

**University of Arkansas**  
**Department of Anthropology**  
**Graduate Assessment Report, 2024-2025**

## **I. Background**

The Department of Anthropology offers an MA and Ph.D., specializing in one of the three subdisciplines represented within the department – Cultural Anthropology, Archeology, and Biological Anthropology. MA and Ph.D. students' training and coursework are supervised by an advisor as well as a committee. After completing coursework and fulfilling the required number of hours for each degree, MA students may opt for a thesis, internship, or 36 hours of coursework. Ph.D. students are required to pass comprehensive exams overseen by the advisor and committee, defend a thesis proposal, and successfully complete and defend a thesis. Additionally, students are strongly encouraged to participate in professional research organizations and conferences, procure extramural funding for research support, and publish research before completing the degree. Learning outcomes and means of assessment are presented below.

### *Learning Outcomes -- (Research/Teaching/Service)*

- Students will articulate research problems, potentials, and limits with respect to theory, knowledge, and practice within the field of Anthropology.
- Students will demonstrate skills in oral and written communication sufficient to publish and present work and to prepare grant proposals.
- Students will have a research experience that results in professional publication(s), thereby contributing to the expansion of knowledge.
- Students will demonstrate a mastery of skills and knowledge at a level required for college and university undergraduate teaching and assessment of student learning.
- Students will interact productively with people from diverse backgrounds as both leaders/mentors and team members with integrity and professionalism.
- Students will foster ethical and professional conduct.
- Students will demonstrate, through service, the value of their discipline to the academy and community at large.
- Students will have professional and specialized training so that they can move into careers in academic or non-academic tracks.

### *Assessment of Student Learning*

#### **Ph.D.**

- Students are required to complete coursework to meet Graduate School and Departmental requirements. Further course work will be supervised by the primary advisor, in consultation with the student's committee where appropriate, to ensure sufficient preparation for the completion of the dissertation.
- Students will successfully complete a written qualifying examination. Questions and writing prompts pertaining the students' subfield will be written and evaluated by the primary advisor in consultation with the students' advisory committee.
- Students will successfully complete a thesis proposal to present and defend in an oral examination. Content and presentation will be evaluated by their primary advisor and

- the students' advisory committee.
- Students will successfully write and defend their research in a dissertation.
- Presentation, content, and quality will be evaluated by their primary advisor and the students' advisory committee.
- Students involved in laboratory research will provide the required laboratory notes/documentation to their supervising faculty member. The supervising faculty member will rate the student's ability to communicate clearly in the laboratory environment.
- Students will successfully complete Teaching Assistant (TA) training under the supervision of the instructor of record.
- Students will complete a resume-update form annually to be submitted to the Director of Graduate Studies at the end of the academic year.
- Students will be encouraged to present research results at professional conferences or other professional venues.

#### **M.A.**

- MA students will complete one of three options available (Thesis, 36 Hour, Internship) to successfully attain a master's degree.
- M.A. students involved in laboratory research will provide the required laboratory notes/documentation to their supervising faculty member. The supervising faculty member will rate the student's ability to communicate clearly in the laboratory environment.
- Students opting for the 36-hour degree will submit a complete resume including performance in classes, teaching, and extra-class reading to their committee, which will evaluate the adequacy of the training and performance, as well as administer an oral evaluation for the award of an MA. Students opting for the thesis will submit a written thesis to the primary advisor and committee and defend the thesis through a presentation and oral examination. Students completing an internship will be required to meet graduate school and departmental requirements for coursework and hours, and the student's advisor and the committee will evaluate the student's performance in accordance with professional standards to award an MA.
- Students will successfully complete Teaching Assistant (TA) training under the supervision of the instructor of record.
- Students disseminate research results at professional conferences or other professional venues.

## **II. Results**

### **Enrollment (2023-2024)**

PhD: 15 students

MA: 8 students

Total: 23 students

PhDs Awarded: 2

MA's Awarded: 3

Students Advancing to Candidacy: 1

### **MAAs Awarded**

Catherine Clayton (ANTH MA, Spring 2025)

Taylor Hubbard (ANTH MA, Spring 2025)

### **Notable Accomplishments:**

#### ***Publications (student author bolded):***

Bowland, LA, Eason, LH, Delezene, LK, Plavcan, JM (2025) Enthesis size and hand preference: Asymmetry in humans contrasts with symmetry in non-human primates. American Journal of Biological Anthropology.

