SENIOR SEMINAR: WORLD ANTHROPOLOGIES

ANTH 5270            Spring 2015            TR 8:00-9:30 a.m.            GLC 218W

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Office hours: W 1:00-2:30 p.m. & F 10:10-11:20 a.m. + by appt.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Goals: The goal of the course is to provide anthropology majors, in the final semester of their senior year, the opportunity to bring together the variety of content and knowledge from various anthropology courses they have taken to broadly address theoretical or conceptual issues of contemporary relevance in anthropology.

Content: Taught in a seminar format, it is intended as a capstone class in the major that emphasizes active student discussion, critique and the production of high quality written work. This course is intended to reaffirm the learning objectives of the anthropology program, and to be a gateway to using anthropological knowledge beyond the university in the world of work or in further professional training in the discipline.

Topic: This year’s iteration of the course has as its organizing topic, “World Anthropologies.” The history of anthropology as an academic discipline suggests that “anthropology” has never been uniform in conceptualization or practice. This seminar seeks to explore: (a) how anthropology has come to be understood, institutionalized, and practiced by anthropologists in different times and places, (b) what power and prestige different forms of anthropological knowledge have had in different times and places, and (c) whether globalization is moving us toward a hegemonic “world anthropology” or an interactive world of differently situated and empowered anthropologies.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

This course meets the Oral Intensive (O) requirements of the Hamline Plan. As a seminar, it depends upon the regular engagement of all participants in intellectual exploration of our topic. Consequently, students should be prepared to contribute to class discussions and share findings of one’s own research with the seminar – and to reflect upon and be assessed thereon.

This seminar is also an occasion for the department to assess our ability in meeting our collective student learning objectives (LOs) for the Anthropology major, as listed below:

1. Articulate the ways that anthropologists in different subfields of anthropology study human beings and human variation as socio-culturally, biologically, linguistically, and historically situated in different contexts.

2. Demonstrate knowledge of key theoretical perspectives and concepts in anthropology.

3. Design and execute an anthropologically oriented research project.

4. Demonstrate an understanding of ethical and professional responsibilities as an anthropologically trained citizen.

5. Articulate the relevance of anthropological approaches to careers.

Consequently, several assignments in this seminar are built around demonstrating student ability to meet these departmental learning objectives – including self-assessment of prior research projects (LO3, LO4) and production of an individual portfolio (LO5).
COURSE MECHANICS

This course will function as a true advanced seminar, calling upon the skills and interests of all participants as we collectively investigate the seminar topic. While the instructor will provide some thought pieces for reading (as posted on Blackboard) and a framework of questions for investigation (as agreed upon in class), it will be up to members of the seminar to conduct and share the results of their independent or group research with the seminar (via individual and group presentations).

Class sessions will thus involve discussions of assigned readings, guest presentations, research sessions, and student presentation and discussions of research findings. Grades will be based equally upon: (a) seminar participation (including contributions to class discussion, presentation of research to the seminar, and completion of assessment exercises); (b) an electronic journal stored on Blackboard detailing one’s reading notes, research findings, and presentation outlines; and (c) a final paper (on “anthropology” as historically configured and developed in a particular national or regional context and as situated socially, epistemologically, and politically in relation to other centers of anthropological production).

COURSE TOPICS

National anthropological traditions
- Practitioner demographics/credentialization/professional employment
- Institutional habitats and disciplinary configurations
- Student training/curricula/forms of instruction/textbook selection
- Research subjects/sites/funding sources
- Theoretical/epistemological/methodological orientations
- Representational forms/styles/languages/outlets/audiences
- Ethical and professional responsibilities
- Political engagements/advocacy
- Public standing/reputation
- Interdisciplinary collaborations
- International/transnational connections

Colonial anthropological legacies

Post-colonial anthropological agendas (nation-building, decolonization of knowledges)

International and regional collectivities and initiatives
International Union of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences (http://www.iuaes.org/)
World Archaeological Congress (http://www.worldarchaeologicalcongress.org)
Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research (http://www.wennergren.org)
lists of regional and national associations
http://www.wcaanet.org/members.shtml
http://www.aaanet.org/cmtes/cwa/CWA-Global.cfm

“World anthropologies” discourses and projects in an era of globalization
AAA Committee on World Anthropologies (http://www.aaanet.org/cmtes/cwa/)
World Council of Anthropological Associations (http://www.wcaanet.org/index.shtml)
World Anthropologies Network (http://www.ram-wan.net)
BOOKS ON RESERVE or as e-BOOKS


ADDITIONAL SOURCES


[http://issuu.com/worldarchaeologicalcongress/docs/academic_freedom_and_apartheid_low_resol/3?e=0](http://issuu.com/worldarchaeologicalcongress/docs/academic_freedom_and_apartheid_low_resol/3?e=0)


CLASS SESSIONS

Week I

2/5  Introductions: The course, the topic, the participants.

Week II

2/10  Unpacking our [American] assumptions about Anthropology as an academic discipline


*Assg:* (a) First, write in your journal about -- and be prepared to discuss -- your understanding of Anthropology as a discipline. Consider how the subdisciplines relate to one another and how the discipline as a whole relates to other academic disciplines and to other ways of knowing/representing the world. Be prepared to share your thoughts with the seminar; (b) Then, take notes on the articles and be prepared to discuss how their representations of the discipline corresponds with or challenges your own assumptions.

