



UNIVERSITÄT
BAYREUTH

M.A. study program
Social and Cultural Anthropology
Module handbook

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General Information

The M.A. in Social and Cultural Anthropology is a research-focused master's program which offers students an advanced orientation in socio-cultural anthropology and guides them through an ethnographic research project. At the heart of the program is the "guided research" component, in which students develop independent research projects in close conversation both with teaching staff and the other students in their cohort. Both in their research projects and in accompanying courses, students engage with enduring and contemporary questions in the field of anthropology and learn to use ethnography as a reflexive lens onto a particular research problem. The program is informed by its emphasis on the multiplicity of human experience and on its global entanglements. Students benefit from a close working relationship with professorial staff and may take advantage of the University of Bayreuth's distinction as a center of African Studies.

Content and Objectives

The M.A. in Social and Cultural Anthropology is an internationally oriented degree that builds on B.A.-level training in anthropology or related disciplines. In the first term, all students participate in foundational courses (module A) which serve as an advanced introduction to anthropology. These include courses on Social and Cultural Theory and World Anthropologies, as well as a course on questions in ethnographic methodology, *Doing Ethnography*. In Contemporary Themes in Anthropology (module B), students will engage with central concepts in contemporary anthropology that are relevant to their research projects. The core of the program is the research project (module C). It consists of a series of scaffolded courses which include preparation, fieldwork and analysis. Fieldwork takes place in the third term and can be combined with a study abroad program. The research project is guided by senior members of the teaching staff, thereby offering students the opportunity to pursue their research interests with careful mentorship. In addition, students have the opportunity to choose from a number of elective courses (module D) to shape their program according to their own interest. This includes the opportunity to study a foreign language (other than English or German).

Career Prospects

With thorough training in analytical and research skills, successful graduates are well prepared for academic positions in universities and research institutions as well as for a wide variety of non-academic careers. The M.A. program's engagement with questions of global interconnection and diversity makes students particularly suited to positions involving international and intercultural cooperation—for instance, in the NGO sector, in public and media relations, and in international organizations. Cultural heritage institutions, museums, the tourism industry, foundations, and other private organizations also look for experienced social and cultural anthropologists. Research done during fieldwork can also be used as the basis for further Ph.D. studies.

Courses Offered

Please refer to our website for information on the courses offered each term. In addition to titles and a short overview of their contents, a weekly overview showing course days and times is also available. You may also search in the UBT students' web domain (CMLife) for the courses you are interested in.

Types of Coursework

Seminars

In seminars, students engage actively with thematic, theoretical, and methodological questions. They can be taught by professors, non-professorial academic staff, or adjunct lecturers.

Colloquia

Colloquia offer opportunities for exchange among outside researchers, students, and professors.

Independent Study

In addition to attending courses, students are expected to work independently to deepen their academic study. This includes preparation for and revision of course material as well as self-directed reading. Students also have the option to organize a supervised independent study course as part of module B (Contemporary Themes in Anthropology), which is evaluated through an oral exam.

Fieldwork

The fieldwork requirement is part of the broader guided research project. It is an opportunity for students to put into practice the skills they have gained through their coursework with guidance from senior teaching staff. They practice ethnographic methods and deepen their knowledge of a thematic area through empirical research. Students can select their own topic and site but may also have the opportunity to conduct their field research with onsite supervision at a site selected by the program teaching staff.

Types of exams

Exams are used to assess acquired competences. The study and examination regulations set the base for basic rules regarding exams. These and other information concerning the study program can be found on our website.

The following types of exams appear in the M.A. program „Social and Cultural Anthropology“

- Final exam (Klausur) with a duration of 90 minutes to be held after the end of classes.
- Term paper (Hausarbeit) about an individual subject at the end of a course. The length of the paper should be in-between 20-25 pages of text (approx. 56.000-70.000 characters – including spaces). The topic has to be related to the course.
- Presentations (Präsentation) with a duration of approx. 30 minutes.
- Oral exam (mündliche Prüfung) with a duration of 30 to 45 minutes, to be held after the end of classes.
- Learning Portfolio (Lernportfolio): written documentation of subject-related content based on predefined criteria. Students will be informed about examination regulations and the type of exam at the start of the course. The learning portfolio's length is related to the size of the module. Examples are:
 - **Small writing exercises** with a length of 6 to 8 pages (16.000-23.000 characters – including spaces).
 - **Transcription of interviews, photographic work, minutes of research observations or coding exercises** with a length of 15 pages (42.000 characters – including spaces).
 - **Research and work concepts, documentation of research material** with a length of 15 pages (42.000 characters – including spaces).
- Research proposal (Forschungsproposal): students generate a research proposal that addresses the relevant literature, thematic scope, and methodological approach of their project. The length of the proposal should be around 15 pages (42.000 characters – including spaces).
- Research report (Forschungsbericht): written reflection of the conducted research with a length of around 35 pages (98.000 characters – including spaces).
- Presentation of the M.A. thesis (Präsentation der Masterarbeit): the M.A. thesis will be introduced in the M.A. colloquium with a presentation of about 30 minutes, followed by discussion.

