This handbook is meant to help doctoral and master’s students in anthropology orient themselves during their time at UVa. It provides information on getting through the program, meeting requirements, heading to the field, returning from the field, writing up your thesis, and handling bureaucratic matters along the way. It’s also meant as a first stop when you have questions about research funding, teaching expectations, departmental polices and traditions, computing privileges, and more.

The content here has been written and updated over the years by graduate students, for graduate students. As time permits, you should take the time to look through it and familiarize yourself with the basics. And if you have suggestions on how to improve the handbook, please send feedback via email to the director of graduate studies.

program overview

The ethos of our department is one in which ethnographic and archaeological content go hand-in-hand with theoretical ingenuity and contemporary relevance. Nearly everything about your training here is aimed at finding a balance between developing theoretical models that advance the discipline in general and immersing yourself in the particulars of a chosen research site or cultural context. Finding this balance and saying something of wider public importance in your work together are the hallmark of a UVa anthropologist.

The most important information you’ll find in this handbook has to do with program requirements. The graduate program in anthropology encourages an intense engagement with the historical, theoretical, and ethnographic literature of your chosen sub-discipline as well as a broad familiarity with the three sub-disciplines represented in the department. While the program is rigorous, it is also streamlined and flexibly shaped to fit the needs and goals of each student.

A Ph.D. requires 54 credit hours of coursework and 18 credit hours of dissertation research. Most graduate courses run one semester and count as three credit hours. Full-time graduate students generally take three courses plus three research credits each semester and complete their coursework in three years or less. Ph.D. students who enter with a master’s degree may be able to transfer credit and finish coursework sooner.

Most dissertation research takes place away from the university, ideally beginning in your fourth year. For simplicity, we call this “fieldwork,” even though we recognize that not all students “go to the field” in the classic sense. To earn the Ph.D., you have to complete two Critical Reading Review Essays by the end of your second year, successfully defend your dissertation proposal (usually at the end of the third year), and write and defend a dissertation based on original research.

Most students in the program enter seeking a Ph.D. and earn a master’s along the way. Some will leave with an M.A. after one or two years. Although this handbook is written mainly with the doctoral track in mind, the requirements for a master’s degree are detailed here as well. In general, the first two years for all graduate students involve similar core work. Students beyond the second year move on to Ph.D. candidacy. They are either finishing courses, applying for research and other grants, working in the field, or writing up.
Everyone's path through the program is a little different, but the basic model is straightforward and follows a standard logic. The process for the Ph.D. consists of three major stages: coursework, fieldwork, and dissertation write-up.

In the first phase, you build a working knowledge of the discipline in broad terms, an ability to converse across subfields, and ultimately expertise in a specialized body of work relevant to your thesis. In the next, you'll deepen, apply and rethink the knowledge you’ve gained through some original research, usually fieldwork carried out away from the university. In the last phase, you’ll write your dissertation. At that point you should also, if you haven’t already, start gearing your work toward wider audiences — in publications, conferences, the classroom, the media, and other venues — as you get ready for the job market and refocus your goals for life after graduate school.

Occasionally students enter the program planning to pursue only a master’s degree, while others will move to the master’s track along the way. M.A.-only students usually take three, and up to four, semesters of courses with their fellow grads, finishing after their last term. At the end of two years, doctoral students can take a master’s degree as they move on toward the dissertation.

It takes time and money

New doctoral students are admitted with departmental funding for up to five years. Three or four of these years are tied to work commitments, like teaching assistantships or gradships. With some exceptions, you’ll take three years of coursework. At the end of the second year, you’ll produce two critical essays for faculty review. Passing them will advance you to Ph.D. candidacy. In your third year, you’ll develop a dissertation proposal. After successfully defending the proposal, you’ll do fieldwork, usually for one to two years, ideally with outside funding. The last two years of your department package are best spent writing up your dissertation after you return from the field. The second of these final two years is usually free from teaching obligations.

While this picture has become increasingly standardized, not all funding packages are exactly the same. Sometimes students join with outside funding or other university-wide fellowships, and others obtain outside resources for coursework during their time in residence. These funding situations may involve different conditions and responsibilities. There’s more on how the money works in the chapter on funding.

The idea is that most Ph.D. students will finish in six years, barring complications. Some can and will finish in five. Some may take as many as seven. Going beyond that is not advisable and requires special permission from both the department and the Graduate School of Arts & Sciences. So does taking a leave of absence. A later chapter covers these and other issues related to your status as you move through the program.

The M.A. option

More on the master’s track:

Students who choose to leave the program with an M.A., including those who entered on the Ph.D. track, share the same requirements as doctoral students in their first two years. In following the master’s track you may elect to write an M.A. thesis under the guidance of two faculty members. Others will write the critical essays required of doctoral students and graduate upon their successful completion. Master’s students who successfully defend a thesis or pass the critical essays (also known as “comps”) in addition to completing all other requirements, will usually earn their degree in the middle or at the end of the second year. You may be able to earn an M.A. in one calendar year or even in two semesters, especially if you enter already planning to be on the master’s track. To schedule a master’s defense and graduate on time, follow the same procedures that apply to doctoral students, outlined in the write-up chapter of this handbook.

Faculty support

A core aspect to the graduate program is working closely with faculty and forming a committee suited to your intellectual interests.

A core aspect to the graduate program is working closely with faculty and forming a committee suited to your intellectual interests. Faculty members and professors from whom you took courses provide the faculty as a whole with an evaluation of your work. The faculty discuss the strengths and weaknesses of this work and consider ways for you to build on your progress or attend to any problems you may be having.

Talking to your advisers before the May meetings is a good idea.

Give them an update on your efforts — a self-evaluation of sorts, and an overview of your plans for the coming year.

Grads who don’t show adequate progress in their annual review (or who aren’t “in good standing”) may be dropped from the program with the consent of the faculty. In some cases, the department may allow students who fall short of Ph.D. candidacy to depart with an M.A. at the end of their second year, assuming the master’s requirements have been met. To make sure you stay on track, refer to the section on good standing in the grad status chapter.
developing your project: coursework & pre-field research

Your years of coursework should be some of the most formative of your intellectual life. The main goal in this time is to foster a deep understanding of anthropological approaches to questions about people’s lives, past or present, one that speaks with and sometimes against the other social sciences. The common courses will help build meaningful intellectual relationships with your cohort and other students, providing academic grounding and a sense of solidarity. Taking courses across the subfields will give you an appreciation for the discipline as a whole and prepare you for teaching multi-field and interdisciplinary courses in the future. Your electives will help tailor your particular interests. As a teaching assistant and/or grader, you’ll gain access to further literatures and experience in undergraduate instruction. Over time, the courses you take — and, ideally, the ones you teach — will become more specific to your chosen areas of expertise, laying the foundation you need to carry forward your own chosen research project.

For doctoral students, coursework culminates in a dissertation proposal and preparations for field research. There are several hurdles to pass along the way. First, there’s a portfolio of your work you submit at the end of the first year. Then, at the end of your second year, the faculty will assess whether you can move on, now as a Ph.D. candidate, based on the overall quality of your coursework and the two critical essays due in the third and fourth semesters. In the intervening summers, most grad students will do preliminary fieldwork and whatever language study they need, if any, for their field research.

Graduate advising: Forming and maintaining your committee

On your arrival to the program, department faculty members on a standing graduate committee will advise you on course options as you start the first semester. They’ll meet with you again in early November and April to discuss your progress and advise you on course options for the next semester. You’ll meet a final time with the graduate committee at the start of your second year, at which point you’ll need to let them know who you’ve chosen as your own committee chair. This person should be aware of your decision and in agreement with your plans. You should fill out the rest of your committee with at least two more faculty members no later than the end of the third semester. When your choices are complete, you should submit a committee membership form with signatures to the main office. Your own committee will take on the role of guiding you and evaluating your progress from that point forward.

But creating a supportive committee is really a task that begins as soon as you arrive. Reach out to faculty beyond your course instructors. Take independent studies with potential committee members. Be open to working with faculty in other subfields — they can bring in different perspectives that help enhance your research and writing. As you move forward, don’t be averse to making changes to your committee if and when it makes sense. You might find that, for one reason or another, a committee member isn’t the best fit anymore. Maybe your project has changed and one member’s expertise no longer directly applies. Or maybe you’ve found your personalities don’t mesh. So long as you are respectful and sincere about switching to another faculty member, and you have a legitimate reason, it’s OK to do it. Just deal with any problems sooner rather than later and keep the lines of communication open. Make your reasons for any changes clear and be civil about how you inform others. The faculty have been through this process before and understand how hard it can be.

Choosing the right courses

Graduate courses are run as seminars, meaning that active engagement in your courses is vital to your success in the program. Everyone takes the common, or “core,” courses: History of Anthropological Theory I and II (respectively, ANTH 7010 and ANTH 7020). You’ll take these in succession in the first and second semesters with your cohort — that’s your entering class.

You also need to take courses across subfields. For Ph.D. students, that means at least one course in each of the three subfields offered at UVA: linguistics, archaeology and sociocultural anthropology. For master’s students, one of your three subfield courses may be waived. The subfield requirement in linguistics is usually met by taking Linguistic Anthropology, ANTH 7400, but the faculty will consider other possibilities on a case-by-case basis. You should take these courses at a pace of about one per year, as needed.

