ANTH 322 : Anthropology of the U.S.

Spring 2021

[Asynchronous Lectures, Synchronous Sections]

Professor Johanna Richlin

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Office Hours: Tu 10am-12pm, sign up here
(https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1MJxKuxIEBiA6STMHiWsg9_0.BL9UaQwh4uwzLvrssBw/edit#gid=0)

via Zoom (https://uoregon.zoom.us/j/166074881?pwd=UUppMmZ6YnpRbHpXc3dSaDJUERhZz09)

Emily Masucci [GE]

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Office Hours: Wed 3-5pm

via Zoom

In addition to accounting for the rise of the United States as a legitimate object of anthropological inquiry, this course explores the culture and political-economy of life in the contemporary United States. Among the questions we will address are the following: How has the discipline of anthropology historically “gazed” at the U.S.? To what extent does work on the United States comprise an anthropological “sub-field”? How can anthropology contribute to contemporary understandings of diverse social groups, religions, communities, regions, institutions, and governance structures in the U.S., and how does this knowledge and methodology differ from that offered by other approaches to U.S. studies? Students will explore the theoretical and historical development of the United States within the anthropological imagination, and study anthropological writing on salient domestic issues, such as poverty, inequality, immigration, work, gender, race, class and faith.

Course Learning Goals:

By the completion of the course, students should be able to do the following:

1. Account for the United States as a contemporary and historical field of inquiry within the discipline of Anthropology.
2. Critically read and evaluate theory and ethnography centered on the United States as an “anthropological object,” and apply key concepts and themes in the literature.
3. Compose well-structured and coherent written compositions that clearly state a position (thesis), evidence for the thesis, supporting arguments, and a thoughtful conclusion.

4. Outline and execute an original group research project concerning the themes of the course on a topic of their choosing.

5. Orally present their research in a logical, coherent, and well-argued fashion.

**Required Books:** Available for purchase, as ebooks where indicated.


**Articles and Selected Chapters:** Available on CANVAS by week under “Modules” tab

**Assignments and Course Evaluation:**

1. **Mid-term Exam:** You will have a mid-term exam during Week 6, administered via Canvas. You will have 80 minutes to complete it. The exam will consist of multiple choice questions and short essay responses. The exam covers material from Weeks 1-5. It is open book, meaning that you may refer to your class and reading notes. The exam will be open from **8am-11:59pm PT on Tuesday, May 4th. [30%]**

2. **Final Research Essay:** Choose a research topic related to our course themes that you would like to pursue further. For example, you may explore the U.S.-Mexico border, Evangelical Christianity, gender and reproduction, race and mass incarceration, ideas of “whiteness,” inequality and regional difference, indigenous experience, or countless other potential topics. You will present your findings in a **3-4 page individual essay** submitted via Canvas (12pt, double spaced, .pdf or .doc format) by **Monday, June 7th at 11:59 PM PT.** Your work should demonstrate anthropological analysis of the subject you choose and should put your findings in conversation with at least two readings from the semester. **You are required to submit a research proposal by Tuesday, April 20th, and a detailed outline by Thursday, May 20th.** [Proposal—5%, Outline—5%, Essay—20%, 30% total]

3. **Film Response Essay:** You will be responsible for writing a **1-page critical essay** in response to the film “The Unafraid,” which we will watch in Week 6. The essay should not be a mere summary, but instead put the film in conversation with course themes, and demonstrate thoughtful analysis. **Due Thursday, May 13th via Canvas at 11:59 PM. [10%]**

4. **Section Participation:** You will have **weekly discussion sections** with your GE, Emily Masucci, via Zoom, to discuss the readings and course themes in-depth. Your attendance and critical engagement in these sections will be critical to your success in this course. **[10% attendance, 15 % participation]**

5. **Current Events Presentations:** Once during the term, you will present on a current event, and how it relates to our course themes, during section. Sign up in the first week of class. Prepare a 10 minute presentation relating the current event of your choosing to specific course themes and readings. **[5%]**

**Grades** will be assigned based on the following criteria:

(A) Outstanding performance relative to course requirements; demonstrates a mastery of course content at the highest level;

(B) Performance that is significantly above course requirements; demonstrates a mastery of course content at a high level;

(C) Performance that meets course requirements in every respect; demonstrates adequate understanding of course content;
(D) Performance that is at a minimum level to pass, but does not fully meet requirements in all aspects; demonstrates a marginal understanding of course content;

(F) Performance that does not meet requirements, for whatever reason; demonstrates an inadequate understanding of course content.

A+ 100 to 97  C  < 77 to 74
A  < 77 to 94  C-  < 74 to 70
A- < 74 to 90  D+  < 70 to 67
B+ < 90 to 87  D  < 67 to 64
B < 87 to 84  D-  < 64 to 61
B- < 84 to 80  F  < 61 to 0
C+ < 80 to 77

If you take this course pass/fail, you must have at least 70% to pass.

**University Policies:** In addition to course-specific expectations, there are also university policies that apply to you in and outside the classroom.

**Accommodations:** If you have a documented disability and anticipate needing accommodations in this course, please make arrangements to communicate with me by the end of Week 2. The University of Oregon is working to create inclusive learning environments. Please notify me if there are aspects of the instruction or design of this course that result in disability-related barriers to your participation. If you develop any conditions that require accommodations, it is highly recommended that you seek these through UO's Accessible Education Center in 360 Oregon Hall at 541-346-1155 or uoaec@uoregon.edu.

