Graduate Study in Medical Anthropology
The program in Medical Anthropology is designed to provide a usable skill set and framework for understanding health and health care in an increasingly complex world through taking seriously the important factor of culture. This cultural approach to health and health care makes the program unique and complementary with other health-related programs. With its emphasis on fieldwork and cultural analysis in the light of biomedical knowledge, the program furthers the excellence of healthcare professionals. The program promotes strategies for equitable access to effective health care both domestically and globally.

Program Goals
The Master of Arts in Medical Anthropology prepares students to:

1. Identify and examine the holistic, comparative, and ethnographic perspectives of medical anthropology. Students will be able to:
   a. analyze social behavior and cultural beliefs within specific groups and their conceptions of and practices associated with illness, health, and healing.
   b. apply the perspectives and approaches of medical anthropology to analyze issues of health and illness.

2. Apply the commonly used methods in medical anthropology for research. Students will be able to:
   a. collect and analyze data based on a clear understanding of the qualitative, quantitative, and integrated mixed methods used by medical anthropologists.
   b. conduct fieldwork, extensive library research, or a practicum. They will be skilled in consulting existing knowledge, following the scientific standards commonly accepted in anthropology, and producing original knowledge.

3. Identify and examine ethical issues in medical anthropology research and practice. Students will be able to:
   a. identify and analyze ethical issues commonly faced by medical anthropologists in their research, writing, and the interpretation of their findings.
   b. identify and apply the ethical standards of the Institutional Review Boards (IRB) and other ethics boards.

4. Make informed and reflexive contributions to scholarly, professional, and general communities. Students will be able to:
   a. critically identify, examine, and interpret personal, professional, and Ignatian values and become advocates for change.
   b. practice effective, clear, and empathic communication across diverse social and cultural perspectives.

Admission Requirements
Applicants must have a Bachelor’s degree or its equivalent from an accredited college or university. An application should include:

1. Completed application form, with application fee.
2. Current resume or curriculum vitae.
MMA 591. Food, Culture, and Nutritional Health. 3 credits.
Eating is a quintessential biocultural phenomenon—it is on one hand a necessary physiological function enacted with the goal of obtaining adequate nutrition, and on the other hand a symbolic activity that we engage in as social actors in complex and meaningful cultural and physical environments. This course is designed to explore how biological, social, and cultural factors have interacted across time and around the world to shape human diet, nutrition, and health. Within the domain of food and eating, this course will examine human culture as knowledge and behavior systems that are shared and variable within and between social groups. The diversity of human foodways as they influence nutritional health will be considered throughout the life course and on global and local scales. Classic works and case studies from nutritional and medical anthropology will be highlighted, along with scholarly material from nutrition sciences, public health, psychology, and other fields. P: Admittance to Medical Anthropology master’s program or DC.

MMA 592. Social Science Approaches to Understanding Disease: Cancer. 3 credits.
This course explores meanings of health, disease, and the body. These ideas are profoundly shaped by culture, transnational flows of people, ideas and resources, histories of colonialism and structural inequalities, and the development of new technologies. An informed understanding of health and illness must begin by exploring these multiple dynamics, processes, and contexts. These contexts are explicated through the use of theoretical perspectives, such as bioculturalism, political economy, and phenomenology. It is through these theoretical lenses that students will come to understand how illness, health, and well-being are understood holistically by medical anthropologists. P: Admittance to Medical Anthropology master’s program or DC.

MMA 593. Cultural Competency in Health Care. 3 credits.
This course is designed to critically examine cultural competency in health and health services and the underlying challenges of responding to health disparity. Students will be encouraged to rethink traditional notions of cultural competency while building an advanced foundation for cultural responsiveness in health services.

MMA 600. Seminar in Medical Anthropology. 2 credits.
This course examines the field of global health, particularly the health problems facing populations in developing countries. The course provides an overview of the major initiatives and issues in international public health such as those by the World Health Organization, as well as in-depth case studies of individual nations’ approach to health. The underlying purpose of the course is to develop students’ awareness of the political, socioeconomic, ecological, and cultural complexity of health problems in developing nations and the need for anthropological involvement in the field of global health. P: Admittance to Medical Anthropology master’s program or DC.

MMA 604. Social & Cultural Contexts of Health Care. 3 credits.
This class introduces the student to the various contexts of personal and social experience that construct and interpret bioethics. Participants consider identity and autonomy as embedded in social matrices ranging from the body itself to global configurations. Various power dynamics of class, legitimacy, and ideology are considered. Participants analyze the culture of the biomedical project and the challenge of finding one’s voice within it.

MMA 610. Public Health Anthropology: Bridging Differences. 3 credits.
This course examines three types of relationships between anthropology and public health. Anthropology and public health will examine complementary and competing concepts fundamental to each discipline. Anthropology of public health takes a critical look at public health’s cultural assumptions in its praxis. Anthropology in public health will focus on ways that anthropology theory and methods inform the practice of public health. Using these three approaches, we will examine topics in public health. P: Admittance to Medical Anthropology master’s program or DC.