Other standard courses are highly recommended for doctoral students. Those include a methods course particular to your chosen subfield, usually taken in the second or third year; Ethnographic Analysis, ANTH 7030; and, in your third year, the Proposal Workshop, ANTH 7060, which will serve as a guide in preparing your dissertation proposal and research grants.

Your remaining courses will be electives. These can be regular graduate courses (5000 level and higher) of three credits...
Choosing courses right

Courses generally run one semester and count for three credits each. A full load in a given semester typically consists of three courses (nine credit hours), plus three research credits, for a total of 12 credits — the maximum load for graduate students. In some cases, students may forgo research credits in a given semester and take a full 12 units of coursework, including any independent studies, but you should only do this with faculty permission. In other cases, particularly when you’ve met most or all of your course requirements, you might need to register for more than three research credits and as many as 12.

The key here is that a full load is 12 credits, or “units.” Each semester in which you are enrolled full-time, you should be registered for 12 credits — some or all of which will be Non-Topical Research units. It’s tempting to think of these simply as placeholders. But they are actually credits you earn for time you spend developing your project. It’s your responsibility to actually devote that time, roughly in proportion to the research credit you’re receiving, since this is why you’re here!

Note once more that research credits are not graded and are not the same as Directed Readings, which are units earned for a course of study under the guidance of one or more professors and count just as any regular course would on your transcript — i.e., they are graded. Note also that there are different types of research credits. Refer to the sidebar on this page for a listing of the different types. Make sure you pick the right one in a given term, depending on your current status.

The sidebar on the next page has more on the mechanics of using the Student Information System, or SIS, to complete your course registration each semester.

Transferring credit

Students entering the program with prior graduate coursework may transfer up to 24 credits with the approval of the faculty. You should discuss this with the graduate committee soon after you arrive so you can plan accordingly. Transferring credits can help you free up your schedule, particularly in your third year while you’re working on your dissertation proposal. Such credit can’t relieve you of the core courses discussed above. You may, however, be able to waive one of the subfield requirements for the Ph.D. if you entered with an master’s degree. And, forgive the repetition — even when you don’t have to take a full suite of three courses in a given semester, you should fill out your enrollment with research credits to maintain full-time status, such that your transcript shows 12 total units for that semester.

Love thy cohort as thyself

Much of what you do in the first two years will be done with your cohort. This department prides itself on its warmth, collegiality and supportiveness. You should strive to develop helpful, working relationships, if not deep and lasting friendships, within and across cohorts. Arriving with and fostering this mindset will not only make your life more enjoyable, it will also deepen your scholarly engagement. No cohort is born whole: it is made through the dedication and enthusiasm of each student in it. Your cohort’s shared experiences, in and out of class, will enrich your collective knowledge of anthropology and weave your first network of associations in the discipline.

One of the benefits of structuring the program so that every student arrives with committed funding is that your success does not entail the failure of others; each student’s unique work is evaluated on its own terms. In ideal situations this leads to cohorts that celebrate their mutual success and support each other in various informal ways of their choosing, including social activities, reading and study groups, etc. Competition, to the extent that we encourage it, is constructive rather than destructive. We strive to make each other smarter as we make ourselves smarter.

As you move through the program, you’ll find that graduate students in other cohorts also will enrich your experience as classmates, colleagues and guides who can provide you with advice about the journey based on their own experiences. There’s more on department traditions and regular extracurricular activities in the chapter on building communities.

The First-Year Portfolio

Over the course of your first year, you’ll develop a portfolio to be submitted for faculty review no later than April 15. The First-Year Portfolio includes a cover letter and three course papers of at least five pages. Addressed to the graduate committee, the cover letter is expected to be short. It should summarize your research interests as they currently stand. Doctoral students should state in the letter whether they wish to stay on the Ph.D. track, or they may request continuation toward the M.A. only.

You’ll also outline in the letter your plans for the second-year comps, or Critical Reading Review Essays, described in the next section. Provide the committee with plans for the scope of each essay, the names of faculty readers, and a timetable for the work involved. The faculty readers, one for each essay, are likely to become members of your committee, and you should ask them to serve as readers with this in mind.

For the course papers you attach to this letter, select work submitted in the courses you’ve taken thus far, without further revisions to the work. The idea is to show off your best work. The entire portfolio should be compiled in electronic form.

The DGS will make First-Year Portfolios available to the department faculty through an internal online portal. Initially, the DGS or other members of the graduate committee will review your work. If the quality is in doubt, they may ask other faculty members to read it. At the end of the year, in their May meetings, faculty use the portfolio along with your performance in courses to evaluate your overall progress.
The Second-Year Critical Essays

Except for master’s students planning to write an M.A. thesis, all second-year grad students produce two critical essays, known officially as the Critical Reading Review Essays. They are meant to cover the "state of the field" in two areas of scholarly literature, one thematic and one geographical, relevant to your planned research topic. They serve as the equivalent of comprehensive exams common in other departments; that’s why you’ll hear grads refer to them colloquially as comps. Faculty evaluate the essays to decide whether you should be admitted to the rank of Ph.D. candidate.

In planning and writing the essays, you should work closely with your advisory committee and other faculty as you define your chosen areas and develop mastery in them. You should research and write the essays in conjunction with your first- and second-year courses, including independent studies. Ideally, you’ll look at literatures to which your dissertation will contribute and which are thus relevant to your grant applications and dissertation proposal. At the same time, faculty understand that your research plans may change, so they will prepare you for your second summer language program, and summer language study typically involves developing a realistic budget and demonstrating that you have a feasible plan for carrying out your studies, showing how they will prepare you for your dissertation research. The DGS solicits applications early in the spring term and announces funding awards by late April. Outside funds for summer fieldwork or methods training may also be available. Consult the chapter on funding for more information on the application process and funding sources.

Summer language study typically involves learning or improving your knowledge of the language variety in everyday use at your field site. Note that internal grants for financing summer language study are contingent on having already met your first language requirement. (More on that in the next section.)

Pre-field study may be carried out together or separately from a summer language program, and draws on a different pot of funds. Pre-field experiences could include scouting or surveying a research site, conducting preliminary participant-observation, consulting offshore archives, establishing scholarly or other contacts in your host country, or any combination of these activities. Develop your pre-field
plan in consultation with the DGS and, once formed, with your committee. When you get back from your pre-field studies, you should think about selecting courses that will help you follow up on your preliminary findings — for example, courses on data analysis specific to your subfield, or Grant Writing (ANTH 7060).

One more note about the summer. This is an ideal time, while you’re free from course papers and grading, to start working on upcoming grant applications. Search databases, download grant lists and talk to the DGS and your chair about these opportunities. Decide who you’d like to write your letters of recommendation, so that you’re ready to request these as soon as the semester begins. Draft a standard project narrative in prose that is not specific to anthropology, as many grant reviewers are scholars in other disciplines. You’ll always be able to tweak it later based on the application criteria. There’s more on different types of fellowships and grants in the funding chapter.

The foreign language requirement

The graduate school requires that doctoral students demonstrate competency in no less than two foreign languages. At least one of these is expected to be a language that enhances your ability to carry out your dissertation research. For archaeologists, a command of intermediate statistics counts in lieu of one foreign language; but in that case you’ll need a letter from a stats instructor certifying your competency. Alternatively, doctoral students can fulfill the entire language requirement by demonstrating “mastery” in just one foreign language.

For M.A. candidates, competency in one foreign language is sufficient. Competency is usually determined in one of two ways. You can show that you’ve passed two years of college instruction in a particular language within the past six years. Or you can take one of the proficiency exams regularly offered through the university’s language departments. These exams are 90 minutes long and involve translating a short text into English; they are not especially hard. French, German, Italian, Russian and Spanish proficiency exams are available, and special arrangements can be made for ancient and other languages. You should talk to the DGS and the associated language department about scheduling a proficiency exam when necessary. Keep in mind that the process of scheduling the exam, taking it, and receiving credit for it could take a month or more.

If you opt for mastery in one language, you will have to take a mastery exam, also offered through the language departments. These two-hour exams are somewhat more difficult and involve translating a passage, analyzing a text and writing a short essay in the foreign language.

Assuming you’ve entered with the necessary language training, take care of the paperwork related to your first language requirement right away — in the first semester. This will preclude troubles when applying for summer language grants or other funding opportunities that depend on having this half of the language requirement done. In any case, the first language must get done for you to qualify for the M.A. and to attain Ph.D. candidacy at the end of the second year.

You should plan to pick up certification in a second language (or mastery in the first) as soon as possible, if not shortly thereafter. Try shooting for the third year of coursework or, if you must, right when you get back from the field. Many write-up grants require having completed the full language requirement. At the latest, you must have the language requirement fully met before scheduling your dissertation defense.

Your dissertation proposal and the Third-Year Symposium

The last and most important part of the coursework years for doctoral students will be spent developing a dissertation proposal and successfully defending it. Developing your proposal happens in earnest in your third year, though it should build on all the work you’ve done previously, including pre-field studies. It’s a good idea to take the Proposal Workshop course this year to help guide you through the process and concurrently work on grant applications. During this time you should also start thinking about important research authorizations you’ll need — such as necessary and proper foreign visas and approval from the university’s Institutional Review Board. There’s more on these and related issues in the next chapter, on heading to the field.

