Syllabus for THOUGHT AND PRAXIS II

ANTH 5021 ☑ University of North Texas
Dr. Andrew Nelson
Spring 2018

Tuesdays, 6-8:30pm
Wooten Hall 214

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

This course is designed to familiarize you with the nature of the discipline of Applied Anthropology. Students will be given an introduction to the way the field of Applied Anthropology has emerged from traditional anthropological theory. It examines the theoretical frameworks of the discipline, particularly in the way anthropologists have applied concepts from anthropology to identify social needs and apply solutions. In this course, students will

- Analyze the way the practice of anthropology has instigated changes in anthropological thought
- Use past and current cases of applied anthropology to scrutinize theoretical frames utilized in applied practice
- Design theoretical models based on their particular research agendas.

Emphasis will also be placed on policy formulation, on appropriate interface with client and other communities, and on a wide range of other ethical issues in the applied field. It will be highly ‘processual’ and very dynamic. Through our weekly discussions students will be allowed to develop and expand their own interests in the field of applied anthropology that may lead to the addition of readings and case studies aligned with the student’s own research interests.

The course is structured in three parts:

1. Overview of major theoretical frameworks in the discipline of anthropology with an emphasis on the emergence of pioneer applied anthropological work.

2. Analysis of ethical responsibilities of applied research and connection to policy using classic cases in applied anthropology.
3. Examination of current examples of applied anthropological work.

COMMUNICATION WITH INSTRUCTOR

You are welcome to communicate with me during my office hours on Tuesday noon until 2 pm or at any time via email. My email address is andrew.nelson@unt.edu. You can also use the email option within the Blackboard Learn.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

A. Weekly Discussion (15%)

This is a seminar-based class and active participation from each of you is required. Each week, you will be responsible for covering at least one reading.

B. Writing Assignments (70%)

You will be expected to write five short papers during this course on topics that will be developed through discussions. Papers should generally be around 1000-1500 words and demonstrate a critical understanding of the readings. Paper topics will be distributed at least 10 days before due dates.

Papers are due on Sundays at 11:59 pm.

Paper 1 (History): February 11
Paper 2 (Theory/Praxis): February 25
Paper 3 (Ethics/Methods): March 18
Paper 4 (Public): April 1 (no joke!)
Papers 5 (Activism/Advocacy): April 22

All papers must be written in grammatically correct, academic style with no punctuation mistakes, colloquialisms or informalities. The more you practice accurate writing now, the easier it will be when you are under pressure to meet your employer’/clients’ deadlines. UNT has a Writing Lab providing help and feedback on your essays if you need it. I also highly recommend the resources and exercises on the Lab’s website: http://www.unt.edu/writinglab/index.htm

C. Research Presentation (15%)
Students will design, and elaborate on, an applied anthropology research project that applies the theoretical models or framework addressed in this course. At the end of the course students will present their research papers in a format similar to a professional conference. The presentation should be approximately 10 minutes.

**Presentation will be on Tuesday, May 8th**

**WEEKLY SCHEDULE**

**Week 1**  
**Introduction to the Course**  
**Jan. 16**  
- Overview of the course  
- Review of Theory and Praxis I  
- Discussion of current theoretical approaches and position of applied anthropology.

**Week 2**  
**History of Applied Anthropology I: Colonial Misadventures**  
**Jan. 23**  
- Colonial origins  
- State anthropology = neocolonialism?  
- Happy Endings

Readings:

- *Human Terrain* (2010) 69 minutes. Link found in BB.

**Week 3**  
**History II: Race**  
**Jan. 30**
• The Social Role of Ideas
• Boas and anti-racism
• White supremacy’s staying power

Readings:

- Herskovits at the Heart of Blackness (2009) 57 minutes. Found in BB.

Week 4 History III: World Anthropologies
Feb. 6

- Anthropology in other national traditions
- What can US anthropology learn?

Readings:

- Read all of NAPA Bulletin 25 cases of applied anthropology in Ecuador, Egypt, India, China, Russia, Israel, Great Britain, Portugal and Canada.

