ANTHROPOLOGY AND SOCIOLOGY (Div II)

ANTHROPOLOGY

Chair: Professor Antonia Foias

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

On leave Fall/Spring: Assistant Professors: J. Lee, C. Simko.
On leave Fall only: Professor J. Nolan. Associate Professor N. Howe.

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.
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.

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.

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.

Students MUST contact departments/programs BEFORE assuming study away credit will be granted toward the major or concentration.

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/assignment. 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.

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.

The Department of Anthropology does not require field work for the major. However, most majors take a field methods seminar and a field methods course. Students interested in undertaking field research abroad in junior year must consult with the departmental advisor before declaring a major.
ANTH 12 (W) Coastal Navigation

Students will learn basic skills for piloting a small vessel in coastal waters using a compass and paper charts. Areas to be covered include: basic rules of navigation; reading nautical charts; recognizing and interpreting aids to navigation (buoys, lighthouses, etc.); reading a magnetic compass; plotting a position on a chart; plotting a course by dead reckoning; planning and charting a voyage; the use of standard navigation references; the use of open source chartplotting software. Work outside class meetings will consist of assigned readings and practice plotting.

Class Format: mornings

Requirements/Evaluation: periodic quizzes and a final exercise; punctual attendance and all class meetings is required; absences for the purpose of extra-curricular activities will not be excused

Prerequisites: none

Enrollment Limit: 10

Materials/Lab Fee: $77 plus cost of books

Winter 2019

LEC Section: 01    TWR 10:00 am - 12:50 pm PORG 10:00 am - 12:50 pm    Peter Just

ANTH 15 (W) Photographic Literacy and Practice

Crosslistings: ANTH15 / SOC15

Secondary Crosslisting

When you look at a photograph, what is it really saying? How can you make photograph that says what you mean? This course will educate students on the concepts of photographic seeing and visual literacy, while also training students to apply these concepts to their own photography. In class we will review historical and contemporary photography, photobooks, and other sources of visual inspiration. Students will conceptualize and photograph a project of their own choosing. Students will learn to defend their work during in-class critiques, and at the end of the course the class will design and produce an exhibition of their photography. Outside of class, students will be expected to photograph on their own in the Williamstown area and access to a car may be helpful.

Class Format: three times per week--Mondays and Fridays from 10am-12pm and Wednesdays from 1pm-5pm

Requirements/Evaluation: final project; formal public exhibit

Prerequisites: none, but students must own or borrow a digital camera (a DSLR with a 35mm lens is ideal, but compact cameras will also work)

Enrollment Limit: 12

Enrollment Preferences: students can email me

Materials/Lab Fee: $0

Attributes: EXPE Experiential Education Courses

Winter 2019

LEC Section: 01    MF 10:00 am - 11:15 am W 1:00 pm - 6:00 pm PORG 1:00 pm - 5:00 pm    Ben Brody

ANTH 31 (W) Senior Thesis: Anthropology

To be taken by students registered for Anthropology 493-494.

Class Format: thesis

Distributions: (D2)

Winter 2019

HON Section: 01    TBA    Antonia E. Foias

ANTH 99 (W) Independent Study: Anthropology

Open to upperclass students. Students interested in doing an independent project (99) during Winter Study must make prior arrangements with a faculty sponsor. The student and professor then complete the independent study proposal form available online. The deadline is typically in late
September. Proposals are reviewed by the pertinent department and the Winter Study Committee. Students will be notified if their proposal is approved prior to the Winter Study registration period.

Class Format: independent study
Distributions: (D2)

Winter 2019
IND Section: 01    TBA     Antonia E. Folias

ANTH 101 (F) How to Be Human
Is there such a thing as "human nature"? Why have human societies developed such a bewildering range of customs to deal with problems common to people everywhere? This course addresses these questions by introducing students to the comparative study of human social life and culture. Topics surveyed in the course include economics, language and thought, kinship and marriage, law and politics, and the wide variations in human belief systems, including religions. The course also considers the ways that anthropology, a discipline that was until recently practiced almost exclusively by Westerners, approaches other societies in search of insights on our own customs and values. Ethnographic descriptions of both "simple" tribal societies and complex modern ones are a prominent part of the readings. This course explores differences and similarities between cultures and societies and ways in which they have interacted and responded to one another in the past.

Class Format: lecture/discussion of case studies and ethnographic films
Requirements/Evaluation: two short essays, a final examination and class participation
Prerequisites: first-year students and sophomores
Enrollment Limit: 30
Enrollment Preferences: first-year students and sophomores; juniors and seniors admitted only by permission of instructor
Expected Class Size: 30
Distributions: (D2)

Fall 2018
LEC Section: 01    TR 9:55 am - 11:10 am    Peter Just
Spring 2019
LEC Section: 01    MWF 11:00 am - 12:15 pm    Peter Just

ANTH 103 (F) Pyramids, Bones, and Sherds: What is Archaeology?
Anthropology examines not only living societies, but also prehistoric cultures whose remains are found worldwide. This course will present how archaeology reconstructs the various aspects of human society from the physical record of prehistory. How do we study the subsistence and settlement patterns, the political and social organization, and the economy and ideology of prehistoric societies who have left behind mute material records? The objective of anthropological archaeology is to bring to life these prehistoric cultures through archaeological analysis. The different goals, approaches and methodologies of modern archaeology will be discussed theoretically and then applied to case studies.

Class Format: lecture/discussion/class presentations of case studies
Requirements/Evaluation: class presentations, two papers, midterm and final exams
Prerequisites: none
Enrollment Limit: 30
Expected Class Size: 25
Distributions: (D2)

Not offered current academic year

ANTH 134 (S) Leaving the World Behind: The Literature of Reclusion  (WI)
Crosslistings: ANTH134 / REL134 / COMP134 / CHIN134
Secondary Crosslisting
Living in a time of political and social turmoil, Confucius told his followers: "When the realm has the Way, show yourself; when it lacks the way, hide." Reclusion here is a moral choice, justified by the ethical decline of the state. But it could also be a mortal necessity in a period in which government service was a distinctly hazardous pursuit. In other contexts becoming a hermit could instead be figured as aesthetic stance meant to preserve one's artistic integrity against the dominant claims of society. This course looks at the literature of reclusion---living a life of seclusion from society---in a range of different cultures and periods, from ancient China to contemporary America. With sources that include poems, essays, novels, and films, we will investigate a set of issues surrounding radical seclusion. What different forms does reclusion take? Can one be a hermit without being completely separated from society? What is the relationship between hermits and the state---to what extent does one depend on the other? What are the philosophical and moral implications of eremitism? Is separating oneself from human society an inherently immoral act? What is the relationship between reclusion and technology in the contemporary world? What is the nature of solitude and can it be experienced in a group (for example, in contemporary "intentional communities")? While most of our work will focus on textual analysis, there will be an experiential component to the course as well. Each student will design and implement their own experiment in (short-term) eremitism.

Class Format: tutorial

Requirements/Evaluation: tutorial papers, responses, and a final project

Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option

Prerequisites: none

Enrollment Limit: 10

Enrollment Preferences: first-year students, Chinese majors, Religion majors, Anthropology majors

Expected Class Size: 10

Distributions: (D2) (WI)

Distribution Notes: meets Division 1 requirement if registration is under CHIN or COMP; meets Division 2 requirement if registration is under ANTH or REL WI. Students will write a 5- to 7-page paper every other week for a total of five papers. On weeks in which they are not writing, they will critique their partner's paper. The final project will be a self-designed experiment in reclusion.