Your proposal is a research prospectus that outlines your project, covering the relevant geographical and thematic literature. A typical dissertation proposal will ask an answerable research question; consider one or several hypotheses in response to the question; and map out a systematic methodology for approaching the question, whether your methods involve field research, archival work, or (in many cases) both. The proposal should offer a coherent statement of your research intentions with the understanding, as always, that your actual findings may lead you to new perspectives or require you to refine your question in the write-up stage. We all recognize that the dissertation — until defended and approved — is a work in progress.

In keeping with this notion, the faculty will arrange for you to present your work in a public symposium in March of your third year, usually prior to the dissertation defense. The Third-Year Symposium is designed in the style of an AAA panel, with 15-minute presentations from you and your peers plus a limited time for questions and answers.

Unlike your proposal defense, this is not an evaluated exercise, but a chance for you to articulate your project in a well-attended forum and to get feedback from the whole department community, including other grads. The feedback you receive can help you improve your proposal in preparation for defense as well as any grant applications that you’re still working on.

You should develop your symposium remarks and the dissertation proposal itself with supervision from your chair and other committee members, who will determine at your defense whether to approve your research plans. Unlike the third-year symposium, the proposal defense is a public examination. It generally takes place near the end of the sixth semester or early in the summer thereafter. Extensions may be granted on a case-by-case basis, allowing some students to defend their proposals in their fourth year.

To schedule your proposal defense, talk to your chair and come up with a date, time and location convenient for everyone involved. Then, provide the department’s administrative assistant, via email, an electronic copy of your completed dissertation proposal along with an abstract and the agreed schedule. You should also bring a hard copy of the proposal and abstract to the main office to be kept on file for public review. All of this should happen three or four weeks before the scheduled date (two weeks is the absolute minimum), so the department can announce the event in a timely fashion. At your defense, you’ll summarize your project and research plans, and answer questions from your committee and other faculty.

Your committee will inform you of the results of your defense after a private discussion about your work. Once you’ve passed, you enter the fabled category of ABD — “all but dissertation.” But these are not the three letters you want after your name. And this title is misleading. The most challenging and exciting part is yet to come.
# First Year

### Fall
- Orientation & introductions
- Meet with grad committee (August)
- Register for fall courses
- Consider applying for outside graduate-student funding
- Apply for outside funding, if applicable
- Meet with grad committee again (November)
- Register for upcoming spring courses

### Spring
- Apply for summer funding
- Submit First-Year Portfolio by April 15
- Meet with grad committee again (April)
- Register for upcoming fall courses

### Summer
- Foreign language study and/or pre-field research

### Typical Course Load
- **Theory I (7010)**
  - first subfield requirement
  - one elective
  - three research (NTR) credits

# Second Year

### Fall
- Meet with grad committee (August)
- Form committee by December
- Write critical essay No. 1
- Apply for outside funding, if applicable
- Register for upcoming spring courses

### Spring
- Critical essay No. 1 due Jan. 15
- Write second critical essay, due April 15
- Apply for summer funding
- Register for upcoming fall courses
- Earn M.A., if desired
- Graduate, or advance as Ph.D. candidate

### Summer
- Foreign language study and/or pre-field research

### Typical Course Load
- **Ethnographic Analysis (7030)**
  - second subfield requirement
  - one elective or independent study
  - three research (NTR) credits

# Third Year

### Fall
- Update your committee on summer work (August)
- Begin developing dissertation proposal
- Apply for outside dissertation research funding
- Register for upcoming spring courses

### Spring
- Apply for department small grants, if applicable
- Present work at Third-Year Symposium (March)
- Continue work on dissertation proposal
- Schedule proposal defense, or seek extension
- Defend dissertation proposal, advance as ABD

### Summer
- Continue research & reading as needed
- Prepare your departure to the field
- Leave to field, preferably by fall

### Typical Course Load
- **Proposal Workshop (7060)**
  - third subfield requirement
  - one elective
  - three research credits

### Ongoing...
- Discuss project with faculty, search for chair
- Begin gathering, reading materials for critical essays
- Certify first foreign language, as soon as possible
- Attend department seminars, symposiums, events
rite de passage: to the field and back

It’s a good idea to start thinking about and getting ready for your fieldwork even while preparing your dissertation proposal. After defending your proposal, you should try to get to the field as soon as possible. The sooner you go, the easier it will be to stay on track with your doctoral studies, and the more flexibility you’ll have later if you hit any snags in the field, or when you return.

A typical stay in the field is one continuous year, but yours could be longer or shorter, or discontinuous, depending on what funding you have and the specific nature of your project. Planning your time in the field, and tending to important tasks before you leave, calls for some foresight and attention to the requirements and recommendations outlined here.

Paying for it

Grads are generally expected to find outside sources of funding for their doctoral research. Don’t distress over this. It’s a good policy in the long run because successfully winning competitive grants is a key to building your scholarly record and skills while you’re in grad school. For more on funding your stay in the field, see the chapter on funding.

In cases where outside funding is simply not forthcoming, there may be other options for you, such as funding your project with loans. But this is not a decision that should be made lightly. It might make more sense to continue applying for research grants while remaining in residence, working in the department or the university as opportunities present themselves, or while taking a leave of absence. You should make any such decision in close consultation with your committee members.

In addition to finding funding for your research, you need to decide what kind of status to maintain with the university. For most students, this will involve seeking Dissertation Research Away status, paying a nominal fee for enrollment, and registering for Non-Topical Research credits. For more on this and other statuses, see the status glossary.

Leaving the country? Not so fast

Most students do their fieldwork abroad. Assuming that’s the case, you should get to know the visa requirements and other bureaucratic hurdles associated with your field site. For example, some host countries, and some grants, require affiliation with a local academic institution. Some medical insurance plans don’t cover foreign healthcare expenses (the UVa student plan, however, does). For research in some countries where the United States enforces economic sanctions (Iran, Cuba, North Korea, et al.) you’ll need special permission for your research from the U.S. government. Also, the State Department occasionally issues official travel warnings for certain countries, and you should be aware of any that pertain to you, as they can create additional, and extensive, paperwork. Consult with the university’s International Studies Office and the DGS if you have any doubts about foreign travel. Your funding organization might help with these issues, but ultimately it’s your responsibility to make sure you’ve taken care of them. And some of them — like the visa process — could take months. Plan ahead!

The IRB and participant-observation

Many research projects involving human participants require formal approval from the university’s Institutional Review Board for Social and Behavioral Sciences, to ensure that research protocols do their best to protect participants from unintended harm. You can only be exempt from this requirement if your research does not involve living people or if the participants are completely anonymous. Hence, nearly all sociocultural and linguistic projects require IRB approval. Most archaeological projects do not. Cases in which archaeologists will need board review include, for example, projects that have collaborative or community archaeology components involving assistance from nonprofessionals. But, archaeologists, take note: You are not automatically exempt from protocol review. If you believe you should be exempt, you need to discuss this with your committee, then formally request (and receive) a notice of exemption from the Institutional Review Board.

The IRB is a multidisciplinary group of faculty who oversee ethical practices in human research, including clinical, behavioral, psychological and social studies. The IRB recognizes ethnographic research as a special case and has unique standards for evaluating protocols from anthropologists. A primary issue to think about is how best to obtain informed consent from your participants, given the cultural context. But there are likely other ethical issues related to your work that are important for you to consider, such as the potential loss of privacy for the people whose lives you study, or the long-term consequences of your ethnographic descriptions.

The department regularly assigns one faculty member to act as our liaison to the review board. Even preliminary summer fieldwork usually requires IRB approval, so consult early on with our liaison and review the forms you’ll need to fill out for the review process. Be on the lookout for emails announcing departmental workshops on ethics and IRB procedures.

Your protocol, outlined in official IRB forms, will summarize your project and detail the ethical considerations of your work, including any potential physical, emotional or political risks it poses to your informants, and what you will do to mitigate those risks. It may also include sample interview questions, recording methods, consent forms or oral consent scripts, etc., as the case may be. Note that if your own research and methods seem not to fit the standard scenarios you see in model proposals, you shouldn’t misrepresent your approach by trying to conform to them. Instead, use your proposal to educate the IRB about the conditions at your research site and why they require particular choices. Explain how your own methods

Beth Hart takes notes while excavating at Elkab, a settlement in Egypt.
orating, but also daunting. Before leaving think about how you might handle the potential isolation — intellectually and emotionally — and still accomplish your research goals. Make a plan with your chair for how you’ll stay in contact with your committee, if possible and appropriate, throughout your time away (this may involve sending periodic field reports). Think of what you need to leave in order back home while you’re gone, so you minimize the stress that your usual life imposes on your field experience. And of course, make a detailed list of materials to pack for the trip, according to the particular demands of your research, airfreight limitations, personal tastes, etc. Good books, magazines and music, for example, are always nice to have when you want to disconnect. Consider especially bringing appropriate gifts for those who help you in the field.

Finally, don’t lose sight of the endgame. The point of going to the field is not to discover the meaning of life (though you may) but to gather what you need to write your dissertation. Keep this in mind as you amass and organize information and artifacts.

