Undergraduate Programme in Anthropology
The Chinese University of Hong Kong
Anthropology is the study of humanity, the distinctive feature of which is culture. Culture may be thought of as a process by which humans make and re-create meaning through the deployment of symbols and symbolic practices. Cultural diversity exists because people around the world in varying environments create different social, political, economic, and religious systems, imbuing them with different symbolic meanings.

Anthropologists study the similarity and diversity of these cultural systems to find out the nature of human existence. Anthropologists take a holistic viewpoint and use systematic research methods. We try to understand the views of people themselves and put emphasis on interaction with people: being immediately amongst them, observing and talking with them about what they do, and why. For cultures that do not exist today, we use archaeological methods.

Anthropology’s emphasis on ground-level research allows it to produce deep understandings about the social world. Anthropologists in Hong Kong study contemporary issues such as:

- Meanings of life in the U.S. and Japan
- The intimate relations between asylum-seekers and the local population in Hong Kong
- Coastal resource development, social transformation, and community resilience in Lau Fau Shan, New Territories
- Scent and the practices of incense in Japan
- Alternative medicine and rationalist discourse in India
- The urbanization process in China and the rise of its funerary industry
- The independent music communities in Hong Kong and Taiwan and their non-accumulative aspirations
- The popularity of Western-style psychotherapy in mainland China
- Filipino domestic workers in Hong Kong and their motivations to be beauty queens
- The relationship between religious and civic infrastructures in Indian cities
- Cultural and situational differences in the distribution of responsibility and blame
- The significance of cultural heritage to Hong Kong people
- How metal technology developed in ancient China
- Economic and social development during the Bronze Age and Han Empire

The anthropology undergraduate programme teaches students to see the world they find themselves in from different perspectives. The mastery of cross-cultural knowledge, the understanding of interpersonal relationships, and the training of research, organization, communication, and dynamic thinking skills will lay a solid foundation for students’ career development.
Programme Objectives

The Undergraduate in Anthropology programme focuses on social and cultural anthropology, and archaeology. Course contents cover the theories and methodologies of anthropology and archaeology, ethnographic studies of Asia and the world, and sociocultural issues in the contemporary world.

Through their training in anthropology, students will be able to:

- Understand the world’s cultural diversity and human universals;
- Know anthropology’s subfields, comprehend and apply different theories to explain a wide range of sociocultural phenomena;
- Design and carry out research projects using anthropological tools and perspectives;
- Think critically about one’s society and the world using anthropological modes of understanding.

Minor in Cultural Heritage Studies
文化承傳學副修

This minor programme focuses on the preservation and management of cultural heritage in Hong Kong and adjacent regions. It is beneficial for career development in museums, education, tourism, as well as other areas related to culture. The programme is co-organized by the Department of Anthropology and the Department of History, and students are required to complete 18 units (6 courses).

Minor in Archaeology
考古學副修

This minor programme is the first and only programme in Hong Kong that teaches basic skills in archaeological excavation and research, as well as knowledge in the appreciation, curation, and exhibition of archaeological materials. It enables students to develop an integrated focus on archaeology by bringing together inter-disciplinary perspectives including anthropology, culture management, fine arts, geography and geology, and history. The programme is coordinated by the Department of Anthropology and students are required to complete 21 units (7 courses).
Student Life

We are a relatively small department with 12 full-time teachers, around 100 undergraduate students, 25 research postgraduate students, and 50 taught master students. Life in the Anthropology Department has a friendly, family feel.

A very important occasion in undergraduate studies is the Summer Field Trip. It is a two-week trip outside Hong Kong, led by a professor and a tutor. Students gain extensive experience of being in another culture and learn how to do fieldwork. Past groups have been to Hunan, Hualien, Cambodia, Turkey, Nagoya, Vietnam etc.

We collaborate with various institutions to offer local and overseas summer internship opportunities to our students, including internships at the Nicholson Museum at the University of Sydney, Australia, the Antiquities and Monuments Office, HKSAR, the Leisure and Cultural Services Department, HKSAR, Hong Kong Museum of History, Hong Kong Maritime Museum etc., and a number of local NGOs.

