

**Department of Anthropology College of Public Affairs and Community Service**  
**The University of North Texas**

**ANTHROPOLOGICAL THOUGHT**

**ANTH 4021**

**Fall 2015**

**TU-TH 930-10:50 AM – ENV #120**

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Office Hours: TuTh 12:30 – 1:30 PM  
and by appointment

Most of the students think that theory is arid, abstract, and has nothing to do with reality. At this point, most of you know that anthropology's strength is about revealing the intricacies embedded in the ways we think, act upon and experience our lives. That's the 'mysticism' that engages the students in this course: to unveil the intriguing social, political, economic and ideological tapestry intrinsic in the emergence of particular anthropological theories, as a way to 'de-construct' the stereotype of anthropological theory as dull, dry and a mere 'intellectual malabarism'.

"Why study the history of anthropological theory?" The answer is straightforward: the most effective way to understand anthropology today is looking at its past. To understand anthropology with sophistication, students need to know how it developed. Throughout this course, we will explore the historical background and philosophical principles embedded in the emergence of different anthropological theories as a way to explain them through their contexts of particular times, places, and personalities. This course will not however cover the entirety of anthropological theory; we will rather focus on trends, which are directly acting in the development of classic and current Western epistemologies. We will also explore different ways of thinking and doing anthropology in other world regions.

**Course Goals and Objectives:**

- Learn anthropological approaches to the study of human culture and society.
- Acquire an understanding of the historical and socio-political factors related to the emergence of major theoretical approaches in anthropology.
- Learn how to apply the holistic approach to the understanding of different schools of thought in anthropology.
- Understand how theories and methods are connected in the history of anthropological thought.
- Compare and contrast different anthropological theories
- Learn about our discipline's ancestors so we can better understand current Western theoretical approaches and trends in our field.
- Explore world anthropological epistemologies

**Format:** Each class session includes a lecture, which outlines the key concepts to link the topic of discussion with the anthropological principles. It goes without saying that

student's opportunity to take full advantage of the course is maximized by reading assigned material before it is discussed in class. You are responsible for the assigned readings on the day of the corresponding class meeting. After the two first weeks of classes, every week will have a class meeting devoted to students' presentations.

### **Course Requirements and Policies**

All work must be typed. Work will be accepted during class. **NO** work will be accepted late.

#### **Presentations** (30% of grade)

Each student is responsible to sign up with a colleague to lead one presentation focused on a series of weekly topics.

#### **Two Take-Home Exams** (60% of grade, 30% each)

Each student will write two take-home exams based on several integrative questions, which will be distributed one week in advance. Questions on the exam will be drawn from the readings, lectures, and discussions. Your response must include the references you used.

#### **Course Participation and Attendance** (10% of grade)

You are expected to come to each session having read the assigned material. Informed participation by everyone in discussions is expected. Those who fail to attend often disrupt class. Your regular attendance will be noticed by the performance in your presentations and discussions. Notify the instructor of any planned absences. More than 3 absences will result in the subtraction of 10% of your grade. Please note that 10% is one letter grade.

#### **Extra Credit**

Occasionally, additional assignments will be given to monitor how well you are absorbing the material. These assignments are likely to become more frequent if students are missing the class or failing to participate. These assignments will receive a checkmark (for an average response) or a plus (for an excellent response). These marks become important at the end of the term. If your final grade is on the margin between two marks, the accumulated points earned on these assignments are used to adjust your grade up or down.

Please turn off all electronic devices in class (cell phones, Blackberries, ipods, etc.). You may not receive or send text messages during class. Personal computers are allowed only for taking notes. **Any use of computers for other purposes will lead to a ban on all computers in the classroom.** The professor reserves the right to alter this syllabus via class announcements or email to students

#### **Course on Blackboard**

This course is on Blackboard. Additional weekly readings will be posted on this online platform. Please check it often for updates.

## **PLAGIARISM POLICY**

The Department of Anthropology does not tolerate plagiarism, cheating, or helping others to cheat. Plagiarism is defined as misrepresenting the work of others (whether published or not) as your own. It may be inadvertent or intentional. Any facts, statistics, quotations, or paraphrasing of any information that is not common knowledge, should be cited. Students suspected of any of these will be provided the opportunity for a hearing; if found guilty they can receive an automatic "F" in the course. In addition, I reserve the right to pursue further disciplinary action within the UNT legal system, which may result in your dismissal from the university. For more information on paper writing, including how to avoid plagiarism, and how to use citations, see <http://www.unt.edu/anthropology/writing.htm>. For information on the University's policies regarding academic integrity and dishonesty, see the UNT Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities, <http://www.unt.edu/csrr/>.

