

New York University
Department of Anthropology

**Master of Science in
Human Skeletal Biology**

**STUDENT
HANDBOOK**

2021-2022

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	2
Program Requirements	3
➤ Funding	
➤ Transfer Credits	
Course Requirements	4
Coursework Expectations & Policies	5
➤ Grades & Progress	
➤ Incomplete Grades	
➤ Academic Probation	
Advising and Review of Student Progress	7
Student Enrollment Policies	8
➤ Full Time Status	
➤ Maintenance of Matriculation	
➤ Leaves of Absence	
Master's Thesis Requirements	9
Graduation and Conferral of Degrees	9

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Human Skeletal Biology program housed in the Department of Anthropology at New York University. All students in our programs have come to the department through a highly competitive process. This handbook outlines many of the requirements and procedures that help define passage through our graduate programs.

Over the course of their matriculation in the department, students are expected to be in regular contact with their Advisory Committees, the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) and the Director of the MS program as they move through their program requirements, fine-tuning them to meet their particular needs. The Chair and Associate Chair of the Department, working with the DGS and the Departmental Administrator, oversee student financial aid packages, teaching assignments, and internal department fellowship monies. Students should be in regular contact with the Graduate Administrative Aide for routine administrative matters.

Please note that this handbook supplements the requirements and procedures of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences (GSAS), which all students are encouraged to read. It is online at: <http://gsas.nyu.edu/about-gsas/policies-and-procedures/policies-and-procedures-manual-and-forms.html>

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS AND TIMETABLE:

- 36 credits of coursework (typically 16 credits of core courses, 20 elective credits)
- Satisfactory completion of a written Master's Thesis
- These are typically completed within two years of full-time work, but may be pursued more flexibly on a part-time basis.
- GSAS requires that all program requirements be fulfilled within 5 calendar years after the date of first enrollment in the MS program.

Funding

- Through the program there is currently a small amount of competitively awarded funding for first-year students. If awarded, this funding usually amounts to a total of 8 credits of funding in the first year of study, and is non-renewable. Funding requires full-time enrollment.
- On occasion, GSAS develops other fellowship opportunities for master's programs. The department nominates appropriate student applicants to all available programs.
- Teaching assignments may occasionally be available to students in the MS program. TA applications are solicited in the early Spring term for the following year.
- **Conference Travel:** Each year students may apply for up to \$500 through the GSAS Dean's Student Travel Grant Program to present papers at conferences and workshops. First-time applicants in PhD programs are generally given priority. MA students and repeat applicants in PhD programs are funded on the basis of a lottery. Funds are awarded three times a year: be sure to check application deadlines well ahead of time at:

<http://www.nyu.edu/about/leadership-university-administration/university-senate/membership/councils/student-senators-council/conference-funding.html>.

Transfer Credits

- Students who have done graduate work elsewhere may transfer credits for some courses toward their NYU MS, as long as these courses have not been counted toward an MA or MS earned elsewhere and they are approved by the NYU program.
- With the approval of the Director of the MS program, a maximum of 12 credits may be transferred toward the NYU MS.
- Requests for transfer credits must be made and approved within the first year of matriculation.

COURSES

- **Required Coursework**

ANTH-GA 1516 *Human Osteology* (4 credits)

ANTH-GA 1520 *Interpreting the Human Skeleton: Morphological and Statistical Methods* (4)

ANTH-GA 1505 *History and Philosophy of Biological Anthropology* (4)

- **Suggested Courses**

ANTH-GA 1521 *Human Osteology Laboratory* (2 credits)

ANTH-GA 1522 *Interpreting the Human Skeleton Laboratory* (2)

ANTH-GA 1540 *Research Design in Biological Anthropology* (2)

ANTH-GA 1509 *Molecular Anthropology* (4)

ANTH-GA 1517 *Biological Variation in Human Populations* (4)

ANTH-GA 1525 *Human Genetics and Biology* (4)

ANTH-GA 1212 *Faunal Analysis* (4)

ANTH-GA 1240 *Dental Anthropology* (4)

ANTH-GA 1510 *Integrative Paleoanthropology I* (4)

ANTH-GA 1511 *Integrative Paleoanthropology II* (4)

ANTH-GA 1211 *Stone Age Prehistory of Eurasia* (4)

- **Field and Lab Training Internships** (at least one internship is required, either for credit or no credit)

ANTH-GA 1541 *Internship in Biological Anthropology*

ANTH-GA 2550 *Field Methods in Archaeology*

ANTH-GA 3910-3919 [pre-approved, non-NYU field schools]

Internships taken for credit or to fulfill a program requirement **MUST** be registered with the Wassermann Center: <https://nyu-csm.symphlicity.com/students/> (Check/add profile content under "Personal" and "Academic", then use "My account" → "Career Outcomes" → "Add New" to register internship; contact Wassermann with problems.)

