

# DEPARTMENT OF FOLK STUDIES AND ANTHROPOLOGY

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What is folklore? When you think about folklore, do you think about fairy tales, quilts, dulcimers, and log cabins? Folklore does include these things, but folklore also includes food customs, jokes, holiday customs, vernacular architecture, folk art, body art, memes, cosplay, urban legends, supernatural stories, bathroom graffiti ... and so much more. Folklore is informal traditional culture. It is the art of everyday life. It is our customs, our beliefs, our stories, our worldview, and how we communicate. In fact, it's often so close to us we don't even notice it's there—which is precisely why it's so important.

What is anthropology? Anthropology is the holistic study of human culture and biology in any geographic place or time period. Anthropologists study topics as diverse as technology, foodways and subsistence, diet and nutrition, housing and settlement, economic systems, educational systems, kinship and social organization, political organization, gender and social identity, religion and belief systems, language, art and other forms of expressive culture, culture change and globalization, evolution and adaptation, health and disease, human genetics, growth and development, demography, and non-human primates like chimpanzees. Anthropologists conduct research in the field and in the laboratory.

## Academic Programs

The programs and coursework of the Department of Folk Studies and Anthropology provide WKU students and the University constituency with the training, intellectual tools, and resources to understand the cultural and biological dimensions of humankind in terms of the myriad shaping factors addressed in our respective disciplines. Although the disciplines of anthropology and folk studies are distinct, we share the University's commitment to excellence in teaching, research, and public service, recognizing that this mission continues to evolve in response to regional, national, and global change.

The folk studies program stresses the examination of traditional expressive culture as a key to understanding human experience. The discipline of folklore has close affinities with literature, anthropology, sociology, history, geography, linguistics, philosophy, ethnomusicology, and psychology. The folk studies program integrates humanistic and social scientific perspectives on culture with pragmatic skills needed for professional involvement in research or for a variety of fields of employment such as public and applied folklore, historic preservation, cultural resource management, and museum work. The department offers an undergraduate minor in folklore in order to provide students with opportunities to enrich their general knowledge of the folk traditions and customs of specific societies and culture areas and to develop greater understanding of related forms of human thought and expression.

The anthropology program at Western Kentucky University offers students a cohesive program of study that enriches their knowledge of

human culture and biology, develops their cross-cultural perspectives, and prepares them for a variety of careers. In particular, the program provides opportunities for students to study the interaction of culture and biology, both in contemporary societies and in the archaeological and evolutionary past. The anthropology major and minor curricula prepare students for graduate studies and employment in cultural anthropology, biological anthropology, archaeology, linguistic anthropology, applied anthropology, cultural resource management, and related fields. Anthropology enriches the study of history, folklore, religion, languages, biological and physical sciences, and other social sciences. The anthropology program maintains extensive archaeological, biological, and cultural collections at the Anthropology Laboratory. The anthropology program also houses the state-of-the-art Ethnographic Visual Production Lab with digital audio and video recorders and cameras, virtual reality equipment, and editing stations.

When planning programs of study in this department, students should be aware of the University's academic requirements and regulations contained in this catalog in the chapter "Academic Information." Specific attention should be given to the subsections in the chapter entitled (a) Academic Programs, (b) Colonnade Requirements, and (c) Academic Requirements and Regulations. Students should be aware that some academic programs may require additional scholastic regulations and standards not specified in the catalog. To obtain a copy of these regulations, students should contact the Department Chair.

## Why Study Folklore and Anthropology?

The folklorist's skills in listening, collaboration, and analytical thinking are valuable skills for a wide variety of jobs. With a folklore minor, you'll develop outstanding skills for communicating across cultural groups as you conduct ethnographic fieldwork. You'll learn how to do multimedia production as you curate your fieldwork data for new audiences. And you'll learn how to work collaboratively with a diverse range of community partners. These are the skills 21<sup>st</sup> century employers seek. According to a survey of recent graduates, 73% of our undergraduate folklore minors were employed and 17% went on to graduate programs. Our graduates are public folklorists, museum curators, educators, preservationists, film producers, professors, and even intelligence analysts.