## **NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY**

The Anthropology Department does not discriminate on the basis of an individual's disability as required by the Americans With Disabilities Act. Our program provides academic adjustments or help to individuals with disabilities in its programs and activities. Attempts will be made to meet all certified requirements

## **STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

1. Treat class time as an opportunity to learn.
2. Arrive on class on time.
3. Complete assignments on time. There will be no exceptions.
4. Cite all research, text and image sources.
5. Participate in all class discussions and critiques.
6. Confront difficulties in your work in the spirit of learning, creative exploration, and personal growth.
7. Ask for help from your instructor when needed.
8. Take advantage of all available support services including advising, tutorials, and workshops.
9. Respect your fellow students at all times.
10. Disruptive behavior, including inappropriate language and talking in class, is not tolerated. Students whose behavior is disturbing the class will be asked to leave and will be marked absent.

## **COURSE SCHEDULE**

Week No.	Dates	Topics
1	August 25-27	Historical Foundation of Anthropological Theory Documentary: <i>Margaret Mead An Observer Observed</i>
2	Sept. 1-3	Nineteenth-Century Foundations and Forerunners I Evolutionism (McGee and Warms 1,2&3)

3	Sept. 8-10	Nineteenth Century Foundations and Forerunners II K. Marx and S. Freud (McGee and Warms 4&5)
4	Sept. 15-17	The Foundations of Sociological Thought (McGee and Warms 6,7,8&9)
5	Sept. 22-24	The Early Twentieth Century. Historical Particularism (McGee and Warms 10,11&12)
6	Sept. 29-Oct. 1	Functionalism (McGee and Warms 13,14&15)
7	Oct. 6-8	Psychological Anthropology (McGee and Warms 16&17)
8	Oct. 13-15	Neoevolutionism and Ecological Anthropology (McGee and Warms 18,19&20)
	Oct. 15	FIRST TAKE-HOME EXAM
9	Oct. 20-22	Neomaterialism and Structuralism (McGee and Warms 21,22,23,24, 25&26)
10	Oct. 27-29	Structuralism – Cognitive Anthropology (McGee and Warms 25,26,27,28&29)
	Oct. 27	FALL FORUM – UNT Coliseum
11	Nov. 3-5	Sociobiology – Anthropology & Gender (McGee and Warms 30,31,32,33&34)
12	Nov. 10-12	Symbolic and Interpretive Anthropology (McGee and Warms 35,36&37)
13	Nov. 17-19	Postmodernism and Globalization (McGee and Warms 38,39,40,41,42&43) American Anthropological Association annual meeting.
14	Nov.24-26	THANKSGIVING
15	Dec. 1-3	World Anthropologies Readings TBA
	Dec. 3	SECOND TAKE-HOME EXAM

**SAMPLE of RESEARCH TOPICS to be assigned to students for PRESENTATIONS in class**

1. Durkheim's Elementary Forms of the Religious Life
2. Mauss' The Gift
3. Boas's Mind of Primitive Man
4. Kroeber's Configurations of Culture Growth
5. Malinowski's Argonautas of the Western Pacific
6. Radcliffe-Brown's Andaman Island Society
7. Freeman/Mead controversy
8. Mead on Samoa
9. Leslie White's The Evolution of Culture
10. Marvin Harris' Cows, Pigs, Wars and Witches
11. Rappaport's Pigs for the Ancestors
12. Julian Steward's Theory of Culture Change
  - a. Levi-Strauss' Structural Anthropology
13. 21 Ocavio Paz's Levi-Strauss: An Introduction
14. 24 Sapir's Time Perspective in Aboriginal American Culture
15. 25 Withspoon's Navajo Categories of Objects at Rest
16. 26 E.O. Wilson's Sociobiology: The New Synthesis
17. 27 R. Dawkin's The Selfish Gene
  - a. Ruth Behar's Translating Woman
18. 29 Ortner and Whitehead's Sexual Meaning
19. 30 E. Martin's The Woman in the Body
20. 31 Eber's Women and Drinking in a Highland Maya Town
21. 32 Rosembaum's With Our Heads Bowed
  - a. Mary Douglas' Purity and Danger
22. 35 Turner's The Forest of Symbols
23. 36 Geertz's Person, Time and Conduct in Bali
24. 37 Geertz's on the Balinese Cockfight
25. 38 Taussig's The Devil and Commodity Fetishism
  - a. Anthropology as a Cultural Critique
26. 39 Edward Said's Orientalism
27. 40 Oscar Lewis's Children of Sanchez
28. 41 Jameson's Postmodernism or the Cult. Logic of Late Capitalism
29. 42 Dumont's The Headman and I
30. 44 Rosaldo's Culture and Truth
31. 45 Rabinow's Reflections on Fieldwork in Morocco
32. 47 Eric Wolf's Europe and People Without History
33. 48 Pierre Bourdieu's Structures, Habitus and Practices