

# THE GRADUATE PROGRAM IN OLD WORLD ARCHAEOLOGY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT

## INTRODUCTION

Our program focuses on the prehistoric archaeology of the Old World. We provide students with the theoretical, methodological, and practical tools to address critical questions of ancient human behavior and evolution. Our geographical foci include Africa (McBrearty), the Near East (Munro, Smith), and Eurasia (Adler), and the temporal context of our research spans the Pleistocene (McBrearty, Adler), the early Holocene (Munro), and the mid-Holocene (Smith). We offer practical training in Zooarchaeology (Munro), Archaeobotany (Smith), Lithic Technology (McBrearty, Adler), the Human Fossil Record (McBrearty), Human Osteology (McBrearty), Geoarchaeology (McBrearty, Adler), Taphonomy (Munro, McBrearty), and Quantitative Methods (Adler). We occupy a newly renovated suite of labs in Beach Hall, completed in 2003, and we maintain close ties with the UConn Geosciences Program and the Departments of Ecology & Evolutionary Biology (EEB), Molecular & Cell Biology (MCB), and Geography. Igor Ovchinnikov (MCB) and Robert Thorson (Geosciences & EEB) have joint appointments with the Department of Anthropology and provide valuable resources for ancient DNA research and geomorphology. The UConn Department of Geography provides training in Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and the Department of Molecular & Cell Biology maintains a new state-of-the-art forensic and ancient DNA facility, the Center for Applied Genetic Technology (CAGT) in Beach Hall, opened in 2004.

**Graduate students in the Old World Archaeology Program obtain their degrees in Anthropology**, and must therefore satisfy the requirements of both the Old World Archaeology Program and Anthropology Department (<http://www.anth.uconn.edu/>), as well as those of the UConn Graduate School. We attempt to incorporate all of these requirements here, but students should also consult the Graduate catalogue, and the Department of Anthropology and Graduate School websites. Students normally enter our program to pursue the PhD degree and obtain the MA as they progress toward the PhD.

## The Application Process

Applications to the Old World Archaeology Program are made through the Graduate School; details of the application process can be found on the Graduate School website (<http://www.grad.uconn.edu>). The Department of Anthropology's graduate program committee makes admissions decisions. Sally McBrearty chairs the committee, and general application inquiries may be made to her ([mcbrearty@uconn.edu](mailto:mcbrearty@uconn.edu)). We judge applicants based upon three primary criteria: academic excellence, preparation in the discipline, and goodness of fit between the

student and our program; we also encourage women and members of underrepresented minorities to apply to our program. In reviewing applications, the committee carefully weighs transcripts, GRE scores, and letters of recommendation for evidence of academic background, interests, and achievements. The written statement of purpose is very important in determining what issues the student wishes to address in their research, and therefore which members of the faculty might serve on the student's advisory committee. If no member of the faculty feels willing or able to serve as a student's major advisor, the student will not be admitted.

Prospective students are strongly advised to learn about the program and about members of the faculty and their research before applying. You are encouraged to make email contact with faculty members with whom you would like to study. You should consider visiting the UConn campus, or at a minimum arrange to speak with your potential advisor on the telephone. The purpose of a campus visit or interview is for both faculty and student to determine whether the program is right for the student and whether the student is right for the program. You should make initial contact no later than the fall semester in which you submit your application. You should realize that while faculty members are conducting research abroad they often do not have regular access to their email. If you do not receive a reply to your inquiries about the program, it may be helpful to check with the Department of Anthropology administrator ([terese.andrews@uconn.edu](mailto:terese.andrews@uconn.edu)) to see if the faculty member you wish to speak with is on campus, and if not, to find out with whom you should correspond. Current graduate students are also a valuable source of information about the program, and you can find out about them and their contact details on their individual webpages or the Old World Archaeology Program website

(<http://www.anth.uconn.edu/faculty/munro/oldworldarchaeology.htm>).

You should begin the application process during the fall semester. The deadline for applications is December 1st and admissions decisions are made in early spring, usually during the months of February and early March, with letters of acceptance or non-acceptance mailed in early April. Acceptance letters usually contain information regarding any offers of financial aid, although financial details may sometimes be clarified in a subsequent letter.