This elective course combines the perspectives of bioethics and anthropology. It focuses on the impact on society of a rescue-oriented health care system and the promotion of transplantation as a quintessential form of rescue. Through reading, discussion, and reflection students explore the concepts of rescue, scarcity, and the search for control in terms of acute care and mortality in the U.S. Students also choose one of several international perspectives on organ transplantation, compare it to a U.S. perspective, and present their finds to the class. The course begins by considering how CPR and the obligation to rescue reflects and shapes both U.S. health care and the social construction of dying and death in the American hospital. The course relates rescue to scarcity and power, including power over nature. The course considers micro and macro perspectives as it explores the organ transfer project, its promises, and its ability to deliver on those promises. Finally, students consider an alternative set of ideas to contrast to rescue’s positivist frame.

MMA 620. Global Health: Local Realities and Global Forces. 3 credits.
This course explores the field of global health, particularly the health problems facing populations in developing countries. The course provides an overview of the major initiatives and issues in international public health such as those by the World Health Organization, as well as in-depth case studies of individual nations’ approach to health. The underlying purpose of the course is to develop students’ awareness of the political, socioeconomic, ecological, and cultural complexity of health problems in developing nations and the need for anthropological involvement in the field of global health. P: Admittance to Medical Anthropology master’s program or DC.
MMA 630. Health Care and Health Services: Anthropological Perspectives. 3 credits.
From birth to death, medical decisions pervade our lives. From macroeconomic controversies over private vs. managed care to micro-cultural decisions over whether and how to incorporate various healing traditions into our lives, all of us make decisions on a daily basis over types of medical treatment. This course takes a historical and comparative anthropological approach to studying health services and healthcare systems. The course especially emphasizes three topics: a) controversies precipitated by new medical technologies; b) continuities and dislocations between western and non-western medical traditions; c) appropriate responses to chronic and global diseases, such as AIDS. We consider the broad plurality of ways of diagnosing and treating illness throughout the world, as well as the specific historical and local contexts of new treatments and technologies. P: Admittance to Medical Anthropology master's program or DC.

MMA 640. Rural Health Issues and Initiatives. 3 credits.
This course examines the environmental, cultural, and systemic economic and political factors that contribute to health, wellness, illness, and healing in rural American settings. It identifies the health effects of air and water pollution as a result of agricultural and industrial production as well as natural environmental hazards and extremes. The course interprets the cultural behaviors of rural people related to health and illness within the contexts of income disparities and the geographic isolation that influences access to health care. It examines and critiques the federal and state level policies that attempt to address inequities and injustices in rural health. Students will understand how medical anthropological field methods are applied to identify rural issues in specific local contexts and applied to further appropriate initiatives. P: Admittance to Medical Anthropology master’s program or DC.

MMA 650. Indigenous Health Issues. 3 credits.
This course examines indigenous health issues and solutions around the globe. After considering and defining the term the course examines groups and individuals within these groups in specific geographic regions such as the Americas, Oceania, Africa and Asia with a focus on population, culture, health resources and challenges, integration with and separation from the outside world particularly in relationship to the Nations in which these groups are located. The class also examines each group's relationship with their heterogeneous health care options. P: Admittance to Medical Anthropology master’s program or DC.

MMA 660. Directed Projects in Medical Anthropology. 1-6 credits.
The student, supervised by a faculty member, pursues in-depth studies on a specific topic, resulting in a paper of publishable quality and length, assessed by the supervising faculty member in terms of 1) research, reading and writing skills, 2) critical thinking and 3) scientific significance. P: MMA 600.

MMA 750. Methods I: Quantitative Research Analysis. 3 credits.
This course will combine an in-depth exploration of quantitative research techniques with a variety of statistical assessments. Particular emphasis will be paid to collection, coding and analysis of original data. Issues concerning ethical expectations and considerations in the collection, analysis and reporting of quantitative data will also be fully addressed. Undergraduate statistics course suggested. P: Admittance to Medical Anthropology master’s program or DC.

MMA 760. Methods II: Qualitative Field Research Methods. 3 credits.
This course will introduce the field research methods used by anthropologists to collect and interpret data. The course will begin by discussing ethical and epistemological issues in research. Then, through a variety of in-class and out-of-class exercises, students will gather and analyze data. By the end of the course, students should be able to evaluate the research of others and plan and conduct their own research through 1) identifying research problems, 2) selecting appropriate research methods, 3) developing a research proposal, and 4) practicing data collection and analysis. P: Admittance to Medical Anthropology master’s program or DC.

MMA 770. Field Research and Thesis Writing. 3-9 credits.
This course is taken by students who opt for the field research track with writing a thesis based on the field research findings. Students will closely interact with and be mentored by their advisor in collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data and when they write the thesis. P: Admittance to Medical Anthropology master’s program or DC and MMA 750 and MMA 760.

MMA 771. Library Research and Thesis Writing. 3-9 credits.
This course is taken by students who opt for the library research track with writing a thesis based on the library research findings. Students will closely interact with and be mentored by their advisor in searching for, analyzing, and interpreting data and when they write the thesis. P: Admittance to Medical Anthropology master’s program or DC and MMA 750 and MMA 760.

MMA 772. Practicum and Program Development. 3-9 credits.
This course is taken by students who opt for the practicum track with developing a program, assessment tool, educational material, etc. for a practicum organization supervised by someone within the organization and by the academic advisor. Both the academic advisor and the organization’s supervisor will assess the developed "product" and the academic advisor will assign the grade. P: Admittance to Medical Anthropology master’s program or DC and MMA 750 and MMA 760.