

ANTH 1020

Anthropology: The Study of Culture

Fall 2021

Lecture: Tuesdays, 1:30-3:15

Location: LSK_LT2

Instructor: Leilah VEVAINA, NAH 324, leilah.vevaina@cuhk.edu.hk, 3943 7116

Office Hours: by appointment

Tutorials:

T1: Tuesdays, 3:30-4:15; LSK_202

T2: Tuesdays, 4:30-5:15; LSK_202

T3: Tuesdays, 5:30-6:15; LSK_202

T4: TBA

Teaching Assistants: Aileen RONDILLA aileendr.rondilla@link.cuhk.edu.hk and Yingjun CHEN 1155151943@link.cuhk.edu.hk

Course Description

This course introduces students to the basics of anthropology, its role within the humanities, and its relevance to modern-day society. It addresses the basic question of how our cultural and social shaping in large part makes us what we are as human beings. The course focuses on the similarities and differences in human societies and cultures, in order to promote a fuller and deeper understanding of the nature and meaning of being human in today's world. In this term, the course will focus on the theme of urbanization and modernity. We will explore issues such as gentrification, flows, religious life, globalization, and gender relations in urban spaces around the globe.

Learning Outcomes

1. Students will acquire a holistic understanding of different regions, cultures, and societies across the globe;
2. Students will develop their own judgment and sense of values through the comparisons of different regions, cultures, and societies;
3. Students will acquire skills in analyzing contemporary social problems;
4. Students will come to understand how anthropology is linked to the humanities in its emphasis on the culturally sensitive understanding of common human concerns.

Assessment Summary

| Grade Item | Percentage | Due Date |
|------------------------------|--------------|-------------------------|
| Attendance and Participation | 20% | Throughout term |
| Group Fieldwork Proposal * | 10% | October 7 |
| Source Commentaries | 20% (10 x 2) | October 22; November 19 |
| Group Presentation * | 15% | November 30 |
| Final Take-home Exam | 35% | December 16 |

* Depending on social restrictions based on the pandemic, these assignments might shift to a take-home Midterm and Final Exams based on course readings.

Assessment Details

- 1) **Tutorial Participation (20%)**: Regular attendance and participation in tutorial discussions are part of your responsibility. The awarding of high participation points comes with good attendance and active, thoughtful, consistent class participation, the kind that reveals your thorough preparation and engagement with class materials. This means contributing your own ideas as well as providing constructive responses to other students' comments. Attendance will be taken for the tutorials.
- 2) **Group Fieldwork Site Proposal (10%)**: For this part of your Group Project, you have to pick a site in Hong Kong following the themes of the course and write about 1) Its location; 2) Its history; 3) Why you picked that site for your fieldwork. 4) Your plan of research. This proposal should be in English, 12-point font, Times New Roman, 800-1000 words. Due on October 7, email to Instructors.
- 3) **Source Commentaries (10% x 2)**: To help you connect the topics and readings to contemporary problems and issues, you will have to finish **two** source commentaries. For this assignment, 1) you have to identify a non-academic source that can be understood or investigated through the specific concepts, theories or problems discussed in the readings. You are free in your selection. Sources could be a newspaper article, 'you-tube' clip, blogpost, movie, advertisement, song, etc. The only restriction is that the source you chose has to be in English or be accompanied by a translation. (online link or PDF). 2) Then, write a commentary in which you explain how the source you chose is related to one or more class readings, what anthropological questions or problems it raises, or answers it provides. This note should be about 200-300 words. Please post your assignment **on Blackboard**. The first note is **due before October 22 and the second before November 19**.
- 4) **Group Presentations (15%)**: Your group will make a presentation of your fieldwork and ethnographic findings in the last Lecture(s) on **November 23 & 30**.
- 5) **Final Take-home Exam (35%)**: You will be given a take-home final exam with some multiple choice and some short-answer questions based on the course readings and lectures. The questions will be distributed about one week before the due date. This should be in English, 12-point font, Times New Roman. Due on **December 16**, upload to VeriGuide, and then upload Final and VeriGuide Certificate to Blackboard.

Please turn in your work on time. Late assignments will be deducted one-third of a letter grade per day (A to A- for example). All written assignments must be submitted to VeriGuide. Assignments without a signed declaration from VeriGuide will not be graded.

Course outline and readings

Week 1 (September 7)

Introductions

No readings

Week 2 (September 14)

How to think like an Anthropologist

Engelke, Matthew. *How to Think Like an Anthropologist*. Princeton University Press, 2019. Introduction (Read 1-15, 23-24, skim 16-23).

Bohannan, Laura. "Shakespeare in the Bush." Chapter 5, in Spradley and McCurdy, *Conformity and Conflict*, 2012.