### **Graduate Student Funding**

UConn and the Department of Anthropology endeavor to provide three years of funding to each student who performs well in the program. Normally this is in the form of teaching assistantships, although some students are funded through faculty research grants. Additional sources of funding at UConn can be found on the Graduate School website ( <http://www.grad.uconn.edu> ) , and students

are encouraged to apply for externally funded fellowships. UConn Graduate assistantships include tuition waivers and health insurance. Figures on current graduate stipends can be found on the Graduate School website where available student benefits are also described. Nominal increases in stipends can be expected when the student is awarded the MA and successfully passes the PhD exam. Modest summer fellowships are available from the Department of Anthropology to fund exploratory fieldwork. Normally students seek external funding to finance dissertation research, which takes place abroad. Upon return from the field, students may expect to receive one year of funding during the data analysis and write-up phase of the dissertation. This award will normally include some teaching duties.

### **Seminar Series**

The Old World Archaeology Program holds a weekly informal seminar (“Beer Hour”), usually on Thursday afternoons, during which program graduate students and faculty present their work in progress. We also invite guest speakers from other departments at UConn and from other universities. Recent invited speakers include:

Frank Hole, Yale University: Origins of Agriculture.

Chris Henshilwood, University of Bergen, Norway: Symbolic artifacts at Blombos Cave, South Africa.

Kurt Schwenck, Ecology & Evolutionary Ecology, UConn: The mammalian skull.

David Watts, Yale University: Aggression in Chimpanzees at Gogo, Uganda.

Phillip Lieberman, Brown University: The Origin of Language.

Paul Goldberg, Boston University: Micromorphology in Archaeology.

Zenobia Jacobs, Aberystwyth University: Luminescence dating.

John Shea, SUNY, Stony Brook: Neanderthals & modern humans in the Levant.

Richard Bribiescas, Yale University: Male reproductive success.

Dan Lieberman, Harvard University: Running & human evolution.

### **PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

#### **The First Year of Graduate Study**

Students should apply to the program with a specific faculty member in mind to serve as their **Permanent Academic Advisor**. They will also select two additional faculty members to serve on their **Advisory Committees**, one of whom must be a member of the graduate faculty and hold a PhD in Anthropology. The second associate advisor may be a member of the Department of Anthropology or another department relevant to the student’s research interest. In some cases the second associate advisor may be a professor from another institution. Students, in consultation with

their major advisor, must communicate the composition of their advisory committee to the Department of Anthropology's Graduate Program Committee by March of their first year in the program. Students should make the best possible use of the expertise of the advisory committee, develop cordial relations with them, meet with them as frequently as possible, and keep them informed of developments in their academic lives.

All Old World Archaeology Program students are required to take two theory courses, **Human Evolutionary Theory** and **Archaeological Theory**, the **Quantitative Methods** course, and a "**Skills**" **Course**, such as Human Osteology, Archaeobotany, Zooarchaeology, or Lithic Technology. Students should endeavor to complete these courses as soon as possible in their careers, in addition to one course in **Cultural Anthropology** to be determined in consultation with their advisor. PhD candidates are required to have a competent reading knowledge of at least one **foreign language** or to have at least six credits of course work in a **related or supporting field**. These six credits are in addition to the credit requirements for the degree. Other coursework is tailored to fit the student's individual needs and interests. Courses must be selected in consultation with the major advisor and need not be confined to the offerings of the Department of Anthropology. Students are encouraged to gain fieldwork experience during the summer following their first year.

### **The Second Year of Graduate Study**

In the second year, students should plan to complete their coursework and to identify a topic for their PhD dissertation research. Students are encouraged to do exploratory work in preparation for their dissertation research during the summer following their second year. Normally students take the **Master's exam** in the spring term of their second year, and, upon passing it, are awarded the **MA degree** in May of their second year.

