

Proposal to the Faculty of Social Sciences for a revised MA programme in Social Anthropology

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Introduction

The department of Social Anthropology proposes to establish a revised Master’s programme in Social Anthropology due to structural issues in the current programme. The current MA programme will be replaced by the revised programme for the 2025 intake. Students admitted to the current programme will be able to complete their degrees within the current model, or if delayed, by transitional arrangements.

As the changes are mainly structural, we propose to repurpose the existing programme description and diploma text. A minor correction will be made under the heading “Fieldwork and a semester abroad” where the opening paragraph will be edited to reflect the changes in the placement and duration of fieldwork in the revised programme. “Programme structure” must also necessarily be changed.

Current programme description:

<https://www.uio.no/english/studies/programmes/social-anthropology/>

Assessment of the current programme and rationale for establishing a revised programme

The current English MA programme had its first in-take of students in 2019. The rationale for establishing a revised programme is that we have had unsatisfactory recent recruitment to the programme and, mainly, that we have experienced late submission of theses.

New features in the current programme included (1) more advanced training in the discipline’s theory and methods, (2) a choice between two specialization tracks (Contemporary Ethnography or Global Political Economy), (3) the possibility of doing an internship or an elective course outside SAI. In addition, we retained the long fieldwork (up to six months), one of SAI’s strengths on the global MA programme market, and the long thesis (35,000 words +/- 10%). Figures 1 and 2 show the existent programme structure with its two tracks.

Fig. 1. Contemporary Ethnography track

4th semester	ANTH4090 – Master thesis		
3rd semester	ANTH4200 – Fieldwork		
2nd semester	ANTH4100 – The Anthropology of Globalization	ANTH4150 – Ethnography in Practice	Elective course(s) *, e.g. ANTH4510
1st semester	ANTH4020 – Academic Writing and Project Development	ANTH4010 – Advanced Anthropological Theory	ANTH4030 – Advanced Anthropological Methods
	10 credits	10 credits	10 credits

Fig. 2 Global Political Economy track

4th semester	ANTH4090 – Master thesis		
3rd semester	ANTH4200 – Fieldwork		
2nd semester	ANTH4100 – The Anthropology of Globalization	ANTH4610 – Work, Capital and Business	ANTH4620 – Finance, Markets and Resources
1st semester	ANTH4020 – Academic Writing and Project Development	ANTH4010 – Advanced Anthropological Theory	ANTH4030 – Advanced Anthropological Methods
	10 credits	10 credits	10 credits

The current MA programme proved attractive to students, as demonstrated in over 200 applications per 50 available seats, more than two first-priority applicants per seat, and stronger applicants, resulting in a programme with a higher grade for admission (*poenggrense*) and a soaring number of international students in the first few years. However, after accumulating feedback from students, the MA programme has proved to contain some important structural complications that make a revision necessary.

We present the complications identified by faculty, administration, and students through *Sosialantropologisk programutvalg* (SAPU) below:

- Low completion rate on time (33% average for 2019-2021). This is lower than SAI's old Norwegian MA programme (62% (2016), 54% (2017), 28% (2018) and 52% (2019)). The COVID pandemic has also been a factor.
- The programme is intense. While a standard year formally consists of 10 study months, our programme recommends students be engaged for 12 months for the first year. We encourage students to do fieldwork over the summer without offering a break elsewhere.
- Fieldwork is formally placed in the third semester but in practice students often conduct their fieldwork from April to October to get time for coursework and thesis writing. This discrepancy between formal structure and informal practice generates more work for the administration and double-speak in communication with students, leading to confusion and delays. This also entails a differentiated study process and less cohesion in the student group.
- The programme structure imposes economic burdens on students as it deprives them of the opportunity to earn money over the summer, without giving them the option of added funding from Lånekassen.
- Low intake in 2023 (35 people out of 50 places), with low grades (even at low C), as well as low diversity rates (3 non-Nordic students, when last year we had 15).
- The electives and internship have proved to be incompatible with the structure of the second semester, as they must be completed before April if students are to do approximately six months of fieldwork.
- We offer no courses or student support in the second year apart from supervision.
- SIO student housing contracts normally last until June/July. When students leave for fieldwork in March/April they may have to terminate their contracts early, and it can be difficult to sublet housing in the middle of the semesters. It can also be challenging to secure housing mid-semester when returning from fieldwork in the autumn.

Objectives for a revised MA programme

The establishment of a revised programme aims to make a good programme better by addressing its weaknesses. The main task in the revision work has thus been to retain the key strengths of the programme in a better structure, thereby raising in-time completion rate substantially within a couple of years, without committing further resources for an already resource-demanding programme.

