

Folklore

The Folklore Program at the University of California, Berkeley trains intellectual leaders in folkloristics for the twenty-first century. We seek to provide a deep, critical, and theoretically-informed reading of folklore scholarship from the seventeenth century through the present. We urge students to develop a particular field of expertise in folkloristics. At the same time, we advise our graduate students to develop strong grounding in another discipline or multidisciplinary perspective, such as race and ethnic studies, performance studies, science studies, rhetoric, narrative theory, ethnomusicology, materiality, womens and queer theory, and others, in order to bring new perspectives to their work in folkloristics.

Admission to the University

Uniform minimum requirements for admission

The following minimum requirements apply to all programs and will be verified by the Graduate Division:

1. A bachelor's degree or recognized equivalent from an accredited institution;
2. A minimum grade-point average of B or better (3.0);
3. If the applicant comes from a country or political entity (e.g. Quebec) where English is not the official language, adequate proficiency in English to do graduate work, as evidenced by a TOEFL score of at least 570 on the paper-and-pencil test, 230 on the computer-based test, 90 on the iBT test, or an IELTS Band score of at least 7 (note that individual programs may set higher levels for any of these); and
4. Enough undergraduate training to do graduate work in the given field.

Applicants who already hold a graduate degree

The Graduate Council views academic degrees as evidence of broad research training, not as vocational training certificates; therefore, applicants who already have academic graduate degrees should be able to take up new subject matter on a serious level without undertaking a graduate program, unless the fields are completely dissimilar.

Programs may consider students for an additional academic master's or professional master's degree if the additional degree is in a distinctly different field.

Applicants admitted to a doctoral program that requires a master's degree to be earned at Berkeley as a prerequisite (even though the applicant already has a master's degree from another institution in the same or a closely allied field of study) will be permitted to undertake the second master's degree, despite the overlap in field.

The Graduate Division will admit students for a second doctoral degree only if they meet the following guidelines:

1. Applicants with doctoral degrees may be admitted for an additional doctoral degree only if that degree program is in a general area of knowledge distinctly different from the field in which they earned their original degree. For example, a physics PhD could be admitted to a doctoral degree program in music or history; however, a student with a doctoral degree in mathematics would not be permitted to add a PhD in statistics.

2. Applicants who hold the PhD degree may be admitted to a professional doctorate or professional master's degree program if there is no duplication of training involved.

Applicants may only apply to one single degree program or one concurrent degree program per admission cycle.

Any applicant who was previously registered at Berkeley as a graduate student, no matter how briefly, must apply for readmission, not admission, even if the new application is to a different program.

Required documents for admissions applications

1. **Transcripts:** Upload unofficial transcripts with the application for the departmental initial review. Official transcripts of all college-level work will be required **if admitted**. Official transcripts must be in sealed envelopes as issued by the school(s) you have attended. Request a current transcript from every post-secondary school that you have attended, including community colleges, summer sessions, and extension programs. If you have attended Berkeley, upload unofficial transcript with the application for the departmental initial review. Official transcript with evidence of degree conferral **will not** be required if admitted.
2. **Letters of recommendation:** Applicants can request online letters of recommendation through the online application system. Hard copies of recommendation letters must be sent directly to the program, not the Graduate Division.
3. **Evidence of English language proficiency:** All applicants from countries in which the official language is not English are required to submit official evidence of English language proficiency. This requirement applies to applicants from Bangladesh, Burma, Nepal, India, Pakistan, Latin America, the Middle East, the People's Republic of China, Taiwan, Japan, Korea, Southeast Asia, and most European countries. However, applicants who, at the time of application, have already completed at least one year of full-time academic course work with grades of B or better at a U.S. university may submit an official transcript from the U.S. university to fulfill this requirement. The following courses will not fulfill this requirement: 1) courses in English as a Second Language, 2) courses conducted in a language other than English, 3) courses that will be completed after the application is submitted, and 4) courses of a non-academic nature. If applicants have previously been denied admission to Berkeley on the basis of their English language proficiency, they must submit new test scores that meet the current minimum from one of the standardized tests.

Admission to the Program

Our students possess a broad range of humanities and social science backgrounds as well as from the natural sciences and other fields. Previous coursework in folkloristics is not required. All that is needed is a strong undergraduate record and the desire to excel.

The Folklore Program requires GRE scores, one to two copies of your official transcript, a statement of purpose, a personal statement, and a critical writing sample.

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 160	Course Not Available	4
FOLKLOR C262A Theories of Traditionality and Modernity		4
FOLKLOR C262B Theories of Traditionality and Modernity		4

One graduate elective, in fieldwork methodology

At least one course in two of the following three areas:

- Folk narrative
- Folk or ethnic music
- Folk or primitive art

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 field work 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.

Folklore

FOLKLOR C261 Theories of Narrative 4 Units

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

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 different topic and different instructor. Course may be repeated for credit when topic changes.

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 C262A

FOLKLOR C262B Theories of Traditionality and Modernity 4 Units

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 different topic and different instructor. Course may be repeated for credit when topic changes.

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 298 Readings in Folklore 3 - 6 Units

Rules & Requirements

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit. Course may be repeated for credit when topic changes.

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

Rules & Requirements

Repeat rules: Course may be repeated for credit. Course may be repeated for credit when topic changes.

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.