Spring 2019

TUT Section: T1    TBA    Christopher M. B. Nugent

ANTH 138 (S) Spectacular Sex

Crosslistings: ANTH138 / WGSS138

Secondary Crosslisting

From Beyoncé's Super Bowl halftime show to Donald Trump's presidential campaign, spectacles captivate us. Spectacles may be live shows, media events, or even everyday performances ranging from interactive advertisements to viral video sensations. But what are the uses of spectacle? Why are some compelling while others fall flat? How do spectacles control society or maintain social norms? And, importantly for our purposes, how does spectacle shape gender in society? Or from another angle, how does sexuality infuse spectacle? This tutorial introduces students to theories of spectacle ranging from the ancient Greeks to Marxist-inspired thinkers in the 20th century. In particular, we will examine how feminist thinkers have contributed to this literature and how theories of spectacle relate to questions of gender and sexuality. Our weekly readings focus on pairings of theoretical readings with writing on popular cultural examples and case studies. Some possible topics include sporting events, charity ad campaigns, music videos, political events, and social media.

Class Format: tutorial

Requirements/Evaluation: weekly response papers

Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option

Prerequisites: none

Enrollment Limit: 10

Enrollment Preferences: first- and second-year students; a statement of interest will be solicited from pre-registrants

Expected Class Size: 10

Distributions: (D2)

Not offered current academic year
ANTH 210 (S) The Challenge of ISIS
Crosslistings: HIST210 / REL240 / ANTH210 / ARAB210 / GBST210

Primary Crosslisting

What is ISIS and what does it want? Using historical and anthropological sources and perspectives, the course considers the origins, ideology and organization of the Islamic State. Beginning with an examination of early radical movements, including the Muslim Brotherhood, the Afghan mujahedin and Taliban, and al-Qaeda, the course will go on to investigate how ISIS derives important aspects of its ideology and organization from these earlier movements and how it deviates from them. We will look at unique aspects of the movement, such as its use of social media, its extensive destruction of ancient historical sites, its staging of spectacles of violence, and its recruitment of Muslims from Europe and North America. We will also examine the ideological constitution of the movement, including its attitude toward and treatment of non-Muslims, its conceptualization of itself as a modern incarnation of the original Islamic caliphate, the ways in which it justifies its use of violence, and its apocalyptic vision of the present-day as End Time. Finally, we will evaluate current responses to ISIS, in the West and among Muslims in the Middle East and elsewhere, in terms of their effectiveness and strategic coherence.

Class Format: lecture

Requirements/Evaluation: blogs (4 main blog posts, responses to at least 3-4 other blogs each week) (30%); analytic paper or class history paper (35%); 2 midterms (35%)

Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis

Prerequisites: none

Enrollment Limit: 40

Expected Class Size: 40

Distributions: (D2)

Distribution Notes: meets Division 2 requirement if registration is under ARAB

Attributes: GBST Middle Eastern Studies Electives; HIST Group E Electives - Middle East

Not offered current academic year

ANTH 212 (F) Foundations of China
Crosslistings: ANTH212 / CHIN214 / REL218 / HIST214 / GBST212

Secondary Crosslisting

This course examines the foundational period of Chinese civilization, from the earliest evidence of human activity in the geographical region we now call China, through the end of the Han dynasty in the early third-century CE. This is the period that saw the creation and spread of the Chinese script (a writing system that would be the dominant one in East Asia for thousands of years), the teachings of Confucius (whose ideas continue to play a role in the lives of billions of people today), the construction of the Great Wall (which is not, as it turns out, visible from space), and the creation of the imperial bureaucratic system (that was, in essence, the progenitor of the modern bureaucratic state). We will proceed chronologically but focus on a set of thematic topics, including language and writing, religion and philosophy, art and architecture, politics and economics, and science and technology. While this course is entitled "Foundations of China," we will take a critical perspective on narratives, both Chinese and Western, that see Chinese history as an unbroken history of a single "civilization."

Class Format: lecture

Requirements/Evaluation: short writing assignments (approximately 750 words each), quizzes, a mid-term, and a final exam

Prerequisites: none

Enrollment Limit: 40

Enrollment Preferences: Chinese majors, History majors, Religion majors, and Anthropology majors

Expected Class Size: 25

Distributions: (D2)

Distribution Notes: meets Division 1 requirement if registration is under CHIN; meets Division 2 requirement if registration is under ANTH, REL, HIST OR GBST

Attributes: HIST Group B Electives - Asia

Fall 2018
ANTH 214 (F)  The Rise and Fall of Civilizations
Crosslistings: ENVI224 / ANTH214

Primary Crosslisting
Over the centuries, philosophers and historians have asked how societies evolved from simple hunter-gatherer bands to complex urban civilizations. Human prehistory and history have shown the repeated cycles of the rise, expansion and collapse of early civilizations in both the Old and New World. What do the similarities and differences in the development of these first civilizations tell us about the nature of societal change, civilization and the state, and human society itself? The course will examine these issues through an introductory survey of the earliest civilizations in Mesopotamia, Egypt, India, Mesoamerica and South America. Classical and modern theories on the nature, origin, and development of the state will be reviewed in light of the archaeological evidence.

Class Format: lecture/class discussion
Requirements/Evaluation: midterm, final exam, paper, two quizzes
Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis
Prerequisites: none
Enrollment Limit: 30
Expected Class Size: 25
Distributions: (D2)
Attributes: ENVI Humanities, Arts + Social Science Electives

ANTH 216 (S)  Urbanism in the Ancient World  (WI)
Crosslistings: ANTH216 / GBST216

Primary Crosslisting
This is a course on cities in the ancient world, which will examine four major ancient urban centers (Nineveh and Nimrud, Iraq; Teotihuacan, Mexico; and Angkor, Cambodia) and end with a sustained, in-depth exploration of urbanism in prehispanic Maya civilization. As more and more people move into cities across the world, human societies are becoming forever transformed. This transformation into an urban globalized world has ancient roots at the beginning of the first civilizations in Euroasia and the Americas. We will delve into the nature of the urban transformation by first exploring sociological and anthropological definitions of urbanism, and recent studies of modern urbanism. We will look at Nineveh, Nimrud, Teotihuacan, and Angkor to consider how ancient urbanism was distinct from modern cities, while at the same time, ancient urbanites had to deal with similar issues as residents of modern cities. We will then examine in more depth the cities of prehispanic Maya civilization, answering such questions as: how different were Maya cities from other premodern ones? Is there one type of Maya city or many? How different was life in Maya cities from life in Maya villages? What were the power structures of Maya cities? How common were immigrants and slaves in these ancient cities?

Class Format: tutorial
Requirements/Evaluation: 5-page papers every other week, oral responses on alternate weeks; tutorial attendance is required
Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option
Prerequisites: none
Enrollment Limit: 10
Enrollment Preferences: sophomores; or majors in Anthropology or Sociology
Expected Class Size: 10
Distributions: (D2) (WI)
Attributes: GBST Urbanizing World Electives;
ANTH 222 (F) Heroes, Saints and Celebrity (WI)
Crosslistings: ANTH222 / REL273

Primary Crosslisting
This course examines the ways in which cultures select, ritually celebrate, institutionally harness, and ultimately devour people designated as 'extraordinary'. We will begin by considering cultural archetypes and theories of the hero and how heroism has been understood in different eras and cultural contexts. Using Weber’s theory of charisma as a foundation, we will look at a number of specific case studies to evaluate the relationship between individual creativity and action and the demands of social conformity and control. Finally, we will examine how charisma is commoditized in the form of the celebrity in contemporary American culture.

Class Format: seminar
Requirements/Evaluation: class participation, two short response papers, research paper, final exam
Prerequisites: none
Enrollment Limit: 19
Enrollment Preferences: Anthropology and Sociology majors
Expected Class Size: 19
Distributions: (D2) (WI)

Fall 2018
SEM Section: 01    TR 9:55 am - 11:10 am    David B. Edwards

ANTH 224 (S) Culture and Morality
Crosslistings: ANTH224 / REL225

Primary Crosslisting
Moral judgments differ across cultures, within cultures, and across time. How do we account for this variation, and what does it tell us about human nature and the nature of moral reasoning? This course examines practical and theoretical orientations for the descriptive study of morality. We will read about and analyze moral life in a range of cultural and historical settings, from Africa and Oceania to North America and the Upper Amazon. As an object of academic inquiry, morality has historically been resistant to classification under any one discipline, recognized at various times to be the exclusive province of philosophy, psychology, religion, and so on; so we will draw on works from across a range of fields in order to better understand morality and its relationship with other significant dimensions of human social life (political economy, religion, gender, etc.). Specific topics will include: the relationship between morality and freedom; the apparent intractability of moral disagreements; the role of intuition and emotion in moral reasoning; and the influence of power and hierarchy on moral judgment.