- Retaining the long fieldwork, an important selling point for SAI's MA programme internationally, but ensure that its timing in the programme structure facilitates these submission on time.
- Guaranteeing that fieldwork time allows students to have a summer break with the possibility of earning money in the absence of support from Lånekassen.
- Continuing the high-level training in the discipline's advanced theory and methods, without making the workload over-demanding for students.
- Retaining the two specialization tracks (Contemporary Ethnography and Global Political Economy), as they afford an identity to the MA, now internationally recognized.
- Continuing the focus on working life relevance, including the possibility of an internship, but in a way that is more compatible with other course work.
- Focusing on students' individual research projects, but with a stronger and more predictable structure for both students, faculty, and administration.
- Creating two clear lines of investigation within theory and method in the first semester: (1) What does an anthropologist study, and how do they approach their subject matter? (2) How does an anthropologist work in practice, and how can we transform our interests into a project?
- Introducing writing seminars after fieldwork supporting students in their writing process and facilitate in-time thesis submission.
- Reducing the length of the MA thesis (currently 35,000 words +/- 10%) to make sure it is comprehensive enough to retain a solid fieldwork-based analysis, while considering students' finishing on time. The length was not changed when the MA thesis was reduced from 40 ECTS to 30 ECTS in the establishment of the current programme. The required thesis lengths for other MA programmes at the faculty are lower: e.g., Human Geography (20,000-25,000 words), Sociology (28,000-36,000 words) and Political Science (16,000-35,000 words).

Proposed changes in structure

The proposed changes in the MA programme's structure include four main points:

- The placement of fieldwork
- The merging of existing courses
- The introduction of a new course on thesis writing in the third semester
- The thesis length.

See new proposed structure in figures 3 and 4 below.

Fig. 3. Contemporary Ethnography

4 th semester	ANTH4092 Master's Thesis (30 ECTS)		
3 rd semester	ANTH4150 Ethnography in Practice (10 ECTS)	ANTHxxxx Elective course(s), e.g. Internship (10 ECTS)	ANTH4091 Writing Ethnography (10 ECTS)
2 nd semester	ANTH4210 Ethnographic Fieldwork (30 ECTS)		
1 st semester	ANTH4115 Advanced Anthropological Theory (15 ECTS)	ANTH4125 Advanced Anthropological Methods and Project Development (15 ECTS)	

Fig. 4. Global Political Economy

4 th semester	ANTH4092 Master's Thesis (30 ECTS)		
3 rd semester	ANTH4610 Work, capital and business (10 ECTS)	ANTH4620 Finance, Markets and Resources (10 ECTS)	ANTH4091 Writing Ethnography (10 ECTS)
2 nd semester	ANTH4210 Ethnographic Fieldwork (30 ECTS)		
1 st semester	ANTH4115 Advanced Anthropological Theory (15 ECTS)	ANTH4125 Advanced Anthropological Methods and Project Development (15 ECTS)	

Merging ANTH4010 and ANTH4100 into ANTH4115

For the first semester, we introduce ANTH4115, a new 15 ECTS course in anthropological theory replacing the current courses ANTH4010 – Advanced Anthropological Theory (first semester) and ANTH4100 – Core Themes in Anthropology (second semester). ANTH4010 (10 ECTS) and ANTH4100 (10 ECTS) are condensed into the new course, which is placed in the first semester to help students find an inspiring theoretical framework for their MA project.

In order to help students of a non-anthropology background increase their learning outcomes, we will offer an introductory workshop early in the semester (not part of the programme's official structure.) See course description in appendix.

Merging ANTH4030 and ANTH4020 into ANTH4125

For the first semester we also introduce ANTH4125 a new 15 ECTS methods/project development course replacing the current ANTH4030 – Advanced Anthropological Methods (first semester) and the current ANTH4020 – Academic Writing and Project Development (first semester). ANTH4030 (10 ECTS) and ANTH4020 (10 ECTS) are condensed into the new course and placed in the first semester to help students with methodological skills for their MA project.

See course description in appendix.

Moving fieldwork from the third to the second semester- ANTH4210

The fieldwork will be moved to the second semester. The new course ANTH4210 Fieldwork will have an unambiguous timeframe that enables the students to have a summer break. This will also give students more time to reflect, digest and write after fieldwork (both third and fourth semester). With the new structure, we expect students to engage in fieldwork between January/February and June. If students want to extend their fieldwork into the summer, they are free to do so. We believe the new structure will have a positive effect on submission rates, not least with the introduction of additional writing seminars (ANTH4091) in the third semester. See course description in appendix.

