

# DSST® GENERAL ANTHROPOLOGY

## EXAM INFORMATION

This exam was developed to enable schools to award credit to students for knowledge equivalent to that learned by students taking the course. This exam deals with theoretical perspectives; physical anthropology; archaeology; social organization; economic organization; political organization; religion; and modernization and application of anthropology.

The exam contains 100 questions to be answered in 2 hours.

## EXAM CONTENT OUTLINE

The following is an outline of the content areas covered in the examination. The approximate percentage of the examination devoted to each content area is also noted.

- I. Anthropology as a Discipline Branches and Methodologies – 7%**
  - a. Physical anthropology
  - b. Cultural Anthropology: ethnology; ethnography
  - c. Linguistics
  - d. Archaeology
- II. Various Theoretical Perspectives – 3%**
  - a. Structuralism
  - b. Functionalism
  - c. Cultural ecology
  - d. Cultural evolution
  - e. Cultural determinism
- III. Physical Anthropology – 17%**
  - a. Genetic principles: genes, heredity, Mendelian inheritance, genotypes
  - b. Phenotypes, gene pools, mutations, molecular genetics
  - c. Adaptation, natural selection, variations (e.g., blood chemistry)
  - d. Living primates
  - e. Fossils
    1. Relative and absolute dating
    2. Fossil hominids – *Australopithecines*, *Homo erectus*, *Homo habilis*, *Homo sapiens* (*neanderthalensis* and *sapiens*)
- IV. Archaeology – 19%**
  - a. Methodology (prehistoric and historic)
  - b. Paleolithic and Mesolithic
  - c. Neolithic: development of technology, domestication of plants and animals
  - d. Development of civilization and urban societies
- V. Nature of Culture – 12%**
  - a. Symbols and symbolic systems
  - b. Language, sociolinguistics, morphology, phonology
  - c. Society vs. culture
  - d. Cultural variation: universals and alternatives
  - e. Real vs. ideal culture
  - f. Cultural change: invention, diffusion, innovation
  - g. Cultural relativity, ethnocentrism
  - h. Etic and emic world views
  - i. The individual in culture
  - j. The arts
- VI. Social Organization – 16%**
  - a. Marriage and family patterns: mate choice, residence, monogamy, polygamy, family of orientation – conjugal, natal family, incest, exogamy, divorce
  - b. Kinship and descent groups: kindred, lineage, clan, phratry, moiety, bilateral vs. unilateral descent, matrilineal, patrilineal, kinship terminology
  - c. Groups and associations (e.g., age, sex)
  - d. Social stratification: caste, class, slavery, status (achieved and ascribed), role, rank
- VII. Economic Organization – 7%**
  - a. Subsistence and settlement patterns
  - b. Formal and substantive approaches
  - c. Communal and private ownership of land, material and nonmaterial property
  - d. Reciprocity, redistribution, and market exchange
  - e. Production, allocation, use, and consumption of goods and services
- VIII. Political Organization – 6%**
  - a. Politics, political systems: bands, tribes, states, chiefdoms
  - b. Political associations
  - c. Social control: customs, laws, war
- IX. Religion – 10%**
  - a. Religious institutions (e.g. individual, shamanistic, revitalization movements)
  - b. Belief systems, world views (e.g., animism, totemism, myth)
  - c. Religious practices and practitioners (e.g. magic, healers)
  - d. Rites of passage: birth, maturity, marriage, death

**X. Modernization and Application of Anthropology – 3%**

- a. Applied anthropology
- b. Cultural survival
- c. Directed cultural change

**REFERENCES**

Below is a list of reference publications that were either used as a reference to create the exam, or were used as textbooks in college courses of the same or similar title at the time the test was developed. You may reference either the current edition of these titles **or** textbooks currently used at a local college or university for the same class title. It is recommended that you reference **more than one textbook** on the topics outlined in this fact sheet.

You should **begin by checking textbook content against the content outline** provided **before** selecting textbooks that cover the test content from which to study.

