University of Missouri - St. Louis

Department of Anthropology

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Mission Statement

Anthropology is the study (logos) of humans (anthropos). It includes cultural anthropology (the study of living humans and their ways of life) and the related field of folklore, archaeology (the study of prehistoric and historic human beings), biological anthropology (the study of the evolution and biology of humans and their nearest relatives, the primates), and linguistic anthropology (the study of human languages).

Anthropology's mission is to teach citizens about the biological, cultural, and historical diversity of humanity, to plead for the dignity of cultural and physical differences, and to insist on an interdisciplinary approach to understanding humanity.

The goal of the Anthropology Department is to gain new knowledge and to teach about the human condition in all times and places. In these times, we feel a keen obligation to teach that the greatest differences between people are cultural, not biological. We understand St. Louis as a microcosm of the world. If we are to meet the challenges of the "global village," we must strengthen the cultural diversity that is the basis of our democratic society and, at the same time, work toward mutual understanding of our legitimate differences. Our objectives are simultaneously local and international: we want to bring the world to St. Louis and St. Louis to the world.

Diversity of Learners: Through academic programs offered on and off campus, it educates diverse, talented, traditional and nontraditional students who will supply knowledge, skills, and intellectual leadership in both the private and public sectors.

The whole community is our student body; the whole world is our textbook.

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