While you will no doubt establish lasting relationships with informants or grow attached to your place of study, you don’t need to solve a global crisis, decipher the significance of each and every utterance you hear, or unearth the Eighth Wonder of the Ancient World. But it will help to begin analyzing your data, especially toward the end of your field stay, and even to begin outlining and drafting your thesis. Another good practice, if you’re recording interviews, is to do some transcriptions while you’re still in the field. This will allow you to troubleshoot any issues with your recording device, generate new ethnographic questions that inform your fieldwork in progress, and get some analytical heavy lifting out of the way while you have the time and space to do this. If you wait until you return, a lot of it might never get done!

The sidebars on this page itemize tasks to complete before leaving, along with other things to think about. These lists aren’t comprehensive, but they’re a good start.

**Fieldwork: Romance and reality**

Fieldwork is exciting, but exacting. You no doubt have an ideal image in your mind, and your dissertation proposal covered a methodology with which to realize your goals. But translating ideas and methods in the abstract into a set of daily practices is a major demand of the job. Before you leave, think about how you’ll schedule your time in the field overall (e.g., on a monthly or weekly basis), as well as what a typical day might look like. Include time for organizing data, taking notes, writing, thinking, relaxing and tending to bureaucratic paperwork, in addition to participant-observation, interviews, site surveys or digs. This plan will have to be flexible. Unforeseen circumstances will no doubt change your plan, but having one will give you a baseline from which to work when you arrive at your site and settle in. As always, get advice from your committee members and other colleagues.

The field is often a time during which doctoral students feel cut off from their usual world of experience. This isolation (and reintegration in a new world) can be invig-
end in sight: writing up & defending

Writing up your dissertation requires organization, thought and time-management, but there's no reason to make the experience excessively burdensome or tedious. It can and should be every bit as fun as being in the field, especially once you've cracked the nut of your dissertation. A thesis is an original contribution to knowledge, but perfection should not be your goal: It's an exercise in demonstrating what you know about anthropological theory, how it applies to your research findings, and how your findings help you to rethink the theory.

As your time in the field nears a close, it's a good idea to contact your committee and the director of graduate studies about your plans for return. Your university or departmental funding packages ideally will make it possible for you to return in either semester and make a more or less seamless transition. Most students returning from the field will enter the fourth year of their funding package, which will involve teaching as an instructor or fulfilling some other departmental work obligations. Talk to the DGS about available jobs well in advance of your return. In fact, it doesn't hurt to have this discussion before leaving to the field, as planning for courses happens as much as a year in advance.

With your coursework obligations done, this is the time to develop a dissertation abstract and outline, and to start analyzing your data in earnest. Even before returning from the field, it's good to have started working on these aspects of the writing already. You should try to have at least one or two chapters done during your first year back from the field. This will put you in a good position to apply for dissertation-year funding and get you within striking distance of your degree, in preparation for the final year of your departmental funding. Now is also a good time to refer back to the advice on writing and work habits in the last chapter of this handbook.

Apply for funding, stay on track
A standard step at this stage is to apply for further funding for write-up. In the funding chapter, you'll find information on dissertation-year grants. Even with the fifth “free” year of departmental funds as a backup plan, competing for write-up money has many benefits: You may be able to get more funding and perks with other fellowships; you may be able to free up department money for other grads; you may be able to get more time for writing, or it could give you a cushion period in which to apply for jobs and write articles for publication based on your doctoral research; and you may be able to take up residence at other institutions or have access to offsite archives. Also, whether your efforts prove successful or not, write-up applications will help you refine and focus your argument.

Good contact with committee members at this time is crucial. You and your chair should develop a reasonable trajectory for your writing process and grant applications. Personalized deadlines for applications, individual chapters, or analytical tasks can be very helpful. The simplest trick to staying on track is writing every day, even if it’s just a little bit.

You should try forming writing groups with other grads who are in the same phase. You can also take opportunities to present your work during subfield-specific departmental workshops. Discussing your project and your fieldwork with colleagues will help you sharpen your thinking, take advantage of emergent funding opportunities, submit papers for conferences and journals, and apply for jobs when you're nearing completion of the dissertation. You’re expected to be in regular contact with your chair — at least once per semester — and to maintain a full, functioning committee throughout the write-up phase. If you need to make changes to your committee, make sure it remains complete in order to stay in the program. If you lose contact and thus go “inactive,” this could hurt you during your end-of-year review (these still matter!) and you could be asked to leave the program. After two years of inactivity, you’ll be dropped automatically.

The bottom line here is: Make steady progress.

Get your house in order and look ahead
Write-up is also a good time to make sure you’ve got your bureaucratic ducks in a row.

Before defending your dissertation, and sometimes as a prerequisite for write-up applications, you have to complete whatever remains of your language requirements. (See the coursework chapter.) And make sure other degree requirements and bureaucratic matters are taken care of. For example, consult with the department’s DGS — before returning from the field, if possible — about the most sensible enrollment status for you to adopt and what measures you have to take. Depending on your status, you may need to continue registering for research credits at the beginning of each semester.

This is also a time to look ahead, beyond graduate school. Keep an eye out for postdoctoral fellowships, appropriate job openings, visiting instructorships, and relevant conferences or calls for papers. Take a fresh look at your career goals and discuss with committee members what they are and how best to achieve them. Occasionally, the department or the university will announce career-development workshops that you may want to attend. These will help you design your CV, prepare for interviews and figure out what to do with yourself after you graduate.

Schedule your defense
Once you have a worthy draft of your dissertation and you’ve completed all other Ph.D. requirements, you may schedule your defense. You’ll need your committee members to approve the draft for scheduling and the scheduling itself. You and your chair should select a time and place convenient for everyone who has to be there, including your outside reader. The defense is a public exam. So you need to let the department’s administrative assistant know about the schedule and bring a copy of your thesis to the main office, to be available for public review at least a month prior to the day.

You should also provide via email a title, abstract and list of your committee members, so the department can announce the event.

Typically, the defense involves presenting your main argument, a selection of supporting evidence, and the most important implications of your work for the discipline. This presentation is followed by questions from your committee and, possibly, other faculty members. After the defense, your committee will discuss your work in private, note any necessary revisions, and vote on whether to pass your thesis. The committee members will, upon reaching a decision, let you know how you fared and what revisions, if any, they want you to make.

Graduating
To be eligible to graduate, you need to formally apply for graduation by university-established deadlines.

(Continued on page 11)
funding demystified

Graduate school is not free, even if you don’t pay for it. To give you an idea: The cost of full funding for an out-of-state student taking courses is about $54,000 annually (some of which is paid in wages). The cost for a post-field student is about $24,000.

In reality, it is that for most grad the department pays for your education and living expenses out of its own budget — funds appropriated by the university. As the resources are always limited, the DGS has to be creative in spreading fellowship money and paid work around so that all students are fairly and minimally covered. This department has a good track record of accomplishing that goal and maintaining a cohesive, collegial atmosphere. Our students, meanwhile, perform well in winning outside funding for pre-field, fieldwork and write-up, helping ease the burden on the department’s budget.

Over the course of the 2011-2012 academic year, the Graduate School of Arts & Sciences worked to restructure how funding works across departments, with the result that finances have become somewhat more centralized, and funding packages for grades more standard. In anthropology the effect has not been especially radical, since the department has historically admitted small, fully funded cohorts. This will continue to be the case for the foreseeable future, with the added benefit that the basic packages offered to incoming students are now renewable for five years rather than three.

The department has also made a commitment to ease the transition as best it can, so that students admitted under the old system have access to some or all of the benefits of the new, to the degree that funding is available.

Despite this standardization, graduate student funding still comes in a variety of ways. We can break these down into four types: (1) basic fellowships for graduate study; (2) small one-time grants for summer research and other activities; (3) dissertation research, or fieldwork, grants; and (4) write-up, or “dissertation-year,” grants.

Below you’ll find a guide to these types listing the most important grants in each. But you should check with the granting institutions for their own official details, requirements and deadlines, as each of these may vary. Also, the department maintains a list of grants and links to grant databases on the department’s Collab site, and from time to time the DGS will broadcast via email major updates to the list or new funding opportunities.

Graduate study fellowships

These are multi-year grants that support coursework and, sometimes, field research and writing, but this depends on the structure of the funds and the conditions of each grant. Some, like the standard GSAS package, are awarded from university funds; others come from external funds that students may solicit while applying for graduate school, or in the early years of coursework.

The department’s basic package. All incoming anthropology Ph.D. students receive a GSAS fellowship, unless they enter with better funding from another multi-year grant. The basic departmental package covers five years of tuition, fees and health insurance, plus an $18,000 stipend for living expenses. You need to remain in good standing and continue receiving the GSAS fellowship from year to year. The stipend will not make you rich, but if you budget carefully you can survive.

In the first three years, some part of the stipend is paid as wages for working as a teaching assistant or grader in the department. In some cases, teaching may be waived in the first year, particularly for students arriving from overseas with little or no experience in the U.S. academic environment. There’s more on teaching jobs and other work opportunities in the next chapter.

The wage portion will be paid to you in biweekly paychecks issued via payroll. The remainder is paid monthly, as a fellowship payment made through Student Financial Services. Both payments are made by direct deposit.