Class Format: seminar
Requirements/Evaluation: a midterm project and a final paper
Extra Info: not available for the fifth course option
Prerequisites: none
Enrollment Limit: 19
Enrollment Preferences: ANSO students
Expected Class Size: 19
Distributions: (D2)
Attributes: PHIL Related Courses

ANTH 226 (F) Spiritual But Not Religious (WI)
Crosslistings: ANTH226 / REL226

Secondary Crosslisting
Not offered current academic year
Today, more than one in five people in the United States identify as "none" when asked about their religious affiliation. Yet that does not mean that religious sentiment or spirituality is on the decline. On the contrary, talk of "spirituality" is more pervasive than ever in popular discourse. Increasingly Americans claim that they are "spiritual but not religious" or that they prefer "individual religion" over "organized religion." This course seeks to understand and investigate this phenomenon. What is the lived experience of being "spiritual but not religious"? What counts as spirituality? Is there a meaningful distinction between spirituality and religion? What does this distinction assume about the nature of organized religion? What is the history that led us to this ideology of individualized spirituality? And what are the social and political implications of this trend? We will explore these questions and study this phenomenon through an engagement with ethnography (the qualitative research method generally described as "participant-observation"). Over the course of the semester, students will be expected to conduct an ethnographic research project within local communities in Williams College and Williamstown. Alongside our central readings on spirituality, we will also be studying some background in the theory and practice of this methodology. Throughout the semester, students will work together on developing the practical skills necessary to conduct an ethnographic project, and will be gradually executing their own individual projects. This will include: designing a feasible project and research question, selecting research sites and interlocutors, taking field-notes and conducting interviews, and finally analyzing data and writing an ethnographic essay.

Class Format: seminar
Requirements/Evaluation: regular reading responses; semester-long research project with frequent small assignments building up to the final product (15- to 20-page paper)
Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis
Prerequisites: none
Enrollment Limit: 15
Enrollment Preferences: none
Expected Class Size: 10-15
Distributions: (D2) (WI)

Not offered current academic year

ANTH 227 (F) Language and Society: What Does Your Speech Say About You?
Crosslistings: ARAB227 / ANTH227
Secondary Crosslisting
Sociolinguistics is the study of how aspects of society influence the way language is used by the society members. In this course, we will examine the inter-relationships between the way language is used in various social contexts affecting that usage. How and why do languages change? How does language reflect a person's identity? How does language intersect with power relations among individuals within a society? Does language vary according to gender? How are language varieties formed, and what determines their status within speech communities? How and why do speakers code-switch among different varieties? These are some key questions that we will examine in this class, drawing on readings that focus on different languages.

Class Format: lecture
Requirements/Evaluation: active class participation, response essays, assignments, article presentation, variation paper, final exam
Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option
Prerequisites: none
Enrollment Limit: 20
Enrollment Preferences: seniors, students who need to fulfill Arabic major or Anthropology major requirements, students interested in linguistics
Expected Class Size: 20
Distributions: (D1)
Distribution Notes: meets Division 1 requirement if registration is under ARAB; meets Division 2 requirement if registration is under ANTH
Attributes: Linguistics

Not offered current academic year

ANTH 228 (F) The Culture of Jihad
Most studies of the global jihad movement focus on ideology, operations, and strategy. Numerous studies have also focused on the individual
psychology of those who join jihad groups. Often ignored are the cultural dimensions of Islamic jihad. This course examines both the "global" culture of jihad—those cultural elements of the movement that are common across national and linguistic borders—and the particular ways in which jihadi groups reflect and respond to the local cultures in which they operate. Among the topics to be considered are the ways in which jihadi adherents use ritual, poetry, graphic imagery, dress and grooming codes, music, film, social media, dream interpretation, and mythology to fix their place in the world and advance their political and social agendas. The course will also examine the role of violence in creating a distinctive and exclusionary social milieu within jihad groups and in defining the relationship between these groups and the societies that surround and, in some cases, support them. Of particular interest for the course will be the ways in which cultural elements of jihadi groups and the jihadi "lifestyle" are mobilized to attract new recruits to the jihadi movement.

Class Format: seminar

Requirements/Evaluation: class participation, four short and informal blog posts (1-page each), two longer response papers (2- to 3-pages each), one research paper (12- to 15-pages)

Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option

Prerequisites: none

Enrollment Limit: 15

Enrollment Preferences: Anthropology and Sociology majors and students who have taken one or more Anthropology or Sociology courses

Expected Class Size: 12-15

Distributions: (D2)

Fall 2018

SEM Section: 01    TR 11:20 am - 12:35 pm     David B. Edwards

ANTH 230  Musical Ethnography

Often, we experience music's impact on us without fully considering why it achieves such strong effects. The discipline of ethnomusicology confronts the question of musical meaning by combining musical study and analysis with an exploration into the contexts of musical production, circulation, and reception. Musical ethnography is both the means by which scholars pursue this line of questioning, and also the (usually) written work that results from such an investigation. This course features a hands-on approach to musical ethnography. Students will each conduct ethnographic fieldwork in a music-making community within Williamstown and the surrounding area. Coursework will survey approaches to methodology (modes and degrees of researcher involvement, practical skills related to documentation), issues of ethics, and social and musical analysis.

Class Format: lecture/discussion

Requirements/Evaluation: class participation, small assignments (four 1-2 page assignments), interview transcript with commentary, reading response, final project and presentation

Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis

Prerequisites: some musical training/experience necessary, see instructor for more information

Enrollment Limit: 10

Enrollment Preferences: students with some musical experience

Expected Class Size: 6

Department Notes: MUS World Music/Ethnomusicology

Distributions: (D1)

Distribution Notes: meets Division 1 requirement if registration is under MUS; meets Division 2 requirement if registration is under ANTH

Attributes: EXPE Experiential Education Courses

Not offered current academic year

ANTH 232 (F)  Town and Gown: Investigating the Relationship of College and Community

Team-taught by an anthropologist and a journalist, this course investigates the relationship between Williams College and the surrounding communities of Northern Berkshire County via ethnographic/journalistic research conducted by students. The course will look at several case studies centered on "town-gown" relations in different eras and locations in order to contextualize and provide comparative material for understanding the relationship of Williams to its neighboring communities. Among the topics to be considered and possibly investigated will be the social and economic
effects of colleges on local communities, the role of alcohol and athletics in town/gown relations, and how the increasing corporatization of academic institutions has changed the nature of town-gown interactions and the place and role of institutions of higher education in their communities. The focus of the course will be on student research, and a large percentage of class time will be devoted to learning the basic techniques of ethnographic and journalistic research, including interviewing, oral historical research, survey research, and participant-observation. Each student will conduct a major research project of their own devising, which will culminate in an investigative report and a public presentation.

Class Format: seminar
Requirements/Evaluation: class participation, research exercises, major ethnographic research paper
Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option
Prerequisites: none
Enrollment Limit: 15
Enrollment Preferences: Anthropology and Sociology majors
Expected Class Size: 15
Distributions: (D2)
Not offered current academic year

ANTH 233 (S)  Spiritual Crossroads: Religious Life in Southeast Asia
Crosslistings: ANTH233 / ASST233 / REL253
Primary Crosslisting
No region of the world presents a richer tapestry of religious beliefs, practices, and institutions than Southeast Asia. Buddhism, Hinduism, Christianity and Islam are all to be found and all of them interpenetrate and contend with each other and with a deep undergirding of animism, shamanism, and mystical folk belief systems. This course will survey these religious traditions through time and space, looking in particular at the growing tension between religion and the state as fundamentalism and religious militancy have spread into the region in recent times. All of Southeast Asia will be covered, but particular attention will be devoted to Indonesia, where religious blending and the growth of new fundamentalism are both especially marked.