Prerequisites for the M.A. program

This research-focused Master of Arts program is open to students who have a Bachelor's degree in anthropology or a neighboring discipline (min. 60 credit points/ECTS) of 2.5 (B-) or better. All applicants must submit a cover letter comprising a maximum of 2 pages where they explain why they consider themselves well-suited for the M. A. program Social and Cultural Anthropology. This letter can contain references to the applicant's previous studies, stays abroad, internships, interest in the theory and methodologies of social and cultural anthropology as well as initial ideas on the research project they plan to conduct during the M. A. program.

Workload

Hours per term week (abbreviated SWS) determine the duration of a course. On average, one term covers 15 weeks. A module normally takes 2 SWS which corresponds to 90 minutes per week.

Seminars are the most common type of course. A typical seminar workload of the M.A. Social and Cultural Anthropology is calculated as follows:

Participation in the seminar:	30 hours
Preparation for seminar:	75 hours
Follow-up on the seminar:	75 hours
Exam preparation:	120 hours

Total:	300 hours
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The calculation can be used as a reference when constructing an individual curriculum at the beginning of each term (see also a sample curriculum at the end of this module handbook). One ECTS credit point usually translates into 30 hours.

Grading

All modules except the Anthropology Colloquium count toward the final M.A. grade. The weight of each course in the final grade is determined by the number of credit points (ECTS).

Student Advising

In addition, students have the possibility to receive individualized counseling on their program of study with the Program Advisor at any point during their degree. Such counseling is recommended for first-year students and students who have failed examinations. It is required in the case that significantly less than 30 ECTS per term are completed during the course of study. For questions concerning organizational issues (e.g. CMLife, communication with the examination office and other administrative departments, etc.), students should refer to the Program Coordinator.

Module descriptions

A: Foundations

These modules provide an M.A.-level grounding in the history, theory, and methods of socio-cultural anthropology. Students learn about the theoretical traditions that have informed the discipline and think critically about the links between theory and the practice of anthropology in different sites.

Module A1, Social and Cultural Theory

A1	Social and Cultural Theory
Module coordinated by	Program Advisor, MA Social and Cultural Anthropology
Language	English
Description	This module offers an overview of strands of social and cultural theory that have had a defining impact on the discipline of anthropology. Students will engage with key concepts and frameworks in order to gain a closer understanding of theoretical positions and critical stances within the discipline.
Learning Objectives	Students are able to identify schools of thought and to critically assess different theoretical positions in anthropological writing. Students can critically frame and analyze social and cultural phenomena. Students are able to make complex theoretical arguments.
Prerequisites	None.
Main components and workload	Seminar (2 SWS)
Total hours	300h
Seminar (S), tutorial (T), Active participation	2 SWS, 30h (S)
Preparation and follow-up	150h (S)
Exam preparation	120h (S)
Exam information	Term paper/final exam
ECTS credits	10
Pattern of offering	every winter term
Course placement and length	to be taken in the first term, 1 term

Additional information	Prerequisite for further studies.
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Module A2, World Anthropologies

A2	World Anthropologies
Module coordinated by	Program Advisor, MA Social and Cultural Anthropology
Language	English
Description	The seminar presents anthropology as a discipline with multiple histories rather than as a unified field emerging from a universalist Western science. Through relevant debates and selected case studies, students engage with the discipline's embeddedness in the socio-cultural and political contexts where it is taught and practiced. This attention to anthropology's multiple genealogies also allows students to critically reflect on forms of anthropological knowledge production and circulation.
Learning Objectives	Students are able to identify the different disciplinary trajectories of anthropology and their embeddedness in academic and professional contexts. They are confident in applying analytical tools to assess how specific socio-cultural, political and institutional factors shape the disciplinary boundaries, contents and canons of anthropology. They are able to conceptualize research questions that are sensitive to the site of their research and to envision symmetrical academic collaboration.
Prerequisites	A1 Social and Cultural Theory
Main components and workload	Seminar (2 SWS)
Total hours	300h
Seminar (S), Active participation	2 SWS, 30h (S)
Preparation and follow-up	150h (S)
Exam preparation	120h (S)
Exam information	Term paper/final exam
ECTS credits	10
Pattern of offering	available to all students every summer term
Course placement and length	to be taken in term 2, 1 term
Additional information	