**Academic Honesty:** Students at the UO are expected to act with academic honesty. It is the official policy of the University of Oregon that all acts of alleged academic dishonesty by students be reported to the Director of Student Conduct and Community Standards in the Office of Student Life. The two most prevalent forms of academic dishonesty are cheating and plagiarism.

**Cheating:** The UO defines cheating as: “an act of deception by which a student misrepresents or misleadingly demonstrates that he or she has mastered information on an academic exercise that he or she has not mastered, including the giving or receiving of unauthorized help in an academic exercise. Examples include, but are not limited to: 1. copying from another student’s test paper, computer program, project, product, or performance; 2. collaborating without authority or allowing another student to copy one’s work in a test situation; 3. using the course textbook or other material not authorized for use during a test; 4. Using unauthorized materials during a test; for example, notes, formula lists, cues on a computer, photographs, symbolic representations, and notes written on clothing; 5. resubmitting substantially the same work that was produced for another assignment without the
knowledge and permission of the instructor; 6. taking a test for someone else or permitting someone else to take a test for you.”

**Plagiarism:** The UO states that, “Plagiarism is the inclusion of someone else's product, words, ideas, or data as one's own work. When a student submits work for credit that includes the product, words, ideas, or data of others, the source must be acknowledged by the use of complete, accurate, and specific references, such as footnotes. Expectations may vary slightly among disciplines. By placing one's name on work submitted for credit, the student certifies the originality of all work not otherwise identified by appropriate acknowledgements. On written assignments, if verbatim statements are included, the statements must be enclosed by quotation marks or set off from regular text as indented extracts. A student will avoid being charged with plagiarism if there is an acknowledgement of indebtedness. Indebtedness must be acknowledged whenever: 1. one quotes another person's actual words or replicates all or part of another’s product; 2. one uses another person's ideas, opinions, work, data, or theories, even if they are completely paraphrased in one's own words; 3. one borrows facts, statistics, or other illustrative materials—unless the information is common knowledge.” This course implements a zero-tolerance policy on plagiarism and cheating. Incidences of suspected plagiarism or cheating will result in immediate penalty, with possible failure of the course.

**Statement on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion:** I support all students regardless of immigration status or country of origin. As a Dreamer Ally, I support Dreamer students and promote their sense of belonging and safety as they pursue their higher education goals. For more information and resources, please visit our Dreamers page and the Immigration FAQs page. I commit to not sharing Dreamer students’ status with anyone if revealed to me, but also remind you that when interacting with faculty, staff, and office around campus, students are never required to reveal their immigration status.

It is the policy of the University of Oregon to support and value diversity. To do so requires that we:

- Respect the dignity and essential worth of all individuals, regardless of national origin or citizenship status.
- Promote a culture of respect throughout our University community.
- Respect the privacy, property and freedom of others.
- Reject bigotry, discrimination, violence or intimidation of any kind.
- Practice personal and academic integrity and expect it from others.
- Promote the diversity of opinions, ideas and backgrounds which is the lifeblood of the university.

**COURSE SCHEDULE:** Complete all assigned readings by the date they are listed.

**Unit I: Framing the Field**

**Week 1**

*Lecture 1: Introduction to the Course*

*Lecture 2: Disciplinary Considerations: The United States as Anthropological Object*


Week 2

Lecture 3:


Lecture 4: Anthropology and Native America


Unit II: Poverty, Wealth and Inequality

Week 3

Lecture 5: The Welfare System

Morgen et. al., Stretched Thin, pp. 1-31

Lecture 6: Perspectives on Welfare Reform, pt. I

Morgen et. al., Stretched Thin, pp. 32-83

Week 4

Lecture 7: Food and Inequality in the U.S.  [Guest Lecture by L. Foltz]

Bowen, et. al, Pressure Cooker, pp. 181-189

Lecture 8: Perspectives on Welfare Reform, pt. II

Morgen, et. al., Stretched Thin, pp. 84-143

April 20th: Research Proposals Due at 11:59 PM via Canvas

Week 5

Lecture 9: Life after Welfare

Morgen, et.al., Stretched Thin, pp. 144-203

Unit III: Illegality, Deportability and Migration Policy in the U.S.

Lecture 10: Deportability and Prevention through Deterrence


Week 6

May 4th: MID-TERM EXAM VIA CANVAS; open 8am-11:59pm PT

Film screening, "The Unafraid"
Unit IV: Gender, Science and Reproduction

Week 7

Lecture 11: Science and Reproduction

Martin, Emily. "The Egg and the Sperm: How Science has constructed a Romance Based on Stereotypical Male-Female Roles"

Lecture 12: Gender and Sports [Guest Lecture: UO Today interview with Dr. Courtney Cox]

Film Response Due via Canvas at 11:59 PM

N. Jeremi Duru, "Hoop Dreams Deferred: The WNBA, the NBA, and the long-standing Gender Inequity at the Game's Highest Level"

Current Events Articles on WNBA and USWNT [optional]

Week 8

Lecture 13


Lecture 14

"Killing Us Softly" [Film]


Research Outlines Due via Canvas at 11:59 PM

Unit V: Affect, Faith, and the Neoliberal

Week 9

Lecture 15


Lecture 16

Adams, pp. 55-98

Week 10

Lecture 17
Adams, pp. 99-152

*Lecture 18*

Adams, pp. 153-190

*Final Essays Due on Monday, June 7th at 11:59 PM via Canvas*