Class Format: seminar
Requirements/Evaluation: midterm, short essays, term paper
Prerequisites: none; open to non-majors
Enrollment Limit: 19
Expected Class Size: 15
Distributions: (D2)
Attributes: GBST South + Southeast Asia Studies Electives

Spring 2019
SEM Section: 01    TR 9:55 am - 11:10 am     Peter Just

ANTH 235 (F)  Refugees and Migrants
An overflow of refugees to the EU and alarmist electoral campaign rhetoric in the U.S. have intensified the issue of international migration around the world. Right- and left-wing politicians and their constituents, human rights activists and state officials, journalists and NGOs discuss, argue, and mull over causes and consequences of population change, strategies of migration management, and predicaments of social integration. In this course, we will examine the emerging conditions of international migration. Specifically, we will focus on how contemporary welfare and labor regimes, claims on citizenship rights, immigration rules, public deliberations, and interethnic and racial experience shape the movements of people and affect their lives by controlling their bodies, subjectivities, social networks, health, and labor. We will draw on domestic and international case studies as we examine a controversy surrounding the Arizona immigration law, DACA debates, challenges of a migration crisis in EU, rural-to-urban migration in India, and a complexity of refugee flows in the Caucasus and the Middle East. We will briefly engage with the subtleties of migration estimation, such as the politics of population censuses, and will analyze consequences of immigration on host populations.

Class Format: lecture
Requirements/Evaluation: one midterm, two short policy memos, one research paper
ANTH 242 (S)  The Country and the City in the Classical World

Crosslistings: ANTH242 / CLAS242 / ENVI242

Secondary Crosslisting

A growing urban-rural divide is defining political discourse around the world. The interrelation and tension between "city" and "countryside" are not new, however, but date back to the time when cities first began. How do cities occupy and transform, interact with and displace rural landscapes? What are the values, stereotypes, and ideals--as well as artistic, literary, and architectural forms--associated with the city and the countryside? What role does one play in the political, social, and economic life of the other? With a focus on ancient Greece and, especially, Rome, this course will combine archaeological evidence and contemporary scholarship with primary sources ranging from Hesiod, Theocritus, Vergil, and Propertius to Cato the Elder, Varro, Vitruvius, and Pliny the Elder, to examine an array of topics including land surveying and colonization; agrarian legislation; the urban food supply; rustic religion in the city; urban parks and gardens; and the concept of the pastoral. Together, we will explore the city and the countryside - not just as places, but also as states of mind. All readings are in translation.

Class Format: seminar

Requirements/Evaluation: informed participation, two short papers (2-5 pages), final paper (8-10 pages)

Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis

Prerequisites: none, although prior knowledge of the ancient world will be useful

Enrollment Limit: 25

Enrollment Preferences: declared and intending majors in Classics and Environmental Studies

Expected Class Size: 20

Distributions: (D1)

Distribution Notes: meets Division 1 requirement if registration is under CLAS or ENVI; meets Division 2 requirement if registration is under ANTH

Not offered current academic year

ANTH 243 (F)  Reimagining Rivers

Crosslistings: ENVI243 / ANTH243

Secondary Crosslisting

Rivers are the circulatory systems of civilization, yet for much of modern history they have been treated as little more than sewers, roads, and sources of power. Today they are in crisis. Rivers and the people who rely on them face a multitude of problems, including climate change, pollution, unsustainable agriculture, and ill-conceived dams. These problems will threaten human rights, public health, political stability, and cultural identities far into the future unless we learn to manage rivers more justly and sustainably. Can we reimagine rivers before it is too late? This course will pursue this question by examining the social, cultural, and political dimensions of conflict over rivers in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Combining approaches from a wide range of social science and humanities disciplines and focusing on case studies in Asia, Africa, Europe, and the Americas, it will explore a diverse array of sources: film, fiction, ethnography, history, journalism, legal texts, and more.

Class Format: seminar

Requirements/Evaluation: three 5- to 7-page papers and several short response papers

Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis

Prerequisites: none

Enrollment Limit: 19
Enrollment Preferences: Environmental Studies majors and concentrators

Expected Class Size: 19

Distributions: (D2)

Attributes: EVST Culture/Humanities

Fall 2018

SEM Section: 01 MR 1:10 pm - 2:25 pm Nicolas C. Howe

ANTH 245 (F) Introduction to Native American and Indigenous Studies
Crosslistings: AMST245 / ANTH245 / HIST255 / WGSS247

Secondary Crosslisting

What does it mean to acknowledge the literal land we stand upon--in Williamstown and beyond--as the occupied territory of indigenous peoples? This course strives to answer that question by offering an introduction to the histories, politics, knowledges, and arts of indigenous peoples across the Americas and Native Pacific. Foregrounding the ways in which indigenous peoples have resisted, refused, and reimagined ongoing histories of settler colonialism, we will survey scholarship in the interdisciplinary field of Native American and Indigenous Studies. By analyzing such scholarship alongside a range of primary sources--including historical documents, literature, film, visual art, music, and social media--we will examine the complex interweavings of indigeneity, race, gender, and sexuality. Throughout the course, we will discuss topics of both past and present importance, such as environmental justice, cultural representation, and self-determination.

Class Format: seminar

Requirements/Evaluation: one 2- to 3-page response paper, one 5- to 6-page analytical essay, one 8- to 10-page research paper, weekly Glow posts, and regular class participation

Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option

Prerequisites: none

Enrollment Limit: 19

Enrollment Preferences: AMST majors

Expected Class Size: 19

Distributions: (D2)

Attributes: AMST Comp Studies in Race, Ethnicity, Diaspora; HIST Group F Electives - U.S. + Canada; LATS Comparative Race + Ethnic Studies Electives

Not offered current academic year

ANTH 246 (F) India's Identities: Reproducing the Nation, Community and Individual (WI)
Crosslistings: ANTH246 / ASST246 / WGSS246 / REL246

Secondary Crosslisting

This course considers India's contradictory legacy as a booming Asian democracy and fragile society built upon deep and enduring divisions. Why is India's growing population so often described in terms of multiple identities or fragmenting oppositions -- Hindu/Muslim, rich/poor, high caste/outcaste, male/female? What are the historic roots and ongoing causes that produce structural violence around these axes of difference? We pay particular attention to key moments (Partition, communal riots in Gujarat in 2003, Hyderabad in 1990, Delhi in 1984), and places (Punjab, Bengal, Jammu & Kashmir) for our analysis of how religion, gender, and caste intersect to produce a landscape of communal violence, social hierarchy, and fragmented subjectivity in India today. We are as interested in discourses and practices that shore up these binaries as well as the third terms that attempt to transcend or diffuse them. For instance, we look at how Buddhism is and is not a middle path between Hindu/Muslim conflict in Indian Kashmir. Our course readings include ethnographic, sociological, and historical analyses, as well as oral histories and popular media.

Class Format: tutorial

Requirements/Evaluation: weekly writing assignments and tutorial attendance every week

Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option

Prerequisites: none

Enrollment Limit: 10
Enrollment Preferences: majors in Anthropology and Sociology, Religion, Asian Studies, or Women's, Gender & Sexuality Studies

Expected Class Size: 10

Distributions: (D2) (WI)

Attributes: GBST South + Southeast Asia Studies Electives; PHLH Bioethics + Interpretations of Health; WGSS Racial Sexual + Cultural Diversity

Courses

Not offered current academic year

ANTH 255 (S)  Buddhism: Ideas and Practices
Crosslistings: REL255 / ANTH255 / ASST255

Secondary Crosslisting
This course introduces students to Buddhism by examining its ideas and practices as they have taken place in actual social contexts rather than as disembodied textual objects. After examining the main ideas and narratives of the tradition, we turn our attention to Thailand where we examine how these ideas and narratives have shaped a whole range of practices, from meditation to shamanistic rituals. We then consider the transformations that Buddhism is undergoing in contemporary society, examining the rise of meditation movement, the changing role of monks and laity, the resurgence of the nun order, the rise of Buddhist social activism and the development of new Buddhist social philosophies. We ask questions such as: How can Buddhism adapt to a modern global consumerist society? What are the transformations involved in this process and the role that Buddhism can play in such a global society? Should Buddhists take advantage of the opportunities of this new global culture or should they adopt a critical stance toward its consumerist values?