Pujiantari, P, Delezene, LK, Plavcan, JM, Teafor, M, Ungar, P. (2024) Stubby vs stabby: A preliminary analysis of canine microwear in primates: implication for inferring ingestive behaviors. American Journal of Primatology. 86 (5), e23608

#### ***Sample of Conference Presentations (student author bolded):***

Methods of Estimating Canine Sexual Dimorphism Applied Across Primates: Implications for the Fossil Record. **Erika Matthews**. American Association of Biological Anthropologists, 2025.

Levels of craniodental variation in fossil *Macaca sylvanus*. **Cristina Stan**, Lucas Delezene, Claire Terhune. . American Association of Biological Anthropologists, 2025.

Dental microwear and diets of Pleistocene hominids in southern China. Yaobin Fan, **Leah Fehringer**, Wei Wang, Peter Ungar. . American Association of Biological Anthropologists, 2025.

Scientific illustration of the diverse impacts of large mammals in human evolution. **Hershel Burgh**, Amelia Villasenor. . American Association of Biological Anthropologists, 2025.

Ontogenetic variation in palatal shape in tufted and untufted capuchins. Valerie Contreras, Taylor Polvadore, Caitlin Yoakum, **Parker Taylor**, Megan Holmes, Myra Laird, Janine Chalk-Wilayto, Claudia Kanno, Jose Americo de Oliveira, Claire Terhune. American Association of Biological Anthropologists, 2025.

Ontogeny of deep masseter and medial pterygoid muscle architecture in tufted and untufted capuchins. Taylor Polvadore, Caitlin Yoakum, **Parker Taylor**, Megan Holmes, Myra Laird, Janine Chalk-Wilayto, Claudia Kanno, Jose Americo de Oliveira, Mariana Dutra Fogaca, Callum Ross, Andrea Taylor, Claire Terhune. . American Association of Biological Anthropologists, 2025.

Investigating variation in suprahyoid muscle morphology in primates. **Parker Taylor**, Caitlin Yoakum, Claire Terhune. . American Association of Biological Anthropologists, 2025.

Understanding evolutionary factors associated with sexual canine dimorphism and sexual size dimorphism. **Catherine Clayton**, J. Michael Plavcan. . American Association of Biological Anthropologists, 2025.

Chris Bodine. Airborne Synthetic Aperture Radar Conference Presentation.

Samuel Martin. FEMA Recovery Summit Conference Presentation Volume Publication (Western Anatolia in the Second Millenium)

Josh Porter. Paleoanthropology Society Conference Presentation.

Cindy Rauth. Southwest Popular and American Culture Association Conference Presentation

Maria Lopez Rojas. Society of Ethnobiology Conference Presentation Publication- Journal of Archaeological Sciences: Reports

James Scanlan. Publication- Journal of Graphic Novels and Comics

Chelsea Thompson. American Society of Primatologists Conference Presentation

Carl Williford. Southeastern Archaeological Conference Presentation

### ***Grants/Awards:***

Oustanding Service Award: Catherine Clayton

UA Community Engagement Service Award: Meutia Hanafiah

Valerie Contreras: Hearst Foundation Grant

Meutia Hanafiah: PEO International Peace Scholarship

Taylor Hubbard: Arkansas Graduate Fellowship

Cindy Rauth: Comparative Literature and Cultural Studies Dissertation Fellowship

Maria Lopez Rojas: Grants from the Smithsonian, Society of American Archaeology, and Society of Ethnobotany Latin American and Latino Studies Program Grad Student Research Award

Cristina Stan: Pollitzer Student Travel Award

Carl Williford: Hester A. Davis Internship in Public Archaeology & Charles McGimsey, III Endowment

### **Graduate Student Exit Interview Report**

This year the Department of Anthropology had two MA students graduate. Of the MA graduates, one will be entering our PhD program in Fall 2024, and one been accepted into the PhD program at the State University of New York at Albany.

The DGS completed one exit interview of a student graduating in Spring 2025 and who is not continuing on to the PhD in our program. This student generally felt the department was doing a good job in administering the graduate program. Pros they noted were that we provided a good variety of class options and that the department has grown substantially in the time they have been here. Graduate students and faculty are generally positive and supportive of one another. However,

this student did identify several cons, including a lack of field opportunities for graduate students, and the potential difficulty of PhD qualifying exams that require students to memorize citations. They also wished to see more professional development opportunities and increased funding for graduate students.

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