

What Can I do with a Major in Anthropology?

An undergraduate degree is seldom connected directly to a specific career because it's about education, not job training per se. Nonetheless, employers often give a BA as a minimal requirement because they recognize that educated employees are often better employees because they have acquired the skills of working independently, finding information and critically evaluating it, analysing, and speaking and writing coherently. A degree in *any* discipline should provide you with these skills but the academic area that most sparks your passion is most likely to motivate you to acquire these skills well and to enjoy it at the same time; that is, there are solid reasons to follow your interests rather than making a disciplinary choice solely on the basis of an expected career ticket.

That said, a major in anthropology is good preparation for specific careers. For many careers, especially those providing higher pay scales and job satisfaction, some graduate work is required and a BA with a major in anthropology qualifies you to apply for positions in graduate schools to pursue a Master's (MA) or doctorate (PhD) degree. Some jobs, such as teaching in a University or College require at least one graduate degree, preferably a PhD.

For BAs with specialization in archaeology and cultural anthropology, possible jobs include research or administrative assistant in the area of cultural heritage management, often with government agencies such as Parks Canada. Graduates can also apply for jobs as research or field assistants with professors with grant projects or jobs in libraries or museums. A BA in anthropology can prepare you for further studies in museology (see: www.cci-icc.gc.ca/resources/links/muse_sour_e.aspx for more information).

Specialization in cultural anthropology prepares students for careers in any field where people are involved, particularly where people with different cultural backgrounds are thrown together: immigration, health services, legal services, social services, diplomacy, and international business. Even at home, the corporate world is recognizing the value of ethnographic research techniques in such fields as applied technology and market research. There are also jobs in non-profit, non-governmental agencies active around the world; such jobs may not always pay well but offer a high degree of satisfaction for the right people.

For BAs with specialisation in linguistic anthropology, possible jobs include: linguistic fieldwork assistant on endangered language projects. Teaching English as a second or foreign language is a way to travel and work abroad but, in addition to a BA in anthropology, we highly recommend getting proper certification in TEAL, TESL or TEFL; this usually takes about a year and provides access to jobs that are both better paid and more secure.

- a good resource is: Camenson, Blythe (2005), Great Jobs for Anthropology Majors, 2nd edition, New York : VGM Career Books.

- to increase their desirability to employers, students should consider the following:

- * getting a double major, e.g., with History, Math, Biology, Social Work, or Earth and Environmental Sciences

- * learning another language

- * acquiring extra computer skills, e.g., database management; or learn unusual programs (e.g., programs for Computer Assisted Design)

- * be active during the Bachelor's degree, e.g., volunteer for faculty research projects, or help out with campus/unit's events; extra activities provide experience and can enable good reference letters

Web Sites

www.aaanet.org/careers.htm - American Anthropology Association

fhss.byu.edu/anthro/Anthropology/deptindex.htm - Brigham Young University.

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jobsearch.about.com/od/anthrojobs/ - gives a list of links to other sites

www.medanthro.net/jobs/index.html - Society for Medical Anthropology. Contains links to other sites focusing on careers in medical anthropology

www.physanth.org/careers/ - American Association of Physical Anthropologists

www.anthrojob.com/ - Context-Based Research Group. Conducts short-term ethnographic research projects around the world

vlib.anthrotech.com/Job_Opportunities/ - provides listings of links to a variety of job sites

www.nku.edu/%7Eanthro/careers.html# - Northern Kentucky University - excellent site providing listings for various career categories (also has a nifty piece of music)

www.uts.utoronto.ca/~chan/capa/resources/Careers.html - University of Toronto (Canadian Association for Physical Anthropology) gives list of links to other sites

www.jobsabroad.com/listings.cfm/interntypeID/8 - Jobs Abroad gives a list of currently available jobs in Anthropology

www.pc.gc.ca/agen/empl/itm3-/emp3_e.asp - Parks Canada. listing of the kinds of jobs available with a degree in Anthropology or Archaeology

www.canadiancareers.com/jobboards.html - gives online job boards for currently available jobs in a variety of disciplines

www.shovelbums.org/ - site devoted to connecting archaeologists or archaeology students with field schools and jobs around the world