

<https://www.bu.edu/anthrop/student-resources/graduate-student-resources/graduate-student-handbook/>  
(9/20/2022)



# Graduate Student Handbook

Department of Anthropology



Boston University

This handbook outlines requirements and procedures for obtaining the PhD and MA degrees in Anthropology at Boston University. It deals only with formal requirements and not with the substance or philosophy of the program. Students should become familiar with the “Policies and Procedures” section in the Graduate School Catalog (<https://www.bu.edu/cas/academics/phd-and-mfa-academics/>) and refer to the GRS Bulletin (<https://www.bu.edu/academics/grs/policies/>) for details on University requirements. Students who have additional questions about academic regulations, policies, programs, or other concerns should consult the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS). The Department encourages frequent communication between graduate students and the DGS on all matters concerning graduate education within the Department and University. Queries regarding petitions, paperwork for exams and academic milestones, applications for diplomas, information on funding for travel and conferences, or other purely administrative matters should be addressed to the Department’s Graduate Program Administrator or the Department Administrator.

Students enrolled in the doctoral program obtain the Master of Arts degree only as a by-product of the PhD program after completing a minimum of 16 graduate-level semester courses; it is awarded simultaneously with the doctoral degree. Students interested in pursuing the degree of Master of Arts in Public Anthropology (MAPA) apply directly to that program. Requirements for the MAPA are discussed in a separate section below.

- **Initial Counseling and Assignment of Advisors for Newly Admitted Students**

The default advisor for all incoming students is the Director of Graduate Studies (the DGS). Incoming students will be contacted by the DGS sometime before the registration period preceding their first semester of coursework. Prior to this meeting, students should review University and Department regulations as well as any program-specific requirements. The DGS will evaluate the student’s formal background in anthropology and discuss with them their particular interests. At this time, the DGS in consultation with the student will choose a faculty member to serve as the student’s first-year advisor.

Students should contact their first-year advisor before the beginning of the fall semester to arrange for an initial meeting. The first-year advisor is a member of the Department’s faculty who will assist a student in designing a course of study for the first and second semesters of their program, taking into account program requirements and individual student interests. The Department recognizes that some students arrive with a very clear sense of their research project and the faculty member who they would like to have as their primary advisor, but that is not the case for everyone. While the first-year advisor often becomes the student’s primary advisor, there is no automatic assumption that this will occur. Students should feel free to explore a variety of possible advisors before making their decision.

Any time during the first year, but no later than the end of the second semester, students must formally identify their primary advisor and report their choice to the Graduate Program

Administrator. Since the relationship between student and advisor is a critical one, students should consult with the Director of Graduate Studies and their first-year advisors before making a decision. This decision must be made formally and included in the student's record because the student's primary advisor will be called on to advocate for and represent the student in important decisions regarding funding, teaching, and other opportunities.

*No student should be without a primary advisor after their first year in the program.* The Graduate Committee will appoint a primary advisor for any student who has not already chosen one. Should a student's chosen advisor be absent from the University for an extended period of time, or not be in residence during a particularly crucial stage in the student's academic career, the Director of Graduate Studies reserves the right to appoint a temporary advisor. Any request to change a primary advisor must be reviewed by the DGS and reported to the Graduate Program Administrator.

- **Program of Study for PhD Students (years one and two)**

*Course Requirements.* In the first two years of their graduate program of study, students are required to undertake foundational coursework in general anthropological research methods and theories as well as courses that will allow them to develop competence in their geographical and topical areas of specialization.

Students entering the program must successfully complete at least 16 graduate semester courses (64 credits) for the PhD. In order to receive credit towards the degree, students must receive a grade of B- or higher in all required courses.

<https://www.bu.edu/academics/grs/policies/grades-and-course-credits/>

Course requirements are detailed below.

*All PhD students must complete these core requirements:*

#### AN 701 Anthropology Across Sub-Disciplines

Two courses must be taken from the following list:

- AN 703 Anthropological Theory: History and Practice
- AN 704 Sociocultural Theory: Contemporary Currents
- AN 705 Theory in Evolutionary Anthropology: The Biological and Historical Past
- AN 751 Seminar in Linguistic Anthropology
- AN 791 Contemporary Theory in Archaeology

Students must also take one course in relevant research methods. Program requirements by sub-discipline are sketched out below.

<b>Sociocultural Anthropology</b>	<b>Biological Anthropology</b>	<b>Anthropological Archaeology</b>
AN 701 Anthropology Across Sub-Disciplines	AN 701 Anthropology Across Sub-Disciplines	AN 701 Anthropology Across Sub-Disciplines
AN 703 Anthropological Theory	AN 705 Evolutionary Theory	AN 791 Contemporary Theory in Archaeology
AN 704 Contemporary Sociocultural Theory	The methodology course should be AN 595	AN 794 Scientific Methods in Archaeology
AN751 Linguistic Anthropology	Plus one of: AN 703, AN 704, AN 751, or AN 791/AR 891	Plus one of: AN 703, AN 704, AN 751, or AN 705
The methodology course should be AN 590	One statistics course, normally AN 588	AN 793 World Archaeology
In addition to expected coursework on the students' own geographical area, students must take one anthropology course focusing on the ethnography of a specific geographical region outside the student's ethnographic area of specialization	At least one course or directed reading/research course in each Bio subfield: Primatology, Human Bio, Genetics/Genomics, Paleoanthropology/Morphology	A second methods course: AR 505, 507, 516, 518, 520, 590, or AR 703 & AR 704 (both must be taken) or a graduate-level statistics course, i.e. AN 588
AN 510 Proposal Writing (recommended)		AN 510 Proposal Writing (recommended)

*Remaining Courses.* The remaining courses should be chosen in consultation with the student's primary advisor to produce a coherent program of study suited to the student's research and career objectives. Courses may include those offered by other BU programs and departments and in various subfields, techniques, methods or "schools" of anthropology. BU belongs to a consortium of local universities and students may, with the consent of their advisor and/or the DGS, take relevant courses at Boston College, Brandeis University, Tufts University, Hebrew College, and, for Women's Studies, MIT. By special arrangement with their advisor, students may be able to take courses at other area institutions including Harvard University and local seminaries. In the same way, students may also arrange for directed studies or reading courses with their primary advisor, other BU Anthropology Department faculty or faculty in other BU departments.

It is the individual student's responsibility to keep in close contact with their primary advisor, discuss course choices with them, and keep them apprised of academic plans and achievements. The progress of all students in the program is evaluated each spring by the Department faculty as a whole. The student's primary advisor will represent the student in this meeting and will note any comments made by other faculty members present. Shortly after this meeting, the advisor will present the student with a brief report of faculty discussion of their performance. This report will be submitted to the Graduate Program Administrator and

placed in the student's file. The point of this exercise is to alert students (and faculty) to any perceived problems that might hinder student progress going forward and to offer remediation and support.

- **Language Requirement**

The Department of Anthropology is a four-field department that includes course offerings in Sociocultural Anthropology, Biological Anthropology, Anthropological Archaeology, and Linguistic Anthropology. Our goal is to produce students who are equipped to move through the world as colleagues, research collaborators, and global citizens sensitive to and respectful of the world's cultural diversity. This requires respect for other languages and related world views that can only be acquired through language study. For this reason, all PhD students in Anthropology must meet the Departmental requirement of demonstrating competence in a language other than English.

For most students this language requirement will be met by 4 semesters or the equivalent of undergraduate study of a foreign language with a passing grade.