Module A3, Doing Ethnography

A3	Doing Ethnography
Module coordinated by	Program Advisor, MA Social and Cultural Anthropology
Language	English
Description	Ethnographic fieldwork is the central research methodology in social and cultural anthropology. Here students gain insights into important conversations in anthropology around methodological questions, including matters of reflexivity, collaboration and research ethics. Moreover, they learn a variety of ethnographic tools through practical exercises, including interviews, close observations, situational analysis, and mapping.
Learning Objectives	Students are able to conceptualize a research question and a methodological approach. They can articulate the specificity of an ethnographic approach and can critically reflect on their own research practice.
Prerequisites	None.
Main components and workload	Seminar (2 SWS)
Total hours	300h
Seminar (S), tutorial (T), Active participation	2 SWS, 30h (S)
Preparation and follow-up	150h (S)
Exam preparation	120h (S)
Exam information	Learning Portfolio
ECTS credits	10
Pattern of offering	Available to all students every winter term
Course placement and length	To be taken in the first term, 1 term
Additional information	Prerequisite for further studies.

B: Contemporary Themes in Anthropology

This module introduces students to central concepts in contemporary anthropology and allows them to engage with debates that are relevant to their research projects. Topics addressed include, but are not limited to, post- and decolonial anthropology, multiple belongings and care, kinship and the life course, global inequalities, public and engaged anthropology, indigenous and global south epistemologies, digitalization, and ecological and global health concerns. Students take two courses in this module (one of which may be an Independent Study), with the aim of situating their research interests in relation to current disciplinary concerns.

Module B, Contemporary Themes in Anthropology

B	Contemporary Themes in Anthropology
Module coordinated by	Program Advisor, MA Social and Cultural Anthropology
Language	English
Description	The module allows students to explore enduring debates and changing concepts in anthropology. Courses introduce relevant anthropological topics and questions and contextualize them in relation to the discipline's histories and to current academic, societal, and political problems. Specific course topics are accommodating students' research interests as well as the lecturer's specializations.
Learning Objectives	Students will deepen their understanding of particular topics and debates in anthropology. They will have an understanding of the history, context, and development of particular thematic areas in anthropology and be able to situate their research interests in relation to these. They will be able to present their own arguments and ideas on contemporary theories and concepts in a critical and concise manner.
Prerequisites	None.
Main components and workload	Seminar (2x2 SWS)
Total hours	2x240h
Seminar (S), tutorial (T), Active participation	2x2 SWS, 2x30h (S)
Preparation and follow-up	2x120h (S)
Exam preparation	2x90h (S)
Exam information	Term paper (after coursework)/oral exam (after independent study course)
ECTS credits	16 (2x8)
Pattern of offering	Offered every summer term. Supplementary courses and independent study courses may be offered in the Winter term

	depending on teaching capacity.
Course placement and length	Flexible
Additional information	One of the two required courses may be an independent study course tailored to the student's specific research interests. This will be evaluated through an oral exam.

C: Guided Research Project

The courses in module C guide students through the research process. Students plan and conduct their own project, analyze and reflect on their research data, and write a research report that serves as preparation for the in-depth theoretical analysis during the MA thesis.

Module C1, Guided Research Project (Practical Preparation and Research Proposal)

C1	Guided Research Project (Practical Preparation and Research Proposal)
Module coordinated by	Program Advisor, MA Social and Cultural Anthropology
Language	English
Description	This module prepares students to conceptualize, design, organize, and realize a research project. Students generate a research proposal that addresses the relevant literature, thematic scope, and methodological approach of their project. This includes ethical reflections on the research, for which relevant references (e.g. the guidelines of the German Anthropological Association) are taken into account.
Learning Objectives	Students learn how to successfully conduct a research project through all the planning stages. They are able to develop a research design for a specific question. They can reflect on ethical and methodological questions in relation to their planned fieldwork.
Prerequisites	A1, A3
Main components and workload	Seminar (2 SWS)
Total hours	150h
Seminar (S), tutorial (T), Active participation	2 SWS, 30h (S)
Preparation and follow-up	60h
Exam preparation	60h
Exam information	Research Proposal
ECTS credits	5
Pattern of offering	available every summer term
Course placement and length	1 term, to be taken in the second term

