GRADUATE STUDY IN MEDICAL ANTHROPOLOGY AND GLOBAL HEALTH [1]

Graduate study in Medical Anthropology and Global Health harnesses expertise in diverse dimensions of health within the Department of Anthropology and across the University of Washington. This area of specialization is available to students completing the Ph.D. in either the Sociocultural Anthropology Program or the Biological Anthropology Program. While these programs differ in their core training, students are encouraged to take health-related course offerings in both sub-disciplines.

The University of Washington has developed a Population Health Initiative [2] to focus our efforts on improving population health worldwide, and in which the Department of Anthropology proudly participates.

Additionally, anthropology has strong ties with centers and departments across the University of Washington that are nationally and internationally recognized for top-tier research and training in health. These include:

- Epidemiology [3]
- Nursing [4]
- Health Services [5]
- Medical History and Ethics [6]
- Nutrition [7]
- Center for Studies in Demography and Ecology [8]
- Global Health [9]
- Center for AIDS Research [10]

Students in the MAGH area of specialization acquire skills in traditional theoretical foundations in anthropology and their relevant methods, as well as newly emerging cross-disciplinary approaches to population health studies that integrate local and global contexts.

Which graduate program is right for you?

While MAGH students share many interests in common, the core training in each program differs.

In the Biological Anthropology Program [11] students receive training that integrates qualitative and quantitative approaches to understand the cultural and biological factors influencing human health and well-being. Students have the opportunity to study cutting-edge analytical techniques, such as network analysis and other modeling techniques for examining population variation in disease burden, as well as behavioral dimensions of the spread of infections such as HIV. Students may also train in the use of field-friendly biomarkers that allow for health assessment at the population, rather than the clinical, level. Additionally, many students take a critical approach to the impact of health policy and intervention, and often integrate life history theory or evolutionary medicine with public health perspectives, suggesting understandings of disease and intervention strategies that might otherwise seem counter-intuitive. This prepares students for careers in either applied or academic fields.

In the Sociocultural Anthropology Program [12] medical anthropology emphasizes the diversity across space and time of health ideas, beliefs and values in creating health systems, systems of illness classification, health disparities and medical programs and procedures for curing illness and disease. The sociocultural approach to Medical Anthropology also examines the role of cultural differences in defining and dealing with health and illness and investigates the health related factors that link humanity cross-culturally through common needs. Broad sociocultural approaches include the study of belief and
ethnomedical systems, the social construction of illness and social production of health and health disparities, healers in cross-cultural perspective, culture, illness and mental health, and critical medical anthropology.

Students specializing in Medical Anthropology and Global Health are admitted to one graduate program, but may take courses in both Biological and Sociocultural Anthropology.

- [MAGH Overview and Mission](#)
- [MAGH Faculty](#)
- [Concurrent MPH/PhD Program](#)

### GRADUATE COURSE OFFERINGS IN MEDICAL ANTHROPOLOGY AND GLOBAL HEALTH

**ANTH 453  Culture, Controversy and Change: The Case of Female Circumcision (3)**
With female circumcision and its surrounding debates as "a tool to think with," develops a number of skills: identifying stakeholders and rhetoric in loaded debates, assessing opposing arguments, critically evaluating scientific evidence, and situating controversial issues in their proper political, historical, social, and cultural contexts.

**ANTH 469 Special Studies in Anthropology (3-5, max. 15) (as relevant)**
Delineation and analysis of a specific problem or related problems in anthropology. Offered occasionally by visitors or resident faculty.

**ANTH 472 Case Studies in Medical Anthropology and Global Health (5)**
Uses multidisciplinary case studies to analyze quantitative parameters of diseases; contrast the description and analytic approaches of health sciences, anthropology, and other social sciences; integrate diverse disciplinary perspectives into cohesive information; organize class presentations; and apply critical thinking in approaches to complex health issues.

**ANTH 474 Social Difference and Medical Knowledge (5)**
Explores relations between medical and social categories: how social differences become medicalized; how medical conditions become associated with stigmatized social groups; and how categories become sources of identity and bases for political action. Considers classifications (race, gender, sexuality, disability) and how each has shaped and/or been shaped by medical science/practice.

**ANTH 475 Perspectives in Medical Anthropology (5)**
Introduction to medical anthropology. Explores the relationships among culture, society, and medicine. Examples from Western medicine as well as from other medical systems, incorporating both interpretive and critical approaches. Offered: jointly with HSERV 475.

**ANTH 476 Culture, Medicine, and the Body (5)**
Explores the relationship between the body and society, with emphasis on the role of medicine as a mediator between them. Case study material, primarily from contemporary bio-medicine, as well as critical, postmodern, and feminist approaches to the body introduced within a general comparative and anthropological framework.

**ANTH 477 Medicine in America: Conflicts and Contradictions (3)**
Introduction to the pragmatic and theoretical dilemmas of current biomedical practice with emphasis on social and cultural context. Case studies in technological intervention, risk management, and other health-related issues used to explore connections among patients' experiences, medical practices, and the contemporary social context.

