ANTHROPOLOGY

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DESCRIPTION

What is Anthropology? The term anthropology comes from the Greek *Anthropos,* meaning “man” and *logos* for “study”. In more modern terms anthropology can be defined as the study of human beings or humankind. This study encompasses literally everything about human life. Anthropologists are interested in discovering where, why and when human beings first appeared on earth, as well as understanding how human societies have developed or changed over time. In order to achieve these aims, anthropology often draws on the knowledge and methods of other disciplines such as genetics, biology, history, politics and economics. It also seeks to be holistic, comparative and practical. Anthropologists study differences and similarities among all societies throughout the world.

In addition to identifying features which many societies share, this comparative research highlights the vast diversity of human expression and experience. How individuals impact and are impacted by their society is another prime concern. While anthropologists traditionally concentrated on the study of non-Western cultures today many researchers are investigating the shape of their own society. Because the scope of anthropology is so broad, most anthropologists specialize in one of four sub fields. These fields are biological anthropology, archaeology, linguistic anthropology and cultural anthropology. The anthropology department at Portland Community College offers classes in all four of these sub-fields.