- **Elective Courses:** typically 16 credits but up to 24 elective credits total, including at least one "recommended elective" (by the MS program director).

COURSEWORK EXPECTATIONS & POLICIES

GRADES AND PROGRESS: No student may receive more than two grades below B within the Department of Anthropology, another graduate department at NYU, or an external graduate department in which graduate course work has been approved. A student who receives two grades below B will be placed on Academic probation. A third grade below B terminates enrollment in the program.

INCOMPLETE GRADES: Students are expected to complete all coursework by the end of each semester. Under exceptional circumstances, they may request an Incomplete ("I") from the instructor of a particular course. Faculty grant such requests on a case-by-case basis. The department will place a student on Academic Probation if they have any remaining incompletes on their transcript by the start of classes each fall.

- GSAS requires that incomplete work be completed within a year from the beginning of the semester in which the course was taken (e.g. fall semester courses must be completed by the beginning of the following fall semester).
- The transcript grade for coursework that has not been completed according to the guidelines above will revert to an "F" (see item 5.6 of the GSAS Policies and Procedures manual). The student will need to register for another course to make up these missing credits. GSAS funding does not cover the tuition for extra courses needed for this reason.
- Requests for further extensions of deadlines for completing incomplete coursework must be clearly justified in writing and submitted well in advance of this deadline to the DGS, who must seek approval from GSAS.
- GSAS regulations also stipulate that any student who fails to complete by mid-summer at least two thirds of all of the course credits for which s/he has registered since first matriculating at NYU will not be considered to be "in good standing," and will be placed on Academic Probation.

ACADEMIC PROBATION

A student who fails to make satisfactory progress toward his/her degree will be placed on Academic Probation. The student will receive a formal letter from the DGS. This letter lays out the reasons for probation and the conditions that must be met in order to reverse this status. If these conditions are met by the stated deadline (generally, the end of the next full semester from the date of the letter), probation will be reversed and will leave no trace in the student's permanent record. If the conditions for reversing probation are not met within the stated time frame, the student may be terminated from the program.

Academic Probation may be triggered in several ways:

- *Grades*: a student whose GPA falls below 3.0 or who receives two grades below “B” will be placed on probation. A third grade below “B” will result in termination from the program.
- *Failure to meet specific degree requirements in a satisfactory or timely manner*:
Examples:
 - A student who fails to complete in due time at least two thirds of the credit hours for which s/he has registered
- *Exceeding time-to-degree limits*. A student who has not completed the degree within GSAS time-to-degree limits may, if s/he is making acceptable progress toward the degree, be placed on Academic Probation for up to two years pending completion of the degree. Alternatively, s/he will be terminated from the program.
- Students have the right to appeal a probation decision, the conditions imposed for reversing this status, or termination. They may do so by addressing the DGS in writing within one month of receipt of the formal letter announcing these decisions. If the department’s response is unsatisfactory, a written appeal may be made to GSAS.

ADVISING AND REVIEW OF STUDENT PROGRESS

ADVISING

Each student must meet with his or her Advisory Committee twice a year on a departmentally scheduled Friday, approximately one month before the end of the semester.

In 2021-22, the dates for advisement are November 5 and April 8.

Each student is given a specific appointment time. Prior to these meetings, the student is required to provide the committee with a brief written progress report and a statement of future plans. The Graduate Administrative Aide will notify students by email as to when statements should be submitted and the date, time, and place of the meeting.

The committee will discuss the student's progress in the program to date, courses to be taken in the upcoming semester, and other procedures to be followed for meeting the student's needs. The head of the Advisory Committee then signs a form indicating the courses to be taken as well as any other actions the student should follow. The committee also appends a brief statement indicating any important issues that must be resolved or difficulties in the student's progress toward the degree. These reports become part of the student's file.