Class Format: lecture/discussion

Requirements/Evaluation: full attendance and active participation; two essays

Prerequisites: none

Enrollment Limit: 25

Enrollment Preferences: none

Expected Class Size: 25

Distributions: (D2)

Attributes: GBST South + Southeast Asia Studies Electives; PHLH Related Courses

Spring 2019
LEC Section: 01    MWF 8:30 am - 9:45 am    Georges B. Dreyfus

ANTH 256 (F)  Buddhism, Sex, & Gender: #MeToo Then and Now  (DPE) (WI)
Crosslistings: ANTH256 / REL256 / WGSS256 / ASST256

Secondary Crosslisting
This course considers the feminist voices that have been part and parcel of Buddhist practices, texts, and institutions for most of its 2500-year history. We will conduct a historical genealogy of Buddhist voices that illustrate the fluid and disruptive role of sex, gender, caste, and class in relation to individual behavior and social relations. How did the Buddha’s inner revolution produce a set of practices that both reject and reinforce existing binaries and social hierarchies of sex and gender, and with what effects? We will trace a feminist voice that decries harassment, assault, and systemic sexism within Buddhist communities from the first female disciples (Theri) of the Buddha to the current #MeToo era of embattled toxic masculinity. Along the way, we explore a literary canon that contains misogyny and ‘she devils’ alongside a rich tapestry of female divinities, transgender fluidity, and female liberation. We pursue and intersectional analysis of Buddhist traditions and texts by considering the multiple forms of social hierarchy--gender, sexuality, race, and class--that Buddhism has attempted to transcend. We begin by considering three women in the Buddha’s life—his mother (Maya), his stepmother/aunt (Gotami), and his wife (Yashodhara)—as well as the tales of the first enlightened Buddhist women whose topics include prostitution, patriarchy, sexism, and pathetic husbands, as well as their own decaying bodies and beauty. Our next theme is the myriad ways that gender is both produced and deconstructed in Buddhist discourses on enlightenment and the human body. Our final theme considers a range of monastic memoirs, including a Buddhist black nun who left Harvard to take ordination in Thailand, and a Dutchman who studied Zen Japan. We close by examining the current debates in the U.S. and Asia that seek to combat systemic racism, sexism, and casteism in Buddhist traditions.

Class Format: seminar
Requirements/Evaluation: class discussion, reading responses (3-4 pages), writing chat, final research paper (12 pages)

Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis

Prerequisites: none

Enrollment Limit: 19

Enrollment Preferences: Anthropology, Religion, Asian Studies, Women's, Gender and Sexuality majors

Expected Class Size: 15

Distributions: (D2) (DPE) (WI)

Distribution Notes: DPE: The course fulfills DPE because it seeks to theorize the role of difference (gender, sex, class, and race) and intersectionality within Buddhist texts, practices, and institutions. It considers how Buddhist practices and institutions both deconstruct and reproduce social inequality. WI: Class is WI because of its reading responses, in-class writing, a final research paper, and required writing chats with the instructor where we identify patterns, strengths, and weaknesses in student writing.

Attributes: GBST East Asian Studies Electives; WGSS Racial Sexual + Cultural Diversity Courses

Fall 2018

SEM Section: 01    M 7:00 pm - 9:40 pm     Kim Gutschow

ANTH 262 (F) Language and Power

"A language is a dialect with an army and a navy." This (originally Yiddish) aphorism points to ways in which language, often imagined to be a neutral or apolitical medium of communication, proves in practice to be a social domain fully implicated in the operations of power. How do we create community - and social exclusion - by the way that we talk? What role does speech play in the accumulation of cultural capital? How are racism and colonialism sustained by language practices, and how can speech transform the world? This introduction to linguistic anthropology draws together classic works of linguistic and semiotic theory with studies of the politics of actual speech grounded in rich and particular cultural and historical contexts, from witchcraft accusations in rural France to American presidential elections. Students will gain familiarity with key concepts (speech acts, performatives, code-switching, language ideology), themes and debates in the social scientific study of language. Assignments include regular postings of 1-page critical response papers and an ethnographic project analyzing a series of speech events in the Williams or Berkshire County community.

Class Format: lecture

Requirements/Evaluation: regular postings of critical response papers and an ethnographic final project

Extra Info: not available for the fifth course option

Prerequisites: none

Enrollment Limit: 20

Expected Class Size: 18

Distributions: (D2)

Attributes: Linguistics

Not offered current academic year

ANTH 269 (S) Mindsight: Mindfulness and Medicine  (DPE) (WI)

Crosslistings: REL269 / ASST269 / ANTH269

Primary Crosslisting

This course offers a social analysis and historical genealogy of mindfulness meditations from its roots as a Buddhist practice through its modern applications in a variety of social settings including hospitals, clinics, schools, communities, and even prisons to improve health and other social outcomes. We explore the scientific evidence including clinical research and other qualitative studies that have shown how mindfulness can alter human experience, behavior, and well-being. We begin by considering how mindfulness and meditation practices were first taught the Buddha two millennia ago in monastic and lay settings before turning to the modern studies and applications of mindfulness training. How has research on mindfulness exploded since 2000 and how does this relate to better models of the human brain and behavior? We critically examine the models developed by clinical psychiatry, neuroscience, and biomedicine, including brain imaging technologies like the fMRI, that have improved our understanding of the relationship between the brain, behavior, and emotions. We consider research on mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR)
within clinical medicine, the rise of the ‘kindness curriculum’ in schools, and other areas of applied research on mindfulness that have generated a ‘science of personal transformation’. Last but not least, we ask how mindfulness has been used to improve the interpersonal skills and training of doctors, teachers, and social workers to help improve social and learning outcomes as well as enhance patient/provider encounters. Students will be expected to engage in a mindfulness practice during the semester.

**Class Format:** tutorial

**Requirements/Evaluation:** weekly papers, 4- to 8-pages

**Extra Info:** may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 10

**Enrollment Preferences:** students majoring or concentrating in; ANTH, SOC, REL, ASST, PH, COGS, and NSCI

**Expected Class Size:** 10

**Distributions:** (D2) (DPE) (WI)

**Distribution Notes:** DPE: This class fulfills the DPE requirement because it will explore the ways that stress related to poverty, social inequality, and structural violence can and have been alleviated by mindfulness-based practices. Further it critiques the continuing misperception that mindfulness practices are elite, non-inclusive practices that cannot benefit populations suffering from pervasive NCDs (non-communicable diseases) like obesity and high blood pressure that are related to broader social inequities. WI: This course is a tutorial and there will be weekly writing assignments.

**Attributes:** GBST South + Southeast Asia Studies Electives; PHLH Social Determinants of Health;

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**ANTH 281 (S)  The Seeds of Divinity: Exploring Precolumbian Art & Civilization in a Museum Exhibit**

**Crosslistings:** REL280 / ANTH281 / ARTH281

**Primary Crosslisting**

For all ancient civilizations, the gods were a powerful force, affecting all aspects of human lives and dominating ancient art. This course will explore concepts of divinity in five civilizations in Precolumbian Central America: Aztec, Maya, Zapotec, Teotihuacan, and Nayarit. The course examines how the broad concept of divinity is materialized in everyday life. We will query how the human body is used as the prism through which concepts about humanity, the human soul and the supernatural are perceived and depicted in the art of these civilizations. This is a project based course, and each student will study one or more art objects from these five civilizations, and consider how these objects could be presented in a museum exhibit.

