

Graduate Medical Sciences

Master of Science in Forensic Anthropology



Program Overview

The MS in Forensic Anthropology trains individuals in theory, practice and methods of biological and skeletal anthropology that are utilized in medicolegal death investigations. While there are many aspects of the program that make it unique, it is one of the only graduate forensic anthropology programs in a department of anatomy at a major medical center. This setting provides faculty and students access to extensive resources and facilities including the following:

- Human Gross Anatomy Laboratory
- Forensic Anthropology Outdoor Research Facility
- Center for Biomedical Imaging
- Boston University Donated Skeletal Collection
- Faculty and Resources in the Department of Radiology, Anthropology and Archaeology and the Biomedical Forensic Sciences Program

Boston University's medical campus, home to Boston's largest research park, is in close proximity to several local and state law enforcement laboratories and facilities. Students will have to complete internships, observe autopsies and will benefit from field-based research and learning experiences at a 32-acre outdoor research facility.

Program Highlights

- Only program of its kind that confers a Master of Science; similar programs offered by other schools confer a Master of Arts
- Full-time, 42-credit program begins in September and is designed to be completed in two calendar years
- Significant opportunities to work with, and learn from, bioarchaeologists, law enforcement personnel, board-certified anthropologists and other experts in related fields
- Access to state-of-the-art laboratory equipment, including NMR spectroscopy, cryo-electron microscopes, X-ray, CT and MRI scanners and 3D printers
- Access to skeletal remains collections housed at Boston University School of Medicine and other universities and museums in the Boston area
- All classes are taught by faculty who are experts in physical and biological anthropology, anatomy, osteology, pathology, crime scene investigation, expert witness testimony and forensic sciences
- Field experiences build skills in forensic anthropology field methods, outdoor crime scene investigation, forensic photography, recovery of skeletal remains and total station mapping techniques
- Students complete a graduate level research project that culminates into a full-length thesis
- Students may pursue internships at various state and federal crime laboratories and agencies

- Graduates have pursued careers at government or private crime laboratories, state or federal law enforcement agencies, in academic settings or have enrolled in doctorate programs, law school and medical school
- The degree is awarded by Graduate Medical Sciences at Boston University School of Medicine

Curriculum

Required Courses

Fall Year 1	Credits
Professional Skills and Thesis Research Development	3 credits
Research in Anthropology	2 credits
History, Methods and Theory in Bio Anthropology	3 credits
Advanced Osteology	4 credits
Special Topics in Forensic Anthropology -- Outdoor Crime Scene Awareness	3 credits

Spring Year 1	Credits
Zooarchaeology	2 credits
Forensic Anthropology Techniques	3 credits
Special Topics in FA: Outdoor Crime Scene Awareness	3 credits
Research in Anthropology	3 credits
Experimental Design for and Statistics for Forensic Anthropologists	3 credits

Fall Year 2	Credits
Human Anatomy and Osteology	4 credits
Advanced Crime Scene Investigation	2 credits
Taphonomy	3 credits
Forensic Trauma Analysis	3 credits

Spring Year 2	Credits
Bioarchaeology	2 credits
Expert Witness Testimony	2 credits
Field Methods in Forensic Anthropology	3 credits
Applied Forensic Anthropology	3 credits

Elective Courses in Anthropology and Archaeology

- Students are strongly encouraged to complete a course in the departments of Anthropology and Archaeology on Boston University's Charles River Campus.

Elective Courses in Biomedical Forensic Sciences

- Students may complete selected courses in the Biomedical Forensic Sciences program.

Program Eligibility Requirements

Applicants must have a baccalaureate degree in anthropology (preferably physical or biological anthropology) or archaeology. Completed coursework in some or all of the following topics is preferred:

- Anatomy
- Biology
- Biological Anthropology
- Experimental Design
- Osteology
- Writing, especially Scientific Writing
- Chemistry
- Statistics

Admissions

Applications must be received by March 1 to be eligible for early admission. All applications received after March 1, up until the July 31 application deadline, will be considered on a rolling admission basis until the incoming class reaches full capacity. Application requirements include:

- An official transcript of each college or university attended
- Official test results for the GRE or MCAT examinations
- Three letters of recommendation from faculty members who know you well
- A written personal statement describing your qualifications and educational objectives

Applicants are strongly encouraged to submit a writing sample, in addition to the personal statement, as the Admissions committee places a significant emphasis on a student's writing ability. Students are also encouraged to submit a proposed thesis topic with their applications.

To apply to the program, please visit bu.edu/gms/admissions.

International Students

In addition to the above listed requirements, international students must submit TOEFL scores (if your native language is not English), and the International Student Data Form. International applicants must also submit documentation of all sources of financial support for a minimum of one year, along with the Financial Sponsorship Certification for International Students.

Tuition, Financial Aid and Student Resources

For the most up-to-date information on tuition and fees, please visit <https://www.bumc.bu.edu/gms/admissions/student-financial-services/>.

The Financial Aid Office at Boston University School of Medicine is available to assist students identifying sources of financial support, including Women's Guild Scholarships and Teaching Assistantships.

The BU Office of Housing Resources provides information regarding housing, transportation, and Boston neighborhoods. For more details, visit www.bumc.bu.edu/ohr.

Contact

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