**ANTH 479 Advanced Topics in Medical Anthropology (3-5, max. 15)**
Explores theoretical and ethnographic advanced topics in medical anthropology. Prerequisite: permission of instructor.

**ANTH 562 Clinically Applied Anthropology (3)**
Anthropology as it relates to interdisciplinary delivery of culturally relevant healthcare. Cultural variation in illness beliefs and behavior, types of healing practices, illness prevention, social support networks. Prerequisite: graduate standing, permission of instructor.
ANTH 574 Culture, Society, and Genomics (3)
Examines social and cultural issues of human genome sequencing and control of genetic expression. Attitudes and behaviors toward health, illness, and disability are studied using historical, contemporary, and cross-cultural case study material. Offered: jointly with NURS 582/PHG 521.

ANTH 575 Cultural Construction of Illness: Seminar in Medical Anthropology (5)
Historical and comparative examination of depression, neurasthenia, somatization, hypochondriasis, and hysteria. Anthropology of psychosomatics and psychiatry, including cultural analysis of selected biomedical, indigenous folk medical, and popular common-sense conceptualizations of illness.

ANTH 583 Africa Living with HIV/AIDS (5)
Examines the epidemiological, historical, political-economic, and social-cultural dimensions of Africa living with HIV/AIDS and the current challenges and debates in international HIV/AIDS policy and programming. Various approaches and analytical models help students grasp the complicated and multiple effects, responses, conditions, and debates surrounding the African HIV/AIDS pandemic.

BIO A 420 Anthropological Research on Health Disparities (5)

BIO A 450 Biodemography Seminar (5)
Introduction to theory, methods, and literature of biodemography. Examines biological mechanisms underlying patterns of aging, mortality, fertility, and population growth and decline. Includes readings from anthropology, sociology, demography, evolutionary biology, molecular biology, and epidemiology. Covers prehistoric, historic, and modern human populations, and non-human model systems.

BIO A 455 Reproductive Ecology Laboratory Seminar (5)
Introduction to the theory and methods of laboratory-based research in reproductive ecology. Covers lab methods for reproductive hormone assays, and their application in anthropological, biodemographic, and epidemiological research.

BIO A 465 Nutritional Anthropology (3)
Concerns interrelationships between biomedical, sociocultural, and ecological factors, and their influence on the ability of humans to respond to variability in nutritional resources. Topics covered include diet and human evolution, nutrition-related biobehavioral influences on human growth, development, and disease resistance. Offered: jointly with NUTR 465.

BIO A 469 Special Topics in Biocultural Anthropology (3-5, max. 15) (as relevant)
Delineation and analysis of a specific problem or a more general area in biocultural anthropology. Offered occasionally by visiting or resident faculty.

BIO A 473 Biological Adaptability of Human Populations (5)
The study of human adaptation to environmental stressors, particularly nutritional and disease stress with an integrated analysis of biological, developmental and cultural means of adaptation. Highlights perspectives offered from evolutionary medicine, fetal origins, and the effect of disparity on health and survival.

BIO A 476 Sociocultural Ecology and Health (3)
Sociocultural ecology of health/disease, focusing on humans as bioculturally integrated beings and on populations as biocultural units of adaptation. Examples of research on disease, both infectious and chronic, and patterns of morbidity and mortality, infant, maternal, old age, with particular attention to situations of sociocultural changes.

BIO A 482 Human Population Genetics (5)
Micro-evolutionary changes in human populations. Effects of mutation, selection, inbreeding, gene flow, and genetic drift as causes of evolutionary change. Mathematics beyond high school not required.

BIO A 483 Human Genetics, Disease, and Culture (5)
Considers relationships among genetic aspects of human disease, cultural behavior, and natural habitat for a wide variety of conditions. Also considers issues of biological versus environmental determinism, adaptive aspects of genetic disease, and the role of cultural selection.

BIO A 484 Human Life Cycle (5)
Human growth and physical/social development: fetal life to old age. Cultural, ecological, and evolutionary
aspects of the life cycle. Population differences in age and sex related to morbidity and mortality.

BIO A 487 Human and Comparative Osteology (3)
Introduction to the vertebrate skeleton. The skeleton is described in detail and various methods of determining age and sex, as well as osteometry and modern statistical methods for handling such data, are presented.

BIO A 495 Growth and Development: Infancy (5)
Genetic and environmental influences on growth and development from prenatal life through infancy. Includes exploration of methods for assessing development and comparisons of development in non-human primates with human development.

BIO A 496 Growth and Development: Adolescence and Reproductive Maturity (5)
Genetic and environmental influences on growth and development during adolescence. Emphasis on the interaction of biological and social factors in attainment of reproductive maturity. Compares conditions of non-human primates with human conditions.

BIO A 568 Human Reproductive Ecology (3)
A consideration of the determinants of fertility variation within and among traditional human societies. Biocultural and ecological perspectives on pubertal timing, nuptiality, duration of birth intervals, and reproductive senescence.