

# INTRO TO ANTHROPOLOGY

ANT 100 // Spring 2018 // Instructor: Scott W. Schwartz

T & Th 8:30pm to 9:45pm // Room N450

Office Hours: By Appointment

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Course Website: [ant100.common.gc.cuny.edu](http://ant100.common.gc.cuny.edu)

## Introduction >>>

The goal of this course is to introduce students to the field of anthropology, and its methods and sub-fields. This course will approach the study of cultural diversity, while examining human constants and constraints via the theoretical and methodological tools of anthropology. We will begin by a brief introduction to anthropological sub-fields and practice, and will progress to an exploration of human origins, means of social organization and sustenance systems. Drawing on these building-blocks we will explore some of the constructs through which people organize themselves and others and understand the world, including race, ethnicity, gender, and kinship.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES	ASSESSMENT PLAN
To identify the subject matter and subfields of anthropology and its development as an academic discipline and practice over time.	Questions included on an exam, assignment, or survey will assess students' ability to identify the traditional subject matter of cultural anthropology as an academic discipline and practice over time.
To demonstrate an understanding of the research methods used within all of anthropology's subfields.	Discussion questions will be assigned on the Blackboard platform throughout the semester.
To demonstrate understanding of human evolution, human diversity, and cultural change through time, as well as process of group formation, othering, and discrimination.	Class participation and discussion will be take place in every class to assess familiarity with the readings.

## Requirements >>>

**Class Website:** You will find all course materials and assignments at this website: [ant100.common.gc.cuny.edu](http://ant100.common.gc.cuny.edu)

**Readings:** Readings will be assigned each week according to the schedule below. Please read the assigned materials before each class in which they will be discussed. All readings are available on the website listed above.

**Discussion Questions:** Each student is required to briefly answer five discussion question posed by the instructor in the Discussion section of the class website (your answers only need to be a couple sentences). These will be counted & graded. In

addition, these questions and answers will be discussed in class, so you should make sure you are familiar with the topics.

**Ethnographic Activity:** Using the Experience NYC section of the class website students are required to submit two brief case studies of different groups in New York. One summary should detail your interactions with a group that you DO NOT identify as belonging to. One summary should detail your interactions with a group you DO identify as belonging to. More details will be posted on the class website and discussed in class.

**Midterm Concept Review:** Halfway through the semester an in-class short answer exam will be given. You will be asked to explain key terms that have been discussed throughout the semester. You will be allowed the entire class time to complete this assignment. The questions will pertain to material covered in the first half of the class. The exam will test for comprehension of the key concepts explored in the class. A study guide of the vocabulary being tested will be provided.

**Final Paper Proposal:** In April you will be asked to submit a one paragraph summary of the topic you will be researching for your final paper. I will use this summary to provide feedback on your topic and give you some ideas to explore.

**Final Paper:** Instead of a Final Exam, there will be a Final Research Paper. The paper should be approximately 1,800 to 2,200 words. The paper is to be a critical analysis of one of the topics covered in class (for example the Anthropology of Health, Gender, or Environment). In this paper you should discuss the existing literature on the topic, as well as present your own ideas and feelings regarding the subject matter. More detailed instructions will be posted on the class website.

**Class Participation:** Determination of this grade will hinge upon classroom conduct. Activities like talking during class or use of electronics will negatively impact this portion of your grade. Studies have shown that students who take notes with pen and paper perform better and are more familiar with the course material than those who type notes on laptops – just something to keep in mind. Positive influences upon this grade include regular attendance, following along with the lecture, and answering questions posed by the instructor and classmates.

## **Grading >>>**

Discussion Questions: 15%

Ethnographic Activity: 15%

Midterm: 25%

Final Paper Proposal: 5%

Final Paper: 35%

Participation: 5%

## **Textbook >>>**

No textbook is required for this class. All the reading material will be posted on the class website. For this reason, it is **critical** that you have access to this website from the start of the semester. If you have trouble accessing the site, let me know immediately. If you cannot figure out how to view the readings, I can email them to you, **but I really don't want to!**

## **Miscellaneous >>>**

Engagement with the lecture is critical to the Participation portion of the grade, and thus the readings for each meeting should be completed before class starts. You should notify me in advance if you will be unable to make class. More than 3 absences will negatively impact your grade. In the course of the lecture, if there are points which are unclear please raise your hand and ask for clarification. It is very likely that you are not the only one who has a similar question. Familiarity and access to the class website is essential for the class, as all readings, assignments, and final papers are to be turned in electronically. An extra credit project may be offered near the end of the semester at the discretion of the professor. **Cheating and plagiarism are easy to detect, and will result in a failing grade for the course, along with the student being reported to the Dean of Students. This syllabus is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor.**

## **Course Schedule >>>**

SECTION ONE // History of Anthropological Thought

### **Week 1**

January 30: Overview of class, Discussion of syllabus & website

February 1: Evolution & Revolution – Paradigm Shifts

### **Week 2**

February 6: Social Facts, & Social Fictions

February 8: Group Formation & Identity

### **Week 3**

February 13: Fieldwork & Ethnographic Encounters

February 15: Ethnography & Methodology

*INTRODUCE ASSIGNMENT*

### **Week 4**

February 20: NO CLASS (CUNY follows a Monday schedule)

February 22: Social Divides – Caste, Class, Status & Power

SECTION TWO // The Four Fields

### **Week 5**

February 27: Primate Ecology & Deep Genealogy

March 1: Altruism, Language & Tools

**Week 6**

March 6: Environments, Migration, & The Neanderthal  
March 8: The Neolithic Transition!

**Week 7**

March 13: Urban Explosion & State Formation  
March 15: War & History

**Week 8**

March 20: Coming to America  
March 22: Mesoamerica & Cultural Contact

**Week 9**

March 27: Linguistic Anthropology: Speaking & Performing  
March 29: MIDTERM ASSIGNMENT

**Week 10**

April 3: SPRING BREAK  
April 5: SPRING BREAK

SECTION THREE: Contemporary Concerns

**Week 11**

April 10: Kinship – What Makes a Family?  
April 12: Religion & Belief – Secularism or Fundamentalism?

**Week 12**

April 17: Racial Violence Today & Institutionalized Discrimination  
April 19: Immigration & Ethnic Marginalization  
*FINAL PAPER PROPOSAL DUE*

**Week 13**

April 24: Gender Equality – Yesterday & Tomorrow  
April 26: Deconstructing Normativity Sexuality

**Week 14**

May 1: Economic Oppression – Industrialization & Debt  
May 3: Geography & Power – Gentrification & Policing

**Week 15**

May 8: Medical Anthropology – Questioning Health  
May 10: Food Sovereignty & Global Malnutrition

**Week 16**

May 15: Environmental Anthropology on a Changing Planet

**FINAL PAPER DUE: MAY 18**