Other means of meeting the language requirement include, but are not limited to:

- Attendance at a school or university where the language of instruction is not the student's native language
- Participation in an intensive language program in the US or abroad at the intermediate level
- Living for an extended period of time in a foreign language environment
- Growing up bilingual or multilingual
- Being a native speaker of a language other than English
- An SAT language exam score of 560 or above

Before taking their Qualifying Examination (the Comprehensive Exam), all doctoral students must fill out the GRS "Report of Examination" form in consultation with their advisor, describing how they have fulfilled the language requirement of intermediate proficiency in a foreign language. This form must be signed by the Department Chair and submitted to the Graduate Program Administrator before the student will be allowed to take their Qualifying Examination.

*Field or Research Language.* For those students whose research project involves a field or research language, additional language study may be necessary. Students are expected to

work closely with their advisors in the first semester of their program to develop a plan for acquiring the proficiency necessary to carry out their intended research. The student's primary advisor will take responsibility for monitoring the student's progress towards achieving the required proficiency in their field or research language. Note that many grants and fellowships require evidence of adequate competency in a field or research language. In addition, language competency may be a focal point of the prospectus defense in the assessment of whether the student is prepared to undertake their proposed research.

- **PhD Qualifying Examination (Comprehensive Exam) (year 3)**

Each student must pass a written and an oral PhD Qualifying Examination (referred to informally as the Comprehensive Exam or "Comps") after completing their coursework and fulfilling the language requirement. This means that normally students are expected to take their exams in their third year their program of study. The purpose of the examination is, first, to allow faculty to determine whether the student has acquired sufficient theoretical, topical, and areal knowledge to conduct PhD level research and write a dissertation. And second, the exam allows faculty to assess whether the candidate is sufficiently knowledgeable about anthropology to successfully teach both general anthropology courses and courses in their specialized topical areas. Successful completion of the examination advances students to PhD candidacy. A "Report of Examination" form indicating the student has successfully passed their Qualifying Exams must be submitted to GRS Records. The form must be signed by the student's primary advisor as the chair of the student's exam committee and either the Director of Graduate Studies or the Department Chair. The student should work closely with the Graduate Program Administrator to ensure that the paperwork is signed and submitted no more than one week after the oral defense.

*PhD Qualifying Exam Committee.* By the end of their second year of graduate study, students should work with their primary advisor to establish a Qualifying Examination Committee consisting of their primary advisor as chair and two additional faculty members. One of the two additional faculty members may be from outside of the Department if deemed appropriate by the student's advisor and the DGS. In selecting a committee, the particular academic expertise of prospective committee members as well as their availability (e.g., future sabbaticals and leaves of absence) should be taken into consideration.

*Bibliography.* Examination Committee members are expected to work closely with the student in supervising and directing the preparation of a bibliography that covers three areas of scholarship.

- General anthropological method and theory (Sociocultural Anthropology); or evolutionary theory (Biological Anthropology); or general anthropological and evolutionary theory as relevant (Anthropological Archaeology)

- A sub-disciplinary research topic or methodological specialization
- At least one geographical area (Sociocultural Anthropology), a species or research specialization (Biological Anthropology), or a culture-historical context (Anthropological Archaeology) that will be the focus of the dissertation research

A draft bibliography should first be developed by the student and then presented to the members of the student's committee. Students may ask the Graduate Program Administrator for bibliographies on file from students who share research specializations and have already completed their exams. Students may ask to see exam questions for up to three students who have already completed their exams. Students may not request exam answers.

Exam Committee members should each meet individually with the student to suggest any additions or changes to the bibliography they feel are necessary. It is the student's responsibility to work with their committee members to identify and discuss important themes and threads in their reading which will allow committee members to develop potential questions. The final version of the bibliography must be agreed upon by the committee and submitted by the student to the Graduate Program Administrator at least three weeks before the scheduled exam. The student is responsible for ensuring that their committee members have copies of the final version of their bibliography. This bibliography will serve as the foundation for Qualifying Examination questions. Students will not be directly examined on works that are not included in the bibliography.

The date for the Qualifying Examination will be set by the student's advisor as Committee Chair in consultation with the student and the other committee members. That date will then be submitted to the Graduate Program Administrator.

*Scheduling.* Permission to take the Qualifying Examination will only be granted if all other requirements have been fulfilled and the appropriate paperwork has been filed with the Graduate Program Administrator and the Graduate School Records Office. All coursework, including the language requirement, must be complete; *students may not take the exam if they have any Incomplete grades on their record.* The date for the exam will typically be set at least one month in advance with the agreement of all members of the committee. The student should report the date to the Graduate Program Administrator who will take responsibility for administering the exam and for reserving an appropriate room for the defense. Qualifying Examinations should take place in person and are not normally scheduled during exam period, winter break, or summer terms because faculty members use these periods for writing and research and should not be expected to be available.

*Written Questions.* Each of the Examination Committee's members contributes three or more questions to the Chair of the Committee (the student's primary advisor), who will assume responsibility for composing a set of nine questions based on the student's bibliography.

Questions will be arranged into three sections: General Theory, Topical Focus, and Areal Specialization. Students will answer two questions in each section, for a total of 6 questions.

At least one week to ten days prior to the examination, the Exam Committee Chair should circulate a copy of the exam questions to the Department's faculty for review. Once the Committee Chair makes any necessary adjustments to the questions based on faculty input, the final form of the exam will be submitted to the Graduate Program Administrator.

The exam is formally administered by the Graduate Program Administrator who negotiates the starting time with the student. Students have exactly 10 days to complete the exam. The questions are typically sent to the student via email by the Graduate Program Administrator at 10:00 am on the start date and essays are due at 6:00 pm ten days later. Students should ensure that they have access to a reliable computer *and be very careful to back up their work*. There is no specific page requirement for the exam, though answers must be thorough (comprehensive). A typical length for a completed examination is in the range of 60 pages; some answers may be longer than others. Students should not duplicate significant amounts of material in their answers, but should demonstrate comprehensive knowledge of a wide range of the material included in their bibliography.

All answers on the Qualifying Exam must be the student's own; once the questions have been received, students may not discuss them with other students or faculty. Students are permitted to consult written sources during the exam so long as these are quoted, cited, and/or otherwise properly and fairly acknowledged as specified in the Graduate Student Academic Conduct Code. <https://www.bu.edu/cas/academics/phd-and-mfa-academics/academic-policies-and-conduct-code/>

Students may not share their answers with other students and may not publish their answers in any format without the prior written consent of the Department Chair.

The student is responsible for sending a copy of their written exam to the Graduate Program Administrator and to each committee member by the agreed-upon deadline. Committee members will have 4 to 7 days to read the exam.

*Oral Exam.* Scheduling the oral examination will take into consideration committee members' availability, but the oral examination should take place preferably within a week, but no more than 2 weeks, after the written exam has been submitted. The student is responsible for requesting the assistance of the Graduate Program Administrator in polling the faculty for their availability and scheduling an appropriate room for the oral examination. During the oral exam, the committee will focus primarily on the student's answers to the written questions, although the student may be queried on other areas covered by the bibliography. Typical questions involve asking the student to expand on or explain particular statements or passages



from their answers. Students may be asked to make comparative comments or to synthesize themes or threads of argument across exam questions.

