ANTHROPOLOGY AND SOCIOLOGY (Div II)

Chair: Professor Antonia Foias


Visiting Assistant Professor: L. Koryushkina, M. Ruikova, G. Shoffstall. Affiliated Faculty: N. Howe, J. Manigault-Bryant, G. Mitchell.


On leave Fall only: Associate Professor N. Howe.

On leave Spring only:

The disciplines of anthropology and sociology aim to teach students how to enter into the social/cultural worlds of others, how to grasp those worlds from the viewpoints of their inhabitants, and how to articulate those denizens’ habits of mind, worldviews, and values to broader audiences.

Anthropology critically analyzes social forms and practices in all their local and global diversity, illuminating the cultural grounding of the ideologies, narratives, and structures in which we are all implicated. Archaeology extends this analysis to social formations of the historical and prehistorical past. Sociology studies the nature and trajectories of modernity, examining the intricacies of industrial and post-industrial societies and the dilemmas that confront individuals in modern social systems. These disciplines introduce students to classical and contemporary theories that illuminate the contours and contradictions of social experience. The Anthropology & Sociology program promotes a critical engagement with these theories while at the same time bringing evidence and case studies into conversation with theory.

The Department emphasizes qualitative fieldwork in its many forms. We teach students how to formulate, frame, and address intellectual problems. We also teach students the empirical methods widely used in anthropology, sociology, and other related disciplines, including, but not limited to ethnography, participant observation, interviewing, discourse and visual analysis, archival research, oral history, and archaeological methods.

Because the program emphasizes critical thinking skills to assess social claims made by others, and the application of anthropological and sociological skills to present day concerns, undergraduate training in Anthropology or Sociology has proven invaluable to majors pursuing a range of careers, including public policy, diplomacy, international development, marketing, social media development, K-12 education, journalism, medicine, and law.

MAJORS

The department offers separate majors in both Anthropology and Sociology, with a broad and diverse array of courses in both disciplines. The department is committed, however, to the unity of the social sciences. To this end, Anthropology and Sociology offer joint core courses in methodology and theory, as well as several elective courses in common. All joint courses are designated “ANSO.”

Requirements

For the degree in Anthropology or Sociology, students must complete a minimum of nine courses as outlined below:

Core Courses

Majors in both disciplines must take a sequence of four core courses. Three of these are joint (ANSO) courses. The sequences are:

Anthropology

ANTH 101 How to Be Human

Sociology

SOC 101 Invitation to Sociology

Joint Courses

ANSO 205 Ways of Knowing

ANSO 305 Social Theory

ANSO 402 Senior Seminar

Elective Courses

Majors in Anthropology or Sociology must take five elective courses from the course listings of their respective disciplines or from the joint ANSO listings. Two of the courses chosen are normally at the 300 level or above. In close consultation with their departmental advisors, students may take some selected courses from other disciplines to fulfill major requirements in either Anthropology or Sociology.

Majors in each wing of the department are allowed to count up to two courses in the other wing towards fulfillment of their major requirements.
**STATISTICS AND DATA ANALYSIS**

In addition to the nine total courses required for the major, it is recommended that Anthropology and Sociology majors take Statistics 101 or a comparable course in statistics and data analysis.

**AREA STUDIES CONCENTRATION**

Students who wish to combine a major in Anthropology or Sociology with an Area Studies concentration are encouraged to do so. Courses taken to satisfy an Area Studies requirement may be counted toward the major with prior approval of a student’s departmental advisor. The only exception to this rule is the Area Studies senior seminar, which cannot ordinarily be counted toward the Anthropology or Sociology degree.

**LANGUAGE STUDY, STUDY ABROAD, AND WINTER STUDY**

Departmental advisors will help interested students integrate a major with study abroad, foreign language study, or field research during the winter study period. The department encourages Williams students to take advantage of established foreign study programs in Egypt, Japan, India, Hong Kong, and other countries. Because some foreign study programs do not offer courses that can be counted toward the Anthropology or Sociology degrees, however, sophomores planning to study abroad in junior year must consult with the departmental advisor before declaring a major.

**FAQ**

- **Can your department or program typically pre-approve courses for major/concentration credit?**
  
  Yes. In some cases, provisional approval can be granted (students should be sure to contact the department for details). We welcome discussions of curricular plans for those major who travel abroad in their junior year. However, typically, students don’t have access to all the salient information until AFTER they have taken the course.

- **What criteria will typically be used/required to determine whether a student may receive major/concentration credit for a course taken while on study away?**
  
  Course title and description, and complete syllabus including readings/assignments. The syllabus and readings/assignment information is required in cases when the course title and description are not sufficient to ascertain whether a course should count towards the major. We also request information on course hours.

- **Does your department/program place restrictions on the number of major/concentration credits that a student might earn through study away?**
  
  Yes. We credit two, and in special cases three courses.

- **Does your department/program place restrictions on the types of courses that can be awarded credit towards your major?**
  
  Yes. The expectation is for an intellectually rigorous semester-long course with a paper/exam component.

- **Are there specific major requirements that cannot be fulfilled while on study away?**
  
  Yes. ANSO 205, ANSO 305 and ANSO 402 are almost always taken in the department.

- **Are there specific major requirements in your department/program that students should be particularly aware of when weighing study away options? (Some examples might include a required course that is always taught in one semester, laboratory requirements.)**
  
  Yes. ANSO 305 is offered in the fall and ANSO 205 and ANSO 402 only in the spring. We advise our majors to be aware if they plan to spend all or part of their junior year abroad.

- **Give examples in which students thought or assumed that courses taken away would count toward the major or concentration and then learned they wouldn’t:**
  
  In one case, a student had assumed that he could take the equivalent of ANSO 205 abroad, and was disappointed to discover that was not the case. He ended up taking ANSO 205 his senior year.