**The Plans of Study** chart the coursework that the student completes in preparation for the MA and PhD degrees. Plan of study forms may be downloaded from the Graduate School website (<http://www.grad.uconn.edu>) . Students should obtain copies of the form and use them as road maps in their course planning. Final versions of the plans of study are submitted prior to the MA and PhD exams. The **MA plan of study** should be submitted to the major advisor by the fourth week of the fall semester of the second year in the program. The Department of Anthropology requires that MA candidates take at least one course each in 1) **Cultural Anthropology**, 2) **Archaeology or Biological Anthropology**, and 3) **Methods**. The archaeology or biological anthropology

requirement is normally satisfied by courses required within the Old World Archaeology Program. You may select a suitable course in Cultural Anthropology in consultation with your advisor; it can include Behavioral Ecology or Ecological Anthropology.

You must complete 24 credits of course work and pass the **MA exam** in order to earn the MA in the UConn Old World Archaeology Program. The MA exam is designed to test your knowledge of the key issues that dominate the field of Old World archaeology. The topics to be covered in the exam and a reading list of relevant literature are made available at the end of the fall semester. Students normally enroll in ANTH 397 in the spring semester of their second year in order to prepare for the MA exam, which will normally be taken in April. The exam consists of three questions to be answered in a classroom setting over a period of three hours.

The Graduate School stipulates that the requirements for the MA must be completed within six years of beginning the program. Extensions are considered but by no means automatic, and require approval by the student's major advisor and the Dean of the Graduate School.

### **The Third Year of Graduate Study**

In the third year, students are expected to complete any remaining coursework, to take the PhD exam, and to begin to focus upon their dissertation research project.

The Graduate School requires that a **PhD plan of study** be submitted before the student has completed 12 units of coursework for the Ph.D. Students in the Old World Archaeology Program submit the **PhD plan of study, signed by all members of the PhD advisory committee, by December 1 of their third year of PhD work** for approval by the Department of Anthropology's Graduate Committee and by UConn's Graduate Council's Executive Committee. The PhD plan of study should include 20 to 24 credits of **course work** above and beyond the course work completed for the M.A., excluding language study, and consisting largely of courses at the 400 level or above. At least 15 credits of GRAD 495 (Dissertation Research) must be included in the plan of study. The PhD plan of study must include details regarding the foreign language or related area and the means by which the requirement is to be satisfied, either by coursework (language or related area) or by examination (language).

Once the PhD plan of study has been approved by the UConn Graduate Council's Executive Committee, the student is allowed to take **the PhD exam**. Old World Archaeology Program

students normally select five fields of expertise that will prepare them for their PhD dissertation research. These fields of expertise are to be negotiated with the advisory committee, but usually include one or more theoretical foci, a methodological or skills focus, and one or more temporal or geographical regions. The student prepares bibliographies or 'field statements' on each topic, and submits them to their advisory committee for comment. The advisory committee, based primarily on these bibliographies, then prepares questions to test the student's knowledge of the five areas of expertise. According to the Graduate Catalog, the examination may be written, oral, or both. The format and date of the PhD exam is to be determined by the student's committee, but normally five questions are answered in writing in a classroom setting, usually in several different sittings, with a total time limit of fifteen hours. An optional oral exam, which must be attended by all members of the advisory committee, may augment the written exam, and will normally not exceed three hours. The advisory committee and two additional faculty members evaluate exams.

Graduate School regulations stipulate that the PhD exam be passed within a maximum of five years of beginning the program, or within four years if the student held an MA in Anthropology upon entering the program. Extensions are considered but by no means automatic, and require approval of the student's major advisor and the Dean of the Graduate School.

### **The PhD Dissertation Proposal**

The PhD dissertation proposal describes the research project that will form the basis of the dissertation. It is written in close consultation with the advisory committee, and is subject to approval by the advisory committee, the Department head, and the Graduate School. It also forms the basis of proposals for external funding, and is presented to the Old World Archaeology Program or Department of Anthropology as a colloquium or seminar. Students are encouraged to present their preliminary findings and research plans at meetings of regional and national professional organizations such as the Society for American Archaeology or the Paleoanthropology Society.