*Procedure.* At the beginning of the oral examination, once the student and all committee members are present, the student will be asked to leave the room for a brief period of time. The committee uses this time to decide on procedure (who will ask questions first, who will focus on a particular theme or topic) and will discuss any weaknesses in the written responses that might require particular attention during the oral examination. Once this has been determined, the student will then be called back into the room. Typically, the questioning moves from one committee member to the next; however, there are also times when a member may ask a question out of turn, following up on a question posed by another member. The order and direction of questioning is the responsibility of the Committee Chair. At the end of the oral exam, the student will once again be asked to leave the room. The committee will use this time to briefly discuss the results of the examination and will then call the student back into the room to inform them of the committee's decision.

A *pass* is awarded when the student demonstrates competency in all parts of the written and oral examinations. By passing the Qualifying Examination, the student immediately advances to PhD candidacy.

A *qualified pass* is given when the student demonstrates general competency but shows weakness in one area that requires remedial work. In this case the student may be asked to rewrite an exam question or questions or to complete some other type of work approved by the committee. The student is typically given 10 days to complete any remedial writing.

If remedial work is required, the student typically submits the work only to the Committee Chair, who may consult with other committee members, but is responsible for determining whether the remediation is acceptable. If the Committee Chair determines that the remedial work is successful, the student will advance to PhD candidacy.

A grade of *fail* means the entire exam (written and oral) must be retaken within a period of six months to one year, if the student wishes to proceed in their program of study. Only one re-examination is permitted and if a student fails to pass the second written and oral exam, they will not be allowed to continue in the graduate program (see **Termination** below). Note that faculty consider a fail on the Qualifying Examination a strong indication that the student will have great difficulty researching and writing a dissertation.

*PhD Candidacy.* Once a student passes their Qualifying Examination and becomes a candidate for the PhD, they have four years to complete the remaining requirements for the degree. After that time, their candidacy will be renewed only if the student requalifies for candidacy as determined by the Department and the Graduate School. The GRS Student Handbook states, "PhD degrees must be completed within seven years after the first

registration for that degree, except for periods of authorized leave of absence. In addition, a full-time or certified full-time PhD student who is in good academic standing and who becomes the primary caregiver of an infant or adopted child will receive a one-year extension of their approved time to degree.” <https://www.bu.edu/cas/academics/phd-and-mfa-academics/academic-policies-and-conduct-code/>

\*\*Students should note that some specific requirements with regard to format and presentation of the Qualifying Examination are sub-field dependent. Students should consult with their primary advisor for any sub-field dependent requirements.

### • **Grant Proposals and Research Prospectus (years 3 & 4)**

*Proposals for Research Funding.* All graduate students accepted into the PhD program in Anthropology are awarded 5 years (10 semesters) of funding. Students may use two or more semesters of their GRS funding to support their dissertation research, but this is not ideal. Successful grant proposals typically garner more substantial funding for research and the grant writing process is an important aspect of students’ professional development. In addition, semesters of GRS funding that are used for research are not available to support write up after the student has completed their research. The Department therefore urges students to apply for funding “early and often” as grant proposals that are not successful on the first application may very well be successful after rewriting and resubmission in a second round.

Most research funding deadlines occur very early in the fall term. Most students begin applying for research funding in the fall of their third year, although other schedules may be appropriate in particular cases. In order to prepare competitive proposals for funding, the Department encourages students to consult with their advisors and settle on a research topic as early as possible in their program of study. Students should take advantage of the Department’s proposal writing course, AN 510. They should work closely with their advisors in crafting proposals and submit drafts for comments and revision well in advance of deadlines. A file of successful proposals is available to students who are looking for models of funded projects. Successful research proposals (those that are awarded funding) must be submitted by students to the Graduate Program Administrator.

*Research Prospectus.* After successful completion of the Qualifying Examination and admission to candidacy, the student will formally submit a dissertation research prospectus to the Department. The prospectus for dissertation research should include a statement of the theory, methods, and techniques to be employed in carrying out the research, and a discussion of the broader significance of the research for the field. It should also include a timeline and comment on the student’s preparation for their proposed research. The Graduate School has set a length of “no more than 20 pages, doubled-spaced” for prospectuses; most are an

expanded version of a student's grant proposal.

<https://www.bu.edu/academics/grs/programs/phd-degree-requirements/>

The prospectus should be ready for presentation no later than the end of the semester following the successful completion of the Qualifying Examination. Often the prospectus presentation occurs just weeks after the Qualifying Exams take place. In some cases, students have already been awarded grant funding for research and are anxious to leave for the field. While successful grant applications are to be lauded, it should not be an excuse to rush through the prospectus process which is critical to students' success in the field. *Students may not leave for the field before the prospectus has been successfully defended and IRB approval has been secured.*

The composition of the student's Prospectus Committee is normally the same as the Qualifying Exam Committee and consists of 3 faculty members with the student's primary advisor acting as chair.

*The Prospectus Presentation* is not a defense per se, but a discussion between the Candidate and the Prospectus Committee members; the procedure is therefore more relaxed than that of the Qualifying Examinations or Dissertation Defense.

- The student submits a complete draft of the prospectus to their committee members at least two weeks prior to the meeting of the entire committee. (Note that under normal circumstances the prospectus is based on a grant proposal that has been read and commented on previously by committee members; in other words, committee members should already be familiar with the student's planned project). The committee reads the draft and decides whether it is ready for presentation. They may suggest changes or modifications.
- Once any suggested changes are made and agreed upon, the Committee Chair must inform the DGS and the Graduate Program Administrator in writing that the proposal is ready to defend.
- At this point a date is scheduled for the Prospectus Presentation. Students should not expect to schedule their Prospectus Presentations during vacation periods or summer as faculty use this time for their own travel, research, and writing. All members of the student's Prospectus Committee must be present for the defense. The student's primary advisor chairs the presentation.
- The presentation may begin with the chair asking the student to briefly leave the room so that the committee can address both procedural issues and any problem areas

to be addressed in the prospectus. After that discussion, the student is invited to return.

- The candidate may offer a brief comment on their proposal, highlighting the issues they want to discuss with the committee. This is followed by discussion and questions by the committee, led by the chair.
- The discussion and questions from the committee and the student's responses should last no more than an hour. The process is meant to help the student prepare for fieldwork, sharpen their research questions, think more deeply about their methods for answering their research questions, and consider the feasibility of their proposed timeline. The Committee Chair will then ask the candidate to leave the room again so that the committee can decide whether any further changes to the prospectus are necessary or if the prospectus can be approved in its present form.
- If the committee determines that the prospectus requires revisions, the student is given a period of 10 days to make them. Revisions should be submitted to the Committee Chair (the student's primary advisor).
- If the committee approves the prospectus, the student is responsible for submitting the final/accepted form of the prospectus along with a "Dissertation Prospectus Approval Form" signed by the student and then the Department Chair or Director of Graduate Studies. This form will then be sent to the Graduate Program Administrator who will forward a formal notification of completion to the GRS Records Office. At this point students should begin the process of securing IRB permission for their research project, if they haven't done so already.
- Once the prospectus has been successfully defended, the student is considered to be "ABD," *All but Dissertation*.

**\*\*Students should note that some specific requirements with regard to format and presentation of the prospectus are sub-field dependent. Students should consult with their primary advisor for any sub-field dependent requirements.**

### ● **PhD Dissertation Committee and Defense**

Based on original research, the doctoral dissertation is expected to constitute a significant contribution to the candidate's scholarly field, and must be presented clearly, precisely, and in good literary style. The dissertation is normally the product of field work or laboratory research, although in special circumstances the Department will approve projects based on library or other kinds of documentary research. The final draft of the dissertation should meet high academic standards and, as a public document available to the entire scholarly

community, it should be a source of pride for both the candidate and the Department. The dissertation defense is therefore not *pro forma*, but rather the final stage in a careful process designed to produce the best quality scholarship possible.