Offering more supervision after fieldwork

The distribution of supervision will not change from the current programme. Students will typically attend twelve supervision meetings: three in the first semester, one in the second semester, three in the third semester and five in the fourth and final semester. However, this distribution suits the proposed revised programme structure even better as it offers more support to the students in the semester after fieldwork.

Moving specialisations and internships

We move the specialisation courses and internship to the third semester. It is easier and more stimulating to read theory when students have already done fieldwork and have empirics. Students may also experience more rewarding internships having tested methods in a long fieldwork and will have a better selection of elective courses outside SAI as they will be at campus the whole semester.

Introducing writing seminars in the third semester- ANTH4091 Writing Ethnography

The introduction of the new course ANTH4091 Writing Ethnography (10 ECTS) will support the students in their writing after fieldwork and could have a significant effect on submission-in-time rates. The course will be held in the third semester, but academic support during the writing phase continues into the fourth semester with two seminars included in ANTH4092 – Master Thesis in the fourth semester. This is to secure sufficient support throughout the writing process.

The exam will consist of a paper where the students reflect on their own writing processes based on the discussions and feedback in class.

Changes in graded courses

Like in our current programme, there will be three graded courses (A-F) in the revised programme structure. The current programme contains 50 ECTS of graded courses, and the revised programme will contain 55 ECTS of graded courses:

- Advanced Anthropological Theory (ANTH4110) in the first semester.
- ANTH4610 for the Global Political Economy track course / ANTH4150 for the Contemporary Ethnography track in the third semester.
- ANTH4092 Master's thesis in the fourth semester.

Shorter Master's thesis

We introduce a slightly shorter thesis (27 000 to 33 000 words) which we still regard sufficient for a solid fieldwork-based analyses while adjusted to the ambitious course work and the work load it implies and makes submission on time more feasible. See course description in appendix.

Transitional arrangements

SAI will offer exams in all current first and second semester courses one more time after teaching is discontinued.

2019-2022 COHORTS

The 2019-2022 cohorts have completed the first two semesters of the current programme design, and therefore will not need transitional arrangements. For delayed students in these cohorts, we will offer the current fieldwork course and thesis course.

2023-2024 COHORTS

For delayed students who have completed all courses in the first two semesters, we will continue to offer the current fieldwork and thesis course. Students who have only partially completed the two first semesters before autumn 2025 will need transitional arrangements.

We will establish 7,5 ECTS transitional courses with teaching and curriculum integrated in the new 15 ECTS courses, but with their own exams. Such courses would enable the department to approve

already completed credits from the current programme into the new design. The transitional design will result in students having 2,5 to 7,5 surplus credits. Teaching in the transitional courses will be offered annually for two years (Autumn 2025 and 2026) and exams will be offered annually for three years (Autumn 2025, 2026 and 2027).

Below are tables showing the degree of overlap between courses in the current programme design and the proposed design, the new transitional courses, and transitional combinations in all the possible cases.

COURSE OVERLAP (OBLIGATORY COURSES FOR ALL STUDENTS)

COURSES (ECTS)	ANTH4115 (15)	ANTH4125 (15)	ANTH4210 (30)	ANTH4091 (10)	ANTH4092 (30)
ANTH4010 (10)	7,5				
ANTH4100 (10)	7,5				
ANTH4020 (10)		7,5			
ANTH4030 (10)		7,5			
ANTH4200 (30)			30		
ANTH4090 (30)					30

TRANSITIONAL COURSES

SANTH4100	SANTH4020	SANTH4030
7,5 ECTS from ANTH4115 with separate exam. Substitution for ANTH4100.	7,5 ECTS from ANTH4125 with separate exam. Substitution for ANTH4020.	7,5 ECTS from ANTH4125 with separate exam. Substitution for ANTH4030.

