THE PROGRAMS

The Department of Anthropology’s doctoral program offers advanced training in social/cultural anthropology and archaeology. A terminal M.A. also is offered in archaeology. Although there are uniform requirements for the Ph.D. degree, each field of specialization offers an array of opportunities for training and research topics reflecting the interests of the faculty. Consequently, the department seeks applicants with a defined interest in one of the broad fields of specialization within anthropology and whose interests match the range of research orientations of the faculty.

Social/Cultural Anthropology. The program’s major focus is social/cultural anthropology. Through ongoing departmental and interdepartmental seminars, the faculty are dedicated to marrying the best in both the social science and humanities traditions. In recent years, faculty members have been concerned with the development of ethnography as a method and with the analysis of social discourse toward a broadly conceived cultural criticism of institutions in many different societies that are experiencing historic and global conditions of modernity. This has made collaboration and exchanges with literary critics, philosophers, historians, linguists, sociologists and political scientists an integral part of the graduate program in anthropology.

Additionally, the program offers exposure to styles of argument and reasoning across a range of contemporary theoretical issues. We emphasize the reading of primary sources of theory that have inspired the definition of central programs in anthropology. As essential preparation for doctoral research, explicit attention in instruction is paid to fieldwork and to skills in the conception and writing of ethnography.

Students interested in medical anthropology may take advantage of the extension resources of the Texas Medical Center through ties established with the University of Texas School of Public Health and the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences. In addition to work at Rice, degree credit may be given for formal courses offered at the Schools of Public Health and Biomedical Sciences.

Archaeology. The archaeology faculty seeks students with research interests complementary to their own. Faculty research writing is ongoing in several fields: the emergence of complex societies and urbanism, settlement studies, origins of food production, the Late Stone Age and Iron Age in Africa and historical archaeology.

This specialization emphasizes research skills in the library, field, and laboratory—making use of the excellent laboratory and computer facilities at Rice. These skills will be tested by means of three research papers, at least one of which must be an original data paper. In addition to research on the dissertation topic, all students are encouraged to develop at least one analytical skill, such as remote sensing, archaeological statistics, osteology, geomorphology or pedology.
**FACULTY/CURRENT RESEARCH**

**Andrea Ballestero.** Assistant Professor. Ph.D. (2010) University of California-Irvine

Major interests are legal and political anthropology, science and technology studies, political economy, materiality, human rights, liberalism, nature, and ontology.


Current research projects include the technopolitical transformation of water in Costa Rica and Brazil, the political economy of rights, the ethical within the technical in water politics, the constitution the differences between human rights and commodities in Latin America, the history of economic regulation, the materiality of ethics, and the becomings of everyday politics.


Major interests are the intersection of media and knowledge; energopower and political power; infrastructure and statecraft; experts, professionalism and cultures of expertise; intellectuals and social movements; late-, post- and neo-socialism; early and late liberalism; social theory and philosophy as resources for, and objects of, anthropological inquiry; Europe; Latin America; Germany; Mexico; Iceland.


Current research projects include: Epistemics and politics of renewable energy transition in Mexico (jointly with Cymene Howe); Digital media and the transformation of news and newsmaking in Europe and North America; Cybernetics and digital reason in postwar social theory and philosophy; Parody, sincerity and political communication in late liberalism (jointly with Alexei Yurchak).


Major interests are ancient and modern Greek society and culture; contemporary Europe; theories of modernity, reformism and radicalism; the ecology of social and cultural thought; the life and career of Michel Foucault, socioaesthetics, the anthropology of ethics and the anthropology of temporality.


A research project currently in formation focuses on the epistemics and the sociocultural themes and variations of scenario construction.


Major interests are political economy, landscape and regional models, household studies, urban space, materiality
of ritual, social memory, African archaeology and ethnography, eastern Africa/Tanzania.


Current research interests include the spatial practices of Swahili towns, including open and domestic spaces; mortuary ritual and ancient claims to the past; ceramics and regional studies; rural aspects of pre-capitalist urbanization; feasting, food and social power.


Major interests are medical anthropology, cultural study of reproduction, labor migration and economic development, modern Greece and Latin America.


Current research interests include new reproductive technologies, politics of reproduction, medicalization of the life cycle, social movements to reform childbirth practices in Brazil.


Research interests are the anthropology of activism and social movements; environmental ethics; Anthropocene and materiality; energy transition and climate change mitigation; gender and sexuality; media and documentary methods; Latin America (Nicaragua, Mexico), United States.