**Class Format:** seminar

**Requirements/Evaluation:** active class participation; three short papers; 15-page research paper and presentation

**Extra Info:** may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 20

**Enrollment Preferences:** ANTH, SOC and ARTH majors

**Expected Class Size:** 12

**Distributions:** (D2)

**Distribution Notes:** meets Division 2 requirement if registration is under ANTH or REL; meets Division 1 requirement if registration is under ARTH

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**ANTH 287 (S)  Propaganda**

We live in the age of mass persuasion. From commercial ads to political campaigns, from mass media "news"-both fake and real-to large scale movements for social change, we are constantly bombarded by powerful messages that aim to capture, hold, and impact our attention and direct our actions. Drawing on symbolic socio-linguistic analysis, we will examine the institutional and technical apparatus of modern propaganda and will
discuss the role of intellectuals, "attention merchants," and receptive audiences in creating the propaganda machine. We will pay special attention to campaigns that aim to overthrow social structures, or to ensure their maintenance and functioning. We will engage with explicit messages received via propagandistic media and implicit directives that aim to silence, obfuscate, and erase. Theoretical discussions will be complemented with intense, in-depth investigations of case studies of persuasive techniques in the Nazi Ministry of Propaganda, Cold war culture wars, Middle Eastern and Post-Soviet regimes, U.S. and Russian electoral and political campaigns. As we explore the overwhelming diversity of persuasive techniques of contemporary propaganda apparatus, we will turn our attention to various ways through which it impacts and molds our individual selves: from organizing dreams and desires to shaping autobiographies. We will conclude the course by creating our own examples of persuasive mass communication.

Class Format: lecture

Requirements/Evaluation: one midterm, one group research project, three short papers

Prerequisites: none

Enrollment Limit: none

Expected Class Size: 25

Distributions: (D2)

Spring 2019
LEC Section: 01    TF 1:10 pm - 2:25 pm    Lisa A. Koryushkina

ANTH 297 (F)  Theorizing Magic  (WI)
Crosslistings: ANTH297 / COMP289 / REL297

Secondary Crosslisting

This is a course about magic. It is not about stage magic, sleight of hand, or the art of pulling rabbits out of hats. You will learn no card tricks. But instead we will learn about those people who believed in the reality of certain powers; from the ability to summon good or evil spirits, transform base metals into gold, predict the future, or manipulate matter by thought alone. The problem of how to theorize magic has long been a cause of concern for the natural and social sciences. Many a sociologist and anthropologist has imagined that belief in magic should have vanished with modernity (despite much evidence to the contrary). Meanwhile, philosophers of science have been long fascinated with the demarcation problem—figuring out grounds by which to distinguish legitimate sciences (like astronomy) from their magical or pseudoscientific cousins (like astrology). We will trace these discussions and problematize them by looking at the beliefs of self-defined witches and magicians. This should put us in a position to interrogate the construction of concepts of magic, science, and religion and show how the boundaries between these categories emerged historically. Topics to be discussed will include: the rationality of magic, the fine lines separating magic, science and religion, the persecution of witches, and the role notions of magic and superstition played in European modernization and colonization projects. The tutorial sessions will be customized to student interests, but texts will likely include selections from primary works in translation, such as Cornelius Agrippa's *Occult Philosophy*, Giordano Bruno's *On Magic*, Aleister Crowley's *Magick Liber Aba*, as well as selections from secondary literature, perhaps including Marcel Mauss, *A General Theory of Magic*, Max Weber, "Science as Vocation," Tanya Luhmann, *Persuasions of the Witches' Craft*, Thomas Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, Larry Laudan, "The Demise of the Demarcation Problem," E.E. Evans-Pritchard, *Witchcraft and Oracles, and Magic among the Azande*, and/or Kelly Hayes, *Holy Harlots: Femininity, Sexuality and Black Magic in Brazil*.

Class Format: tutorial

Requirements/Evaluation: weekly writing assignments and tutorial attendance every week

Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis

Prerequisites: none

Enrollment Limit: 10

Enrollment Preferences: potential Religion or Comparative Literature majors

Expected Class Size: 10

Distributions: (D2) (WI)

Distribution Notes: meets Division 2 requirement if registration is under REL or ANTH; meets Division 1 requirement if registration is under COMP

Not offered current academic year

ANTH 299 (F)  The Body in Power
Crosslistings: ANTH299 / REL274

Primary Crosslisting

The thesis of this course is that ritual plays a crucial role not only in legitimizing and mobilizing political power, but also in determining whether people decide to act in defense of or dissent against the status quo. In the first part of the semester, we focus on the ways in which different cultures construct categories of inclusion and exclusion, safe and dangerous, while also creating rituals for ensuring the preservation of the dominant social order against all that is transgressive and undermining to those in power. Of particular importance to our discussion will be consideration of how the body is ritually mobilized as an instrument of persuasion and control. On this foundation, we move to an examination of how political rituals are used to undermine established orthodoxies, mobilize popular dissent, and bring down those on top. Among the topics to be discussed are the role of martyrdom and beheadings in the rise of the Islamic State, the use of symbols and ritual interventions in framing both sides of the abortion debate, and the expanding importance of social media in protests movements around the world. The final unit of the course will consider a current controversy (e.g., police violence against African-American men) in light of the concepts discussed during the semester.

Class Format: seminar

Requirements/Evaluation: class participation, three short response papers, and one 10- to 12-page research paper

Prerequisites: none

Enrollment Limit: 19

Enrollment Preferences: open to first years

Expected Class Size: 19

Distributions: (D2)

Not offered current academic year

ANTH 301 (F) Sexual Economies  (DPE)
Crosslistings: WGSS301 / ANTH301 / AMST334

Secondary Crosslisting

This course examines various forms of sexual labor around the world in order to better understand how gendered and sexual performances are used in a variety of cultures and contexts for material benefit. Our topics include "traditional" forms of sex work such as street prostitution, pornography, and escorting as well as other forms of sexualized performances for benefit such as stripping or camming. We also discuss current issues and debates about discourses of "sex trafficking." Course readings come from a range of fields, but focus most heavily on anthropology, sociology, American studies, and gender studies. The readings for this class will frequently foreground the lived experiences of sex workers from a variety of nations, races, classes, religions, and backgrounds in order to explore the broader social implications of our subject matter. The format is largely discussion-based, with short lectures supplementing the reading with summaries of current scholarly and activist debates. We will have either guest speakers or a field trip to hear from people working in various commercial sex sectors.

Class Format: seminar

Requirements/Evaluation: midterm essay exam, final research paper, research proposal/annotated bibliography

Prerequisites: none, though WGSS 101 and/or 202 may be helpful, but not required

Enrollment Limit: 20

Enrollment Preferences: based on statement of interest

Expected Class Size: 20

Distributions: (D2) (DPE)

Distribution Notes: DPE: We will study various questions related to sexual empowerment, agency, vulnerability, and exploitation in myriad global contexts. We pay particular attention to the intersecting questions of race, sexuality, gender, and class as we explore the political economy of commercial sex. The course teaches students to examine the underlying political and economic structures that create systems of privilege and power, thereby complicating questions and assumptions about sexual consent, coercion, agency, and empowerment with particular attention to race and gender in comparative transnational contexts.

Fall 2018

SEM Section: 01  MR 1:10 pm - 2:25 pm  Gregory C. Mitchell
ANTH 322 (F) Trash
Crosslistings: GBST322 / ANTH322 / ENVI322

Primary Crosslisting

What is waste? What is filth? Why do titles or categories of sanitation workers—“garbage man,” for instance—bear such charged social and sometimes moral significance in many societies? In this seminar we will critically examine the production of waste and its role in the production of value, meaning, hierarchy, and the environment. Readings will be of three types. First we will consider theoretical inquiries into the relations between filth and culture. Second, we will examine studies of the political and environmental consequences of systems of waste management historically and in the present, with a focus on South Asia and the United States. Third, we will read ethnographies of sanitation labor and social hierarchy with the same regional focus - work on Dhaka and Delhi, Chicago and New York. There is also a fieldwork component to this class. In groups, students will conduct ethnographic micro-studies of elements of the systems of waste production and management in Berkshire County (e.g., cafeterias, retail outlets, homes, dorms, recycling facilities, sewage treatment plants). Students will post field notes to a class blog, and each group will present its findings in the form of a short film, multimedia presentation, or paper.