Sources for study material are suggested but not limited to the following:

1. Barrett, Richard A. *Culture and Conduct: An Excursion in Anthropology*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing, current edition.
2. Fagin, Brian. *People of the Earth: An Introduction to World Prehistory*. Glenview, IL: Scott, Foresman & Co., current edition.
3. Ember, Carol R. and Melvin Ember. *Anthropology*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, current edition.
4. Harris, Marvin. *Cultural Anthropology*. New York: Harper and Row, current edition.
5. Haviland, William A. *Anthropology*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, current edition.
6. Jolly, Clifford and Fred Plog. *Physical Anthropology and Archaeology*. New York: Knopf, current edition.
7. Kottak, Conrad P. *Anthropology: The Exploration of Human Diversity*. New York: Random House, current edition.
8. Nanda, Serena. *Cultural Anthropology*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing, current edition.
9. Rosman, Abraham and Paula Rubel. *Tapestry of Culture*. New York: Random House, current edition.
10. Sharer, Robert and Wendy Ashmore. *Archaeology: Discovering Our Past*. Palo Alto, CA: Mayfield, current edition.

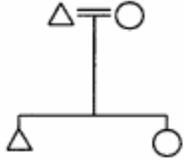
11. Swartz, Mark J. and David K. Jordan. *Culture: The Anthropological Perspective*. New York: John Wiley, current edition.
12. Thomas, D.H. *Archaeology*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, current edition.

**SAMPLE QUESTIONS**

All test questions are in a multiple-choice format, with one correct answer and three incorrect options. These are samples of the types of questions that may appear on the exam. Other sample questions can be found in the form of practice exams by visiting our website at [www.getcollegecredit.com/testprep](http://www.getcollegecredit.com/testprep).

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1. Which of the following statements best describes the concept of culture?
    - a. Culture consists of genetically transmitted patterns of thinking and acting.
    - b. Culture represents economic and political achievements.
    - c. Culture is primarily determined by artifacts and art.
    - d. Culture consists of learned and shared patterns of thinking and acting.
  2. A major contribution by Darwin is the
    - a. Principle of uniformism
    - b. Theory of diffusionism
    - c. Theory of organic solidarity
    - d. Theory of natural selection
  3. All of the following have traditionally been advanced as possible reasons for the incest taboo EXCEPT the
    - a. Necessity to create alliances with other groups
    - b. Instinctual sexual aversion to relatives
    - c. Deleterious effects of continued inbreeding
    - d. Example set by nonhuman primates
  4. The Mesolithic era is often described as a period of transition because it
    - a. Allowed for the development of great hunting cultures
    - b. Is characterized as a period of major growth in the early cities
    - c. Witnessed a sharp decline in the development of tools
    - d. Represented a period of diversification of subsistence strategies
  5. Which of the following statements about ideal cultural patterns (norms) is true?
    - a. There is often great discrepancy between what people say they do and what they actually do.

- b. A norm ceases to exist if the normative rule is not carried out in social behavior.
- c. Norms are seldom outmoded or maladaptive.
- d. Ideal cultural patterns are found only among peoples who practice agriculture.



6. The diagram above shows
- a. An extended family
  - b. A patrilineage
  - c. A nuclear family
  - d. A matrifocal family
7. Which of the following is true of traits of humans and not true of other animals?
- a. Prolonged care of young
  - b. Sedentary residence patterns
  - c. Complex symbol systems
  - d. Socialization of young
8. Jane Goodall observed chimpanzees in the wild and was surprised to find that they
- a. Lived in large groups
  - b. Made and used tools
  - c. Lived in nuclear families
  - d. Used sign language
9. The careful description of a culture is called
- a. Epistemology
  - b. Phenomenology
  - c. Ethnography
  - d. Ethnomethodology
10. The special norm that a person must marry someone who is within his or her group is called
- a. Endogamy
  - b. Group marriage
  - c. Exogamy
  - d. Polyandry

**CREDIT RECOMMENDATIONS**

The American Council on Education’s College Credit Recommendation Service (ACE CREDIT) has evaluated the DSST test development process and content of this exam. It has made the following recommendations:

<b>Area or Course Equivalent</b>	General Anthropology
<b>Level</b>	Lower-level baccalaureate
<b>Amount of Credit</b>	Three (3) semester hours
<b>Minimum Score</b>	400
<b>Source</b>	American Council on Education – College Credit Recommendation Service

**Answers to sample questions:** 1-D; 2-D; 3-D; 4-D; 5-A; 6-C; 7-C; 8-B; 9-C; 10-A.