TRANSITIONAL COMBINATIONS

CASE A: COMPLETED ONLY ANTH4010 (10 ECTS)

ANTH4092 Master's thesis (30)		
ANTH4091 Writing Ethnography (10)	SPECIALISATION COURSES (20)	
ANTH4210 Ethnographic Fieldwork (30)		
SANTH4100 (7,5)	ANTH4125 (15)	

Total ECTS: 122,5

CASE B: COMPLETED ONLY ANTH4020 (10 ECTS)

ANTH4092 Master's thesis (30)		
ANTH4091 Writing Ethnography (10)	SPECIALISATION COURSES (20)	
ANTH4210 Ethnographic Fieldwork (30)		
ANTH4115 (15)	SANTH4030 (7,5)	

Total ECTS: 122,5

CASE C: COMPLETED ONLY ANTH4030 (10 ECTS)

ANTH4092 Master's thesis (30)		
ANTH4091 Writing Ethnography (10)	SPECIALISATION COURSES (20)	
ANTH4210 Ethnographic Fieldwork (30)		
ANTH4115 (15)	SANTH4020 (7,5)	

Total ECTS: 122,5

CASE D: COMPLETED ONLY ANTH4010 AND ANTH4020 (20 ECTS)

ANTH4092 Master's thesis (30)		
ANTH4091 Writing Ethnography (10)	SPECIALISATION COURSES (20)	
ANTH4210 Ethnographic Fieldwork (30)		
SANTH4100 (7,5)	SANTH4030 (7,5)	

Total ECTS: 125

CASE E: COMPLETED ONLY ANTH4010 AND ANTH4030 (20 ECTS)

ANTH4092 Master's thesis (30)		
ANTH4091 Writing Ethnography (10)	SPECIALISATION COURSES (20)	
ANTH4210 Ethnographic Fieldwork (30)		
SANTH4100 (7,5)	SANTH4020 (7,5)	

Total ECTS: 125

CASE F: COMPLETED ONLY ANTH4020 AND ANTH4030 (20 ECTS)

ANTH4092 Master's thesis (30)		
ANTH4091 Writing Ethnography (10)	SPECIALISATION COURSES (20)	
ANTH4210 Ethnographic Fieldwork (30)		
ANTH4115 (15)		

Total ECTS: 125

CASE G: COMPLETED ANTH4010, ANTH4020 AND ANTH4030 (30 ECTS)

ANTH4092 Master's thesis (30)		
ANTH4091 Writing Ethnography (10)	SPECIALISATION COURSES (20)	
ANTH4210 Ethnographic Fieldwork (30)		
SANTH4100 (7,5)		

Total ECTS: 127,5

CASE H: COMPLETED ANTH4010, ANTH4020, ANTH4030, ANTH4100 + SPECIALISATION (60 ECTS)

ANTH4090 Master's thesis (30)		
ANTH4200 Fieldwork (30)		

Total ECTS:120

CASE I: COMPLETED ANTH4010, ANTH4020, ANTH4030, ANTH4100 + SPECIALISATION ANTH4200 (90 ECTS)

ANTH4090 Master's thesis (30)		
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Total ECTS:120

Appendix

Obligatory courses in the revised MA programme

All course titles are working titles. The course descriptions will be reviewed again before implementation and may be subject to changes.

ANTH4115 Advanced Anthropological Theory

Level: Master

Credits: 15

Teaching: Autumn

Examination: Autumn

Teaching language: English

Course content

The course provides students with a broad and advanced level grounding in contemporary anthropological theorization. In addition to introducing students to key theoretical discussions and approaches in the discipline, it presents them with a set of analytical tools and frameworks for theorizing the present moment and for constructing their own research agendas.

The course is divided into two main parts. The first quarter of the course introduces students to recent anthropological discussions on the role and practice of theory in anthropological research, and the history of anthropological theorization. The rest of the course explores recent developments in anthropological theorization through an examination of theoretical approaches and discussions that have animated the discipline in the 21st century.

Themes covered in the course:

- Gender, Sexuality and Kinship
- Religion in a Secular Age
- Anthropology and History
- The State
- Media and Publics
- Capital and Labour
- The Environment and the Anthropocene
- Beyond the Human
- Other Worlds, Other Politics

Learning outcome

Knowledge

- Advanced level overview of key theoretical discussions in contemporary anthropology
- Appreciation of their relevance for contemporary academic and public policy debates
- Understanding of ongoing theoretical debates in social anthropology and related disciplines, and the position of the students' own research in relation to these debates

Skills

- Ability to summarize and convey advanced theoretical perspectives in anthropology
- Extensive ability to construct and present an academic argument
- Ability to write academic texts at an advanced level

General competence

- Ability to understand and reflect on a variety of theoretical positions in anthropology and to use this understanding to contribute to the construction of a unique research agenda
- Team-work capability through group discussions and group-presentations
- Ability to express arguments both in solid academic written prose and through oral presentation

Admission to the course

Students must be enrolled in the master's programme in Social Anthropology. Students from MA programmes in other relevant disciplines may apply for admission by sending an email to info-master@sai.uio.no within the regular deadlines.