**THE DEGREE WITH HONORS IN ANTHROPOLOGY OR SOCIOLOGY**

Honors and highest honors are normally awarded for the completion of a year-long research project that has resulted in an original thesis of high quality. Students wishing to write an honors thesis should engage a member of the department faculty as a Thesis Advisor as soon as possible and must submit a proposal for the thesis for department approval no later than the end of spring reading period of the junior year. If the proposal is approved, they will be permitted to register for Anthropology and Sociology 493-W31-494, during which they will write and defend a thesis. If their overall work in the major continues to be of high quality and the thesis is deemed of a similar quality, they may be awarded honors or highest honors in Anthropology or Sociology.
ANSO 205 (S) Ways of Knowing
An applied exploration of how one makes sense of the social world through fieldwork. Some of the key questions of the course are: What are the philosophical and epistemological underpinnings of social inquiry? How does one frame intellectual problems and go about collecting, sifting, and assessing field materials? What are the uses and limits of statistical data? What is the importance of history to sociological and anthropological research? How can one use archival and other documentary materials to enrich ethnographic research? What are the empirical limits to interpretation? What is the relationship between empirical data and the generation of social theory? How does the social organization of social research affect one's inquiry? What are the typical ethical dilemmas of fieldwork and of other kinds of social research? How do researchers' personal biographies and values shape their work? In the first half of the course, we will approach these problems concretely rather than abstractly through a series of case studies, drawing upon the field experiences of departmental faculty and guest speakers from different professional backgrounds. The second half of the course will be dedicated to a hands-on training in field methods, in which the students will design and undertake their own pilot field projects.

Class Format: seminar
Requirements/Evaluation: full-participation in the seminar, several short papers, an independent ethnographic project and a final research proposal
Prerequisites: ANTH 101 or SOC 101 or permission of instructor
Enrollment Limit: 25
Expected Class Size: 25
Distributions: (D2)
Attributes: EVST Methods Courses; SCST Related Courses

Spring 2019
SEM Section: 01 W 1:10 pm - 3:50 pm David B. Edwards

ANSO 214 (F) Performance Ethnography: Global Approaches to Dance
Secondary Crosslisting
The course aims to explore the theory, practice, and ethics of ethnographic research with a focus on dance, movement and performance ethnography. Traditionally considered to be a method of research in anthropology, ethnography is the descriptive and analytical study of a particular community through fieldwork, where the researcher immerses herself in the culture of the people that she researches. In this course students will be introduced to (i) critical theory that grounds ethnography as a research methodology, (ii) will read ethnographic studies of dance and performance practices from different parts of the world, and (iii) will do field research in the local community for their own ethnographic projects. This is primarily a discussion-based seminar course and will include fieldwork, attendance at live performances, film screenings, workshop with guest artists etc. No previous dance experience required.

Class Format: seminar
Requirements/Evaluation: class participation, reading responses and essays, fieldwork and field notes, and presentations
Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option
Prerequisites: none
Enrollment Limit: 15
Expected Class Size: 15
Distributions: (D2)
Distribution Notes: meets Division 1 requirement if registration is under DANC or THEA; meets Division 2 requirement if registration is under GBST, AMST or ANSO

Fall 2018
SEM Section: 01 W 1:10 pm - 3:50 pm Munjulika Tarah

ANSO 305 (F) Social Theory
An introduction to social theory in anthropology and sociology, with strong emphasis on enduring themes that cut across disciplinary divides. What is modern about modern social theory? How do social thinkers construe “society” and “culture,” and have these constructions withstood challenges over
time? What role does human agency play in the unfolding of social life, and where does that sense of agency come from in the first place? What are the forces that animate social interaction on the level of individuals, social groups and complex units like nation-states? What are the possibilities and limits of systematic approaches to the study of human social experience? The course emphasizes major differences between interpretive frameworks as well as the common elements that contribute to a deeper understanding of the social world.

Class Format: seminar
Requirements/Evaluation: full participation in the seminar, regular reading response memos, and three papers
Extra Info: formerly ANSO 206
Extra Info 2: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option
Prerequisites: ANTH 101 or SOC 101 or ANSO 205 or permission of the instructor
Enrollment Limit: 19
Enrollment Preferences: Anthropology and Sociology majors
Expected Class Size: 15
Department Notes: AMST Critical and Cultural Theory Electives
Distributions: (D2)
Attributes: AMST Critical and Cultural Theory Electives;

Fall 2018
SEM Section: 01    MR 2:35 pm - 3:50 pm    Olga Shevchenko

ANSO 402 (S) Senior Seminar
This capstone seminar combines intensive discussion and individual research. Half of the course will be dedicated to the discussion of current debates central to the concerns of both anthropology and sociology, such as the ethics of conducting fieldwork, humanitarianism and relief, global public health, poverty and the city, and environmental conservation. Among the topics discussed, the ethical dilemmas of conducting ethnography will be a common theme. The instructor will consult with the students in late fall to decide on the topics for discussion. The second half of the course will be devoted to independent individual original projects which should have a major ethnographic component. At the end of the course, students will present their projects to the seminar.

Class Format: seminar
Requirements/Evaluation: full participation, major research project and paper (30 pages), class presentation; weekly short responses
Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option
Prerequisites: only senior majors in Anthropology and Sociology, or permission of instructor
Enrollment Limit: none
Enrollment Preferences: Anthropology and Sociology majors
Expected Class Size: 12
Distributions: (D2)

Spring 2019
SEM Section: 01    TF 2:35 pm - 3:50 pm    Antonia E. Foias