

Course Syllabus

Who: Dr. Courtney Cecale (she/her)

Office Hours: Thursday after class, 12:30-1:30pm

Office: Back of the hall in the Anthropology Department, First floor, Sycamore Hall

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24-hour response time M-F, 48-hour response time S-Su

If you don't hear from me, please reach out again!

About the Course

Overview

Practice is often defined as an act of doing, commonly contrasted with *theory* which is an act of thinking. *Praxis*, however, emerges from both of these. It is the act of doing *informed* and driven by theories, culture, ideologies, values and worldviews – in other words, it is the enactment of theory. Applied anthropology is a project of praxis, asking practitioners to be skilled in both knowing and understanding the world, while also acting with this knowledge to solve human problems. This class interrogates what it means to practice anthropology, to do work informed by our field's long – and sometimes harmful! – history. Together, we will explore how it is the field of applied anthropology emerged, and how it has developed since its inception.

Objectives

This class is designed for students to achieve the following:

1. Gain knowledge and insight about key concepts in applied anthropology that have been used to identify human needs and propose solutions to those issues
2. Understand applied anthropology in a deeper historical context, situating how the field has changed over time
3. Critically examine diverse approaches to this type of work by examining case studies, methodological practices, and ethical commitments
4. Integrate and develop theoretical framings into their own research, practice, and career agendas

Assignments:

Your growth throughout this course will be evaluated through the following assignment types:

1. Class Engagement
2. Weekly Reflection Papers
3. Discussion Leadership
4. Final Paper

Class Engagement

This class is designed to be a seminar, so come to class having read the assigned readings and prepared to join in the discussion.

You will earn points each week for being an active, respectful and engaged participant and contributing new ideas to the conversation.

Because of ~*~*the times~** there is a good chance this will look different if you, for instance, get sick or have an emergency. We can work out what engagement means if something major comes up.

You will not be graded on our first meeting or finals week, you've got other things to do!

Reflection Papers

You will be expected to write weekly reflection papers throughout the semester on the assigned materials for the week.

Each essay should be 2-3 pages, double spaced. They should contain:

- Summaries of the articles
- Your personal reflection on the articles
- At least one quote from the article (preferably not pulled from the first page)
- Any crossovers that you see between the pieces

The goal is to help process what it is that you read, to put it into conversation with the other readings for the week, and to begin to keep track of the ideas that you've been exposed to.

Because this is a lot of work, this will be your main assignment for the semester. The class should feel (mostly) even paced.

Discussion Leadership

This class is designed to be conversational, where we collectively develop new ideas in relation to our own work. Because of that, all of our classes this semester will be structured as follows:

- Opening remarks from me
- Turn the class over for discussion to leaders
- Some classes I will add additional pieces of information, films, etc.
- Concluding remarks, and set up for the following week

You all will be discussion leaders at least twice this semester. Some of you might be discussion leaders on your own.

You can sign up here:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/14SsajGkrHpOAKgXyTgXLZ5dopeD7zHI1w9To4BKwchg/edit?usp=sharing>

Student seminar leaders will choose to run class time in whatever way they wish — unconventional seminar formats are encouraged! Feel free to bring in outside materials if they are relevant. Seminar leaders are also welcome and encouraged to drop into my office hours to discuss their strategies ahead of time, but this is not a requirement.

Final Paper

Your final assignment for this class is open ended, and you have two options:

1. Write a paper that puts authors across three weeks in conversation with one another. How do these readings relate to one another, strengthen one another, or help clarify the same topic? (12-15 pages)

or

2. Write a paper that is useful to your own research. Identify what 2 or 3 theoretical schools might be most important to your research. Summarize major findings in them. Write a summary about how those authors/that work will inform your research praxis (12-15 pages).