There’s more on how stipend payments may affect your federal and state taxes in the sidebar on this page. Another sidebar covers details about the student health plan.

Jefferson Fellowship. A limited number of incoming students are invited to participate in a university-wide competition for this award from the Jefferson Scholars Foundation, which covers up to five years of study with an annual stipend of $30,000 to $35,000. Fellows also receive research funds of up to $7,500. Many of the fellowships are endowed by particular alumni donors and earmarked for specific departments and even topics within disciplines. Departments with slots in a given year nominate finalists who participate in a special recruitment weekend. If you win one of these, you’ll know it. The idea of this program, run in parallel with the undergraduate Jefferson Scholarships, is to entice excellent applicants away from other top-notch programs. Even if you win a Jefferson, the department is still on the hook for contributing a portion of the money, and teaching obligations typically apply in some or all of your years of funding.

External funding. Applications for the major fellowships in this category are usually due in October or early November. Restrictions vary on who can apply, but typically you need to try for these while...
applying to grad school, or in your first or second year. The DGS and other faculty members will be glad to advise you on whether and how to apply for these.

The biggest and most common:

- NSF Graduate Research Fellowship
- Jacob K. Javits Fellowship
- Ford Foundation Predoctoral Fellowships
- Wenner-Gren Wadsworth International Fellowships

**Summer funding and other small grants**

Small one-time grants are crucial for paying for travel and other expenses while you’re conducting language study and/or pre-field research over the summers, both of which often take place overseas. Students in good standing are expected to apply for and receive such funds from the department. It’s also a good idea to apply for other internal and external small grants. These can offset costs not covered by your pre-field money, or subsidize other activities such as conference presentations, offsite archival research, additional methods training, etc.

- **UVA summer grants.** The department administers applications, usually due in March, for two common awards: the departmental Summer Fieldwork Grants and the GSAS-funded Summer Foreign Language Fellowship from the Dean’s Office for Summer Foreign Language Instruction. The DGS announces the process for applying in early spring. Usually you’ll provide a description of your project or study plans, a schedule of your activities and a realistic budget. Funds awarded are meant to reimburse you for budgeted expenses and thus should not be construed as earned income. You may be asked to keep receipts for your records to be presented upon request. While the awards vary, representative amounts are between $2,500 and $5,000 for language and about $3,000 for fieldwork.

When funds are available, the department may provide additional so-called Small Grants of about $1,000 for summer travel or research. These might be helpful, for example, in the summer after your third year, as you’re on your way to the field, or if you’ve taken an extension to finish your dissertation proposal the following fall. You might want to use the money for travel to an outside archive or archaeological collection, or to visit scholars at another institution with the purpose of learning analytical techniques necessary in your research.

Occasionally, other university programs may also offer summer funding to grad students. Applications and deadlines for these funds are announced on an ad-hoc basis. At least one other pot of small research funds is usually available to UVA students on a competitive basis, and anthropology grad students have been successful in winning awards of up to $2,500 from this money. These are the Raven Fellowships, awarded by the university’s Raven Society, so named in homage to Edgar Allen Poe. Poe once lived in a room on the Lawn, but as far as anyone knows he never earned a graduate or any other degree at the University of Virginia. Raven applications are usually due in February.

- **UVA travel funds.** The Graduate School of Arts & Sciences awards very small grants for travel to conferences. Known as Robert J. Huskey Travel Fellowships, these have become more limited as money has dwindled, with the usual amount around $250. You’ll have preference as you get closer to the job market and if you have not received prior funding for conference travel. To be eligible, you need to be presenting a paper or other original work in the scholarly forum you are planning to attend. Deadlines for the Huskey are set on a rolling basis, by trimester. The deadline that applies to you depends on the conference dates. Be on the lookout for updates and instructions from the DGS several months in advance. The application is usually electronic and very simple, involving a bit of data entry and not taking more than a few minutes to complete.

- **External language and pre-field grants.** These are common sources of external funding, but the list is by no means comprehensive. Talk to your committee about whether applying to any of these would be a good idea for you. (Many students in our department have had success with the Explorer’s Club and the Lewis and Clark programs.)

- **GRANTS**

- ACLS East European Language Grants to Individuals for Summer Study
- American Philosophical Society Lewis and Clark Fund for Exploration and Field Research
- Blakemore Freeman Fellowships for Advanced Study of Asian Languages
- Critical Language Scholarships for Intensive Summer Institutes
- Explorer’s Club Student Grants
- Middlebury Language School Davis Fellowship for Peace
- SSRC Dissertation Proposal Development Fellowship
- SSRC Eurasia Program (Independent States of the Former Soviet Union)

**Fieldwork grants**

These are the most crucial of grant applications you’ll complete, and you should start planning them well in advance, working on them especially over the summer after your second year. In most cases, you’ll be preparing these applications in tandem with your dissertation proposal, and much of the work will overlap. In general, a good dissertation research grant application will raise a novel theoretical question that you want to explore with a set of data that can only be gathered through your intended fieldwork. Your statement of purpose should make an effort to explain the project in language accessible to a range of reviewers. Tell them why your work is interesting and important for the social sciences and the world at large.

Beyond these common criteria, you should pay attention to the particular interests of the granting institution and the instructions it provides. Note who is eligible for support, what you need to submit, where you’re allowed to do your fieldwork, when it has to get done, how much the funding covers, etc.

All grants in this category are external, except for one. During your fieldwork, the department and the graduate school together may be able to foot the reduced bill for your Dissertation Research Away status, and to fund your health insurance for up to one year. (The chapter covering status terminology.) To apply for this so-called Dissertation Year Away funding, talk to the DGS with plenty of time and submit the proper form to the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences. But again, this funding doesn’t cover anything beyond enrollment fees and health insurance.

Winning an outside grant for fieldwork is an important aspect of your scholarly development, and you should make every effort to do so. Do not despair if you get turned down in the first or even second application cycle. Every iteration will improve your project and give you much-needed practice in applying for funding. In cases where a good project simply isn’t getting funded — which can happen for various reasons and doesn’t necessarily mean the research isn’t worthy — there may be other ways to pull it off. This is a discussion you can have with your committee if need be.

The following list includes all the obvious options for anthropology grants, but not the only ones. Some accept applications only from U.S. citizens and permanent residents.

- Wenner-Gren Dissertation Fieldwork Grants
- NSF Doctoral Dissertation Research Improvement Grants
- Fulbright IIE Programs
- Fulbright-Hays Doctoral Dissertation Research Abroad Fellowship
- Ford Foundation Dissertation Fellowship

**Write-up grants**

Even though you have a fifth year of university funding generally free of teaching and other obligations,
You shouldn’t rest on your laurels. This “free” year will come in handy during the write-up phase but it will probably not be enough. Plus, write-up grants are prestigious and may have extra perks attached to them, such as more money, access to different institutions and facilities, or seminar and publication opportunities. Often known as “dissertation-year” fellowships, write-up grants come in many forms, and may include other obligations and conditions. Be on the lookout for announcements of fellowships of this type at UVa and other institutions, including universities overseas.

- **Departmental support.** Support in the form of your fifth year of funding may receive an honorary title, depending on your chosen subfield. These titles reflect the history of the department and memorialize a few of its most distinguished scholars:
  - The Edith and Victor Turner Dissertation Write-Up Fellowship in Sociocultural Anthropology
  - The Virginia and Dell Hymes Dissertation Write-Up Fellowship in Linguistic Anthropology
  - The James Deetz Dissertation Write-Up Fellowship in Anthropological Archaeology

Students admitted under prior funding schemes who do not have the standard five-year package may still be eligible for receiving departmental support and the associated fellowship title on an ad hoc basis. Ask the DGS for more information on how to apply.

- **The Dissertation-Year Jefferson Fellowship.** One and sometimes two have been awarded by the Jefferson Scholars Foundation in recent years. These write-up positions come with an office, a stipend of $20,000, health insurance, and extra research funds. The foundation reviews one nominee from each department. The DGS may announce an internal application process or contact you directly to solicit your application for this fellowship. The winner or winners are chosen after a round of finalists are invited to the foundation for a short interview.

- **Graduate Fellowship in the Digital Humanities.** Administered by the Alderman Library Scholars’ Lab, these awards give you access to powerful computing tools meant to help advance scholarship in the humanities.

Fellows are expected to employ IT in their research and create or work with digital content and other electronic resources. These awards of $10,000 may supplement your fifth year of funding or help cover an additional year in residence while you write up your dissertation. It is often ideal for archaeology and linguistics grads who are working with complex datasets that can be manipulated and analyzed in electronic form. The application is usually due in March and announced at the end of the month.

- **The Dumas Malone and Albert Gallatin Fellowships.** These are administered by the UVa Office of the Vice President for Research and supported by the Thomas Jefferson Memorial Foundation.

The Malone Fellowship covers graduate students who need to investigate archives, or other repositories of information, in foreign countries. It is generally reserved to architecture and politics grads, but other disciplines are considered.

The Gallatin Fellowship supports advanced graduate students writing dissertations on “international affairs,” with preference on multinational studies. It is open to applicants across disciplines whose projects look at political, economic, social or legal processes across cultures.

