

**New York University
Department of Anthropology**

**Master of Science in
Human Skeletal Biology**

**STUDENT
HANDBOOK**

2023-2024

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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

- 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 five 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. Applicants self-nominate at the application stage and GSAS selects awardees.
- 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. MS 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.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

- **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 1214 *Paleopathology* (4)

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)

ANTH-GA 3391 *Experimental Design in Archaeology* (4)

- **Field and Lab Training Internships** (at least one internship is required; credits are optional)

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.symlicity.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

Advisement

Students are strongly encouraged to meet regularly with members of their committee individually, and to organize other full-committee sessions when needed. The department schedules mandatory advisement for each student with all members of their committee two times a year, normally in person, on a Friday in November and April, approximately one month before the end of the semester. Prior to these meetings, the student must provide the committee with a brief written progress report and a statement of future plans. Together with the student, the committee discusses progress in the program to date, courses to be taken in the upcoming semester, and other procedures to be followed for meeting research needs. The department sees these meetings as the minimum foundation for successful passage through the program.

Mentorship

When a student identifies a chair of their advisory committee, GSAS requires that both parties sign a formal mentorship agreement that follows [set guidelines](#). While eager to ensure that every student receives close attention from their chosen faculty advisor, the department also believes that the best mentorship comes from multiple engagements both within and beyond the university. Students can build such networks through conversation with more advanced graduate students, members of their dissertation committee, NYU faculty outside the department, and by regularly attending professional meetings. As always, the department strongly encourages students to regularly evaluate the composition of their advisory committees and to make changes when necessary.

Problem-Solving

All departmental faculty want students to have a positive passage through the degree. Any student encountering problems related to discrimination, harassment, mentoring, or wellness should draw on the many departmental and university resources maintained at [NYU Anthro Grad Central](#).

“Roundup,” the Annual Review of Students

Every year in early May, the faculty hold an all-day meeting to review each student’s progress and take note of degree milestones as well as particular achievements or difficulties. A brief note of congratulations, encouragement, or probation 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 is available, along with other documents, on the MS Human Skeletal Biology Brightspace page and is disseminated multiple times a year by the MS program director (copies can also be requested at any time by writing 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). The outside members can serve any role (primary, secondary, or tertiary reader).

For protocols regarding MS Thesis format and submission requirements, please refer to the handout provided by the MS Program Director ("Finishing the MS").

MS THESIS INFORMATION

1) File the MS paper committee form with the department – the form is available from the Graduate Administrative Aide at any time OR during advisement

2) Format the thesis TITLE PAGE and your standalone ABSTRACT as indicated below in 'REQUIRED COPIES OF YOUR THESIS'

Additionally, theses should be:

Double-spaced (except for references)

1 inch margins all around

References and in-text citations consistently formatted to AJPA or JHE style

3) Reader Sheet - your readers and the program director must both sign the 'Master's Thesis Readers Sheet' available here: [https://gsas.nyu.edu/content/dam/nyu-as/gsas/documents/policies-and-procedures-and-forms/esignature forms/writeable master thesis reader sheet New.pdf](https://gsas.nyu.edu/content/dam/nyu-as/gsas/documents/policies-and-procedures-and-forms/esignature%20forms/writeable%20master%20thesis%20reader%20sheet%20New.pdf)

4) What to File - For filing the MS thesis, you must deposit:

a) The appropriate paperwork (reader forms) and signed title page with The Grad Admin Aide (grad.anthro@nyu.edu), and

b) One hard copy AND two electronic copies (.doc & PDF) with the Director of the program (Williams) and your reader if requested (please ask). See "Required Copies for Submission" below for explicit instructions.

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.
 - 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>

GRADUATION DEADLINES AND REQUIREMENTS

Fall 2023/January 2024 Graduation Deadlines

- Graduation Application: July 1, 2023 through October 15, 2023
- Requirements Deadline: January 21, 2024
- Graduation Date (Conferral): January 22, 2024

May 2024 Graduation Deadlines

- Graduation Application: November 1, 2023 through February 15, 2024
- Requirements Deadline: May 14, 2024
- Graduation Date (Conferral): May 15, 2024
- [All-University Commencement Ceremony](#): May 15, 2024

September 2024 Graduation Deadlines

- Graduation Application: March 1, 2024 through June 15, 2024
- Requirements Deadline: September 22, 2024
- Graduation Date (Conferral): September 23, 2024

You can verify or update your expected date of graduation on [NYU Albert](#) in the Academics section under "Graduation."

For graduation ceremonies, such as Commencement, please visit the [Commencement website](#) for more information.

See more information here: <https://www.nyu.edu/students/student-information-and-resources/regISTRATION-records-and-graduation/graduation-and-diplomas/graduation-information.html>

EXAMPLE TIMELINE FOR COMPLETION OF THE MS DEGREE

Semester 1 (12 points)	Semester 2 (12 points)
Courses: History of Biological Anthropology (4) Human Osteology (4) Human Osteology Lab (2)	Courses: 1 or more electives [e.g., Research Design (2), Human Variation/Genetics (4), Paleoanthropology I/II (4 each), Dental Anthropology (4), Faunal Analysis (4)], Paleopathology (4), ETC.
Course codes for internships, etc.: 1541 Internship in Biological Anthropology 3993 Research in Anthropology 3910 Reading in Anthropology 2550 Field Methods in Archaeology 3910-3919 (pre-approved field schools)	Thesis: <i>Ideally</i> , decide on a project Choose a committee File MA Paper Committee Form
Summer (0-6 points)	
Courses: Internship, fieldwork, or electives	
Thesis: Research and data collection	
Semester 3 (variable points) ¹	Semester 4 (variable points)
Courses: Interpreting the Human Skeleton (4) Interpreting Lab (2) Remaining electives	Courses: Remaining requirements/elective Or matriculation fee status
Thesis: Finish data collection Start Writing File MA Paper Form	Thesis: Finish Writing/Revisions !!!File paperwork for graduation!! (required VERY early in the semester)

¹In semesters 3 and 4, if you are not taking 12 points of work but have done so in your first year, are actively working on your MS, and are set to complete the required 36 points by the end of the second year (e.g. Semester 4), you can enroll for less than a full time load AND also be certified as a Full Time student. If you need this certification, email Evan Cerniglia (ejc549@nyu.edu) and Dr. Williams, who can approve.