All anthropology-major undergraduate students will do a Final Year Project. Under the supervision of a faculty member, students develop an independent research project on a topic of their own choosing, conduct extensive fieldwork, and then write a thesis.
系友心得  
Alumni Sharing

我从小就有对历史很浓厚，好古历史比其他生活是怎样的，因
此我选择了入读人类学系，了解了不少古史相关的科目，一四年
修读历史系作毕业。我在香港大学的学刊写了一篇，在当时考
试上交论文，这篇论文是我向大学申请的通过，尝试不同文
法，因此决定继续深造。我对我所研究的学刊很感兴趣，这
学刊不是一般大学教授首长发表的研究，我不得不对人类学的学刊化
化有兴趣的领域。在
香港大学大三，我决定要将香港的学刊了了解。

蔡智，香港中文大学人类学学士（2016），
北京大学考古文博学院文物与博物馆硕士（2019）。

Researchers of anthropology usually need to discover
a research question on their own, which must be burning
from inside: Why am I interested in this question? What is
its practical significance? How can we better understand
the world through answering this question? My research
focuses on the cross-border connections of ethnic
minorities in various societies. I hope to discover new stories
and vocabularies, which may help us comprehend and
challenge the current power structures. I believe that to
promote social change, we need new forms of knowledge
production and more infectious social critique. This group of
people I study have not been at the center of attention in
this age of globalization, yet the concept of marginality is
very vital in anthropological theorization—people on
the margins use diverse perspectives to observe the world.

Ka-Ian Cheuk, BSc (2006) and Mphil (2008), CUHK,
PhD in Social and Cultural Anthropology (2016), University of Oxford.

讀書時當然會考慮將來的職業發展，但我覺得，也不需要談大
學這個自由自在的環境—一個自由、有興趣、好玩的環境，可以
無所不談、無所不在的地方。人類學的邊緣，讓人打破固有，以新
的角度看世界。例如在教室裏，不同角色都各有關鍵，掌握
一個「成形」，是需要觀察和模仿「正常」的角色是一個怎樣
的人。我不人類學，我學人類學，我希望能夠學好自己—
世界上的一個人。「自我」應該相對於「自我」而言的。在新作
文中，我有時會問「我為什麼」。我學人類
學的邊緣已經展現在我在其中。

陳心達，監製、編劇、編劇人，
香港中文大學人類學社會科學學士（2018）。

The advantage of anthropology graduates regarding careers
in NGOs may be that they are well-prepared at the awareness
level. Many anthropological research topics are also social
issues that NGOs try to address. New questions raised by
anthropologists bring new horizons and challenges to NGOs
from time to time. Anthropologists emphasize the holistic
view, pay attention to the interconnection of different factors,
and are good at seeing the big picture. This is very helpful for
understanding how social problems come into being and
conceptualizing possible change. While working in an NGO
may not make you rich, if you studied anthropology, get to
know the various problems existing in the world today and
want to have more direct impact, then NGOs will be a
relatively free field with a lot of room for action for you.

Debby Cheng Yi Yi, BSc (2003), Project Manager, Jockey
Club Design Institute for Social Innovation, The Hong Kong
Polytechnic University.
職業前景

Job Prospect

人類學的訓練使得學生善於理解人們之間的複雜關係，敏銳於社群生活的文化面向。本系畢業生擅長批判、比較及整合思考，尤其能適應各種專業環境，與來自不同背景的人互動。

Anthropology students are trained to understand human relations and develop sensitivity to the cultural aspects of human existence. Our students become adept at critical, comparative, and holistic thinking, and are particularly skilled at adapting to various professional circumstances and interacting with people from diverse backgrounds.

聯絡我們

Contact Us

歡迎在本科入學資訊日來到人類學系，與本系的同學和老師見面，我們非常樂意與你談談我們的研究課題和你的學業規劃。

Please come and visit the Department of Anthropology during Information Day. We are all very interested in speaking with you about our research and about your future education.

入門讀物

Recommended Readings

- 香港中文大學人類學系學者。2020年。【人類學好野——關於人類的，我想聊聊】。築典出版.

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