*First and Second Readers.* Once the student has passed the Qualifying Examination and Presentation of the Prospectus, they should consult with the Director of Graduate Studies to formally identify First and Second Readers for the dissertation. The First Reader is always the student's primary advisor. The Second Reader will be determined by the advisor and the student in consultation, if necessary, with the DGS. The Second Reader has very often served as a member of the student's previous Qualifying Examination and Prospectus Committees. From this point on, these two readers will supervise the dissertation research and the writing of the thesis, so their selection should be based on relevant expertise and research interests, as well as perceived ability to support the student's learning style/needs. Should either of these two readers become unable to continue their roles as supervisors, the student must petition the Director of Graduate Studies to appoint replacements. Although a committee of four or more members will eventually be appointed to review the final draft of the dissertation, under the rules of the Graduate School only the First and Second Readers may be formally chosen before the dissertation is complete. For this reason, while students should keep in contact with other potential thesis readers, there can be no formal appointments for other readers until the dissertation is ready to defend.

*Dissertation Defense Committee.* The Director of Graduate Studies, in consultation with the student, formally appoints the Dissertation Defense Committee. The Committee is composed of four or more faculty members: the First and Second Readers, a Committee Chair, and at least one other designated reader or committee member.

<https://www.bu.edu/academics/grs/programs/phd-degree-requirements/>

At least two of the committee members, including the chair and either the First or Second Reader, must be from the Department. The remaining member or members of the committee may come from outside the Department and even outside of BU. External appointments and the appointment of visiting, adjunct, or emeritus faculty require consent from the Director of Graduate Studies and formal approval (a "special service" appointment) provided by the Dean of the Graduate School. The candidate must contact the Director of Graduate Studies to initiate a request for such special service appointments and must submit a "Request for a Special Service Appointment" form. The Graduate Program Administrator will then send a formal notification to the GRS Records Office asking for approval. The Department does not pay an honorarium to outside committee members and cannot normally pay for travel expenses for those coming to campus from beyond the Boston area. The Graduate School, however, sometimes has travel funds available for this purpose; applications should be made through the Department Chair.

According to GRS rules, all Dissertation Defense Committee members are required to attend the final oral examination. Up to one committee member, who is not the Committee Chair or the First Reader, can attend via audio/video communication (e.g. Zoom) without a proxy during the final oral examination. A proxy must be in attendance for any additional committee members who attend via audio/video communication.

<https://www.bu.edu/academics/grs/programs/phd-degree-requirements/>

The Dissertation Defense Committee Chair is assigned by the Director of Graduate Studies. The chair can serve either as one of the four committee members, as an additional committee member, or solely as the chair of the committee. The First Reader, however, cannot serve as the Committee Chair.

The Committee Chair's duties begin only when the candidate's final draft of the dissertation has been approved in writing by both the First and Second Readers as complete and ready to defend. *The defense cannot be scheduled before the dissertation is complete and the First and Second Readers have reported in writing to the Director of Graduate Studies that it is ready to defend.* At this point, the student is responsible for completing the "PhD Intent to Graduate" form online through the GRS website: <https://www.bu.edu/cas/academics/phd-and-mfa-academics/graduation-information/intent-to-graduate-form-for-phd-students/>.

At the candidate's request, the Committee Chair then schedules the defense. It is the student and Committee Chair's responsibility to find a defense time that works for all members of the Committee. The Graduate Program Administrator will then officially notify the Graduate School of the Dissertation Defense date and locate an appropriate room. The Dissertation Defense is a public event and the University publishes the time and place at which it will occur. Other faculty, students, and visitors are welcome to attend as observers.

In advance of the defense, the candidate must receive Department approval of the dissertation abstract, which then must be submitted to the Graduate School. Approval is indicated by the signatures of the First Reader, the Director of Graduate Studies, and the Department Chair on the GRS form "Schedule of the Final Oral Exam with Abstract Approval."

Only after the complete draft has been reviewed and approved by the First and Second Readers are copies distributed (along with the approved abstract) to the rest of the Dissertation Defense Committee.

Once the dissertation and abstract have been reviewed and approved by the remaining members of the Defense Committee, the candidate is responsible for sending the draft Dissertation and Abstract to the Graduate Program Administrator *at least three weeks before the scheduled defense*. If these conditions are not met, the Dissertation Defense may be postponed. Dissertation Defenses are not normally scheduled during exam period, winter

break, or summer terms because faculty members use these periods for writing and research and should not be expected to be available.

*Procedure.* During the Dissertation Defense, the Dissertation Committee Chair presides. The Procedure for the Dissertation Defense is similar to that of the Comprehensive Examination Defense and Presentation of the Prospectus, but as the capstone of the PhD degree and an official event open to the public, it is more formal.

- The procedure for the Oral Defense of the Dissertation is as follows.
- The Dissertation Defense Committee Chair welcomes those present and asks everyone including the candidate to briefly leave the room so that the committee can discuss procedure and identify any problems or concerns regarding the dissertation.
- Everyone is then invited to return.
- The defense begins with candidate offering a brief (10-15 minute) synopsis of their dissertation, highlighting key arguments and findings and the work's contribution to the field. This is followed by discussion and questions by the committee in an order determined by the chair.
- The discussion and questions from the committee and the student's responses should last no more than eighty minutes (90 minutes total for the entire defense). The Committee Chair will then ask the candidate and visitors to leave the room again so the committee can decide whether the candidate's defense of the dissertation was acceptable or not. The Defense Committee acts on behalf of the Department as a whole in determining whether or not the defense is adequate.
- Once the committee has made their determination, everyone including the candidate is asked to return.
- If the committee determines that the Dissertation Defense is acceptable, the candidate is congratulated heartily by the committee and all those present. The committee can also determine that the defense is acceptable, but that certain changes need to be made before the dissertation can be officially approved and deposited with the University. In such a case, the committee will make very specific recommendations for revisions. A single member of the committee may be appointed to supervise the completion of the requested revisions. If the committee finds that the defense was unacceptable and that major revisions are necessary, another defense may be required. When the dissertation has been finally and completely approved (i.e., any revisions completed and approved by the Committee Chair) and the dissertation itself is in a form suitable

for deposition in the University Library, committee members will sign the dissertation's front pages signaling their formal approval of the dissertation.

\*\*\*Note that some specific requirements with regard to format and presentation of the Dissertation Defense are sub-field dependent. Students should consult with their primary advisor for any sub-field dependent requirements.

For a spring defense and graduation in mid-May, the Department deadline for submitting the draft of the dissertation to the Dissertation Defense Committee is March 1<sup>st</sup>, and March 30<sup>th</sup> is the last day of the academic year that a dissertation defense can take place. These Department deadlines take into account the time needed for internal processing of required paperwork and the possibility that students will need to make corrections to the text and adjust dissertation formatting to meet Graduate School standards. Note that the Graduate School imposes its own deadlines for the submission and defense of the completed dissertation each year for students seeking a May degree. These dates vary slightly from year to year and students should be sure to check the most up-to-date GRS schedule of deadlines at

<https://www.bu.edu/cas/academics/phd-and-mfa-academics/graduation-information/>. A

student who submits a completed dissertation after the Department deadline of March 30<sup>th</sup> but before June 1<sup>st</sup> will be awarded a degree in September without having to pay fall Continuing Student Fees.

