



**Department of Anthropology**

**MA Program  
Graduate Student Manual**

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## MA QUICK GUIDE

- 24 credits of coursework (21 credits at 600 level), including Anth 629 & Anth 652. Six credits ANTH 699 thesis
- 30 credits total
- One language or one research tool
- Written comprehensive exam
- Approved thesis proposal
- Advancement to Candidacy (at least one semester before graduation)
- Written thesis with public oral defense
- Maintain good standing with 3.0 GPA or better
- Time limit: 7 years to degree

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## GENERAL INFORMATION

The M.A. degree in anthropology is an advanced degree that may either lead to further study in a Ph.D. program or to work in a professional career. The department expects that most applicants for the M.A. degree either hold a B.A. or B.S. degree in anthropology or have had an equivalent of at least fifteen semester credit hours in anthropology along with an undergraduate degree in another field. In the latter case, the normal expectation is that the applicant has successfully completed lower division courses in three of the four subfields of anthropology (archaeology, physical/biological anthropology, social/cultural anthropology, and linguistics), two of which are at an advanced undergraduate level.

Exceptions may be granted under certain circumstances. If the faculty are uncertain about the student's prior academic preparation, they may require the student to take several undergraduate courses without graduate credit and/or additional graduate courses beyond those normally required for the M.A. degree to remedy deficiencies in their background. The precise requirements will be developed by the student's Advisory Committee and recorded in the student's file. Whenever remedial work is indicated, the student should be prepared to spend an extra semester or two in earning the degree.

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## FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

We offer approximately 10 to 15 Graduate Teaching Assistantships each semester on a competitive basis with students ranked by multiple variables (GPA, timely progress toward degree, previous TA performance, etc.). Renewal is not automatic: new and continuing students must reapply EACH SEMESTER for a Taship and will be re-ranked for funding at that time. TA applications for new and returning students are available on the [anthropology website](#). Applications must be received by the Anthropology Department by October 15 to be eligible for a spring TA award and by March 15 to be eligible for a Fall TA award. These departmental

deadlines are different from those listed on other UAF web sites.

Information about competitive scholarships available to all UAF graduate students can be found on the Graduate School web page or through the Anthropology Department's Financial Aid links. Students are encouraged to apply for a variety of scholarships and fellowships, and should work closely with their Advisory Committee members to develop proposals and applications.

All students are encouraged to apply for various sources of funding including opportunities outside UAF. Information on funding opportunities is posted on the departmental bulletin board, disseminated by email, available from the UAF Proposal Office and through the department website. Faculty will assist students in developing competitive funding proposals. Ph.D. students are expected to apply to national funding agencies to fund their dissertation research. Obtaining funding for the write-up phase is also encouraged.

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#### MA PROGRAM DURATION, LEAVES AND READMISSION

Official degree requirements for the M.A. degree are stipulated in the [University General Catalog](#). The UAF Regulations state (see General Catalog) that all requirements for the M.A. degree must be completed within a seven-year time period. The faculty expect that, in the normal course of events, a student with an adequate background in anthropology at the undergraduate level will complete all the requirements for an M.A. degree in two to three academic years. Readmission after expiration of the seven-year limit is possible only under exceptional circumstances and only with the concurrence of the student's Advisory Committee and the Dean of the College of Liberal Arts. All applications for extensions or readmission must also be approved by the Dean of the Graduate School.

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#### GRADUATE STUDY PLAN

The Advisory Committee must approve the study plan. The study plan should be submitted to the Advisory Committee by the student and the department chair. The study plan should include a list of courses to be taken, a list of faculty members to be consulted, and a list of research projects to be completed. The study plan should be submitted to the Advisory Committee by the student and the department chair. The study plan should include a list of courses to be taken, a list of faculty members to be consulted, and a list of research projects to be completed.

documents for a student's file. The student is responsible for ensuring that all required forms are submitted on time. The Graduate Studies Coordinator and the Chair of the Advisory Committee may assist students in this matter. The Graduate School maintains student files. The Graduate School offers training on the use of the NextGen forms and accessing the completed forms that are on record in the student's file.

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ANNUAL EVALUATION

their programs of study and research. Students are responsible for arranging meetings and consultations with their Advisory Chair and other committee members and for arranging periodic meetings of the Advisory Committee. The student should set a meeting with the committee by the end of the second semester at the latest. Students may wish to change their Advisory Committee Chair or a member of their committee during the course of their studies. To do so, a student must first notify their Chair and then file a new [Appointment of Advisory Committee](#) form, showing the change(s) with required signatures.