ANNUAL REVIEW OF STUDENTS ("ROUND-UP")

- Annually in early May, an all-day meeting of the full faculty is held to review each graduate student's progress.
- Drawing on input from all members of the department, each student's progress, as well as particular achievements or difficulties are noted.
- A brief note of congratulations, encouragement, or notice of probation (as appropriate) is sent to each student under the signature of the department chair.

STUDENT ENROLLMENT POLICIES & PROCEDURES

FULL-TIME STUDENT STATUS

Most students maintain full-time student status until they obtain their target degree in order to maintain eligibility for student loan deferrals, student visas, or various kinds of financial aid and medical insurance. Full-time status can be maintained by:

- *Course load*. Enrollment in at least 12 credits (usually 3 courses)/semester
- *Equivalencies*. Involvement in any combination totaling at least 40 hours/week of coursework, research, non-credit training programs or MS thesis write-up

Students who are in good standing in the program should contact the Director of the MS program IN ADVANCE of the semester required regarding full-time equivalence status. With the Director of the MS program's approval the Graduate Administrative Aide completes the paperwork to certify full-time equivalency.

Students who have not been making regular progress but who nevertheless wish to maintain full- or part-time student require special approval from the DGS. These students should contact the Director of the MS program.

MAINTENANCE OF MATRICULATION

GSAS requires that students maintain matriculation from the time of their initial registration until the granting of their final degree. This may be done by:

- *Enrollment* for at least 1 credit during the fall *and* spring semesters
- Students who are no longer taking courses must *register* each semester for Maintenance of Matriculation (MAINT-GA 4747).
- *Students may be definitively dropped from NYU rosters or charged substantial back fees before being awarded their degree if they have not maintained continuous NYU matriculation beginning with their initial course enrollment until the granting of their final degree.*

LEAVES OF ABSENCE

A student in good standing who is obliged to withdraw temporarily for reasons beyond their control, due to *National Service, Serious Illness, or Compelling Personal Reasons* may request a leave of absence (LOA) from the DGS, who must seek approval from GSAS. If the LOA is approved, the student's status is maintained, and readmission is assured at the end of the leave.

The following considerations apply:

- No maintenance of matriculation fees accrue during an approved LOA;
- The period of an approved LOA does not count toward time-to-degree limits;
- A student on LOA is ineligible for full-time or half-time equivalency;
- Foreign students on LOA, other than medical, will not be permitted to remain in the U.S.

Please consult the GSAS Policies and Procedures Manual for further information.

MASTER'S THESIS EXPECTATIONS

All students must complete a master's thesis, the culmination of a research project agreed upon by the students' advisory committee. The thesis does not have a minimum or maximum page limit but should be sufficiently long to thoroughly address the question/s posed to the satisfaction of the committee. Thesis formatting guidelines can be found in the "Finishing the MS" document, which will be disseminated by the program director twice a year (copies can also be requested at any time; contact the MS program director, Scott Williams: sawilliams@nyu.edu).

Final thesis committees consist of a primary reader (advisor) and a secondary reader (generally the second most relevant committee member give the student's project). Students may (and commonly do) work with an outside committee member (if approved by the internal committee), but the student must have at least two NYU faculty on their thesis committee. The outside members can serve any role (primary, secondary, or tertiary reader).

GRADUATION & CONFERRAL OF DEGREES

GRADUATION

Students graduate in September, January, or May. The NYU commencement ceremony for all schools is held in May.

- In order to graduate in a specific semester, you must apply for graduation within the application deadline periods (posted in the website listed below).
 - It is recommended that you apply for graduation no later than the beginning of the semester in which you plan to complete all program requirements.
 - Waiting to receive end-of-term comprehensive exams, thesis or final project results before you apply for graduation, would result in a delay in your graduation date. Note that the deadlines for application to graduate are extremely early relative to the degree date conferral.
 - If you do not successfully complete all academic requirements by the end of the semester, you must reapply for graduation for the following cycle. Please refer to the specific deadlines for the completion of requirements for each graduation available in the Graduation Deadlines Calendar link: <http://www.nyu.edu/registrar/graduation/deadlines.html>
- For protocols regarding MS Thesis format and submission requirements, please refer to the handout provided by the MS Program Director ("Finishing the MS").