

Majoring in

Anthropology

Description of Anthropology

What is anthropology?

Anthropology is the systematic study of humans, their practices, and the myriad ways they experience these practices. Anthropologists study humanity in its diverse cultural, social, physical, and linguistic forms.

What do anthropology majors study?

Anthropology majors learn about the similarities and differences between peoples and cultures around the world and through time. They study archaeology, primatology, linguistics, human evolution, and comparative societies-any area that yields knowledge of humankind. Students engage in guided and independent studies in which they venture into new academic and social settings and situations, frequently in an international setting.

What skills are important for an anthropology major?

Anthropology majors should:

- Be curious about different cultures;
- Enjoy traveling and exploring new horizons;
- Have excellent oral and written communication skills; and
- Be able to challenge what is "known" and think critically.

What else do anthropology majors study?

Liberal arts courses provide a background to strengthen critical thinking; problem solving; written, oral, and interpersonal communication; quantitative, analytical, and reasoning skills. The program provides opportunities for involvement in faculty research through its course offerings, which include independent study, internships, and honors research.

Course Requirements

General education: About 60 credit hours of general education courses are required. These courses give a broad range of knowledge in science, math, writing, arts, ethics, civilization, literature, and urban environment. Anthropology majors are required to study a foreign language through the advanced level or two languages through the intermediate level.

Major courses: A minimum of 36 credit hours of anthropology courses are required. A 2.25 GPA is required in major courses in order to graduate. Anthropology majors may take courses such as:

- African societies
- Anthropology through Film
- Archaeological theory
- Comparative perspectives on cultures and society
- Ethnic and historical textiles
- Forensic anthropology
- History of human settlement
- Historical archaeology
- Human evolution
- Linguistics
- Nationalism
- Primatology
- Religion, magic and witchcraft
- Rethinking a continent: Europe
- Rethinking a continent: South America
- South American ethnography
- The family

Electives: About 25 credit hours are required.

Anthropology majors are strongly encouraged to complete a minor offered in the School of World Studies. These minors include French, German, Italian, Spanish, geography, global studies, area studies, Native American studies, Catholic studies, Judaic studies, and religious studies.

Careers in Anthropology

An anthropological perspective is and will increasingly become important in the 21st century. There is a growing demand for sensitivity to the values, beliefs, and cultural structures of other groups that might be different from one's own. In all parts of society, people progressively need the ability to live, work, and appreciate diversity at the same time as they simultaneously become more aware of the relations that connect various groups and the similarities they share.

Some areas of employment entered by anthropology majors with appropriate experience and education include the following:

- Attorney
- Business, especially international business
- College professor
- Community development officer
- Cultural artifact specialist
- Development agency consultant
- Environmental impact assessment researcher
- Field archeologist
- Human resources manager
- Legislator
- Librarian
- Museum curator
- National or state park interpreter
- Non-profit, especially international
- Primate researcher
- USAID, World Bank specialist
- Youth program coordinator

Anthropology majors are required to complete an experiential learning requirement through an approved internship, service-learning course, independent study, or study-abroad program. These experiences expand the chances of finding a job in this field.

Next Steps

If you are interested in learning more about becoming an anthropology major at VCU, consider doing each of the following things. Check them off as you complete each step.

- Check out the VCU School of World Studies webpage.
- Take an anthropology course.
- Read about the anthropology major in the *Undergraduate Bulletin*.
- Review the anthropology major graduation worksheet with an academic advisor.
- Talk to one or more upper-level anthropology students about their major.
- Discuss the major with one or more anthropology professors.
- Go to the Career Center to read about careers in anthropology.
- Go to the VCU bookstore and browse in the anthropology textbook section.
- Explore internship possibilities through the Career Center and the School of World Studies.
- Visit with the director of study-abroad program

to discuss options available.

- ☐ Check out the American Anthropological Assoc. website at www.aaanet.org.

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