Master of Arts in anthropology

Program information

College	Dorothy F. Schmidt College of Arts and Letters		
Department or school	Department of Anthropology		
Degree abbreviation	M.A.	**CIP code**	45.0201
Program website	www.fau.edu/artsandletters/anthro/master		

Our commitment to you

This Academic Learning Compact describes the program's mission, what students who complete the program will know and be able to do and how faculty assess that learning. Florida Atlantic University publishes a compact for every degree program and standalone certificate so students, families, employers and the community can see what each program commits to providing its graduates.

Program mission

The master's program in anthropology gives students in-depth training in biological anthropology, cultural anthropology and archaeology, with a solid grounding in theory, methods and analysis. It prepares graduates to go on to doctoral study or into the workforce.

Florida Atlantic University's mission

Florida Atlantic University is recognized as an opportunity university and R1 research institution dedicated to transforming lives through education, discovery, and innovation. We empower students to achieve economic mobility, advance knowledge that creates meaningful impact, and forge partnerships that drive prosperity and connection in the communities we serve.

How the program supports the university mission

The program supports the university's mission by advancing knowledge through original research, from proposal to data collection to thesis. Students gain research and analysis skills that prepare them for doctoral study or make them ready for careers.

About the program

Master's students study anthropological theory, quantitative methods and the fields of biological anthropology, cultural anthropology and archaeology. Every student designs, carries out and defends an original research project that becomes a master's thesis. The program is a great fit for students who want hands-on research experience before a doctorate or a research-based career.

Student learning outcomes

By graduation, students will be able to demonstrate outcomes in three core areas: content/discipline knowledge and skills (Outcome 1), communication skills (Outcome 2) and critical thinking skills (Outcome 3). Faculty assess all three core outcomes every year.

A. Content/Discipline Knowledge and Skills

What graduates will know and be able to do in their field

Areas this program addresses (check at least two)

- ☒ **Declarative knowledge:** key vocabulary, history, theories and concepts of the field
- ☒ **Research skills:** finding, gathering, analyzing and reporting information the way the field does
- ☐ **Technical skills:** hands-on tools and methods of the field, such as software, instruments, lesson plans or business reports

Graduates will be able to explain the theories and methods of one field of anthropology at a professional level: archaeology, biological anthropology or sociocultural anthropology.
Graduates will be able to design an original research project with sound theory and methods and collect data for it.

How students show it

The written research proposal and its public defense, and the master's thesis.

Where it is assessed

Research proposal defense; Master's thesis

B. Communication Skills

How graduates will share ideas and work with others

Areas this program addresses (check at least two)

- ☒ **Written communication:** clear, well-organized writing suited to the audience and purpose
- ☒ **Oral communication:** well-organized presentations that connect with an audience
- ☐ **Other forms of communication:** visual, media, performance or exhibit work
- ☐ **Team/collaborative communication:** contributing to group projects and shared goals

Graduates will be able to write a research proposal and a thesis that meet professional standards in anthropology.
Graduates will be able to present and defend their research in a public forum.

How students show it

The written research proposal, the public proposal defense and the master's thesis.

Where it is assessed

Research proposal defense; Master's thesis

C. Critical Thinking Skills

How graduates will analyze, create and solve problems

Areas this program addresses (check at least one)

- ☒ **Analytical skills:** weighing evidence, comparing ideas and judging arguments
- ☐ **Creative skills:** combining knowledge to create something new, such as a design, performance or proposal
- ☐ **Practical skills:** applying knowledge to real situations, such as a business proposal, lesson plan or grant

Graduates will be able to analyze research data within a clear analytic framework and draw sound conclusions.

How students show it

The analysis and results sections of the master's thesis, and the analytic plan presented at the proposal defense.

Where it is assessed

Master's thesis; Research proposal defense

Assessment approaches

Every year, faculty review samples of student work to see how well students are meeting all three outcomes, and they use what they learn to improve the program.

Faculty committees review each student's written research proposal and public proposal defense. They look at writing, speaking, choice of theory and methods, and the strength of the analytic plan. The finished thesis shows how well students carry out and report their research. The department also keeps track of student conference presentations and publications, and of graduates who enter doctoral programs or jobs.

Assessment methods may change over time.