- **Funding for PhD Students**

All PhD students are awarded 5 years (10 semesters) of funding which includes an annual stipend, medical benefits, and payment of tuition and fees. Students who matriculated in fall of 2021 or later also receive a summer stipend each of those 5 years. Up-to-date information on benefits, policies, and restrictions on graduate student funding should be sought from the Graduate School office at <https://www.bu.edu/grad/admission-funding/phd-funding/>.

The Department recognizes that funding is always a major concern for our graduate students and that the cost of living in Boston regularly outpaces annual increases in awards. We will continue our efforts to represent student concerns to the Graduate School and to advocate for more reasonable graduate stipends that allow our students to secure safe and healthy living situations.

Students should make every effort to take advantage of the funding opportunities offered by the University, the Department, and other schools and programs within BU, as well as external funding possibilities. These opportunities vary from year to year, so *it is important to check your BU email account and the Department's twitter, Instagram, and Facebook sites regularly for updated information*. Links can be found at: <https://linktr.ee/buanthropology>.



Details of the various types of financial aid available to graduate students through the University can be found at <https://www.bu.edu/cas/admissions/phd-mfa/fellowship-aid/aid-for-phd-students/>. These include Graduate Student Organization (GSO) travel grants for research and presentations (at conferences and workshops), Bloom Dissertation Fellowships, Doctoral Research Fellowships, and long-term and short term Graduate Research Abroad Fellowships (GRAF).

The University's Center for the Study of the Humanities offers a number of graduate student fellowships and awards which can be found at <https://www.bu.edu/humanities/opportunities/graduate-opportunities/>. These opportunities include Dissertation Fellowships, PhD Internships, and Graduate Student Awards for students doing excellent work in the humanities and humanistic social sciences.

BU's Pardee School of Global Studies offers a number of funding opportunities for graduate students. See their page for more information on their Summer Fellows Program <https://www.bu.edu/pardee/community/graduate-summer-fellows/>

There are also internship and research funding opportunities through the BU Initiative on Cities <https://www.bu.edu/ioc/for-students/fellowships/> for students interested in urban-based projects.

At the Department level, there is a Graduate Allocations Fund, some limited summer funding for students who do not have guaranteed GRS summer support, and opportunities for summer teaching. The Graduate Allocations Fund exists to support symposia, research and travel expenses, course-related teaching expenses and student group activities. Stipends from the Graduate Allocations Fund are capped at \$800 per student per academic year and are available on a first-come, first-served basis. Individual faculty members may also have research funds that allow them to support student assistants. There are, in addition, regular opportunities for graduate students to act as course graders. Again, students should be sure to talk with their primary advisor, the DGS, and Graduate Program Administrator about any financial concerns they may have so that possible sources of assistance may be identified.

Students who experience short term financial distress or need to access their stipend before the normal pay period or disbursement, may request an advance or no-cost emergency loan from GRS. <https://www.bu.edu/cas/emergency-funding-for-graduate-students/>. This option may be particularly helpful to foreign students who need an advance on their stipend money in order to arrange for travel to the US or pay security deposits for housing.

Finally, the Department strongly encourages every student to apply "early and often" for external grant funding for research, travel, and writing. Students should check the Department website for a comprehensive list of external funding agencies. Information on external funding opportunities and deadlines for applications are announced regularly via

Department email, twitter, Instagram, and Facebook sites. Your advisor will also be an important source of information about grants that are particularly relevant to your topical focus and area.

- **Teaching (TF-ing)**

For the first two semesters of their program of study, all Anthropology PhD students are granted Dean's fellowships and are expected to focus on their coursework. Beginning in their second year, students are required to serve as teaching fellows (TFs) for undergraduate Anthropology courses. All second year students in the PhD program TF unless they have some form of outside support such as an NSF or Fulbright.

Teaching experience under the guidance of a seasoned faculty member is considered an important aspect of graduate training and professionalization. TFs are critical to the Department's mission of educating informed citizens who are at home in and engaged with a diverse and constantly changing world. To that end, the Department requires that TFs—like faculty—strive to create inclusive classrooms. Doing so requires recognizing the ways that differences in background, experience, or identity may impact students' university experiences, including their intellectual perspectives, academic trajectories, and understandings of classroom interactions. All new TFs will receive training in building inclusive classrooms from University and/or College DEI experts.

After the second year of their program and depending on Department needs and graduate student numbers, a small number of students may be granted a non-teaching or non-service (NS) semester. Non-service semesters are not guaranteed and are generally awarded to those students in good standing and making timely progress in their program of study as determined by their advisors and the DGS in consultation with the Department Chair. (Note that in the University's calculations, PhD students are not "owed" any NS semesters other than their first year when they are on Dean's fellowships.)

*There is no particular formula for making TF assignments* because there are so many considerations that must be taken into account. Grad students are polled by the Graduate Program Administrator before the semester begins and asked to indicate their availability (Do they have plans to leave for the field? Are they returning from the field? Do they expect to have grant support? etc.), and course preferences. Before making placements, the Department first considers how many grads are available, how many courses have sections, and what course enrollments are like. Students' fields and areas of interest are taken into account, but there are often fewer grads available in one sub-discipline than another. This means that students may be asked to TF for courses outside of their sub-discipline. Ours is a four-field program. The Department considers the experience of teaching outside of one's sub-discipline valuable as it allows students to broaden their expertise in the field and increase later

professional opportunities. As we normally supply TFs for the undergraduate Archaeology Program, most of our archaeology students are given assignments in those courses.

In determining TF assignments, our large undergraduate courses -- those with multiple sections -- are our first priority. Our introductory courses, AN 101 and AN 102 are “feeders” for the major and other anthropology courses. We therefore try very hard to create teams of TFs that include at least one student with experience teaching the course in a previous semester.

Note that GRS is the final determiner of which grads we can use as TFs based on GRS calculations of how many semesters of funding a student has remaining; those students who have used all 5 years of their funding are not eligible to TF except by special GRS permission.

Students should consult the appendix “Teaching Fellow Duties and Expectations” for details on the various types of TF assignments and related duties and expectations.

- **Grievances**

Misunderstandings, disagreements or perceived failures to follow Department or University policies that occur between a graduate student and faculty member, or a graduate student and another graduate student, should ideally be dealt with immediately and directly through discussion between the parties involved. In many cases, the behavior is unintentional and can easily be resolved.

If the student is not comfortable discussing the issue with the faculty member or student directly involved, they should make an appointment to speak with the Director of Graduate Studies. (If the student is not comfortable approaching the DGS, they can ask to speak instead with the Department Chair). The DGS (or Chair) may meet individually with the parties involved and/or ask if a discussion with all parties present might be a useful approach to addressing the problem.

If the student is not satisfied with the outcome of this process, they may present a written petition of grievance to the DGS requesting an appearance before the Graduate Committee. If the grievance involves a faculty member who is sitting on the Committee, that faculty member will not be present during the presentation of the grievance.

Students should be aware that all faculty, including the DGS and Department Chair, are required to report any incidents of sexual harassment that students report to them, so it is not possible to keep such conversations confidential. However, students always have the right to contact the GRS Title IX Coordinator or the University Ombuds directly at any point in the grievance process. The SARP (the Sexual Assault Response and Prevention Center) and the

Office of the Ombuds are both confidential contexts where students can seek support, voice concerns, and identify options.