Overlapping courses

- ANTH4010 (7,5 credits)
- ANTH4100 (7,5 credits)

Teaching

Twelve 3-hour teaching blocks with a combination of lectures and seminars.

Examination

4-day take home exam (2700-3300 words).

Grading scale

Grades are awarded on a scale from A to F.

ANTH4125 Advanced Anthropological Methods and Project Development

Level: Master

Credits: 15

Teaching: Autumn

Examination: Autumn

Teaching language: English

Course content

This course takes as point of departure the relevance of fieldwork as a practice of anthropological knowledge making. The course includes reading discussions, methodological explorations, and writing

work to study the ethics, politics, and practice of ethnographic fieldwork. This way, it aims at contributing to the development of each student's individual research proposal for the MA fieldwork and thesis.

The key output of the course is twofold: a written individual research proposal and a creative methodological reflection. Students' field projects are bases for both.

The course includes teaching on:

- participant observation
- conducting interviews
- data management
- library and data research and resources
- critical and ethical reflections on anthropological truth claim, scale, positionality, representation, and collaboration in ethnographic practice as it intersects with gender, class, ethnicity, and nationality

This enables students to formulate research questions, conduct literature review, and define the methodological aspects needed to conduct their own fieldwork. Students will learn to “deep read,” develop their writing skills, and think critically to produce written proposals, in-class presentations, and a final creative project.

Learning outcome

Knowledge

- Advanced level overview of key methodological approaches in contemporary anthropology and their relevance for students' own research
- Appreciation of the ethical challenges raised by different methodological and theoretical approaches
- Understanding of how ethnographic research can address the pressing questions of our age

Skills

- Ability to design a qualitative research project based on the state of the art of a research field, with a relevant research question and an ethically feasible methodological design
- Ability to use creative methods and forms of expression for communicating research designs
- Ability to assess the methodological merit and ethical soundness of qualitative research projects

General competence

- Capacity for critically engaging with the methodological and ethical challenges of ethnographic research within contemporary social science
- Capacity for intellectual cooperation and teamwork through group discussions and group presentations
- Ability to cultivate ethics, responsibility, and respect in the production of knowledge

Admission to the course

Students must be enrolled in the master's programme in Social Anthropology.

Overlapping courses

- ANTH4020 (7.5 credits)
- ANTH4030 (7.5 credits)

Teaching

Twelve 3-hour teaching blocks with a combination of lectures and seminars.

Compulsory activities:

- 2-page draft research proposal.
- 6-page draft research proposal with oral presentation.
- Creative project that students will build throughout the course, and which will be part of a collective exhibit at the end of the semester.

Draft proposals and oral presentations will be assessed as Approved/Not approved.
All compulsory activities must be approved in order to take the ANTH4125 exam.

Examination

- A final submission in Inspira of a 3500 words research proposal.
- Short description (up to 300 words) in which students explain what inspired and guided their final production, including a picture of their creative project, a file with it or a link to it. The creative project must be accepted by the lecturer beforehand.

All compulsory activities must be approved, and the exam passed in the same semester.

Grading scale

Grades are awarded on a Pass/Fail scale.

ANTH4210 Ethnographic Fieldwork

Level: Master

Credits: 30

Teaching: Spring

Examination: Spring

Teaching language: English

Course content

This course consists of independent data production through ethnographic fieldwork for a period of four to six months. During these months, you will be gathering the data or the material that will form the basis for the writing of your thesis. After fieldwork, you have to submit a fieldwork report.

Ethnographic fieldwork is central to anthropological knowledge production, but an anthropological master's thesis can be based on different types of research strategies and different types of material. In addition to more or less classic ethnographic fieldwork, it can also be based (partly or completely) on forms of archival work, digital sources, reading of others' publications, etcetera.

[SAI Financial support for fieldwork](#): The Master's Programme in Social Anthropology offers financial support for fieldwork expenses to promote and facilitate students' fieldwork. Social Anthropology master's students can be reimbursed for certain expenses up to maximum fixed rates.

Learning outcome

Knowledge

- In-depth knowledge of the ethnographic region in which you will conduct fieldwork.
- In-depth knowledge of qualitative research methodology with a focus on participant observation and the interpretation and analysis of social interactions.
- Experience-based knowledge and a deeper understanding of the research process in Social Anthropology.

Skills

- Ability to manage and execute an independent research project and collect qualitative data through fieldwork.
- Ability to apply and reflect on key methodological and theoretical tools involved in the collection, production and analysis of different types of data.
- Ability to convert fieldwork material into anthropological data, and to move from data to analytical text in an ethically sound manner.