UAF Regulations specify that an M.A. student's Advisory Committee is to be composed of a minimum of three members. The Advisory Committee Chair (or co-chair) must be a faculty member in the UAF Department of Anthropology. [Affiliate faculty](#) are also eligible to serve on advisory committees, including as co-chair. Additional committee members may be

(e.g., discourse analysis), a particular analytical technique (e.g. statistics), audio/video transcription and coding software (such Transana or Elan), Geographic Information System software (such as ArcGIS), or another appropriate tool.

Language proficiency will be determined by an examination in a format agreed upon by the Advisory Committee. Typically, a student is expected to translate an article in the language and area of specialization appropriate to their field OR translate a passage from a text in a 1-2 hour exam (with a dictionary). Alternatively, the Advisory Committee may permit passing a language proficiency exam at a level equivalent to 2 years of university language study to fulfill the language requirement. Proficiency in a particular research tool will be determined by an examination in a format agreed upon by the Advisory Committee.

Completion of this requirement should be filed using the [Report on Language/Research Tool](#)

research proposal should be a clear statement of the research problem and its significance. The proposal should reflect a thorough literature review that addresses the general area of the research problem. The student should explain the methodology or research strategy that will be employed in researching the topic, and this should also be substantiated with references to relevant literature. The written proposal will be reviewed and approved by the student's Advisory Committee. When the Advisory Committee approves the proposal, the student must submit the signed [Proposal Approval form](#) to the Graduate Studies Coordinator and the Department Administrative Assistant.

The thesis proposal should demonstrate the following:

Mastery of relevant anthropological theories and concepts in the field as demonstrated in problem statement and literature review:

Are the arguments coherent and clear?

Are the objectives well defined?

Does the proposal demonstrate mature, refined critical thinking skills?

Does the literature review demonstrate appropriate depth and mastery of the relevant theories and/or theoretical concepts?

Does the proposal generate well-reasoned and well supported research questions and/or hypotheses?

Mastery of research methods - data collection procedures:

Is the overall research design appropriate to the proposed study?

Are the sources of primary and secondary data clearly specified?

Are the data collection procedures clearly and sufficiently explained?

Are the research methods appropriate to the research questions and/or hypotheses?

Does the proposal demonstrate regulatory compliance (if applicable)?

Mastery of research methods – data analysis procedures:

Are data analysis procedures clearly and sufficiently explained?

Are the analysis procedures appropriate to the types of data collected?

Does the analysis go beyond the obvious, acknowledging limitations and critically considering alternatives?

Quality of Writing:

Does the proposal utilize an appropriate academic writing style (i.e. a style that is formal, cohesive, and cogent, one that employs precise word choices, clear language, logical organization, and appropriate grammar/spelling)?

Originality and potential for contribution to the discipline of anthropology:

Does the proposal demonstrate potential for discovery?

Does the proposal extend previous work on the topic or related topics?

Does the proposal demonstrate theoretical and/or applied significance?

Does the proposal demonstrate publication potential?



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## ADVANCEMENT TO CANDIDACY

With advancement to candidacy, the department certifies that the student's thesis proposal has been approved, that the Comprehensive Exam has been passed, that the language or research tool requirement has been met, that all course deficiencies have been remedied, and that all remaining requirements have been spelled out in the Graduate Study Plan. The form for [Advancement to Candidacy](#) must be completed and turned in no later than the *semester before* a student plans to graduate.

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## MA THESIS AND DEFENSE

It is expected that by the end of their first year in the program the student will have defined a thesis topic. The student will be guided in completion of the thesis by their Advisory Committee, with primary responsibility resting with the Advisory Committee Chair.

The thesis must be at least 14,000 words in length and not more than 50,000 words (excluding bibliography, figures, tables and appendices). Upon approval of the written draft by the Advisory Committee, the student will present and defend their thesis in a session open to the public known as the defense.

