

Ancient History and Mediterranean Archaeology

The interdisciplinary program of graduate study in Ancient History and Ancient Near Eastern and Mediterranean Archaeology (AHMA) is conducted by a group that includes more than 20 faculty members affiliated with seven different Berkeley departments as well as the Graduate Theological Union. A chair, a graduate adviser, and a student affairs officer administer the program.

The AHMA program offers PhD degrees in areas that combine work in archaeology and history and related disciplines of ancient studies. Most of its graduates have successfully secured teaching positions in Departments of Classics, Art History, History, Anthropology or Near Eastern Studies in colleges and universities in the US or abroad, including Bar-Ilan, Haifa, Volos, Oxford, Toronto, Columbia, Madison, Austin, and Pennsylvania.

Students are not admitted to work specifically for the MA degree, although those working toward the PhD may file for an MA after fulfillment of the requirements for Stage 1. Students work closely with faculty in courses, seminars, and independent research projects to develop independent thought as well as a thorough knowledge of their fields and their critical methods.

Admission to the University Applying for Graduate Admission

Thank you for considering UC Berkeley for graduate study! UC Berkeley offers more than 120 graduate programs representing the breadth and depth of interdisciplinary scholarship. The Graduate Division hosts a complete list (<https://grad.berkeley.edu/admissions/choosing-your-program/list/>) of graduate academic programs, departments, degrees offered, and application deadlines can be found on the Graduate Division website.

Prospective students must submit an online application to be considered for admission, in addition to any supplemental materials specific to the program for which they are applying. The online application and steps to take to apply can be found on the Graduate Division website (<https://grad.berkeley.edu/admissions/steps-to-apply/>).

Admission Requirements

The minimum graduate admission requirements are:

1. A bachelor's degree or recognized equivalent from an accredited institution;
2. A satisfactory scholastic average, usually a minimum grade-point average (GPA) of 3.0 (B) on a 4.0 scale; and
3. Enough undergraduate training to do graduate work in your chosen field.

For a list of requirements to complete your graduate application, please see the Graduate Division's Admissions Requirements page (<https://grad.berkeley.edu/admissions/steps-to-apply/requirements/>). It is also important to check with the program or department of interest, as they

may have additional requirements specific to their program of study and degree. Department contact information can be found here (<https://guide.berkeley.edu/archive/2024-25/graduate/degree-programs/>).

Where to apply?

Visit the Berkeley Graduate Division application page (<http://grad.berkeley.edu/admissions/apply/>).

Admission to the Program

The AHMA program is open to students with a BA degree in a relevant field of study (such as Classics, Near Eastern Studies, History, or History of Art) that have completed at least one year of undergraduate work in ancient history, ancient art, archaeology, or related fields. Applicants primarily interested in the Greek and Roman worlds should be prepared to undertake advanced work in either Greek or Latin and its culture, and also should have basic competence in the second of these two languages. Applicants primarily interested in the ancient Near East and Egypt do not have to display competence in one of the area's ancient languages before applying, but to do so may strengthen their application considerably.

Students who have already acquired the MA degree in a relevant field are especially encouraged to apply and will be considered for direct admission to the PhD program. The AHMA faculty as a group approves all applicants for admission. AHMA policy is to limit enrollment to the number of students who can be adequately supported for the first five years of their graduate career. Although AHMA receives around 35 applications per year, we can only enroll one to two students each fall. Competition therefore is extremely keen. As a result, while some applicants may be rejected for lack of preparation or for undistinguished academic records, a substantial number who are capable of doing good graduate work unfortunately also must be denied admission.

The AHMA faculty judges and ranks applicants on a combination of criteria that includes:

- Preparation to undertake advanced scholarly work.
- Academic distinction as reflected in overall GPA, major GPA, and junior and senior year GPA, as well as awards, prizes, or publications.
- A minimum of three letters of recommendation.
- A statement of purpose, which should be clearly and cogently written and indicate why the applicant is interested in the AHMA program and where his or her specialization might lie.
- A scholarly writing sample between 25-30 pages and indicating the origin of the writing sample (i.e. a class paper, senior honors thesis, MA thesis).

An applicant with an MA is expected to offer substantially stronger preparation than one with only a BA. Applications must be submitted electronically either via Graduate Division's online application (<http://grad.berkeley.edu/admissions/apply/>). The online application process for fall normally opens in early September. The deadline for applications is early December.