General competence

- Respect for scientific values, such as openness, rationality and precision, and ability to distinguish between research-based knowledge, practice-based knowledge and "perception"
- Enhanced ethical awareness concerning the various problems that may arise during research and the writing up of research results
- Enhanced capacity to adhere to the principles of academic honesty, integrity, and responsibility when it comes to your research and to other professional work

Admission to the course

Students must be enrolled in the master's programme in Social Anthropology.

Formal prerequisite knowledge: Students must have completed ANTH4115 and ANTH4125.

Teaching

Compulsory activities:

- Project Proposal Update (pre-fieldwork). Before you start your fieldwork, you must have a mandatory meeting (ca. 30-60 minutes) with your supervisor, during which you present your project plans. This discussion should use the project proposal that was submitted at the end of ANTH4125 'Advanced Anthropological Methods and Project Development' as a basis. The main task is to update your supervisor on further preparatory developments or changes made to the submitted proposal and clarify further ethics and safety challenges that may still need to be discussed. Your supervisor will assess this mandatory meeting as Approved/Not approved.
- MA Fieldwork Notification form (pre-fieldwork). You must fill in the [MA Fieldwork notification web form](#) to notify the department about the details requested before starting your fieldwork. This will be assessed as Approved/Not approved.
- Sikt approval. All Master's projects must be pre-registered with the [Norwegian Agency for Shared Services in Education and Research \(Sikt\)](#). You are obliged to have the Sikt approval and inform the department of your Sikt reference before you start your fieldwork. This will be assessed as Approved/Not approved. Please read [SAI's data storage guide](#) (in English and Norwegian).

The compulsory activities will be assessed as Approved/Not approved.

All compulsory activities must be approved in order to take the ANTH4210 exam.

Examination

The examination consists of a fieldwork report submitted towards the end of the second semester.

The total word count of the fieldwork report is 3150-3850 words. The fieldwork report is assessed by the supervisor.

Grading scale

Grades are awarded on a Pass/Fail scale.

ANTH4091 Writing Ethnography

Level: Master

Credits: 10

Teaching: Autumn

Examination: Autumn

Teaching language: English

Course content

The course focuses on writing. The central activity in this course is the students' submissions, and group discussions, of written drafts from their thesis work during the semester. Weekly readings also form part of the teaching and in-seminar conversation. The course offers anthropological and some literary theory perspectives on key notions regarding the writing and composition of ethnographic texts.

Learning outcome

Knowledge

- Overview of anthropological as well as some literary-theory perspectives on central notions regarding the writing and the composition of ethnographic texts
- Understanding of these notions' relevance for contemporary academic and public writing
- Appreciation for theoretical and practical debates on writing, and particularly ethnographic writing, and ability to relate own research to the development of such debates

Skills

- Enhanced ability to reflect critically when composing texts for academic and general audiences
- Enhanced ability to synthesize different positions and to use this competence to give shape to a unique research agenda in writing
- Strengthened ability to write ethnographically driven analyses

General competence

- Enhanced capacity for independent anthropological thought
- Increased capacity for intellectual collaboration through critical group discussions of the academic quality of texts
- Strengthened ability to express arguments in solid academic language and through oral presentation

Admission to the course

Students must be enrolled in the master's programme in Social Anthropology.

Formal prerequisite knowledge: Students must have completed ANTH4115, ANTH4125 and ANTH4210.

Teaching

Eight combined lectures and seminars. Students should submit a draft from their thesis work for at least six of eight seminars.

The master's thesis will be produced during the third and fourth semesters, i.e. the writing will start after you return from fieldwork.

Compulsory activities:

- Submission of an excerpt (2400-2900 words) of the thesis draft

- Oral presentation of excerpt
- Feedback to co-students on excerpt

Compulsory activities will be assessed as Approved/Not approved.
All compulsory activities must be approved in order to take the ANTH4091 exam.

Examination

Reflection paper (1000-1400 words) where you discuss:

- The choices you have made in writing the excerpt for this course
- The feedback received from your co-students and teacher
- How you plan to proceed in your writing based on the feedback received in this course

Compulsory activities must be approved and the exam passed in the same semester.

Grading scale

Grades are awarded on a Pass/Fail scale.

[ANTH4092 Master's Thesis](#)

Level: Master

Credits: 30

Teaching: Spring

Examination: Spring and Autumn

Teaching language: English

Course content

The master's thesis is an independent scientific product to be submitted for the final assessment of the master's degree program.