The student must submit the [Defense Approval Form](#) to the Graduate Studies Coordinator and the department administrative assistant *at least 3 weeks in advance* of the scheduled defense. The information will be shared with students, faculty and department webpage and social media managers for public advertising. This process ensures that all faculty and students are aware of the upcoming defense. Students must also create and post flyers to advertise the event (the departmental administrative assistant will provide students access to the photocopier). The flyer should include the presentation title, abstract, as well as the date, time, and location of the defense. If the defense will be held online in Zoom, the zoom link should not be advertised publicly (to avoid zoom-bombing), but rather members of the public should be advised regarding who to contact (name and email address) to obtain a Zoom join link and passcode. Students are encouraged to share a pdf file of their flyer with the Graduate Studies Coordinator and department administrative assistant at the same time as they submit the Defense Approval Form. Students are required to advertise a minimum of 2 weeks in advance of the defense. The information will be shared with students, faculty and department webpage

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**FINAL THESIS.** The thesis must be prepared in accordance with the Graduate School's thesis requirements. Once the final draft has been approved in the proper format a pdf version must be submitted to the department office. Students attempting to graduate in the semester of the defense must plan in advance:

[Apply for graduation](#)

Allow appropriate time after the defense for revisions and final formatting  
Defense date (with post-defense time for preparing the final document) should take into account the following deadlines (i.e., defenses typically take place in September/October for Fall and January/February for Spring graduations)

Final thesis due to CLA mid-November or mid-March

Final thesis due to Graduate School late November or early April

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**PROGRESS WITH GOOD STANDING**

To remain in good standing in the department, the student must maintain a 3.0 GPA or better, must meet with the interim advisor at least once per semester until the Advisory Committee Chair is designated, must designate an Advisory Committee Chair no later than the end of the second semester, and must assemble a full committee and select a research topic no later than the end of the second semester. Any student failing to meet these milestones must explain why in their annual report. Receiving departmental funding (T.A., R.A.) is contingent upon remaining in good standing. Students who fail to remain in good standing will be placed on probation for one semester, and asked to correct the problems. Students who do not correct the problems after one semester will be dropped from the program. The Graduate School requires that

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students are referred to the Office of the Graduate School.

**STUDENT-FACULTY INTERACTION.** In our department, faculty work closely with graduate students and most faculty members maintain an "open door" policy. From time to time students request individual faculty members to write recommendations either for study elsewhere or in applying for a job, research or training grant, summer institute, language school, and so on. Normally the faculty respond promptly to such requests. However, to facilitate the process, it is desirable that the student provide the faculty member with curriculum vitae, a stamped and addressed envelope (if applica-4 a4 (y)8 (y)8 ( (c)8 (c)8 0.00)4 ae , i ( ,)5 ( iia4 (

space assignment. Library carrels are also available and can be applied for at the Rasmuson Library Circulation Desk. Students who are not in residence on campus should not expect to be assigned space in the department.

**GRADUATE STUDENT ORGANIZATION.** Graduate students may organize and elect a Graduate Student Representative who reports to the faculty, usually through the Department Head and/or in faculty meetings, the students' concerns, plans and interests. From time to time, a departmental student/faculty meeting may be called by the Department Head to address common concerns. The Graduate Student Representative is also responsible for calling meetings of the graduate students to organize educational and/or social activities. There are opportunities to invite guest speakers (periodically funded by the Graduate School) and to hold special events (such as a film screening, a holiday potluck, or a joint graduate/undergraduate social gathering). Graduate students also typically assist with the Alaska Anthropological Association Meetings, which are hosted in Fairbanks on a rotating basis.

**FORMS.** There are numerous forms that students are required to submit or that need to be submitted on their behalf during the course of their studies. The most common and important forms are available on the [Graduate School forms webpage](#), while others may be internal to the Department of Anthropology (such as the Defense Approval form). The Graduate School has implemented an electronic forms system called NextGen. Students, faculty, and administrative assistants are able to initiate forms. Students should consult with their Advisory Committee chair prior to initiating forms.

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION.** More information about the UAF Department of Anthropology can be found online at <http://www.uaf.edu/anthro>. This website includes links to other UAF online sources, including the General Catalog, Admissions, and Financial Aid. The UAF Graduate School forms and Thesis Format Workbook can be found online at <http://www.uaf.edu/gradsch/forms.html>.

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## CHECKLIST

- Maintain good standing with 3.0 GPA or better
- Students must apply for a temporary [leave of absence](#) if not registered for classes
  - Leaves are granted for a maximum of one year
  - If a student is not registered for credits without/following leave, the Graduate School requires an [application](#) for reinstatement to graduate status
- 30 credits (time limit: 7 years to degree)
  - 24 credits course work (21 credits at 600 level)
    - ANTH 629 and ANTH 652
    - 6 credits ANTH 699 thesis
  - [Graduate Study Plan](#) (and [supplement](#), if needed): Completed in first semester