Applications to either of these grants need to be submitted through department, so talk to the DGS if you think you would be a good candidate for them.

- **External grants.** There are various opportunities for write-up funding from outside sources. Besides consulting the department’s grant listings, be on the lookout for announcements via email.

Common external write-up grants include:
  - Charlotte W. Newcombe Doctoral Dissertation Fellowship
  - AAA Minority Dissertation Fellowship
  - Middlebury College Dissertation Fellowship
  - SRI Foundation Dissertation Research Grants in Historic Preservation

You are responsible for reporting your income in tax returns to the state and the federal government as required by law. Reporting requirements vary from person to person, but in general you should know that fellowship funds meant to cover living expenses (your stipend and/or fellowship from UVa or elsewhere) are probably taxable, while funds covering tuition, fees and other required payments to the university as a condition of enrollment are not. Furthermore, wage earnings are generally taxable as “earned income,” and in most cases state and federal taxes will be deducted based on the number of so-called exemptions you claim. Doing your tax return correctly and on time will allow you to seek a refund (if you’re owed one) for any taxes withheld over the amount you actually owe.

You should update your exemption claims every calendar year to make sure the right amount of tax is being withheld from your paychecks. For example, many grads have no tax liability and may therefore elect to have no taxes be withheld. Others — say, those with two-income households — may owe more in taxes and need to have more than the usual withheld. You can find paperwork to take care of this issue in the main office or access it online, via the university’s Integrated System site. (This is different from the Student Information System. The UVa Integrated System is a portal for employees to manage their hours, view their pay stubs, fill out forms, etc.)

Another thing to keep in mind is that fieldwork research fellowships often present a new tax situation. For example, you may be able to deduct unreimbursed field expenses from the grant amounts that you have to report as income, thereby minimizing your tax liability. For more information on this and other relevant tax issues, see the latest version of IRS Publication 520, “Scholarships and Fellowships.”

The usual disclaimers apply here: Specific tax situations vary from person to person, so consult with a tax expert if you’re not sure what to do. And special circumstances apply to foreign students. They should get advice from the International Studies Office on how and when to file tax returns.
teaching & other paid jobs

Anthropology at UVA has an excellent teaching record. The department strives to prepare graduate students to be inspired instructors and to value teaching as a vital part of our scholarly development. Most grads will take jobs as teaching assistants or graders during each year of their coursework, and will be expected to teach their own courses at least once after returning from the field. The DGS will let you know what your specific instructional responsibilities are and what courses are available.

For teaching assistantships and course-grader positions, preferences for upcoming courses are solicited from eligible grad students around the middle of the prior semester, so you’ll know ahead of time what material you’ll be teaching or grading. If you serve as an instructor — whether in summer session, January term or a regular semester — you may be asked to teach an existing course or to submit a new course topic.

Teaching and grading positions present opportunities for you to deepen your knowledge in some area of the literature or in a set of disciplinary approaches relevant to your own research. Wages for these assignments, like other university employment, are paid every two weeks via payroll.

There’s more below on each type of instructional position. Note that teaching positions may be available in other departments and universities, especially in programs that don’t have their own graduate students. These are generally advertised over email. Keep your eye out for them as another funding option, especially in the write-up phase.

Instructional assignments

There are three categories:

- **Graduate Teaching Assistant.** In anthropology, GTAs (or TAs for short) lead discussion sections for courses taught by a primary instructor, usually a regular member of the faculty. A typical discussion section has up to 20 students and a typical load of sections for one TA assisting one course is three sections. The graduate school considers this standard load a “half-time” assignment of 10 hours per week. You do not, however, have to keep track of these hours or turn in a timesheet. In some weeks you may work more than that, others less, but it should average to about 10. (The reason this kind of assignment is called “half-time” is that 20 hours are the maximum, or “full-time,” that you can work for the university while also enrolled as a full-time student. See the sidebar on this page for more on this limit.)

  In addition to leading discussion sections related to a lecture course, TAs typically do a sizeable portion of the grading for the professor, who may also ask you to handle various other tasks, like doing a guest lecture, running a review session, or writing exam and quiz questions. As a TA you’re responsible for coordinating with the lead instructor, establishing the particulars of the job and working together to provide as much coherence as possible to the course. Your wages usually are paid in combination with a stipend, as explained in the funding chapter. A half-time GTA working two semesters always receives tuition remission and a full health-insurance subsidy. A half-time GTA working one semester in a given year receives tuition remission but not necessarily the health subsidy. (One-semester TAships are not common; when they occur it is often in a carryover semester, for example, as you’re preparing to leave for the field or after you’ve returned.)

- **Gradership.** Graders work for large courses and do most or all of the grading, including essays, exams, quizzes and papers. Usually you have to attend classes regularly but you’re not responsible for running sections (unless you’re also a TA in the same course). Sometimes, graderships are combined with TAships to meet your funding needs. These positions may also be available to students who have completed coursework and are preparing to leave the field. Graderships are 10-hour (“half-time” positions), like TA assignments. When held on their own, without any other teaching jobs, graderships do not typically come with tuition remission or the health subsidy, because they don’t meet the threshold of $5,000 per semester in wages that applies to these benefits. Ask the DGS for more information if this situation pertains to you.

- **Instructorship.** Grads in good standing who are ABD are eligible to teach their own courses as adjunct instructors. Availability for these courses often depends on how many faculty members are on leave. They may be taught in any term, with priority given to grads who are returning from the field. Occasionally, you may also be able to teach as an instructor before leaving for the field, for instance, in the summer before your fourth year.

  The graduate school considers this to be an assignment of 13.3 hours per week. As with TAs and graders, instructors don’t need to keep track of their hours. While working as an instructor, you may want to remain registered for research credits (and hence qualify as a full-time student), depending on your particular situation. If you do this, you can remain eligible for the student health insurance plan, though not for tuition remission (unless you are teaching during one of the years of your regular funding package). Any student loans you have can also continue to be deferred if you stay enrolled.

  In some circumstances, an instructorship can be combined with a half-time TA or grader assignment while you are enrolled for research credits, thus qualifying you for work eligibility. Being eligible for student employment depends on your status as a student. (See the chapter listing status terms and their implications.)

  Full-time students can take university jobs, but they are restricted in how many hours they can work. Some jobs, like teaching assistantships and grader assignments, have weekly hours fixed by convention. Other jobs are truly hourly jobs and require you to keep track of your hours and submit timesheets.

  Your total work hours from these sources during the fall and spring semesters can’t exceed 20 per week, except with approval from the DGS, your chair and special permission from the dean. The same limit applies to international students; exceptions here are possible but require the student to meet further conditions. Contact the International Studies Office for more information on work eligibility for foreign students.

  During the summer, however, you may work up to 40 hours per week in a university job, so long as you still plan to enroll again in the fall. The same applies to the winter break.

  Note that for jobs held during an academic recess, most grads will have to pay FICA taxes, also known as “payroll taxes.” these are not income taxes but federal taxes collected at a fixed rate to fund social security and Medicaid. Full-time students are otherwise exempt from payroll taxes, while foreign nationals who are not permanent residents of the United States are always exempt. Foreign students may also work up to 40 hours per week at a university job during the summer and winter breaks.

  You don’t need to be a full-time student to take an instructorship. In that case, it may be considered “professional employment” and result in extra payroll taxes for you. Consult the sidebar on stipends, wages and taxes on the preceding page for more.

(Continued on page 15)
for the tuition remission and health subsidy. But this requires special permission from the dean as it would exceed the 20-hour work limit for full-time students.

Instructors structure and teach a course on their own. Unless you have a grader or TA working with you, you’ll also be responsible for all of your own grading. Designing a course and preparing a syllabus is labor-intensive, and you should schedule plenty of time in advance of the term to do so. You also need to place your own book orders with the bookstore and gather other materials for students as needed. Taking care of these things two or three months in advance, if possible, is a good rule of thumb.

Note that while serving as an instructor, you can request faculty status at the library and use the library’s scanning services. Just talk to a staff member at the front desk of Alderman Library. The library may ask you to obtain verification from the department before granting these privileges.

Other jobs

Jobs that don’t involve classroom time can also materialize through the department and other programs at the university. These include, for example, research assistantships, hourly work at the library and other centers, tutoring in the athletics department, leading teaching workshops in anthropology or performing other odd jobs.

Regular positions for graduate student associates are available at the Teaching Resource Center for advanced grad with expertise in teaching and an interest in helping others improve their teaching. These are usually one-year appointments and the application process can be fairly competitive.

Before applying to or accepting another job you should consult the DGS and your advisory committee about the opportunity. Make sure it won’t create a conflict with any other duties you have or cause you to exceed your employment time limit. Jobs held outside the university do not affect that limit, but even then it might be good to discuss any such employment with your chair.

Notes on teaching

There’s more to teaching than just showing up and talking — especially if your classes are discussion-based. Leading a discussion and giving effective lectures are skills that can be learned and improved. You should take advantage while you can of the resources available to you to help you sharpen your teaching.

For starters, whether you’re teaching for the first time or not, it’s always good to attend the August and January teaching workshops offered by the university’s Teaching Resource Center. These events are free for graduate students and include workshops led by fellow grads, tailored specifically to issues common to first-time teachers. Registration is required and widely announced several weeks in advance. In addition to running these and other workshops, the TRC has a small walk-in library and files filled with teaching tips and ideas, available at the center’s office in Hotel D on the East Range. You can also browse or search a full-text database of TRC materials on the center’s website.