Learning outcome

Knowledge

- Deep understanding of the anthropological research process
- Experience-based knowledge
- Knowledge of how your own data, collected during fieldwork, can be connected to analytical issues within social anthropological theory, and can be put in a comparative perspective.
- Knowledge of how to apply and reflect on key methodological and theoretical tools that allow you to analyze different types of data

Skills

- Ability to complete and present an independent scientific work in an ethically sound manner
- Ability to present your research results in a way that meets scientific criteria
- Ability to analyze, disseminate and present social and cultural phenomena in written form
- Ability to find and put into context relevant literature

General competence

- Respect for scientific values, such as openness, rationality and precision, and ability to distinguish between research-based knowledge, practice-based knowledge and "perception"
- Enhanced ethical awareness concerning the various problems that may arise during research and the writing up of research results
- Enhanced capacity to adhere to the principles of academic honesty, integrity, and responsibility when it comes to your research and to other professional work

Admission to the course

Students must be enrolled in the master's programme in Social Anthropology.

Formal prerequisite knowledge: Students must have completed ANTH4115, ANTH4125, ANTH4210, ANTH4091 and two specialization courses.

Teaching

The master's thesis will be produced during the third and fourth semesters.

In the spring semester the teaching in this course consists of two seminars, which will extend and solidify previous work done with the ANTH4091 Writing Ethnography.

Compulsory activity:

Students in their final semester must fill in and submit a reporting form. This web form is not used to register for the exam. You must already be registered for the course and the exam in Studentweb to submit your master's thesis. The department uses the reporting form to prepare for the upcoming written and oral exams. The deadline for handing in the form is announced in Canvas. Usually, the deadline is in March in the spring semester and October in the autumn semester.

Submission of the reporting form will be assessed as Approved/Not approved.

This compulsory activity must be approved in order to take the exam.

Examination

The final master's degree exam consists of a master's thesis and an oral examination.

In the spring semester the deadline for submission of master's theses is usually in May. Most oral exams will take place in June, and some in August. In the autumn semester the submission deadline is usually in November with oral exams in December and January.

The master's thesis and the oral exam are assessed by an examination committee consisting of two examiners, and at least one of them will be external, i.e. not hold a position at the University of Oslo.

As soon as possible after the submission, and minimum seven days before the oral exam, you will be notified of the time and place for the oral exam, as well as who the examiners are.

The master's thesis:

The scope of the master's thesis is 27 000 – 33 000 words. Master's theses that do not adhere to the word limits will be rejected.

Included in the word count:

- Front page
- Abstract
- Table of contents
- Footnotes

Optional to include in the thesis, but will be included in the word count:

- Acknowledgements
- Preface
- List of figures, maps etc. after the table of contents
- Abbreviations after the table of contents

In addition to the word count:

- Reference list
- Appendices

The oral examination:

Before the oral exam, the examiners hold a pre-examination meeting where the supervisor is present to clarify ambiguities and answer questions the examiners may have. The supervisor leaves the meeting before the preliminary grade on the master's thesis is set. The supervisor does not attend the oral exam.

The oral examination will only be arranged if the master's thesis is given a passing grade.

Remember to bring your identification to the oral exam. Student ID, passport, driver's license and Norwegian ID-card are all valid forms of identification.

The examiners will inform you of the preliminary grade and give an explanation for it when you present yourself for the oral exam. You can choose not to be informed about the preliminary grade until after the oral exam is completed.

The oral exam lasts for about an hour and usually takes place just after the pre-examination meeting:

- The oral exam consists of a conversation between you and the two examiners about the submitted thesis.
- The examiners may raise all kinds of questions linked to the thesis and its generation. For example, they may ask questions about the use of analytical perspectives, the argument, the thesis' structure, specific research findings, the fieldwork or the data production, and about issues tied to research ethics.
- You are not to give a prepared presentation of the thesis.
- You should bring a copy of the thesis to the exam and may take notes should you wish to do so.

The performance at the oral exam will be used to adjust the grade on the master's thesis. The adjusted grade is the final one. The final grade can differ no more than one grade from the preliminary grade; You can either keep the grade, get one grade lower or one grade higher. Once the committee has determined the grade following the oral exam, they will inform you of the final grade. Only the final grade, and not the preliminary one, will appear on your master's degree diploma.

Grading scale

Grades are awarded on a scale from A to F.

MA programme learning outcomes

Learning outcomes

Social Anthropology engages with contemporary social issues through empirically grounded studies of people's lives. You learn how anthropologists have developed theoretical and methodological tools for conducting such studies. You also learn to apply these yourself through designing your own research project, carrying out ethnographic fieldwork and analysing qualitative research data.

