DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN THE FIELD OF HUMAN PALEOBIOLOGY

The human paleobiology doctoral program is the graduate education and training effort of GW's Center for the Advanced Study of Human Paleobiology (https://cashp.columbian.gwu.edu/), which promotes interdisciplinary research on human evolution. Because fossils, artifacts, and genomes are complex and mostly indirect sources of data for testing evolutionary hypotheses, research questions in human evolutionary studies exemplify the importance of an interdisciplinary approach.

This five-year program features rigorous core training in human paleontology, archaeology, molecular biology, genomics, behavior, ecology, and statistical methods. It emphasizes problem-based learning and training and internships in how science is communicated to the public—for example, through television, news media, museums, and the internet. The first two years of the program primarily consist of coursework, a professional skills and ethics seminar, a grant-writing course focused on preparing a dissertation proposal, and practical experiences that integrate original research and coursework from the earliest stages of graduate training. During the second and third years, students participate in two topically distinct laboratory rotations to broaden their research skills. Following the second year, students begin directed research on their doctoral dissertations while participating in a capstone seminar. Students are encouraged to submit their dissertation in a ready-to-publish format by the end of the fifth year.

There are two separate PhD programs affiliated with the Department of Anthropology, in the fields of anthropology (http://bulletin.gwu.edu/arts-sciences/anthropology/phd/) and in human paleobiology (p. 1). These programs have separate admissions procedures; prospective students should be sure to submit their application to the correct program.

This is a STEM-designated program.

Visit the program website (https://anthropology.columbian.gwu.edu/phd-human-paleobiology/) for additional information.

ADMISSIONS

Admission deadlines:	Fall – January 15
Standardized test scores:	The GRE general exam is not required.
	The Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), the academic International English Language Testing System (IELTS), or the PTE Academic is required of all applicants except those who hold a bachelor's, master's, or doctoral degree from a college or university in the United States or from an institution located in a country in which English is the official language, provided English was the language of instruction.
	Minimum scores for the program are:
	- Academic IELTS: an overall band score of 7.0 with no individual score below 6.0; or
	- TOEFL: 600 on paper-based or 100 on Internet-based; or
	- PTE Academic: 68.
Recommenda required:	Three (3) recommendations required.
Prerequisite requirements	A bachelor's degree in anthropology, biological sciences, geological sciences, psychology, or other cognate discipline from an accredited college or university. Advanced undergraduate coursework in one or more of the following subjects is desirable: biology, chemistry, biochemistry, physics, geoscience, and calculus.
Prior academic records:	Transcripts are required from all colleges and universities attended, whether or not credit was earned, the program was completed, or the credit appears as transfer credit on another transcript. Unofficial transcripts from all colleges and universities attended must be uploaded to your online application. Official transcripts are required only of applicants who are offered admission. If transcripts are in a language other than English, English language translations must be provided. The English translation alone should be uploaded into your application.
Statement of purpose:	In an essay of 250 – 500 words, state your purpose in undertaking graduate study in your chosen field. Include your academic objectives, research interests, and career plans. Also discuss your related qualifications, including collegiate, professional, and community activities, and any other substantial accomplishments not already mentioned on the application.
International applicants only:	Please review International Applicant Information (https://columbian.gwu.edu/international-graduate-applicants (https://columbian.gwu.edu/international-graduate-applicants/)) for details on required documents and English language requirements.

Supporting documents not submitted online should be mailed to:

Columbian College of Arts and Sciences, Office of Graduate Studies
The George Washington University
801 22nd Street NW, Phillips Hall 107
Washington DC 20052

For additional information about the admissions process visit the Columbian College of Arts and Sciences Frequently Asked Questions (https://columbian.gwu.edu/graduate-admissions-faq/) page.

Contact:

askccas@gwu.edu

202-994-6210 (phone)

Hours: 9:00 am to 5:00 pm, Monday through Friday

REQUIREMENTS

The following requirements must be fulfilled:

The general requirements stated under Columbian College of Arts and Sciences, Graduate Programs (http://bulletin.gwu.edu/arts-sciences/#degreeregulationstext).

The requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy program (http://bulletin.gwu.edu/arts-sciences/#doctoraltext).

72 credits, including a minimum of 45 credits in courses selected in consultation with the advisor prior to advancing to PhD candidacy and 6 to 27 credits in dissertation research.

Code	Title	Credits
Required		
Foundations core (8 or 9 credits)		
ANTH 6413	Analytical Methods in Human Evolutionary Studies (or an alternative course selected with the approval of the advisor and program director)	
ANTH 6414	Grant Writing for Biological Anthropology	
HOMP 6202	Lab Techniques: Paleoanthropology	
HOMP 6203	Ethics and Professional Practice I	
Modern and paleobiology core (15 credits)		
Five courses selected from the list below. Of these five courses, one course exemption may be allowed depending on prior education, for which program approval is required. When an exemption is granted, the student is still held to the requirement that they take 45 total credits of coursework.		
HOMP 6201	Hominid Paleobiology	
ANTH 6403	Primate Behavior	
ANTH 6404	The Evolution of Primate Life Histories	
ANTH 6407	Anthropological Genetics	
ANTH 6423	Evolution of the Human Brain	
ANTH 6801	Paleolithic Archaeology	
Engagement and application core (6 credits)		
HOMP 8302	Public Understanding of Science Internship	
HOMP 8303	Paleobiology Lab Rotation	
Electives		
At least 15 or 16 credits in coursework should be selected in consultation with the advisor from among various disciplines, including, but not limited to, ANAT, ANTH, BISC, BIOCHEM, BIOSTAT, CHEM, GEOL, HOMP, PHYS, or PSYC.		
The following courses may be repeated for elective credit, not to exceed a total of 12 credits:		
HOMP 6995	Independent Research	
HOMP 8998	Advanced Reading and Research (Taken for no more than a total of 6 credits. This course is graded on a CR/NC basis.)	
Dissertation research		
HOMP 8999	Dissertation Research (taken for 6 to 27 credits)	

Advanced Requirements

Students must successfully complete general comprehensive examinations, a dissertation proposal defense and examination, and a final dissertation defense and examination.

General examinations prior to PhD candidacy

General examinations must be successfully completed before the end of the third year of the program, prior to advancing to candidacy. These comprise two written comprehensive examinations, and a dissertation proposal defense and examination.

The first comprehensive examination includes written questions that integrate comprehension across all thematic areas in the modern and paleobiology core and tests foundational knowledge, concepts, theory, and/or methods learned in the core curriculum.

The second comprehensive examination is written in the form of an authoritative review of a chosen topic, including a history of previous relevant research, discussion of theoretical issues, and identification of outstanding questions or directions for future research.

For the dissertation proposal defense, students must prepare a research proposal that meets funding agency guidelines and successfully complete an oral defense and examination of this proposal.

After PhD candidacy

After candidacy, students proceed to completing their doctoral research plan and writing the dissertation, in consultation with their dissertation committee. Successful completion of a final dissertation defense and oral examination is required to earn the PhD degree.