Class Format: lecture/discussion

Requirements/Evaluation: regular posting of critical response papers and an ethnographic final project

Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option

Prerequisites: none

Enrollment Limit: 20

Enrollment Preferences: seniors and juniors

Expected Class Size: 20

Distributions: (D2)

Attributes: ENVI Humanities, Arts + Social Science Electives

Not offered current academic year

ANTH 323 (F) Democracy and Citizenship in the Age of Multiculturalism (DPE)

Democracy (and its particular implementation in the United States) is regularly taken as an unconditional ideal for the rest of the world. In this class, we will analyze democracy as a culturally and historically specific form of social relations and meanings. We will carefully examine a broad range of phenomena that pertain to democracy—for instance, cultural notions of participation in public life in Post-Socialist Germany or categorization of citizens in contemporary India, attachment to homeland among migrant workers in Russia or transnational rhetoric of Chinese bloggers. By so doing, we will study local meanings, circulating discourses, multiple contestations, and changing forms of power in regimes that are heralded as democratic. Our focus on citizenship (broadly defined)—i.e., a recognized right to be different while being accepted as a part of a national community—will bring to light complex issues in the relationship between the state and its subjects. We will discuss how men and women, the abled and the disabled, the migrants and the natives identify with their statuses and define their place in state structures. Anthropological studies of citizenship and diversity of forms of belonging and identification in democratic states will enable us to understand cleavages of power inequality and conceptual predicaments of social fairness in the contemporary world. Ethnographic studies from around the world will be used to provide specific examples of the ability and failure of democratic regimes to govern their varied populations.

Class Format: seminar

Requirements/Evaluation: one long research paper, three book reports, and seminar discussions

Prerequisites: ANTH 101 or SOC 101 or by permission of the instructor

Enrollment Limit: none

Enrollment Preferences: juniors and seniors

Expected Class Size: 15

Distributions: (D2) (DPE)

Distribution Notes: DPE: Through an in-depth examination of case-studies of citizen exclusion and inclusion around the world, the course will foster students’ critical engagement with a concept of democracy. Special attention will be paid to a differential access to power on a basis of gender, disability, migration status, and ideological constructions of difference.

Fall 2018
ANTH 328 (F) Emotions and the Self  (WI)

Everyone everywhere experiences emotions, and everyone everywhere is faced with the task of conceptualizing a self-hood and its place in the social world. This course analyzes a variety of recent attempts in the social sciences to come to grips with topics that have long been avoided: the nature of the interior experience and an epistemological framework for its cross-cultural comparison. Exploring the borderlands between anthropology, sociology, and psychology, we will bring the tools of ethnographic analysis to bear on central pan-human concepts: emotions and the self. By examining these phenomena as they occur in other cultures, we will be better placed to apprehend and challenge the implicit (and often unconsciously held) assumptions about emotions and the self in our own culture, both in daily life and in academic psychological theory. What are emotions? Are they things--neuro-physiological states--or ideas--sociocultural constructions? How are they to be described; compared? What is the self? How are selves constructed and constituted? How do various cultures respond to categories of emotion and self, and how can we develop a sense of the relationship between self and emotion?

Class Format: tutorial

Requirements/Evaluation: typical for that of a tutorial

Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option

Prerequisites: none; open to first-year students with instructor's consent

Enrollment Limit: 10

Expected Class Size: 10

Distributions: (D2) (WI)

Attributes: AMST Critical and Cultural Theory Electives;

Fall 2018

TUT Section: T1    TBA     Peter Just

ANTH 334 (S) Imagining Joseph  (WI)

Crosslistings: REL334 / COMP334 / ANTH334 / JWST334

Primary Crosslisting

Beloved son, rival brother, faithful servant, dreamer, seer, object of desire, lover, husband, bureaucrat, Joseph is one of the most fully-limned and compelling figures in the Jewish, Christian, and Muslim scriptural traditions. The story of Joseph unfolds over fourteen chapters in the Hebrew Bible, and is the subject of the fourth longest sura in the Qur'an. Through millennia, the story of Joseph has inspired a wealth of interpretations, commentary, apocrypha, re-tellings, and back-story, including an apocryphal book of scripture about Joseph and his wife, Asenath, Sufi poetry about Joseph and Zuleikha (Potiphar's wife), a trilogy by the 20th century German novelist Thomas Mann, a musical by Andrew Lloyd Weber, and many expressions in Western visual art. The course will explore these various expressions, looking to them for the ways in which Joseph has captured the imaginations of peoples and cultures across time and space. The course will be organized as a collaborative seminar in which the class will read the foundational scriptures together, followed by thematic discussions to which students will contribute insights from their own readings of particular peripheral texts. Students will learn the pleasures of close and intense exegetical reading in approaching the Hebrew Bible and Qur'an, as well as the more expansive pleasures of linking post-scriptural expressions together.

Class Format: seminar

Requirements/Evaluation: 3- to 5-page weekly response papers; 15-page final paper; class participation

Prerequisites: none

Enrollment Limit: 12

Enrollment Preferences: based on responses to a questionnaire

Expected Class Size: 10

Distributions: (D2) (WI)

Distribution Notes: meets Division 2 requirement if registration is under ANTH, JWST, or REL; meets Division 1 requirement if registration is under COMP

Attributes: JWST Core Electives;
ANTH 337 (S)  Race, Sex & Gender in Brazil  (DPE)
Crosslistings: ANTH337 / WGSS337

Secondary Crosslisting
The course introduces students to anthropological literature of Brazil as well as Brazilian novels and films. Its focus is on understanding the history and contemporary culture of Brazil through attention to racial justice, including the country's unique history and legacies of slavery in comparative context. It also examines questions of gender, including the history of feminism in Brazil and current debates related women's equality such as Brazil's abortion laws, domestic violence, sexual tourism, and job opportunities for women. Lastly, we also examine LGBT history in Brazil and dive into writing about queer culture there. NOTE: The seminar will include a mandatory spring break trip to Rio de Janeiro, during which time students will visit important historical sites, museums, and relevant cultural attractions. They will also meet collectively with faculty members from several universities and NGOs to learn about the research and projects our Brazilian hosts are engaged in. Students also have their own individual exploratory research projects related to social justice, which are integral to the seminar. These form the basis of their final research paper. Students should also be aware of the physical demands of the trip, which include extensive walking, some hiking, and exposure to summer heat and the elements in the Atlantic Rainforest. Thanks to the Global Initiatives Venture Fund, the cost of the trip is covered for all students enrolled.

Class Format: seminar
Requirements/Evaluation: research paper and its various components, participation
Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option
Prerequisites: none
Enrollment Limit: 7
Enrollment Preferences: students are required to attend an info session and submit an application that includes a statement of interest, finalists will need to complete an interview
Expected Class Size: 7
Materials/Lab Fee: the cost of the spring break trip is included (i.e., airfare, most meals, lodging, etc.), but costs related to incidental expenses (e.g., souvenirs, drinks), passports, vaccinations, etc. are not and will vary by student
Distributions: (D2) (DPE)
Distribution Notes: DPE: This is a class about social justice movements and racial/gender/sexual diversity. It includes experiential learning devoted to these issues and engages questions related to the origins of inequality and prejudice in Brazil
Attributes: LATS Countries of Origin + Transnationalism Elect

ANTH 340 (S)  Artisan and Connoisseur  (WI)
In recent decades Americans have increasingly taken up the small-scale hand-work production of specialized goods as a livelihood, depending on connoisseurs who appreciate and are willing to pay high prices for their goods. Products ranging from cheeses to wooden boats have secured markets enabling lifestyles that appear to challenge classic capitalist modes of labor and consumption. We'll explore this movement. Students will conduct original research resulting in a major paper and presentation. To elaborate: We will explore the differences among traditional craftsmen, hobbyists, and contemporary artisans, considering the nature of creativity and hand-work. We will use Marx's concepts of the alienation of labor and commodity fetishism as a frame for considering the ways in which both artisans and connoisseurs appear to be resisting modern capitalist modes of production and consumption. But we will also look at the ways in which artisans' articulation with capitalism and industrial production has shifted over time, beginning with the Arts and Crafts movement around the turn of the last century, through the "hippies" of the 1960s and '70s, to more recent entrepreneurial artisans and those engaged in the "Maker Movement." The course entails a commitment to undertaking an original, possibly ethnographic research project in which a student undertakes a detailed investigation of the production and consumption of an "artisanal" product, involving a preparatory paper, a preliminary proposal, and culminating in a research paper of at least 20 pages and a class presentation.