The PhD exam must be passed before presentation of the dissertation proposal. Once the advisory committee approves the proposal it is submitted to the head of the department, who appoints reviewers from outside the advisory committee for evaluation. The head, having received the examiners' reports, then recommends approval or disapproval to the Executive Committee of the Graduate Faculty Council. The dissertation proposal approval form may be obtained from the

Graduate School website. A copy of the signed approval form and the dissertation proposal must be submitted to the Graduate School; another is kept on file with the Department of Anthropology. Upon approval of the plan of study, the passing of the PhD exam, and approval of the dissertation proposal by the Executive Committee, the student is **advanced to candidacy** for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

### **Fourth Year and Beyond**

By the fourth year students will be well along in their PhD dissertation research. By definition, fieldwork in Old World Archaeology takes place abroad, and students are expected to raise external funds to support it. Some students carry out their research in close collaboration with their major advisor; others pursue more independent projects. In either case students are advised to remain in close communication with their advisory committee. Final data analysis and write-up are normally carried out at UConn. Upon return from the field, the student may expect to receive one year of funding that usually requires some teaching duties.

The dissertation normally proceeds through a number of drafts with the advisory committee providing critique and comment. Students are encouraged to present their findings at professional meetings and to submit portions of the dissertation for publication. When the dissertation is completed, students present their research findings as a formal colloquium that forms the **dissertation defense**. Following the defense the advisory committee decides whether to approve the dissertation and sign the cover page, or make suggestions for revision. After the completion of all requirements and the successful defense of the dissertation, the student is awarded the PhD. Many helpful details on final preparation and submission of the PhD dissertation and final degree conferral may be found on the Graduate School website.

The Graduate School stipulates that requirements for the PhD must be completed within eight years, or seven years if the candidate already held the MA in Anthropology upon entering the program. Extensions are considered but by no means automatic, and require approval of the student's major advisor and the Dean of the Graduate School.

### **Yearly Graduate Student Evaluation**

Students are encouraged to meet regularly with their major advisors and to keep members of their

advisory committees informed of their plans and progress. Students are required to meet with or report to their advisory committees at least once per academic year. Between March 1 and March 31 you will submit for evaluation by your advisory committee a summary curriculum vitae and a brief annual report of your activities and contributions for that academic year. The Department of Anthropology's Administrator maintains a dossier of essential data for each student, and relevant details should be included in the student's report. This information includes the names and contact details of all advisory committee members, the dates of the MA and PhD exams, dates of submission of the plans of study, the date of completion of the language requirement, and the date of submission of the PhD prospectus. Other relevant information includes details of coursework, papers published or presented, professional meetings attended, grants or prizes received, and similar accomplishments.

The annual Anthropology Department Graduate Student Evaluation Meeting usually takes place in April. Prior to the meeting, the major advisor, in consultation with the advisory committee, submits a brief report summarizing the student's progress to the Department of Anthropology's Graduate Program Committee, allowing adequate time for the report to be read by the Graduate Program Committee prior to the meeting. **If no information regarding the student is submitted to the Graduate Program Committee, the student will face termination from the program.** All members of the Department of Anthropology's graduate faculty normally attend the annual Graduate Student Evaluation Meeting. Following the meeting major advisors write letters to each of their advisees to inform them whether their progress is satisfactory, and to summarize any relevant findings of the annual graduate student evaluation process.

### **Graduate Student Timeline & Checklist**

#### **Year One**

- Begin Required coursework:
  - Archaeological Theory
  - Evolutionary Theory
  - "Skills" Course
  - Quantitative Methods
  - Foreign Language or Related Area
  - Cultural Anthropology
- Communicate names of advisory committee members to Department Head.
- Submit CV and statement for annual review (March)
- Summer Field work

#### **Year Two**

- Complete Required coursework:
  - Archaeological Theory
  - Evolutionary Theory

“Skills” Course  
Quantitative Methods  
Foreign Language or Related Area  
Cultural Anthropology  
Submit MA Plan of study  
Submit CV and statement for annual review (March)  
MA exam  
Summer exploratory field research

### **Year Three**

Complete any coursework  
Composition of advisory committee (December 1)  
PhD Plan of study (by December 1)  
Bibliographies for PhD exam  
Submit CV and statement for annual review (March)  
PhD exam  
Present PhD prospectus in seminar  
Submit PhD prospectus to advisory committee  
Grant proposals  
Preparation for dissertation research