The specialization in contemporary ethnography gives you in-depth knowledge of the use of anthropological theory and methods in a diverse range of non-academic applied contexts. The specialization in global political economy gives you in-depth knowledge of key concepts and debates in anthropological analyses of work, capital and finance, and the role of culture in business.

Upon completing the master's programme in Social Anthropology, you will have the following knowledge, skills, and general competences:

Knowledge

- Advanced knowledge within the field of Social Anthropology, with a particularly thorough knowledge of political, socio-economic, and cultural-historical perspectives on contemporary issues.
- Advanced knowledge of qualitative research methods.
- Advanced knowledge of how an ethnographic approach can be used in short-term applied research, and for the purpose of answering specific empirical questions.
- Specific in-depth knowledge of the theme, theory and region chosen for your master's thesis.

Skills

- Formulate a viable research problem on contemporary issues and conduct independent ethnographic fieldwork in line with academic, methodological, and ethical guidelines.
- Identify, collect, select, and assess relevant sources and data for purposes of analysing specific research questions.
- Analyse and deal critically with existing theories and methods within Social Anthropology in an independent manner.
- Apply your knowledge to current challenges within the field of Social Anthropology.
- Translate your academic research experience into job-related competence.
- Present knowledge-based information, and academic arguments, orally and in writing

General competence

- Analyse relevant anthropological literature, concretize social problems, and know how you draw the connection between social theory and empirical challenges and questions.
- Analyse and communicate existing theories and ethical considerations concerning political, economic, and social problems.
- Carry out an independent research project within the field of Social Anthropology in accordance with applicable norms for research ethics.
- Use advanced skills in qualitative, social-scientific research methods and apply them in a problem-solving context.
- Apply your knowledge and skills in new research areas in order to carry out advanced assignments and projects.
- Discuss academic questions connected to your own and other people's work.
- Communicate academic knowledge in English, both orally and written, using the terms and language required to convey your scholarly knowledge to both academic and other audiences.
- Contribute to the working environment based on knowledge and experience.

MA diploma text

Objectives, content and organization of the programme of study

The Master's programme in Social Anthropology has provided the candidate with an advanced, comprehensive knowledge of the discipline of social anthropology and its applications in relation to contemporary global socioeconomic, cultural, political and sustainability issues. The Master's programme consists of a 30 ECTS credits Master's thesis, i.e. an independent piece of social-anthropological research of a theoretical and empirical nature carried out under the guidance of an academic supervisor, and of 70 ECTS credits compulsory and 20 ECTS credits elective courses. The programme's obligatory course component consists of courses in advanced anthropological theory; in advanced anthropological methods and independent anthropological-ethnographic project development; and in academic and ethnographic writing. The candidate has specialised in either contemporary ethnography or global political economy. The specialisation in contemporary ethnography gives the candidate in-depth knowledge of the use of anthropological theory and methods in a diverse range of non-academic applied contexts. The specialisation in global political economy gives the candidate in-depth knowledge of key concepts and debates in anthropological analyses of work, capital and finance, and the role of culture in business.

The candidate has conducted extensive fieldwork and qualitative research specialising in the use of ethnographic methods, including their application in relation to specific problems of broad relevance. The candidate has in this manner acquired competence in organising, leading and carrying out an independent, systematic, long-term project in accordance with current academic and ethical guidelines. This includes collecting and working with empirical data, communicating research findings, analysing qualitative data, and transforming ethnographic findings into a coherent written thesis. The Master's degree qualifies the student for continued studies at the Ph.D. level.

The candidate's learning outcomes

By completing this programme, the candidate has acquired specific in-depth knowledge of the chosen theme, theory and cultural-geographic region of relevance to the candidate's fieldwork and thesis. The candidate has also acquired profound knowledge of how an ethnographic approach – and more generally qualitative data-collection methods – can be used for the purpose of answering clearly defined, precise questions. The candidate knows how to convey advanced social-scientific and anthropological insight in practice and in relation to a broad range of societal challenges. This includes the ability to address and analyse key questions and dilemmas regarding political, economic, and environmental factors that affect and change the conditions of communities, businesses, organizations, and nation-states. The candidate has the capacity for critical reflection and can give constructive feedback on the work of others, and has the ability to work in a systematic, result-oriented manner, both independently and as part of a team. The candidate has used English as an academic language, has developed advanced writing skills, and is able to present knowledge-based information, and academic arguments, orally and in writing.