Additional information	Passing this module is a prerequisite for conducting the research project and doing fieldwork.
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Module C2, Guided Research Project (Fieldwork)

C2	Guided Research Project (Fieldwork)
Module coordinated by	Program Advisor, MA Social and Cultural Anthropology
Language	English or other, depending on chosen field site
Description	Students conduct a minimum of 6-8 weeks of ethnographic field research for projects they have designed in conversation with their project mentor. During this fieldwork, they are in regular communication with their project mentor, who supports students as they refine their topic, gather data, and reflect on their progress. This can take the form of a midterm meeting, field reports, individual consultations, or visits to the student's field site.
Learning Objectives	Students practice conducting ethnographic fieldwork for a specific research topic. They are able to successfully employ a variety of research methods and understand the specifics of ethnographic fieldwork.
Prerequisites	A1, A2, A3, C1
Main components and workload	
Total hours	6-8 weeks (240h-320h)
Exam information	Research report
ECTS credits	20
Pattern of offering	Every winter term
Course placement and length	To be taken in term 3
Additional information	Can be combined with a study abroad program

Module C3, Guided Research Project (Analysis)

C3	Guided Research Project (Analysis)
Module coordinated by	Program Advisor, MA Social and Cultural Anthropology
Language	English
Description	This course accompanies students in the analysis phase of their projects by facilitating discussions around research analysis and allowing them to process their research in a group setting. Guided by texts and discussions of data analysis, students compile their research findings into a report, which serves as the basis for group feedback and evaluation. Students learn to support each other and to offer constructive commentary, thus enriching each other's work.
Learning Objectives	Students will be able to process and conduct preliminary analyses of their research data. They can present the results of their research in a research report, taking into account theoretical and methodological considerations. They can critically reflect on their own process and offer constructive commentary on the work of others.
Prerequisites	A1, A2, A3, C1, C2
Main components and workload	Seminar (2 SWS)
Total hours	150h
Seminar (S), tutorial (T), Active participation	2SWS, 30h
Preparation and follow-up	60h
Exam preparation	60h
Exam information	Learning portfolio
ECTS credits	5
Pattern of offering	At the end of each winter term (en bloc)
Course placement and length	To be taken in term 3, 1 term
Additional information	Students who combine their fieldwork with a study abroad program will have the opportunity of individual mentorship.

D: Elective Courses

The electives are designed to broaden and deepen students' knowledge according to their individual interests and priorities. They provide flexibility and opportunities for students to acquire specialized knowledge and skills relevant to their research project. Students have the option of taking courses in other departments, including language courses. The timing of electives is flexible according to the student's study and research plans. Students must take at least two electives for a total of (at least) 12 ECTS.

Examples of programs that would be suitable for this module:

- MA „African Visual and Verbal Arts“
- MA „Intercultural Anglophone Studies“
- MA „Global Change Ecology“
- MA „Development Studies“
- MA „Sociology“
- MA „Global History“
- MA Religionswissenschaft
- MA Philosophy & Economics
- BA-Kombifach „Rechtswissenschaften mit Wahlpflichtbereich „Recht in Afrika“
- Language courses offered by the University of Bayreuth's language center/Sprachenzentrum (3 language courses fulfill the Electives requirement).

All modules are bound to the respective study and examination regulations of the programs they belong to. Please contact the program advisor if you want to take a course which is not on the above-mentioned list.

Module D, Elective Courses

D	Elective Courses
Module coordinated by	Program Advisor of the program where the course is based
Language	English or other (depending on the courses chosen)
Description	For a course description, please consult the module handbook of the study program where the course is based.
Learning Objectives	Objectives vary according to the course selected.
Prerequisites	None.
Main components and workload	Information on workload as well as exams can be found in the module handbooks of the respective courses
Total hours	360h
Exam information	The examination and study regulations of the selected courses apply.
ECTS credits	12

Pattern of offering	every term.
Course placement and length	Can be taken at any point during the study program.
Additional information	Credits from study abroad courses can be accepted for the Electives module

E: Anthropology Lecture Series

The Anthropology Lecture Series is the central discussion forum for anthropologists in Bayreuth and the interested public. Each week during the lecture period, a guest speaker is invited to present their work. Guests are invited who offer contemporary perspectives on research, theory, or methodology. This module offers MA students the opportunity to actively participate in the lecture series.