Information on services provided by the Office of the Ombuds is available at:

<https://www.bu.edu/ombuds/>

Information on the Sexual Assault Response and Prevention Center is available at:

<https://www.bu.edu/shs/sarp/services-we-provide/>

For various Title IX resources available at BU, see:

<https://www.bu.edu/cas/faculty-staff/administrative-directory/office-of-the-associate-dean-of-diversity-inclusion/cas-title-ix-workshops-and-resources/>

- **Termination and Withdrawal**

The Department reviews student progress annually and reports in writing to the student and to the Graduate School any perceived grounds for termination. The Graduate School identifies the following grounds for termination from the program:

“A student may be dismissed from their academic program for failure to maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress. The determination of a student’s failure to make academic progress must be based on the program’s annual graduate student review, which must include but cannot be limited to advisor assessment of student progress. If a student is not on track to maintain academic progress based on the quality of their work, the program must place the student on academic probation and give the student sufficient feedback, opportunity, and time to improve their performance.

If a student fails to address concerns regarding academic progress by the end of the probationary period, a program should submit a request for the student’s dismissal to the Associate Dean of the Graduate School of Arts & Sciences. The Associate Dean will then notify the department if the request for dismissal is valid. Following the program’s communication to the student of the dismissal and its rationale, the Associate Dean will then send a letter of dismissal to the student. A student who is dismissed for failure to maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress may appeal the decision to the Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences by submitting a written appeal that explains any mitigating circumstances within 14 days of the notice of dismissal. A dismissal that is upheld by the Dean may be appealed to the University Provost.”

<https://www.bu.edu/academics/grs/policies/suspension-or-dismissal/>

*Incomplete Grades.* If a student is experiencing difficulties completing their coursework for personal, medical or other reasons, they should be sure to speak with their course instructors.

In some cases, adjustments can be made in the timing of due dates for assignments or in the form of the assignments. If necessary, grades of “Incomplete” are a possibility, but must be arranged in writing with the agreement of the course instructor before the end of the course in question. Please contact the Graduate Program Administrator for the relevant form which requires a statement of the reason for the Incomplete, a schedule for the timely completion of any outstanding work, and the signature of both the student and instructor.

<https://www.bu.edu/academics/policies/incomplete-coursework/>

Once the incomplete work for a course has been satisfactorily completed, the instructor must file a Change of Grade form with the Department Administrator. Note that it is the student’s responsibility to follow up and ensure that all required paperwork is filed. *Incomplete grades automatically become a grade of fail (F) if they are not resolved within a year from the time awarded.*

The Department strongly discourages students from accumulating too many Incompletes. All grades of Incomplete must be resolved before the student may take the Qualifying Examination; and multiple Incompletes can harm a student’s chances of obtaining external grants. Incompletes that are left unchanged beyond one semester can negatively affect end-of-year student reviews, Departmental allocations of funding, and other academic opportunities. In addition, in cases where incomplete work is evaluated long after the course has ended, the results tend to provide less educational value for the student than work finished in a timely manner.

If a student experiences personal or health related issues that are an impediment to their progress in the program, they should always apprise their primary advisor and the DGS. If after consulting with their advisor and the DGS, a student decides a period of leave is warranted, they may make that request by submitting a “Request for Leave of Absence for Graduate Students” form. <https://www.bu.edu/reg/students/forms/>

Those students who decide for various reasons to follow another career path, but have completed all required coursework for the PhD, may apply to the Department Chair to be awarded an MA degree.

- **Professionalization**

Professionalization is a key part of the graduate experience. It is built into almost every facet of life in the Department. For example, TF-ing is a professionalization experience during which students can expect (and should ask) supervising faculty to provide feedback on their teaching strengths and weaknesses. The optional but strongly encouraged seminar on proposal writing (AN 510) pushes students to think about how to pitch their very specific interests to audiences bigger than the small group of people who work on their topic, thereby

training them to speak and write compellingly for wider anthropological publics. The close and sustained student-advisor relationship is a key place for dialogue about everything from conference attendance to pre-dissertation publishing. Students should look at all their classes and interactions with faculty advisors as opportunities to develop professional skills and ask questions related to future careers as anthropologists.

In addition to this general culture of professionalization, the Department provides many formal opportunities for students to develop important skills, including an extra-curricular professionalization series coordinated by the Director of Graduate Studies. The full series takes place over two academic years and covers a range of topics relevant for students at every stage of the PhD program. For students in the early years of the program, the Department offers seminars on best practices in teaching, comprehensive exam preparation, grant writing, and advisor wrangling. For those post-field, there are seminars on making the most of conference opportunities and publishing strategies. There is also a dissertation writing workshop (FRED) that both teaches and allows students to practice peer review. For those beginning to think about the job market, there are CV and cover letter writing workshops, as well as panels dedicated to careers (including non-academic careers) in anthropology. Students have also organized their own “Works in Progress” series that allows students to present drafts of their work or practice conference presentation in a low-stress environment.

An archive of previous Department professionalization seminars and resources can be found on the Department of Anthropology website at: <https://www.bu.edu/anthrop/student-resources/graduate-student-resources/professionalization-workshops/>

The Department strongly encourages students to take advantage of the frequent opportunities to connect with other Anthropology graduate students and to attend Department social and academic events. The Department hosts several picnics and parties over the course of the academic year. There is also a regular Department Talk Series which typically draws on scholars from local universities; in addition, at least one or two speakers are invited from outside the university each semester. With generous funding from a faculty member, the Department hosts an annual Fredrik Barth lecture. With the support of an alumni, there is a regular lecture on Contemporary Chinese Culture. Students should also take advantage of the many clubs, lectures, and events that are sponsored by other departments, programs, and organizations at BU and at neighboring universities.

Finally, students should take advantage of GRS sponsored resources and opportunities for professional development and career planning. See <https://www.bu.edu/grad/cd-pd/career-preparation/>. These resources include:

- Sessions with experienced career counselors, workshops, programs, offered by BU’s Center for Career Development (CCD) <https://www.bu.edu/careers/>

- Handshake, an online hub for career resources <https://app.joinhandshake.com/login>
- Vmock, an online tool for creating and evaluating CVs <https://www.vmock.com/bu>
- BU's PhD Progression project <https://www.bu.edu/pdpa/for-doctoral-students/phd-progression/>

While we strongly encourage all graduate students to take advantage of these opportunities, it remains the case that much of the real work of professionalization happens informally, in peer-to-peer interactions. Indeed, some forms of professionalization can *only* be acquired in peer-to-peer interactions. Students develop their writing skills and practice peer review by creating writing groups with fellow students within and beyond their cohorts. For many students, the relationships developed with peer review partners in graduate school are a crucial part of successful pre- and post-dissertation writing and revising. Fellow students are also invaluable resources for information about everything from little known or niche grants to best practices in exam preparation.

If students have ideas for professionalization experiences that they think are not fully being addressed, they are strongly encouraged to bring their ideas to the attention of the Director of Graduate Study.

- **The Master's Degree in Public Anthropology (MAPA)**

The Master of Arts in Public Anthropology (MAPA) is intended to provide students with basic anthropological training and an appreciation of the significance of cross-cultural perspectives in professional practice. The program is designed for individuals who are already engaged in, or plan to enter, such fields as medicine, business, public health, education, journalism, law, environmental management, social services, rural development, or public policy evaluation. Students accepted into the MAPA program come with a relevant undergraduate degree; many also have years of job experience in pertinent fields. The program, then, is designed to enhance the student's standing in their existing place of employment and/or make students more desirable candidates for employment in a range of sectors, including non-profit organizations and NGOs; government advisory positions; and consultancy positions in business, medicine, and education.

The Master's degree is neither required nor encouraged as a stepping-stone to the PhD. Those persons intending to become professional anthropologists should apply directly to the PhD program.