Fields

Students declare three fields: a First field, a Second field, and a Special field. The First and Second fields are chosen from the following four options: North Africa; Greek world; West and/or Central Asia; and Roman world. All four First/Second fields embrace both history and archaeology/

material culture. A third, Special field, is tailored to the student's specific interests.

Coursework

Pre-MA students are required to take at least 12 courses. They are also required to write no fewer than 8 seminar papers in those 12 courses.

Post-MA students are required to take at least 8 courses. They are also required to write no fewer than 5 seminar papers in these 8 courses.

Courses that normally satisfy these requirements will be from AGRS, AHMA, ANTHRO, CLASSIC, HISTART, HISTORY, and MELC.

Languages

Students satisfy program requirements in four languages, two ancient and two modern. One ancient language is designated as primary, the other as secondary.

Fieldwork

Students are required to participate in either (a) at least one season of excavation or survey, or (b) one summer program in archaeology, material culture, or a relevant technical discipline, or (c) a summer internship, usually in a museum.

Petition to Proceed

Every student must submit a Petition to Proceed to Stage II of the program. This occurs for pre-MA students no later than the beginning of the fifth semester, and for post-MA students no later than the beginning of the third semester.

Exams

In order to advance to PhD candidacy, students must pass a written exam covering the First field and an oral Qualifying Examination (QE) covering all three fields.

Dissertation

After passing their QE, students must compose a prospectus of the intended dissertation, present it at a colloquium for approval, and then, under the supervision of a Dissertation Committee, complete a dissertation that makes an original contribution to the subject.

Ancient History and Mediterranean Archaeology

AHMA 210 Ancient History and Mediterranean Archaeology Interdisciplinary Seminar 2 or 4 Units

Terms offered: Fall 2025, Spring 2025, Spring 2024

Team-taught by faculty from two different departments. The purpose is not only to expose students to a discipline other than their own, but to engage them directly in the application of that discipline to their own research interests. The topic and instructors will vary from year to year.

Rules & Requirements

Prerequisites: Graduate standing

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit without restriction.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3 hours of seminar per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Ancient History and Med. Arch./Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

AHMA 298 Special Study 2 - 12 Units

Terms offered: Fall 2025, Spring 2025, Fall 2024

Normally reserved for students writing the doctoral dissertation.

Rules & Requirements

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit without restriction.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring:

15 weeks - 6-36 hours of independent study per week

15 weeks - 6-36 hours of independent study per week

Summer: 12 weeks - 7.5-45 hours of independent study per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Ancient History and Med. Arch./Graduate

Grading: Offered for satisfactory/unsatisfactory grade only.

AHMA 299 Special Study 1 - 4 Units

Terms offered: Fall 2025, Summer 2025, Spring 2025

Topics and instructors will vary from year to year. Special individual study for qualified graduate students. Individual study and research, including archaeological fieldwork or laboratory projects, in consultation with instructor on subject matter not covered in scheduled course offerings.

Rules & Requirements

Prerequisites: Graduate standing or consent of instructor

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit without restriction.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 4-16 hours of independent study per week

Summer: 8 weeks - 7.5-30 hours of independent study per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Ancient History and Med. Arch./Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

AHMA 601 Individual Study for Masters Candidates 1 - 12 Units

Terms offered: Spring 2025, Spring 2024, Spring 2023

Individual study for the comprehensive or language requirements in consultation with the graduate adviser or personal adviser. Units may not be used to meet either unit or residence requirements for a master's degree.

Rules & Requirements

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit without restriction.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring:

15 weeks - 3-36 hours of independent study per week

15 weeks - 3-36 hours of independent study per week

Summer: 12 weeks - 3.7-45 hours of independent study per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Ancient History and Med. Arch./Graduate examination preparation

Grading: Offered for satisfactory/unsatisfactory grade only.

AHMA 602 Individual Study for Doctoral Candidates 1 - 12 Units

Terms offered: Fall 2025, Spring 2025, Fall 2024

Individual study in consultation with the graduate adviser or personal adviser, intended to provide an opportunity for qualified students to prepare themselves for the various examinations required of candidates for the Ph.D. May not be used for unit or residence requirements for the doctoral degree.

Rules & Requirements

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit without restriction.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring:

15 weeks - 3-36 hours of independent study per week

15 weeks - 3-36 hours of independent study per week

Summer: 12 weeks - 3.7-45 hours of independent study per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Ancient History and Med. Arch./Graduate examination preparation

Grading: Offered for satisfactory/unsatisfactory grade only.