BA OR BS? [1]

Anthropology, as a field, is broad and expansive, encompassing questions and methods that reach from the humanities to the natural sciences – and you can pursue your major in the way that best fits your interests and aspirations.

Anthropology undergraduates earn either a Bachelor of Arts (BA) [2] or a Bachelor of Science (BS) [3] in Anthropology. The difference between the two degrees lies in how they are structured. If you want a broad overview of Anthropology as a discipline or if you want to focus on the more humanistic side of Anthropology, the BA is for you. If you want to focus on a particular area within the more scientific side of Anthropology, you should pursue the BS.

Both degrees are appropriate for a myriad of post-baccalaureate opportunities including graduate and professional school training in the health sciences (e.g. medical school, public health, physical therapy), law, social justice advocacy, cultural resource management, forestry services, and (of course!) anthropology.

Both degrees share a core curriculum that includes:

1. An introductory course in each of the traditional subfields of anthropology at UW: sociocultural anthropology (courses are listed under the ANTH prefix), biological anthropology (courses are listed under the BIO A prefix), and archaeology (courses are listed under the ARCHY prefix); and
2. An introductory statistics course.

Both degrees allow you to earn options in Medical Anthropology & Global Health, Human Evolutionary Biology, and Archeological Sciences. Only the BA allows options in Anthropology of Globalization and Indigenous Archaeology. The BA also allows students to choose to generalize their anthropology coursework without pursuing an option.

The best way to approach either degree is to take the introductory subfield courses. They give you an overview of the approach and topics of interest of each subfield and you may find that you are more engaged with one area than another. Explore our courses; speak with our advisors; meet our faculty.

The specifics of each can be found under the Undergraduate pages [4] under the Programs & Courses tab.

If you are unsure of the best degree preparation for your future goals, talk with an Anthropology Undergraduate Advisor. You can make an appointment online [5] or by calling 206-685-9516.