- **Initial Counseling and Assignment of Advisors for Newly Admitted MAPA Students**

Initial counseling and assignment of advisors for newly admitted MAPA students follows the procedure outlined above for PhD students (see **Initial Counseling and Assignment of**



**Advisors for Newly Admitted Students** above). As is the case with PhD students, MAPA students should work closely with their primary advisor because the primary advisor will act not only as an academic advisor but as an advocate for the student. In the case of MAPA students, the primary advisor is perhaps even more important, due to the (relatively) short period of time most MAPA students are in the program. For these reasons, it is critical that the student settle on a primary advisor early in their program and keep them apprised of their particular concerns and any problems they face in completing their program of study.

- **MAPA Program Requirements**

Students enrolled in the MAPA program are expected to complete a minimum of eight semester courses (32 credits) at the 500 level or higher and must achieve an overall grade point average of 3.0 (B) in their coursework.

*Course Requirements.* All students are required to take GRS AN 701 Anthropology across Sub-Disciplines and to choose one of four core graduate courses in anthropology:

- GRS AN 703 Anthropological Theory: History and Practice
- GRS AN 704 Sociocultural Theory: Contemporary Currents
- GRS AN 705 Theory in Evolutionary Anthropology: The Biological and Historical Past
- GRS AN 751 Seminar in Linguistic Anthropology

Students are also required to choose one of the following courses in research design/methods:

- GRS AN 510 Proposal Writing for Social Science Research
- GRS AN 557 Anthropology of Mental Health
- GRS AN 590 Theory, Method, and Techniques in Fieldwork
- GRS AN 595 Methods in Biological Anthropology

*Additional courses.* Additional courses will be chosen under the guidance of the student's primary advisor. Students can choose to take up to two electives outside of the Department of Anthropology, for example in the Medical School or in the Pardee School of Global Affairs.

*Research Paper.* During their final semester, students will enroll in a directed study course (GRS AN 902) and will prepare a required research paper (or "Qualifying Paper"), under the supervision of their primary advisor and in consultation with other relevant faculty members. Students may find a relevant faculty member in another department. (See details below under **MAPA Qualifying Paper**).



- **MAPA Language Requirement**

The MAPA does not require foreign language study.

- **MAPA Qualifying Paper**

The qualifying paper for the MAPA should demonstrate the candidate's ability to integrate anthropology with their own area of specialization or profession. It should be well-conceived but modest in scope and can be based on either library or field research. The candidate should work closely with their primary advisor, consulting with other faculty as appropriate, in developing, researching, and writing their paper. The Qualifying Paper should be 25-30 pages (double spaced) in length and of publishable quality.

*Qualifying Paper Committee and Defense.* In consultation with their primary advisor, the student should identify 2 additional faculty members willing to act as readers of their Qualifying Paper. Once the primary advisor feels the paper is defensible, the student can enlist the assistance of the Graduate Program Administrator to poll the committee in order to schedule a defense time.

*Defense Procedure.* The defense of the MAPA Qualifying Paper follows roughly the procedure for the PhD Dissertation Defense, but is considerably less formal. See **PhD Dissertation Defense** above.

- **MAPA Funding**

*Funding.* No financial aid is available through the University for students enrolled in the MAPA program. MAPA students are not eligible for GSO funds for conferences and research travel nor may they apply for support from the Department Graduate Allocation Fund. There are, however, more limited research funding opportunities available to them both internally and externally. Students should explore the links under **Funding for PhD Students** above and talk to their primary advisors about possible sources of support for research relevant to their project and area.

For information on federal and private educational loans, students should visit the GRS page on aid for MA students at <https://www.bu.edu/cas/admissions/ma-ms/financial-aid/>. International students are urged to apply for support to their governments or international agencies.

MAPA students will not be assigned to courses as teaching fellows.

- **MAPA Professionalization**

MAPA students should take full advantage of the professionalization opportunities offered by the University and the Department (see **Professionalization** above). Students are encouraged

to attend Department social and academic events and to explore the various resources available at Boston University and in the surrounding area.

- **MAPA Time to Degree**

For those students who attend classes full-time, it is possible to complete the program's requirements in two semesters. Some students, however, may need an extra semester to complete their studies, particularly if they decide to conduct field research for their final research paper. Students attending the MAPA program part-time as part of BU's Tuition Remission Program for employees, should make their situation clear to their primary instructor so as to receive proper advising. Part-time students have three years after first registering to complete their studies leading to the master's degree. In extenuating circumstances, a student may petition the CAS Graduate School for more time in which to complete the degree <https://www.bu.edu/academics/grs/programs/masters-degree-requirements/>.

### **Important Resources for Graduate Students**

- Anti-Racism Collaborative <https://www.bu.edu/diversity/r-diversity-culture/anti-racism-collaborative/>
- BU Student Health Services <https://www.bu.edu/shs/>
- Food Insecurity Resources <https://www.bu.edu/grad/community/health-and-wellness/mental-health-wellness/food-security-resources/>
- Food Security Guide for Graduate Students <https://www.bu.edu/gpr/student-resources/food-security-guide-for-graduate-students/>
- Graduate Resources for Diversity and Inclusion <https://www.bu.edu/cas/about/diversity-inclusion-cas/grs-diversity-and-inclusion/>
- Graduate Student Organization <https://www.bu.edu/gso/>
- Graduate Writing Support <https://www.bu.edu/erc/grad/gws/>
- GRS Career Planning and Professional Development for PhD Students <https://www.bu.edu/grad/cd-pd/career-preparation/>
- How to Report a Safety, Harassment, or Ethical Issue <https://www.bu.edu/diversity/resources/safety-and-ethics-reporting/>
- Indigenous Education Resources <https://www.bucare.ca/indigenous-education-resources>

- LGBTQIA+ Resources <https://www.bu.edu/thurman/resources-lgbtqia-community/>
- Mental Health Resources <https://www.bu.edu/shs/behavioral-medicine/behavioral-resources/>
- Minority Connection Initiative <https://bu.campuslabs.com/engage/organization/minority-connection-initiative>
- Sexual Assault Response & Prevention Center (SARP) <https://www.bu.edu/shs/sarp/>
- Title IX Office and Administrators <https://www.bu.edu/safety/sexual-misconduct/title-ix-bu-policies/sexual-misconducttitle-ix-policy/title-ix-team/>

Edited 9/17/2022

## Appendix: Teaching Fellow Duties and Expectations

Teaching experience under the guidance of a seasoned faculty member is considered an important aspect of graduate training and professionalization. TFs are critical to the Department's mission of educating informed citizens who are at home in and engaged with a diverse and constantly changing world.

The following are some general guidelines for TFs. Keep in mind that different instructors may have different expectations for what TF-led sections are supposed to accomplish and how those goals are supposed to be met. Your instructor should make those expectations clear. If they are not made clear, you should ask for clarification. What is offered here are some very general guidelines. Note that every year, the department hosts an introduction to TF-ing, as well as a number of supplementary workshops that touch on teaching-related issues, including directing a discussion section, an introduction to Title IX and procedures for dealing with sexual harassment, and best practices for running an inclusive classroom. You should take advantage of those opportunities to learn more about TF-ing and to raise any questions you might have.

**1.-Your most important responsibilities are to attend all lectures, take notes, and be prepared to go over the material with students in your sections, answering any questions they may still have, unpacking difficult concepts, offering examples and clarification, and stimulating discussion.** Of course this requires that you do all of the assigned readings.