Module E, Anthropology Lecture Series I + II

E	Anthropology Lecture Series
Module coordinated by	Program Advisor, MA Social and Cultural Anthropology
Language	English
Description	MA students participate actively in the Anthropology Lecture Series. In addition to attending weekly lectures and engaging in the discussion, they have the opportunity to introduce a speaker.
Learning Objectives	After completing the module, the students have an overview of current anthropological research topics and theories which they can use for their master's thesis. They are familiar with international scholars and their presentation styles, and practice active participation in academic discussions. In this module, they particularly acquire the ability to introduce a speaker in an academic context and to engage in academic discussions.
Prerequisites	None.
Main components and workload	Colloquium (2 SWS)
Total hours	2 x 30 hours
Colloquium (C), active participation	2 x 3 SWS (C)
Exam preparation	Preparing introductory notes for one colloquium speaker and introducing the speaker.
Exam information	Introducing a lecturer ahead of their talk and frequent participation.
ECTS credits	7 (2 & 5)
Pattern of offering	Available to all students, usually every term
Course placement and length	2 terms (free choice)
Additional information	Course can also be taken in MA Interdisciplinary African Studies

F Master Thesis and Colloquium

The courses in this module guide students through the master's thesis, helping them to move efficiently through the stages of preparing, drafting, presenting, and finalizing the work.

Module F1, Master's Colloquium

G1	Master's Colloquium
Module coordinated by	Program Advisor, MA Social and Cultural Anthropology
Language	English
Description	The course focuses on the preparation and presentation of the master's thesis. Students present their individual projects to one another as they finalize their analyses and write up their research. The course focuses on questions like: how do I present my research findings in written form? How are my fellow students approaching their projects and what can we learn from one another?
Learning Objectives	Students are able to formulate and present their research findings. Students can recognize and evaluate theories and methods of social and cultural analysis.
Prerequisites	A1, A2, A3, C1, C2, C3
Main components and workload	Colloquium (2 SWS)
Total hours	180h
Colloquium (C)	2 SWS, 30h (C)
Preparation and follow-up	75h
Exam preparation	75h
Exam information	Presentation
ECTS credits	5
Pattern of offering	Summer term.
Course placement and length	To be taken in term 4, 1 term
Additional information	

Module F2, Master Thesis

F2	Master Thesis
Module coordinated by	Program Advisor, MA Social and Cultural Anthropology
Language	Usually English
Description	The master's thesis is the keystone project of the MA degree. The MA candidate analyzes their research findings in relation to the relevant context, theoretical literature, and methodological considerations. The thesis is submitted to the Examinations Office and evaluated by two examiners. Theses may be written in languages other than English with appropriate approval.
Learning Objectives	The MA candidate is able to work independently on a research project and to write up their analysis in a competent and critical manner.
Prerequisites	A1, A2, A3, C1, C2, C3
Main components and workload	
Total hours	600h
Exam information	Master thesis
ECTS credits	20
Pattern of offering	Summer Term
Course placement and length	
Additional information	The Master Thesis may not already have been used to obtain an academic degree.

Curriculum

This chart serves as a template for how one might organize one's courses as a full-time or part-time student in the MA in Social and Cultural Anthropology. Students are encouraged to use this as a framework for planning their courses, so as to ensure the feasibility and successful completion of the degree. Modules pictured in pale colors are flexible and may be taken at any time during the program.

Overview: Full-time study

4th Term	F1 MA Thesis (20)		F2 MA Colloquium (6)	E Anthropology Lecture Series II (2)	28
3rd Term	C2 Guided Research Project (Fieldwork) (20)		C3 Guided Research Project (Analysis) (5)	D Elective Course (6)	31
2nd Term	C1 Guided Research Project (Practical Preparation and Research Proposal) (5)	A2 World Anthropologies (10)	B Contemporary Themes in Anthropology (8)	D Elective Course (6)	29
1st Term	A1 Social and Cultural Theory (10)	A3 Doing Ethnography (10)	B Contemporary Themes in Anthropology (8)	E Anthropology Lecture Series I (5)	33

Overview: Part-time study

8th Term	F1 MA Thesis (20)		F2 MA Colloquium (6)	26
7th Term	B Contemporary Themes in Anthropology (8)			8
6th Term	C3 Guided Research Project (Analysis) (5)		E Anthropology Lecture Series II (2)	7

5th Term	C2 Guided Research Project (Fieldwork) (20)		20
4th Term	C1 Guided Research Project (Practical Preparation and Research Proposal) (5)	B Contemporary Themes in Anthropology (8)	13
3rd Term	A3 Doing Ethnography (10)	D Elective Course (6)	16
2nd Term	A2 World Anthropologies (10)	Anthropology Lecture Series I (5)	15
1st Term	A1 Social and Cultural Theory (10)	D Elective Course (6)	16