

## FAQ Sheet: Graduate (MS) Program in Biomedical Anthropology

“So-- what's unique about this program?”

“What are the requirements of the Program?”

“What are the minimum GRE scores for admission?”

“What if I am a psychology (or biology, or sociology, or ...) major—can I still be accepted?”

“What is the employment rate amongst graduates?”

“How do I get funding for this program?”

“How does this program relate to the other degrees that the department offers—like the MA, or the PhD?”

“Can I come meet some of the faculty and students, and see the department and facilities?”

“What if I have other questions?”

“So-- what's unique about this program?”

EVERYTHING! This was the first, and is still the only, program of its kind. It is designed to train students for careers, in health research and related areas, that require more than a BA/BS, but not a PhD. It is applied, skills-based, experiential learning. Also, the administration here at BU strongly supports the program; so at a time when many programs are suffering, shrinking, and losing resources, we have a commitment of growth (and growing resources) from our administration... so we are growing and improving!

“What are the requirements of the Program?”

You have to take 42 credits of coursework (pass it all with a B- or better), and 1 credit of internship.

### Required Courses:

- History of Anthropological Thought (501; departmental requirement)
- Human Skeletal Biology
- Human Biological Variation
- Quantitative Methods/Statistics
- Forensic Anthropology OR Co-evolution Humans and Pathogens
- Laboratory Practicum OR other lab course
- Molecular Anthropology/Anthropological Genetics
- International Health OR Epidemiology

To make up the rest of the 42 credits, you need additional courses. Some of the strongly recommended ones are:

- Evolutionary Theory
- Methods in Biological Anthropology
- Darwinian Medicine
- Stress Chronobiology
- Ethics

You also have to do an internship (320 hours; 1 credit), and give a formal presentation in the department about that.

### [“What are the minimum GRE scores for admission?”](#)

I know this makes students uncomfortable in a way, but we have no “cut-off” for GRE scores. We’re not trying to trick you or anything like that. It’s really in your favor! Because students are better represented by multiple indicators (personal statement, transcripts, letters of recommendation, AND test scores) than test scores alone, we have no definitive requirement for particular scores. We look at your application materials as a package, and try to evaluate whether you would *fit* well in this program, whether it is likely that you would be able to *do* well in the program, and most importantly, whether we can help you get to your goals (whatever they may be). So when you apply, be sure to include in your personal statement an indication of why you want to come here, what you want to eventually do, and whose interests you overlap and how (see descriptions of faculty interests and research on the website). That way, we can evaluate your entire application package as a whole, instead of having it ride on one set of GRE scores!

“What if I am a psychology (or biology, or sociology, or ...) major—can I still be accepted?”

The study of human health connects to all sorts of fields! We therefore accept students with a wide variety of backgrounds into this program. You need not be an Anthropology major in undergraduate school to be accepted. What we are looking for is the potential to succeed, a good fit with the program, and to be sure that we can help you get where you want to go in terms of your next steps (whether that be continuing education, or a particular career). Don't let a “different” background deter you!

“What is the employment rate amongst graduates?”

Most of our graduates have jobs in-hand, or have been accepted for continuing study (here or elsewhere) before they leave the program; 98% are working in health research-related jobs or have gone on to continue their education (work on a PhD).

“How do I get funding for this program?”

The only students who are eligible to compete for university/departmental funding (like a Teaching Assistantship or Graduate Assistantship, with tuition waiver and stipend) are PhD-track students. The Graduate Program in Biomedical Anthropology—the MS-- is a *terminal* master's degree, so students in this program are *not* funded through university-sponsored lines including Teaching Assistantships or Graduate Assistantships. So how do students finance this? They use a variety of means, including:

- student loans and grants (see the grad school website, linked on our website, for info)
- jobs around campus (some of which may be on "lines" through the university, which can end up with tuition support, though not all do)
- research positions in labs for the various professors in the department (you'd have to contact those professors whose research interests overlap yours to find out if they have any available positions)
- jobs off campus

“How does this program relate to the other degrees that the department offers—like the MA, or the PhD?”

We also have standard MA and PhD programs here in the department, and they share the same faculty, classes, resources, laboratory facilities, projects, etc.—they just have different degree requirements. If you are interested in the MA/PhD program, you can also talk with our departmental graduate director, Prof. D. Andrew Merriwether ([andym@binghamton.edu](mailto:andym@binghamton.edu)).

“Can I come meet some of the faculty and students, and see the department and facilities?”

Of course you can! We are a state university, and as such, we are open to the public. This means that you can come wander around any time you’d like (although you should be very careful to park only in the Visitor’s lot to avoid leaving with a parking ticket!). If you would like to ensure an opportunity to meet the faculty and have someone show you around, you can get in touch with Laura Potter ([lpotter@binghamton.edu](mailto:lpotter@binghamton.edu)), the departmental administrative assistant, and she will be happy to set up an itinerary for you to meet with various faculty and students while you are here. Just let her know when you can come, tell her you’re a prospective Biomedical MS student, and she’ll take care of the rest. But do please keep in mind that the availability of faculty and students will be limited during university holidays, summer, and periods when there are professional anthropology meetings going on—so you might want to avoid those times when you plan your visit.

“What if I have other questions?”

Just drop an email to the Program Director, at: [biomed@binghamton.edu](mailto:biomed@binghamton.edu).