

Folklore

The interdisciplinary Folklore Program at the University of California, Berkeley trains intellectual leaders in folkloristics for the twenty-first century. We provide a rigorous, critical, and theoretically-informed grounding in folklore scholarship drawing from intellectual traditions worldwide. Students develop a particular field of expertise in folkloristics, drawing on methodological, theoretical and cultural frameworks. We encourage our students to develop a strong grounding in another discipline or multidisciplinary perspective, such as race and ethnic studies, data science, environment and sustainability, law and policy, organizational theory, performance studies, rhetoric, narrative theory, ethnomusicology, materiality, women's and queer theory, etc. in order to bring new perspectives to their work in folkloristics.

The Folklore Program offers two options: a two-year-long MA in Folklore requiring a thesis; and a Designated Emphasis.

The Designated Emphasis in Folklore (<https://folklore.berkeley.edu/programs/designated-emphasis/>) permits students enrolled in a separate PhD program at UC Berkeley to specialize in folklore while pursuing their PhD.

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

Applicants for the Masters degree in Folklore must hold a Bachelor of Arts degree or its equivalent from an institution of acceptable standing.

Unit Requirements

The requirements for the MA in Folklore include 20 units, of which at least 10 must be graduate-level (200 number) in Folklore.

Curriculum

ANTHRO 160AC Forms of Folklore (Required if no equivalent introduction to the discipline has already been taken.)	4
FOLKLOR C262A Theories of Traditionality and Modernity	4
FOLKLOR C262B Theories of Traditionality and Modernity	4
One graduate elective, in methodology	
Electives, per approved study list	

Foreign Language

The student must demonstrate proficiency in reading at least one foreign language by the time he or she advances to candidacy. The language is selected in consultation with the chair or graduate adviser; in most cases, it is the language most closely connected with the MA thesis. The language requirement is ordinarily satisfied by an examination in which the student translates a passage from an academic text in their language of choice into English.

Capstone/Thesis (Plan I)

MA thesis based upon fieldwork or some other research project. (No course credits are allowed for the thesis). Theses are directed by a Thesis Committee consisting of at least three faculty members, one of whom does not belong to the Folklore Graduate Group. The committee chair and inside member must be members of the Graduate Group; a co-chair from another department or program may be named when appropriate.

The Designated Emphasis in Folklore permits students to specialize in folklore while pursuing a PhD in a UC Berkeley department or program. The DE seeks to train future leaders in the field of folklore by assisting students in developing their own critical, theoretically-informed reading of folklore scholarship from the seventeenth century through the present, developing sophisticated analyses of traditional cultural forms and how they are imbricated in producing modernities, and juxtaposing folkloristic approaches with perspectives emerging from their home disciplines in shaping interdisciplinary exchanges of ideas and development of rigorous research that challenges epistemological boundaries.

Upon successful completion of the dissertation, the student's diploma and transcript will include the designation: "PhD in [major] with a Designated Emphasis in Folklore."

Requirements for Admissions

To be admitted to the program, applicants must already be accepted into an existing PhD program at Berkeley (Master's students and students at other institutions are not eligible). Graduate students are strongly urged

to apply early in their third semester, but applications will be considered at any time prior to completion of the qualifying examinations.

Curricular Requirements

FOLKLOR C262A and FOLKLOR C262B, and ANTHRO 160AC, Forms of Folklore (unless the applicant has taken an equivalent introduction to the discipline). It is strongly recommended that students take at least one course in their home department that focuses on research techniques.

Examination and Dissertation Requirements

The student's qualifying examination committee and dissertation committee must have one member of the DE faculty.

UCB doctoral students who wish to apply to the Designated Emphasis in Folklore Program are welcome to contact the Chair and/or Graduate Adviser. Applications and details regarding admissions process are available from the Folklore Graduate Student Affairs Officer, Tabea Mastel (tmastel@berkeley.edu; 510-642-3406).

Folklore

FOLKLOR C261 Theories of Narrative 4 Units

Terms offered: Spring 2011, Summer 2006 10 Week Session, Spring 2006

This course examines a broad range of theories that elucidate the formal, structural, and contextual properties of narratives in relation to gestures, the body, and emotion; imagination and fantasy; memory and the senses; space and time. It focuses on narratives at work, on the move, in action as they emerge from the matrix of the everyday preeminently, storytelling in conversation--as key to folk genres--the folktale, the legend, the epic, the myth.

Hours & Format

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

Summer:

6 weeks - 10 hours of lecture per week

8 weeks - 7.5 hours of lecture per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Folklore/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

Also listed as: ANTHRO C261

FOLKLOR C262A Theories of Traditionality and Modernity 4 Units

Terms offered: Fall 2025, Fall 2024, Fall 2023, Fall 2022

This seminar explores the emergence of notions of tradition and modernity and their reproduction in Eurocentric epistemologies and political formations. It uses work by such authors as Anderson, Butler, Chakrabarty, Clifford, Derrida, Foucault, Latour, Mignolo, Pateman, and Poovey to critically reread foundational works published between the 17th century and the present--along with philosophical texts with which they are in dialogue--in terms of how they are imbricated within and help produce traditionalities and modernities.

Rules & Requirements

Prerequisites: Graduate standing or consent of instructor

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit with instructor consent.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 2 hours of seminar per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Folklore/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

Also listed as: ANTHRO C262A

FOLKLOR C262B Theories of Traditionality and Modernity 4 Units

Terms offered: Spring 2025, Spring 2024, Spring 2023

This seminar explores the emergence of notions of tradition and modernity and their reproduction in Eurocentric epistemologies and political formations. It uses work by such authors as Anderson, Butler, Chakrabarty, Clifford, Derrida, Foucault, Latour, Mignolo, Pateman, and Poovey to critically reread foundational works published between the 17th century and the present--along with philosophical texts with which they are in dialogue--in terms of how they are imbricated within and help produce traditionalities and modernities.

Rules & Requirements

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit with instructor consent.

Hours & Format

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

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Folklore/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

Also listed as: ANTHRO C262B

FOLKLOR C288 Vernacular Art 2 or 4 Units

Terms offered: Not yet offered

Studies in vernacular art and expression. Topics will vary from semester to semester.

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring:

8 weeks - 3-3 hours of seminar per week

15 weeks - 3-3 hours of seminar per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Folklore/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

Also listed as: HISTART C288

FOLKLOR C292 Experiments in Collaboration and Reciprocal Transformation 4 Units

Terms offered: Prior to 2007

Collaboration in ethnographic praxis on a local and global scale in folkloristics, sociocultural, linguistic, media, and medical anthropology, producing projects grounded in meaningful engagement with communities. Graduate students, working with lay mentors and faculty, will design and begin implementation of projects that break through infrastructures of theory, research, pedagogy, and practice that reproduce racial hierarchies and that erase anti-racist alternatives.

Hours & Format

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

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Folklore/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

Also listed as: ANTHRO C292

FOLKLOR 298 Readings in Folklore 3 - 6 Units

Terms offered: Spring 2025, Spring 2024, Spring 2023

Rules & Requirements

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

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 0 hours of independent study per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Folklore/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.

FOLKLOR 299 Directed Research 3 - 6 Units

Terms offered: Spring 2025, Spring 2024, Spring 2023

Rules & Requirements

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

Hours & Format

Fall and/or spring: 15 weeks - 3-6 hours of independent study per week

Summer:

6 weeks - 7.5-15 hours of independent study per week

8 weeks - 5.5-11 hours of independent study per week

Additional Details

Subject/Course Level: Folklore/Graduate

Grading: Letter grade.