2/12  Core-periphery relations and ‘asymmetrical ignorance’ in the world system of anthropology


*Assg:* (a) Explore how Anthropology and the various subdisciplines as they are known in American anthropology are institutionally structured in other national contexts. Note department structures/curriculum/faculty, professional associations, academic journals. Be prepared to share findings with the seminar; (b) Take notes on the articles and be prepared to discuss differences in national anthropological traditions and their positionings within the world system of anthropology.

Week III

2/17  Internationalizing Anthropology


*Assg:* (a) Check out the International Union of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences (IUAES), the World Archaeological Congress (WAC), and Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research websites and be prepared to report back about on your findings; (b) Take notes on the article and be prepared to discuss this history of anthro’s internationalization.

2/19  The “World Anthropologies” project


*Assg:* (a) Check out the World Anthropologies Network (WAN) and World Council of Anthropological Associations (WCAA) websites and be prepared to report back on your findings; (b) Take notes on the articles and be prepared to discuss the WA analysis and agenda.
Week IV

2/24  AAA Committee on World Anthropologies (CWA) and the “World Anthropology” section of the American Anthropologist (with Dr. Jim Weil, first editor of the section)


**Assg:** (a) Check out AAA’s Committee on World Anthropologies (CWA) website and be prepared to report back on your findings; (b) Take notes on the “World Anthropology” introduction + entries and be prepared to ask Dr. Weil questions about CWA and the AA section.

2/25  REGISTRATION BEGINS FOR PRACTICE INTERVIEW PROGRAM

2/26  Cosmopolitics and anthropological knowledge in neo-liberal times


**Assg:** (a) Take notes on and be prepared to discuss these articles in terms of the production, circulation, and consumption of anthropological knowledge in our period of globalization under neo-liberal capitalism; (b) Assess what we have learned thus far.

Week V

3/3   Brainstorming what we want to know about anthropological diversality and interculturality

**Assg:** (a) Think about what research questions we will want to consider in our independent meta-anthropological investigation of differently positioned national/regional anthropologies and be prepared to share ideas with others.

3/5   Researching different world “anthropologies without history”

(library session w/ Amy Sheehan, library liaison for Anthropology, in BML 10)

**Assg:** Be prepared to begin (or expand) your consideration of primary, secondary, and tertiary source materials of potential relevance to your topic of investigation.

REGISTRATION ENDS FOR PRACTICE INTERVIEW PROGRAM

Week VI

3/10  TBD

3/12  TBD

Week VII

3/17  TBD

3/19  TBD

Week VIII

3/24  No Class

**Assg:** Attend lecture by Prof. Jean Comaroff at Macalester on Monday 3/23 at 4:45 p.m.

3/26  TBD
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Week IX
Spring Break

Week X  PRACTICE INTERVIEW WEEK
4/7  TBD
4/9  TBD

Week XI
4/14  TBD
4/16  TBD

Week XII
4/21  TBD
4/23  TBD

Week XIII
4/28  TBD
4/30  TBD

Week XIV
5/5  TBD
5/7  No Class

Week XV
5/12  TBD
5/14  Seminar assessment and self-evaluations

5/20  All work due (journal, portfolio, paper)
RESEARCH PROJECT: Case Study  
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As we have seen from our initial readings in this seminar, among the foundational questions framed by the World Anthropologies (WA) project are the following:

1. What have been the histories of “other” (non-dominant) national anthropologies?
2. How are anthropologies connected within the world system of anthropology?
3. What counts as “anthropological” knowledge and how is it shared/valued?
4. What would need to happen – to anthropology as a discipline and/or to world at large – to achieve the WA goal of greater diversality and conversability among anthropologies?

To create a knowledge base from which to begin to answer those questions, each of us will contribute a case studies that addresses: (a) how “anthropology” has been historically configured, developed, and practiced in a particular national or regional context, and (b) how this anthropology has been situated socially, institutionally, epistemologically, and politically in relation to other centers of anthropological production. By sharing our findings across our multiple case studies, we hope to put ourselves in a position to address the wider questions that the World Anthropologies project has posed.

Your case study will result in a final paper (due May 20) which, framed in WA terms, addresses (a) and (b) above. Please keep your journal up-to-date with reflections on your research process and findings so that I can be provide you with feedback along the way. Don’t forget to use the Writing Center, as needed, to shape and polish your final paper.

In addition to the research paper, we will share pieces of our research findings in the seminar throughout the second half of the semester. To that end, we have agreed upon the following schedule of topics for presentation and discussion of our cases:

Week X (4/7 and 4/9) – Institutionalization  
- Practitioner demographics/credentialization/professional employment  
- Institutional habitats and disciplinary configurations

Week XI (4/14 and 4/16) – Training/Research/Methods  
- Student training/curricula/forms of instruction/textbook selection  
- Research subjects/sites/methods/funding sources

Week XII (4/21 and 4/23) – Ethics/Politics/Advocacy  
- Ethical and professional responsibilities  
- Political engagements/advocacy  
- Public standing/reputation

Week XIII (4/28 and 4/30) – Ontology/Epistemology/Theory  
- Theoretical/epistemological/ontological orientations  
- Representational forms/styles/languages/outlets/audiences

Week XIV (5/5 and 5/7) – Connections/Collaborations  
- Interdisciplinary collaborations  
- International/transnational connections

To get us started, we meet on 3/5 with Amy Sheehan in BML 10 to discuss research sources/searches. On 3/10, please have recorded in your journal the fruits of your initial search and be prepared to share with the seminar: (a) what case study you are pursuing, and (b) what successes or challenges you are facing in finding materials. And, then, keep researching and journaling!