And if you’re really feeling overwhelmed, the center provides one-on-one confidential consultations for teaching assistants and instructors who want to improve their teaching or work on particular problems. Consultations are never scheduled for you — instructors and TAs set them up at their own discretion. You can discuss issues you’re having, ask for advice or teaching ideas, and even have a consultant observe, videotape and/or poll students in your class. These are great, low-pressure options for getting feedback on your teaching from experienced people who care about student learning and are not judgmental about your teaching challenges. To request a consultation, use the center’s online form.

Just sharing ideas with fellow grads is another good way to work on your teaching methods and stay sane. You should also be on the lookout for in-house departmental teaching workshops designed especially for anthropology TAs. They usually take place early in the fall semester each year, and are led by fellow grads.

Here are some basic teaching tips to keep in mind (but again, you can find much more on the TRC’s website):

- You are responsible for your own syllabus. Make it as clear, concise and complete as possible. This applies especially to the courses you teach on your own, but having a syllabus specific to your discussion sections is also important when working as a TA. A standard syllabus will outline learning objectives you want your students to meet, define assignments and policies, and explain participation guidelines, grading procedures, etc. Instructors should also give their students an idea of the reading schedule and structure of the semester. As a TA, you need not repeat in your section syllabus information found in the lecture syllabus, but you can add or expand on it in reasonable ways; explain, for example, your participation policy.

- When leading discussions, keep an open mind and ask simple, open-ended questions. Avoid structuring questions with an implied “right” answer or questions that ask students to guess what you’re thinking, as these tend to stifle discussion. Validate students’ remarks, improving on them as you paraphrase them. This helps to encourage a welcoming environment, especially early on. That doesn’t mean you should shy away from hot topics or vigorous debate, only that you should try to keep the tone civil and model respect for the views of others.

- When lecturing, plan ahead and give yourself a goal for the day. Structure remarks and classroom activities in terms of what you want students to understand. Usually this means one or two key facts, concepts or controversies that you want them to fully grasp by the end of the lecture. If you use slides or other technology, these should serve your objective; don’t allow your instruction to be the slave to your slides. As often as IT can be helpful, it can become a crutch or an end in itself rather than a tool for helping students meet the learning goals you’ve established. Sometimes simply referring to lecture notes, putting chalk to the blackboard, or leading a well-planned-in-class exercise will serve just as well or better.

- If nothing else, think of professors you’ve had whose teaching you admire, and emulate them. What works in their classrooms and why? Chances are, you remember their teaching because they found a way to make it fun and interesting. Make an effort to have fun with your teaching in ways that work for you. Be creative.

And finally, get a good night’s rest.
what’s my status? a glossary

Getting through graduate school involves some bureaucratic hoops that you’ll have to jump through — there’s simply no way around them. Navigating your way through them will be easier if you understand, in good anthropological fashion, certain roles and statuses that apply to you and what their implications are. This chapter defines the most important ones in brief.

Your administrative status

These categories are primarily fiscal; they determine how much you owe the university and, therefore, how much you cost the department.

- **Full-time student.** A full-time student is enrolled in 12 credit hours, whether in the form of research credits or courses or both. With this status, you’re eligible for loan deferrals if you have any prior or current student loans. You can also purchase health insurance through the university. All other enrollment statuses refer to whether you are a student employee, assuming this amount of UVa work, you’ll have to jump through — there’s simply no way around them. Navigating your way through them will be easier if you understand, in good anthropological fashion, certain roles and statuses that apply to you and what their implications are. This chapter defines the most important ones in brief.

**Non-topical research only (NTR).** When you are no longer taking courses, you may elect to remain enrolled for research credits only, in which case tuition is dramatically reduced. However, being NTR still costs about $4,000 for out-of-state students, so it’s not cheap either. The department will cover this cost during your regular years of funding, but not thereafter. “Continuous enrollment” (below) may be the better option in that case. Note that NTR status means that you are still a full-time student and thus eligible for student-loan deferrals and all the related privileges outlined above, such as buying health insurance at the student rate.

When you are NTR, you still need to make sure you enroll for the proper research credits using the Student Information System. (See the coursework chapter.)

- **Continuous enrollment.** This status is the cheapest, and often it’s the most sensible for Ph.D. students who are close to completing their degrees but need a little extra time. It costs around $400 and allows you to keep your university email account and to remain on the department’s list of active grad students. But it grants few other privileges. You are not considered a full-time student, your loans go out of deferral, and you lose access to library checkouts, the gym, etc.

Continuous enrollment is also referred to as “non-resident” enrollment. Residence in this context has nothing to do with physical or state vs. out-of-state residence, but refers to whether you are a student in “in-residence” at the university. All other enrollment statuses are considered “in-residence,” even if you’re actually in another country doing fieldwork.

- **In good standing.** You should always be “in good standing.” If you’re not, you’re in trouble and you might be dropped from the program, especially at the end of the year during your annual review.

“In good standing” is more than just an artful way of saying the faculty like you, it’s a procedural term with definite criteria. To be in good standing you must not have any course grades lower than the B range; beyond your first year, you must have three active members on your committee; and at your year-end review the faculty must find that you’re making adequate progress toward a degree.

Make sure you don’t fall out of good standing by accident or otherwise. For example, incompletes taken in your courses are converted automatically to Fs about six months after grades are due. The graduate school enforces this policy firmly and does not easily allow grades to be overturned once they’ve been assigned. For this reason, you should avoid taking incompletes and, if you can’t, resolve them quickly. Also, if a committee member unexpectedly withdraws from your panel, find another one quickly and get the proper signatures.

- **Ph.D. candidate.** You become a doctoral candidate after successfully completing two years of coursework and passing a qualifying assignment. The critical essays, or comps, are your qualifying assignment, as described in the coursework chapter.

- **All but dissertation, or all but defended (ABD).** You are ABD after successfully defending a dissertation proposal. Only students who are ABD can take instructorships.

- **Leave of absence.** Students who want to take a leave of absence from the department may apply by letter to the director of graduate studies. The letter should explain why you want to take the leave. The faculty review applications for leave during the regular evaluation meetings in May. Students who are in good standing and who show cause may receive a leave of up to one academic year (or two consecutive semesters), renewable for additional one-year periods up to a total of three years. Renewals are subject to approval in the same manner as an original request for leave.

Students gone for more than three years are dropped from the program.

While on a leave of absence, you have no fiscal status as a student, but you can be readmitted to the program without going through the usual admissions process. Consequently, this status can be useful in the later stages of writing your dissertation: when you finish a worthy draft, the faculty will gladly readmit you to defend it and graduate.

**In-state vs. out-of-state.** UVa is a state school. Thus, tuition is different for in-state and out-of-state students. While this will not matter much to you since your tuition is generally covered, it matters to the department because out-of-state students — that is, most grads — “cost” more in the budget. In general, you can’t change this status once you enter the university, no matter how long you live in Virginia or how much you pay in taxes. There are only very limited exceptions to this and the procedure involves special paperwork. This status is only likely to affect you if and when you remain enrolled with research credits during the ABD phase, after all your funding sources have been exhausted.
notes for new students

New grads should be aware of some odds and ends to take care of as soon as they arrive.

Eservices, home directory and email

One of the first things you should do is sign up for an Eservices account and register for email, using the computing ID, or username, assigned to you upon your initial enrollment. This account will give you access to public computers at the university and allow you to access your “home directory,” an electronic repository where you can store private files and access them from virtually anywhere. Plus, you can map your home directory as a drive on any computer hooked up to the UVa network, allowing you to manipulate your server folders seamlessly, as if they were local directories on your own machine.

The university’s ITC webpages will tell you more about the home directory system and how to use it. One of the great advantages of using your home directory is that your files are regularly backed up, so that you can retrieve old versions of files if something goes terribly wrong.

Note that email is official university correspondence. You should assume that it can be monitored by UVa officials. Use an outside email account for sending messages of a sensitive or personal nature.

Get a student ID and number

You need a student identification card to do a lot of things around here. After setting up an Eservices password go online to register for a student ID number. Then you can get your identification card at the University ID Card Office, in the Observatory Hill Dining Hall on McCormick Road. Bring a valid government-issued photo identification card with you. Note the expiration date on your new card and make sure to renew it when it expires. (This often happens around the time you return from the field.) Renewals are free, but if you lose your first ID you’ll have to pay a fee to replace it.

Get your keys to Brooks

The administrative assistant will provide you with keys to the building, including the outer doors and the graduate computer lab. Don’t lose them — you’ll have to pay a fee to get new copies. Also, please turn them in when you graduate or leave the program.

Brooks is generally open during regular business hours, but you need your keys to get in after hours. You’re allowed to use the building at any time, including nights, weekends and holidays.

Mailboxes and lockers

Your graduate student mailbox is in the basement of Brooks Hall. Take note of the slot with your name on it and check it regularly. You can use this as a drop-off point for student papers and other official business. Any postal or campus mail you receive at the department is devoted there.