Class Format: seminar
Requirements/Evaluation: 5-page paper, 8-page proposal, 20-page research project, and class presentation
ANTH 341 (S)  Caste, Race, Hierarchy
Crosslistings: ASST341 / AFR341 / ANTH341 / GBST341
Primary Crosslisting

Caste in India looms large in global social thought as a kind of benchmark against which hierarchical social systems across the world are measured. This prominence has much to do with British colonial ideologies of rule, but it also has a deeper and different history: the Buddha compared caste to Greek slavery, early modern Jesuits related it to the system of European estates, and since the nineteenth century, anti-caste radicals from Dalit, or "untouchable," backgrounds have drawn a sustained comparison between the forms of oppression they face and those with which African Americans contend in the United States. Reciprocally, thinkers from W.E.B. DuBois to Toni Morrison have deployed the category of caste in their writings on race. What can the study of caste in postcolonial South Asia contribute to global debates over the persistence of "traditional" forms of social hierarchy? What are the stakes of bringing caste and race into the same conversation, and what are the implications of refusing to do so? In this seminar we will acquire a thorough grounding in the anthropological literature on caste and then investigate the politics of the caste-race comparison over the last hundred years. Assignments include weekly postings of 1-page critical response papers and either a research paper or an interview-based, ethnographic final project examining "caste" in one's own community.

Class Format: seminar
Requirements/Evaluation: weekly postings of 1-page critical response papers and research paper or ethnographic final project
Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option
Prerequisites: none
Enrollment Limit: 19
Enrollment Preferences: Anthropology and Sociology majors; seniors
Expected Class Size: 19
Distributions: (D2) (WI)
Not offered current academic year

ANTH 346 (S)  Islam and Anthropology
Crosslistings: REL346 / ANTH346 / ASST346 / ARAB280
Primary Crosslisting

If anthropology has helped to define Islam in global thought, Islam has returned the favor, holding a critical mirror to the anthropological endeavor perhaps more than any other traditional "object" of study. This course examines anthropological studies of Islamic societies for what they teach us both about Islam and about anthropology. We begin with foundational social theorists whose studies of religious phenomena helped give rise to the field of anthropology of religion. We then survey influential efforts to construct "ideal-type" models of Muslim society based on anthropological and historical knowledge, alongside efforts to critique, historicize, and redirect the model-building project (notably by Talal Asad and Edward Said). The second half of the course is devoted to ethnographies that explore, from a variety of perspectives and in several regions (Morocco, India, Egypt, Syria), questions of human agency, hierarchy and resistance, and Islam as discursive resource, ethical project, and embodied community.

Class Format: seminar
Requirements/Evaluation: weekly postings, one 5-page paper, one 10-page paper, discussion leading
Prerequisites: none
Enrollment Limit: 19
Enrollment Preferences: juniors and seniors, Anthropology, Sociology or Religion majors
Expected Class Size: 19
Distributions: (D2)
Not offered current academic year
ANTH 371 (F) Medicine, Pathology, and Power: An Ethnographic View (DPE) (WI)
Crosslistings: SCST370 / ANTH371 / WGSS371

Primary Crosslisting

How do medical anthropologists examine and interpret health, disease, and illness today, in order to elucidate the biosocial determinants of health and health-seeking behaviors? We are particularly interested in how medical anthropologists employ ethnographic techniques including interviewing, surveys, and observant participation/participant observation--also known as 'deep hanging out.' Through experiential inquiries, we investigate the systemic health inequalities that are produced by socio-economic hierarchies, while paying particular attention to the most marginalized and vulnerable groups. Through the semester, students pursue their own individual, fieldwork-based projects on campus with students & staff. Our goal is a better understanding of the limits and strengths of ethnographic inquiry as we explore the challenges of collaborative research into health and inequality in a local world structured by diverse forces, actors, and motives. We consider how medical anthropologists: tell stories that describe and influence the ways that patients and providers respond to a dialogic quest for health and well-being within a world structured by social inequality and suffering; interpret the biological, socio-cultural, and behavioural determinants of health at individual and population levels and seeks to mitigate the ways that health inequities are produced by social inequality and unequal access to health resources; understand biomedicine and other medical systems as scientific and cultural discourses that project their own rationalities and biases even as they try to improve health outcomes.

Class Format: seminar

Requirements/Evaluation: four fieldnotes, weekly class discussion and writing exercises, final presentation on ethnographic project

Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option

Prerequisites: none

Enrollment Limit: 19

Enrollment Preferences: Anthropology, Sociology, Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies majors; Public Health, Science and Technology Studies concentrators

Expected Class Size: 19

Distributions: (D2) (DPE) (WI)

Distribution Notes: DPE: This class examines the intersection of race, gender, class, and sexuality in structuring health outcomes and access to health resources. It theorizes the dynamics of race, gender, and class in shaping patient/provider encounters and efforts to 'improve' health outcomes within contexts of structural violence (poverty, racism, and sexism) and social suffering. WI: This class includes; weekly writing exercises and monthly 'writing chats' with instructor.

Attributes: EXPE Experiential Education Courses; PHLH Methods in Public Health; SCST Related Courses;

Fall 2018
SEM Section: 01  W 1:10 pm - 3:50 pm  Kim Gutschow

ANTH 397 (F) Independent Study: Anthropology

Anthropology independent study.

Class Format: independent study

Distributions: (D2)

Fall 2018
IND Section: 01  TBA  Antonia E. Foias

ANTH 398 (S) Independent Study: Anthropology

Anthropology independent study.

Class Format: independent study
ANTH 412 (S)  Graphic Sex: Queer Ethnographic Writing
Crosslistings: ANTH412 / WGSS412

This seminar examines recent and canonical work in queer anthropology, exploring how different cultures construct sexual and gender identities and subjectivities, and what happens when dominant paradigms such as the Euro-American LGBT model become enmeshed in globalization, late capitalism, and consumerism. We begin with a series of case studies highlighting alternative gender and sexual formations in various cultures around the world, emphasizing how these seemingly "authentic" local categories are themselves the products of historical shifts, colonial relations, and political economy. We also examine how these categories overlap, conflict with, subvert, or syncretize with the increasingly global category of "gay." In addition to reading queer ethnographies, we will also learn the methods required for doing ethnography ourselves, including interviewing techniques, participant observation, writing thick description, data analysis, and editing.

Class Format: seminar
Requirements/Evaluation: ethnographic writing assignments (e.g., interviews, field notes, essays, etc.)
Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis
Prerequisites: none
Enrollment Limit: 15
Enrollment Preferences: Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies majors and others with substantial background in Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies or Anthropology and Sociology Studies, statements of interest will be solicited
Expected Class Size: 15
Department Notes: WGSS junior/senior seminar
Distributions: (D2)

Not offered current academic year

ANTH 493 (F)  Senior Thesis: Anthropology

Anthropology senior thesis.

Class Format: independent study
Extra Info: this is part of a full-year thesis (493-494); may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option
Distributions: (D2)

Fall 2018
HON Section: 01  TBA  Antonia E. Foias

ANTH 494 (S)  Senior Thesis: Anthropology

Anthropology senior thesis.

Class Format: independent study
Extra Info: this is part of a full-year thesis (493-494)
Distributions: (D2)

Spring 2019
HON Section: 01  TBA  Antonia E. Foias