Week 3 (September 21)

Rituals in Mexico and the Kalahari

Napolitano, Valentina. "Becoming a *mujercita*: rituals, fiestas, and religious discourses." *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* (1997): 279-296.

Lee, Richard B. "Eating Christmas in the Kalahari." Chapter 2, in Spradley and McCurdy, *Conformity and Conflict*, 2012.

Week 4 (September 28)

Christian Voices in Seoul

Harkness, Nicholas. "Voicing Christian Aspiration: The Semiotic Anthropology of Voice in Seoul." *Ethnography* 16, no. 3 (September 1, 2015): 313–30.

Week 5 (October 5)

Unveiling Religion and Secular Practices in Iran

Hoodfar, Homa, "The Veil in Their Minds and On Our Heads," in Moro and James eds., *Magic Witchcraft and Religion 8th edition*, (2001) pp. 412-427.

Group Fieldwork Proposal Due: October

Week 6 (October 12)

Hydraulic Ecologies in Mumbai

Anand, Nikhil. "Municipal disconnect: On abject water and its urban infrastructures." *Ethnography: infrastructures. Ethnography* 13, no. 4 (2012): 487-509.

Week 7 (October 19)

The Sacred Politics and Social Justice in Cairo

Mittermaier, Amira. "Bread, Freedom, Social Justice: The Egyptian Uprising and a Sufi Khidma." *Cultural Anthropology* 29, no. 1 (February 3, 2014): 54–79.

Source Commentary #1 Due by October 22

Week 8 (October 26)

Language

Svoboda, Elizabeth. "Where do new languages come from?" *Sapiens*, 6 February 2019.

Jones, Nicola. "Do you see what I see?" *Sapiens*, 9 February 2017.

Keating, Elizabeth. "Why do virtual meetings feel so weird?" *Sapiens*, 20 October 2020.

Lera Boroditsky, How the Languages We Speak Shape the Ways We Think

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iGuuHwbuQOg>

Week 9 (November 2)

Gaming Girls in China

Chen, Xiaoxu, and Chadwick Wang. "Migrant Gaming Girls in Beijing: Urban Solitude, Play, and Attempts to Integrate." *Ethnography* 0(0), (2019): 1-20.

Week 10 (November 9)

Place and Memory in Hong Kong

Cheung, Sidney C.H. "Remembering through Space: the politics of heritage in Hong Kong." *International Journal of Heritage Studies*, 9:1. (2010): 7-26.

Week 11 (November 16)

Transnational Recycling from Denmark to Ghana

Kleist, Nauja. "Follow the computers: Entangled mobilities of people and things in transnational recycling." *Ethnography* 0(0), (2020), 1-20.

Source Commentary #2 Due by November 19

Week 12 (November 23)

Globalization

Ehrenreich, Barbara and Arlie Russell Hochschild. "Global Women in the New Economy," in Spradley and McCurdy, *Conformity and Conflict*, 2012.

OPTIONAL: Urdanivia, Claudia. "Andean Quinoa: Local Farmers in a Global Market," *Anthropology Now* Vol. 6, No. 2. Pp. 35-43.

Week 13 (November 30)

Project Presentations

Groups will present their projects in Lecture

Final Exam Released December 9 and Due December 16

Grade descriptors for the assessment of this course:

| Grade | Criteria for 1) the course and 2) for coursework |
|---------|---|
| A | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Outstanding performance on all learning outcomes. 2) The work has creatively synthesized course materials and key ideas in an original way. The argument is logical and cohesive, the discussion is well-organized, and the writing is clear. The work goes beyond merely summarizing key ideas, using original texts in a strategic way. Concrete evidence corresponds to statements and claims. All sources are cited properly. |
| A- | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Generally outstanding performance on all (or almost all) learning outcomes. 2) The work synthesizes course materials and key ideas in an original way, but there are areas for improvement. |
| B-range | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Substantial performance on all learning outcomes, OR high performance on some learning outcomes, which compensates for less satisfactory performance on others, resulting in overall substantial performance. 2) The work demonstrates a solid grasp of course materials and key ideas. There are areas for improvement with respect to building a cohesive argument, organizing the discussion, communicating clearly, and/or identifying relevant evidence. |
| C-range | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Satisfactory performance on the majority of learning outcomes, possibly with a few weaknesses. 2) The work shows some effort, but course materials have not been sufficiently engaged, or the paper fails to address the prompt directly. The argument and the writing are not clear. |
| D-range | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Barely satisfactory performance on several learning outcomes. 2) The work shows little effort to engage course materials. There are significant problems with the clarity of argument and writing. |
| F | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Unsatisfactory performance on a number of learning outcomes, OR failure to meet specified assessment requirements. 2) The work has failed to respond to the assignment prompt. |