Lockers in the basement area are available first-come, first-serve. If you see an open one, claim it by putting a lock or a tag of some kind on it. Please consider making your locker available to others when you leave for the field, and clean it out when you graduate or leave the program. Some of the lockers are reserved for linguistics M.A. students. If you’re not sure which those are, ask.

Library carrels

Library carrels are desks in the quiet and secluded stacks of Alderman Library and can be an ideal place to study and write in peace. Most carrels have shelves, a drawer that can be locked and an electrical power outlet. There’s usually Wi-Fi access throughout the stacks, and grads may store books checked out to them in their carrels. Carrels may be shared by up to two students.

If you want a carrel assigned to you, talk to a staff member at Alderman Library about the procedure, as it sometimes varies. You may be asked to have the department’s main office confirm that you are a student in residence, and there may be limits based on availability or quotas established across departments.

If you get a carrel, please consider relinquishing it when leaving for the field.

UVaCollab

Collab is the university’s version of Sakai, a web-based portal designed in partnership with several major institutions. It’s meant to facilitate collaboration on academic projects and instruction. All courses and discussion sections at UVa are eligible for workspace on Collab, and many other collaboration sites are open to all users if you want to join them. You can search for public sites, create new project sites, and manage site memberships from your workspace in Collab.

You’ll use Collab as a student and an instructor, and it’s a good idea to familiarize yourself with the ins and outs of how it works. (The views and permissions you have for courses you teach and courses you take are slightly different.) Collab allows you to exchange files, submit or evaluate assignments, post or access syllabi and reading materials, etc. You can also create new Collab sites for group projects with others within and beyond the university community, and establish site permissions based on your needs.

The department operates several in-house Collab sites, including one for each subfield and one for departmental documents (such as grant lists or faculty-search applications). You should make sure you’re signed up for the sites that apply to you. For any course you take, the relevant worksite will appear automatically in your tabs once the instructor has set it up.

For the courses you teach, you’ll need to set up your own Collab sites. This includes discussion sections to which you’re assigned as a TA. (Sections have their own sites, separate from the site of their associated lecture.) To set up a new worksite for a course, follow the onscreen instructions available on the Collab homepage.

Printing and scanning

By being frugal in their printing habits, grad students have been able to prevent the establishment of departmental quotas.

Please be considerate when deciding whether to print on either the lobby printer or the printers in the grad and archaeology labs. The lobby printer is accessible from the grad lab computers, and it’s a good choice for course articles or instructional materials because you can print double-sided automatically. Please also consider printing multiple pages to a sheet where possible, or printing more lightly using the machine’s toner-saving mode. The lobby printer also allows you to scan documents and email them to yourself, without having to print them.
building communitas

Communitas was a term of special significance to Victor Turner, one of this department’s foremost ancestors. He used it to describe a strong feeling of solidarity and mutual support often developed through ritual. It’s a good term to represent the ideal toward which this department has strived over the years. Building solidarity can come in ephemeral and spontaneous acts, but it also benefits from organized and regular events and activities. This chapter outlines a few that have become more or less institutionalized in the anthropology department.

Graduate student meetings and officers

There’s always one grad meeting at the beginning of the academic year, and others may be convened from time to time to discuss specific business. At the first meeting, usually held the first week of class, the incoming cohort is introduced to other grads and new grad officers are elected. There may also be department or university business to review.

Graduate students in the department do not follow formal bylaws in how they organize and reach consensus on matters of importance, but there are certain historical precedents: Two grads serve as our graduate-faculty representatives, or “grad reps” for short. The grad reps attend all faculty meetings, with the exception of tenure discussions, and report back to their fellow grads about department business. They also cast a single vote at faculty meetings on behalf of their peers in all routine matters, including new hires and program changes (but not tenure evaluations, which are decisions reserved to tenured faculty).

The grad reps also convene graduate student meetings and serve as liaisons to the faculty on graduate grievance, suggestions or ideas. They may also delegate tasks to other graduate students or coordinate department services, like cleaning or refurbishing the computer lab or hosting bagel brunches when outside scholars visit.

Grad reps are chosen from nominees who step forward at the first meeting of the year. They are typically third-years or beyond. Usually we also elect a social chair to organize parties, as well as a graduate council representative, who attends meetings of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences Council, an official body that represents graduate students in university-wide issues. Those issues include grad-student space, health insurance, tuition, taxes and wages. GSAS council also has access to student activity fees that can be used to support student-planned events. The grad council reps should convey information about those funding opportunities and other GSAS-wide activities to the rest of us.

In years past there has been a Graduate Labor Union, and anthropology has contributed representatives to it, but its power is limited due to Virginia labor laws and the group is not always active.

Parties and prospective students

Several parties in particular have become something of a tradition. In the fall semester, second-years throw a dinner and party to welcome the incoming cohort. At the end of the academic year, first-years reciprocate and throw a party congratulating second-years on their passage to candidacy. Third-years and above are generally invited to join in the festivities as well.

On the weekend closest to Halloween, Brooks Hall gets ghoulish and ghostly for the holiday. Grads and faculty alike join in decorating ahead of the party, with a pumpkin carving extravaganza.

Dionisios Kavadas and Carrie Douglass chat at a seminar reception.

At the beginning and end of each year, the department chair usually convenes a general get-together, either hosted at the chair’s home or in the Brooks Hall Commons. Everyone is invited to enjoy the food and drink, catch up, and meet new students and faculty or say goodbye to those departing.

Workshops and the departmental speaker series

The department hosts a speaker series every year, usually inviting scholars from around the world, plus one or two from within the university, to give talks on their research, followed by questions from faculty and graduate students. The series is generally held on Friday afternoons throughout the fall and spring semesters, with a reception and catered hors-d’oeuvres to follow. We’re told it’s practically required for first- and second-years to attend: Sitting through them is itself something of a rite of passage. But the truth is the talks can be riveting, and they offer an opportunity to see how scholarship takes place in public and to hear what some of the brightest minds in the discipline are up to.

In cases where an invited scholar’s interests dovetail with your own, you may ask or be invited to meet further with the visitor, informally or as part of a department dinner with faculty.

Each sub-discipline also hosts internal workshops in which department faculty and advanced graduate students are invited to present their research. These workshops are informal, usually held around a table filled with snacks. While each series is geared toward one of the subfields, all faculty and grads are encouraged to attend. Offering to present material is a good way to flex your thinking after you’ve gotten back from the field.

Other workshops to look out for include the departmental teaching workshop series, IRB and ethics workshops, and UVAs professional development seminars. You should also attend the symposium for third-year students, especially if you’re in your first or second year, to get a sense of where things are headed. See the coursework chapter for more on that event.
getting the most out of grad school

Like any job, the most important things you learn about graduate school you learn by experience. But it helps to have a roadmap and a set of tools to get you going. This chapter includes general advice on getting the most out of grad school. Much of it will seem obvious or intuitive, but the good habits suggested here are easily forgotten when you’re facing the pressures of multiple deadlines, grading, and other duties all at once. If you feel stymied or overwhelmed, come back to these notes and refocus. Talk to other grads and the faculty members with whom you’re close. You’ll be OK.

Prioritize

Not all your tasks are of equal importance. Sometimes it’s tempting to push off the really important stuff while you deal with the little things that pile up and perhaps seem more essential than they are. Categorize your responsibilities into long-, medium-, and short-term items and set aside regular hours to handle the major stuff, such as writing your critical essays or applying for fieldwork funding. Be careful not to let immediate tasks like responding to emails or grading papers take over your life. Allowing that to happen might be a sign that you’re putting something important off because you’re anxious about it. Break down large projects into smaller, manageable tasks so they don’t seem so daunting.

For example, if you’re working on a grant application, write the intro today, get to the methods section and the budget on Thursday and Friday. But don’t take on too much at once. Often it’s more efficient to stay focused on one or two key jobs at a time, then move on to the next task in order of priority.

Get organized

It might help to block your time on a weekly and monthly basis. Draw a schedule out in a notebook, on a whiteboard or on your computer, so you can see in a nutshell your various obligations — reading for courses, attending class, holding office hours, planning for sections, etc.

Find a regular workspace and make it sacred. This is a place where you can get in the zone and not be unduly distracted. It should be comfortable and you should be able to keep the things you need, like books, notes, papers and files close at hand. Figure out a system of organization that works for you.

You should especially consider using bibliographic software like Zotero, Endnotes or RefWorks and begin organizing your citations as soon as you start grad school. If you haven’t done this already. These programs allow you to store reading notes, tag your sources and keep electronic copies of articles all in one place. They have features that work with most word processing applications, so you can build bibliographies for your papers at the snap of a finger. There may be some startup costs involved, but trust us it’s worth it.

Keep your computer files and email in some kind of logical order that works for you, and consider using UVA’s home directory system.

Take time at the end of each semester to put printed material, your papers and written notes in a sensible order. The less clutter you accumulate over time the easier it will be to stay sane. And doing these things will save you a lot of trouble in the long run.

Be flexible

Not everything will go as planned and when it doesn’t you have to roll with the punches. You should be willing, especially, to be provisional in your choice of research topic. You might have been accepted on the basis of a beautifully designed and articulated project — but this was because it was beautifully designed and articu-
Books in the linguistics library, on the second floor of Brooks Hall.