Week 5 Applied Theory & Praxis I: the Critique
Feb. 13

- Analysis of “applied” anthropological work
- Postmodern critique of applied anthropology
- Responding to the pomos

Readings:


**Week 6**

**Theory & Praxis II: Integrating Thought and Praxis**

Feb. 20

- What about the dichotomy “thinking” vs. “doing”?
- How might applied debates contribute to anthropological theory?

**Readings:**


**Week 7**

**Applied Ethics & Methods I: What are anthropological ethics?**

Feb. 27

- Development of anthropological “ethics”
- The cost of intervention?
- Ethics in anthropological interventions

**Readings:**

➢ Bourgois, Philippe (1991) “Confronting the Ethics of Ethnography: Lessons From Fieldwork in Central America.” In *Decolonizing*


**Week 8** Applied Ethics & Methods II: Case Studies  
**March 6**
- Critical analysis of anthropological ethics through historical cases
- Participatory Action research

Readings:

**March 13 – 17: Spring Break**

**Week 9** Public Anthropology I: Is anybody listening?  
**March 20**
- What is public anthropology?
- For whom do we write?
- How could we reach more readers?

Readings:


**Week 10**

**Public Anthropology II: Policy**

**March 27**

- Readings: Definition of Policy
- Anthropological research as policy research
- How does theory affect policy analysis?

Readings:


**Week 11**

**Bye Week: TBA**

**April 3**
**Week 12  Activism & Advocacy**

**April 10**

- The role of activism and advocacy in anthropology
- Critical analysis of particular cases in anthropological activism and advocacy

**Readings:**


**Week 13  Anthropology in Practice I: The University**

**April 17**

- The (a)political university
- How can anthropologists re-politicize their institutions?
- Taking class beyond the ivory tower

**Readings:**


**Week 14**  
**Practice II: Anthropological Careers**

**April 24**

- What does a 21st century anthropologist look like?
- Gender and intellectual labor
- What do you want to do with your degree?

**Readings:**

- Pick any two other articles from *Annals of Anthropological Practice* 29(1).
- One additional article from *Annals of Anthropological Practice* 26(1).

**Week 15**  
**Applying Theory to Sub-Fields**

**May 1**  
**Meet at Eastside**

- Connect class to own research interests

**Readings:**

- Search for and read 2 research articles from sub-field and come to class prepared to describe them

**Finals Week**

**May 8 Final Presentations**

**DISCRIMINATION POLICY**
It is the policy of the University of North Texas not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, disability (where reasonable accommodations can be made) disabled veteran status or veteran of the Vietnam era status in its educational programs, activities, admissions or employment policies. In addition to complying with federal and state equal opportunity laws and regulations, the university through its diversity policy declares harassment based on individual differences (including sexual orientation) inconsistent with its mission and education goals. Direct questions and concerns to the Equal Opportunity Office, (940) 565-2456, or the Dean of Students, (940) 565-2648. TDD access is available through Relay Teas (800) 735-22989.

Anthropology does not discriminate on the basis of an individual’s disability as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act. The program provides academic adjustments and aids to individuals with disabilities in its programs and activities. If you have a disability, you are strongly encouraged to contact the Office of Disability Accommodations (940) 565-4323. It is the responsibility of the student to make the necessary arrangements with its instructor.

PLAGIARISM POLICY

The department of anthropology does not tolerate plagiarism or any other form of academic dishonesty. Students suspected of academic dishonesty will be given a hearing in which they are informed of the charges. Clear evidence in support of the charge will merit automatic failure in the course. For more information on the university’s policies regarding academic integrity and dishonesty, see the Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities at http://www.unt.edu/csrr/. Plagiarism is defined as misrepresenting the work of others (whether published or not) as your own. It may be inadvertent or intentional. You should always provide references for any facts, statistics, quotations, or paraphrasing of information that are not common knowledge. For more information on writing papers, including how to avoid plagiarism and how to use citations, see the department of anthropology’s Writing Guide at http://www.unt.edu/anthropology/writing.htm.

This syllabus is subject to changes or revisions.