Training in anthropology promotes cultural awareness and enhances critical thinking, data collection and analysis, and creative problem-solving skills. Our students are actively engaged in research, extracurricular activities, public education, and community service, gaining valuable experience in preparation for careers and advanced studies. According to a recent survey of our anthropology graduates, 74% were employed and 21% progressed on to graduate school. Our former students are working in contract archaeology, cultural resource management, museums, medical anthropology, visual media, international education, the non-profit sector, and other exciting areas.

## Public Outreach Programs

The department is proud to house two award-winning public outreach programs. Besides serving diverse communities across the Commonwealth, the programs afford our students with opportunities to gain practical hands-on experience in public folklore and applied anthropology.

For over 30 years the Kentucky Folklife Program (KFP) has been dedicated to the mission of documenting, presenting, and conserving the diverse traditional culture and heritage of the Commonwealth. Founded in 1989 as an inter-agency partnership between the Kentucky Historical

Society and Kentucky Arts Council, KFP moved to its current home in the department in 2012. Physically located in the Pioneer Log Cabin on WKU's main campus, KFP remains focused on practical folklife and traditional arts projects as we continue to understand the evolving needs of local constituents throughout Kentucky, those who have a crucial stake in documenting the folk traditions of their regions. With our vantage point at WKU, KFP is always exploring exciting and innovative partnership opportunities with other organizations, universities, and folklife programs throughout the nation. Examples of KFP projects and programming since moving to WKU include the Bosnian oral history project, Folklorists in the Park program, Pioneer Log Cabin concert series and jams, and Southcentral Kentucky Musical Legacy project.

Founded in 1995, the mission of the Kentucky Archaeological Survey (KAS) is to provide services to state and federal agencies, work with private landowners to protect archaeological sites, and educate the public about Kentucky's rich archaeological heritage. KAS works with local governments and non-profit organizations on diverse initiatives, including educational projects that involve grade-school children and civic groups who participate in ongoing archaeological research. KAS undertakes a variety of projects throughout Kentucky. Some are conducted in advance of construction by government agencies, while others are conducted to identify sites on public lands, so that agencies can be better stewards. Examples of projects are the Old Frankfort Cemetery relocation, survey of historic farmsteads in the Bluegrass, Building Blocks of History program at Riverside–The Farnsley-Moreman Landing, and Kentucky Archaeology video and booklet series.

## Degree

- Anthropology, Bachelor of Arts (608) (<http://catalog.wku.edu/undergraduate/arts-letters/folk-studies-anthropology/anthropology-ba/>)

## Minors

- Anthropology, Minor (311) (<http://catalog.wku.edu/undergraduate/arts-letters/folk-studies-anthropology/anthropology-minor/>)
- Folklore, Minor (362) (<http://catalog.wku.edu/undergraduate/arts-letters/folk-studies-anthropology/folklore-minor/>)

## Faculty

### Professor

Darlene A. Applegate PhD (Anthropology), The Ohio State University Main Campus, 1997

### Associate Professor

Ann K. Ferrell PhD (English), The Ohio State University Main Campus, 2009

Jean-Luc Houle PhD (Anthropology, Archeology), University of Pitts Pittsburgh Camp, 2010

Kathryn A. Hudepohl PhD (Anthropology), Tulane University, 2002

### Clinical Assistant Professor

Brent A. Bjorkman MA (Folk Studies), Western Kentucky University, 1998

### Instructor I

Sydney K. Varajon BA, Tennessee Wesleyan College, 2014

## Professional Staff

Janie-Rice Brother MA (Architectural Historian, Kentucky Archaeological Survey), University of Kentucky, 2009

Justin N. Carlson PhD (Project Director, Kentucky Archaeological Survey), University of Kentucky, 2019

Joel Chapman MA (Folklife Specialist, Kentucky Folklife Program), Western Kentucky University, 2019

A. Gwynn Henderson PhD (Education Director, Kentucky Archaeological Survey), University of Kentucky, 1998

Bruce L. Manzano, MA (Project Archaeologist/Faunal Analyst, Kentucky Archaeological Survey), University of Tennessee, 1986

David Pollack PhD (Director, Kentucky Archaeological Survey), University of Kentucky, 1998

Lori C. Stahlgren, MA (Project Archaeologist, Kentucky Archaeological Survey), Northern Arizona University, 1999

M. Jay Stottman PhD (Assistant Director, Kentucky Archaeological Survey), University of Kentucky, 2016