**2.-Some instructors may ask that in sections you go over readings that were assigned but not covered in depth in lectures.** But normally it is not a good idea to introduce new or additional information that does not come from class lectures or readings. It is, for example, inappropriate to present your section(s) with your own alternative interpretation of something the professor has introduced; it is also inappropriate to assign additional readings or other materials unless you have cleared those materials with the professor before presenting them. An exception to this is perhaps to bring in a short news article or a photograph or YouTube video **that illustrates a point that was made in lecture and stimulates discussion.**

**3.-Some professors will provide you with a specific set of discussion questions to go over in sections that accompany the lecture.** If you feel you are having difficulties stimulating discussion, you should discuss this with the professor or/and with your fellow TFs. As noted above, the department also regularly runs a workshop on how to run a successful discussion section.

**4.-Most instructors appreciate your technical assistance.** Helping with power point set up and making certain that the system is on line and working allows the professor the time to interact with students before class and to field questions. The same goes for helping the instructor shut the computer system down, wrap up cords, etc. Having the Media folks on

speed dial is especially helpful. Picking up and returning films, books, or course supplies is also expected.

**5.-Most instructors also appreciate classroom assistance** for the same reason – that is, it allows the professor time to interact with students who come up before or after lecture. Getting a DVD out of the DVD player, making certain that the attendance sheet circulates and that late students sign in, picking up the attendance sheet instead of leaving it on a desk, handing out and picking up stray handouts—these are all forms of assistance that are universally appreciated.

**6.-During class time, TFs should act as examples to the undergraduates in the class.**

Please take notes and pay attention; do not look at your phone or social media on your laptop. Keeping an eye on what's going on in the class is also helpful to the professor who may be concentrating on delivering his or her lecture. Is a particular student always late, or bored, or spending class time on their lap top or talking with a friend, etc.? This information may be an important element in a student's participation grade.

**7.-TFs should restrict all written comments about students to official media,** namely BU's email system, blackboard, and/or faculty link. TFs should assume that any written comment about a student MIGHT eventually be seen by the student concerned. Comments on students and their work **should not** be posted on any public site or discussed where the conversation could be overheard by other students.

**8.-Note that most classes with TFs are introductory or 200 level courses.** TFs should be cognizant of the fact that the material is introduced at a novice level and that complex arguments may be to some extent simplified; similarly, exceptions may be glossed over. It is not the job of the TF to contradict the instructor either during lecture or in sections; please stick to the spirit of an introduction to the subject matter, recognizing that in higher level courses the exceptions and alternative interpretations will be taken up in more detail.

**9.-Most instructors appreciate it if their TF checks in with them weekly.** Some faculty will schedule regular or semi-regular meetings with their TFs. Faculty like to know how the class is going from your perspective. What materials do students seem to be struggling with? Should the lectures be slowed down or sped up? Are the students doing the reading? Is there too much of it? What seems to be working and what doesn't seem to be going so well? Of course we prefer positive comments, but helpful suggestions for improvement are also welcome.

**10.-TFs are responsible for meeting with their sections, arriving on time, and being prepared to lead discussion.** If you must be absent due to illness, it is your responsibility to

alert the professor and contact the students. You must let the instructor know if you have to cancel a section for personal, professional, or other reasons.

**11.-TFs are expected to work to create inclusive classrooms** that allow students from a wide variety of different backgrounds to share different perspectives, arguments, and even epistemologies. All TFs will be required to take a workshop on creating inclusive classrooms run by University or College DEI experts.

**12.-TFs are expected to hold weekly office hours**, alert students to any times they may have to be cancel their office hours, and set up alternative hours when necessary.

**13.-The number of TF office hours per week** should be decided in consultation with the faculty supervisor, but is usually in the range of **2 hours a week** per course taught.

**14.-Note that while GRS indicates that TF instructional and other duties can total up to 20 hours per week**, <https://www.bu.edu/cas/admissions/phd-mfa/fellowship-aid/aid-for-phd-students/>; more often Anthropology graduate students work in the range of 12-15 hours per week. Of course, hours per week may vary over the semester -- grading exams and assignments may periodically require more time intensive work. TFs should take this into account in their own time assessment as final exams and papers for undergraduates happen during the same time period as final exams and papers for grads.

**15.-Specific tasks assigned will vary from instructor to instructor.** In addition to running discussion sections, tasks may include: proctoring, showing films, writing exam questions or quizzes, and grading exams and papers.

**16.-TFs should expect faculty** will apprise them of all course changes or adjustments in readings or assignments in a timely fashion.

**17.-TFs should expect faculty** to be cognizant of and sensitive to the student's own schedule of courses, papers, and other requirements as well as their other personal responsibilities. (This requires, of course, that students apprise the faculty member of any issues or conflicts.)

**18.-A faculty member may request a TF to take over a class** in the case of a planned absence discussed in advance (such as a single day conference) or in an emergency (car trouble on the way to work). If the student is willing, this could be an opportunity for the TF to try teaching a class for which the faculty member supplies lecture notes or a power point -- or it could consist of a film showing with or without discussion afterwards.

**19.-The point of being a TF is to introduce you to the classroom and to teaching.** You should take advantage of the opportunity by asking questions and getting feedback from the instructor and from your fellow TFs. If you are interested in trying your hand at offering a lecture, you should discuss it with the instructor. Some instructors expect TFs to offer at least one lecture over the course of the semester. **If you are not comfortable doing so (because it**

**is not your area of expertise, or you have other time commitments, etc), you should let the instructor know.**

**20.-Use your fellow TFs as resources.** Introductory courses are often taught in teams, and TFs can use that to their advantage. A different TF can take the lead each week in developing discussion questions and a lesson plan, sharing their work with their fellow TFs. Faculty often find this kind of approach particularly helpful because it means there is some consistency across sections taught by different graduate students.

**21.-Be welcoming and open to student feedback, but set limits.** Because you are often closer in age and stage to undergraduates than faculty, students may open up to you about their personal lives. Anthropology PhD students are not trained as therapists or social workers; you cannot help students with their often very difficult and complicated lives. You can, however, make sure they know about the university resources available to them (see further below). And you can reach out to your faculty member if you need help setting boundaries with a student. If one student is taking all your time and energy, you will not have the time to be a good TF to your other students.

**22.-When in doubt, ask.** Your professor is there to help guide you through this process so that everyone involved—faculty, graduate students, and undergraduates—have the best possible experience in the course.

### **Resources for Students in Distress**

- **Mental Health Resources:** <https://www.bu.edu/shs/behavioral-medicine/behavioral-resources/>
- **Sexual Assault Resources:** <https://www.bu.edu/shs/sarp/>
- **Study Resources:** <https://www.bu.edu/erc/>
- **Writing Resources:** <https://www.bu.edu/writingprogram/the-writing-center/>

#### **Administrative Resources:**

- Steven Jarvi, Associate Dean for Student Academic life, [sjarvi@bu.edu](mailto:sjarvi@bu.edu)
- Office of the Ombuds, <http://bu.edu/ombuds/>

### **More Resources for Teaching Fellows**

- CAS Guidelines for Teaching Fellows can be found at <https://www.bu.edu/ctl/teaching-resources/preparing-to-be-a-teaching-fellow/responsibilities-of-graduate-teaching-fellows/>.
- ERC Handbook for Teaching Fellows: <https://www.bu.edu/erc/files/2015/07/teaching-fellow-handbook.pdf>
- CTL Resources for Teaching Fellows: <https://www.bu.edu/ctl/teaching-resources/preparing-to-be-a-teaching-fellow/responsibilities-of-graduate-teaching-fellows/>