Major interests are the origins of complex societies, West African Iron Age archaeology, cultural property and archaeological heritage issues, human osteology, bioarchaeology, ceramic analysis.

Publications include Seeking Takurur: Archaeological Excavations and Survey in the Middle Senegal Valley, ed. with R.J. McIntosh, Yale University Publications in Anthropology, 2014; The Way the Wind Blows: Climate, History, and Human Action, ed. with J. Tainter and

Current research interests are in early urbanism in West Africa, archaeological investigations in the Middle Niger and Middle Senegal Valleys.

**PLAN OF STUDY**

**Course Work.** Each entering student is required to successfully complete a professional seminar; a seminar on theories of modernity and postmodernity; a grant-writing seminar; a yearlong sequence in the history of anthropological theory; and a yearlong practicum in pedagogy. In addition, seminars and tutorials can be arranged on any topic relevant to a student’s training, and where appropriate, these can be conducted in supervisory consultation with scholars in other disciplines at Rice as well as with adjunct faculty.

**Special Papers.** During the first three years of study, each student will prepare three substantial papers, each emphasizing an analytical, research and writing skill appropriate to the field of specialization. The subjects of the papers and their scheduling are major considerations in the ongoing consultations between students and their advisors.

**The Research Proposal.** Before being advanced to Ph.D. candidacy, a student must prepare a satisfactory proposal for dissertation research. The thought and planning for this proposal are a culmination of two years’ training, and its assessment is, therefore, a major emphasis in the program of study.

**Doctoral Dissertation.** Following approval of the proposal, a dissertation committee will be appointed, which may include others than the student’s original advisory committee. Dissertations ordinarily will be based in substantial part upon field research.

**DEGREE REQUIREMENTS**

(1) Two years of full-time scholarly study in residence at Rice.
(2) Competence in one scholarly foreign language.
(3) Satisfactory completion of the three qualifying papers in distinct fields of specialization.
(4) Satisfactory completion of a research proposal.
(5) Satisfactory completion of a dissertation.

**CAMPUS VISIT**

We encourage you to visit Rice at any time for a firsthand look at the department and the beautiful, tree-lined campus near the heart of historic Houston. In the meantime, feel free to contact the department with any questions you may have about its programs or the university.
ABOUT RICE AND HOUSTON

Rice is a leading American research university—small, private and highly selective—distinguished by a collaborative, interdisciplinary culture and a global perspective. Only a few miles from downtown Houston, it occupies an architecturally distinctive, 285-acre campus shaded by nearly 4,000 trees. State-of-the-art facilities and laboratories, internationally renowned centers and institutes and one of the country’s largest endowments support an ideal learning and living environment.

The university attracts a diverse group of highly talented students and faculty with outstanding graduate and professional programs in the humanities, social sciences, natural sciences, engineering, architecture, music and business. With just 2,275 graduate students and 3,485 undergraduates, it offers an unusual opportunity to forge close relationships with eminent faculty scholars and researchers and the option to tailor graduate programs to specific interests.

Houston offers all the expected educational, cultural and commercial advantages of a large urban center, and more. It’s home of the Texas Medical Center, the largest concentration of medical schools, hospitals, and research facilities in the world, as well as several other universities. Rice has cooperative programs with the University of Houston, Baylor College of Medicine, the University of Texas Health Science Center and Texas Southern University. Houston is one of the few U.S. cities with resident companies in all four major performing arts—drama, ballet, opera and symphony. It also boasts a museum district featuring exhibits of national and international prominence.

As urban as it is, Houston also is a surprisingly green city. Houstonians enjoy the outdoors in more than 300 municipal parks and 120 open spaces, and many frequent the beach at Galveston Island, only a 45-minute drive away. Other short trips include Austin, the state’s capital, and historic San Antonio, both of which are a little more than three hours away.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:
Rice University
Department of Anthropology–MS 20
P.O. Box 1892
Houston, Texas 77251-1892
Phone: 713-348-4847
Fax: 713-348-5455
E-mail: anth@rice.edu
Web site: www.ruf.rice.edu/~anth

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:
Rice University homepage:
www.rice.edu
Rice University Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies homepage:
graduate.rice.edu
Graduate Student Association homepage:
gsa.rice.edu
City of Houston homepage:
www.houstontx.gov
Houston information from the Houston Chronicle:
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www.houston.org
Houston information from Citysearch:
houston.citysearch.com