

# ANTHROPOLOGY (ANTH)

## **ANTH 101 – Anthropological Perspective** Course count: 1

A one-semester introduction to the main modes of cultural anthropological analysis of non-Western cultures, such as those of Africa, Latin America, Southeast Asia, Melanesia, Polynesia, sub-Saharan Africa and Native America. Topics include: ethnographic methods; concepts of culture; symbolic communication; ecological processes; introduction to anthropological approaches to kinship, religion, gender, hierarchy, economics, medicine, political life, transnational processes.

Enrollment limited to 1st and 2nd year students only

GPA units: 1

Common Area: Cross-Cultural Studies, Social Science

Typically Offered: Fall, Spring

## **ANTH 101C – Anthropological Perspective CBL** Course count: 0

GPA units: 0

## **ANTH 199-S01 – Brazilian Immigration and Experiences in the U.S. and in Massachusetts** Course count: 1

Students will be introduced to current theoretical approaches used to explain Brazilian experiences of immigration to the U.S. and to an empirical overview of how social institutions affect the daily lives of Brazilians living in the U.S. Through collaborative community-engaged projects with institutions working with the Brazilian population in Massachusetts, such as the Brazilian American Center (BRACE), the Brazilian Worker Center, the Worcester Brazilian Association, Framingham Public Schools, Worcester Public Schools and Instituto Diaspora Brasil, students will have the opportunity to do ethnographic research and acquire first-hand knowledge about the third largest immigrant community in Massachusetts. The complex nature of identity, as a historical and cultural construct, will underlie the discussions about the categorizing of Brazilians within the largest minority in the U.S.: Latina/o/Latinx.

GPA units: 1

Common Area: Cross-Cultural Studies, Social Science

## **ANTH 250 – Arab Women's Worlds: Remapping Feminist Geographies** Course count: 1

Taking the idea of worlding, or ways of collective living through the senses in relation to women's storytelling as a foundation, this course invites students to participate in a poetics of visceral encounter with Arab women's worlds. Through the lens of feminist ethnography, which questions the line between the fictional and the 'real', we will explore the intimate social, political and cultural geographies of Arab women in the MENA region and its diasporas. We will attend to the everyday and embodied realities of Arab women through themes of identity, power, violence, war, exile, memory, revolution, home, love, and belonging, from traditional ethnographic texts to literature, poetry and experimental art, film and life writing. In doing so, we summon the social worlds and gendered imaginaries that grow out of women's lives as ethnographic text.

GPA units: 1

Common Area: Cross-Cultural Studies

Typically Offered: Spring

## **ANTH 251 – Informal Economies** Course count: 1

The UN reports that 2/3 of the global workforce operates in the "informal economy." This course develops an anthropological approach to that fact. Our foundation is the literature on the informal economy in Africa and other parts of the global south, but we will also explore economic processes closer to home. Topics include: the origin, development, and use of the "informal economy" concept, precarious livelihoods, micro-credit and "bottom of the pyramid" ventures, informal networks, illicit trade, smuggling, black markets, and organized crime.

GPA units: 1

Common Area: Cross-Cultural Studies, Social Science

## **ANTH 252 – Anthropology of Law** Course count: 1

This course explores cross-cultural variation within and among legal institutions. Through the medium of ethnography, as well as original primary-source research into court proceedings and legal disputes, we consider how law becomes a mechanism for the maintenance of social order at the same time that it can contribute to social inequity. We will address central questions in the anthropology of law: How does our cultural background influence how we conceptualize justice? What are the consequences of finding oneself between competing legal systems? Why are questions of legality so often tied up with our conceptions of human nature? Our focus will be to examine critically the social and cultural dynamics behind dispute resolution, corporate law, crime, torts, religious law, and international courts, as well as dilemmas around policing and other ways people encounter the law in everyday life. Case studies from diverse legal environments in both industrialized and small-scale societies will help place Western law traditions in a comparative, global perspective.

GPA units: 1

## **ANTH 253 – Gender & Development** Course count: 1

Is there any validity to the claim that women in the Global South have largely been "left out", "marginalized" and even "harmed" by development programs and ideologies? And is development a new form of imperialism? The course begins with discussion of anthropological and feminist critiques of "development" and then examines successes and shortfalls of different strategies used to "bring women back" into development. We then evaluate the gendered impacts of development policies, programs promoted by international development agencies.

GPA units: 1

Common Area: Cross-Cultural Studies, Social Science

**ANTH 254 – Reproductive Justice** Course count: 1

This course examines the concept of Reproductive Justice, understood as the complete physical, mental, spiritual, political, social and economic well-being of women and girls, based on the full achievement and protection of women's human rights. More than focusing solely on the pro-choice issue, the Reproductive Justice framework addresses the social reality of the inequality of opportunities available to women to control their reproductive destinies. In that sense, this framework attempts to analyze how the ability of any woman to determine her own reproductive destiny is linked directly to the conditions of her community. The course draws on various theoretical and analytic tools to explore the social, legal, and economic barriers for accessing reproductive health care domestically and internationally, specifically in Latin America. Three areas of focus are included in this framework: (1) the right not to have a child; (2) the right to have a child; (3) the right to parent children in safe and healthy environments.

GPA units: 1

Common Area: Social Science

Typically Offered: Fall, Spring

**ANTH 255 – Gender & Sexualities** Course count: 1

Over the past few years the very limit of what is "male" and what is "female" seems to have become more unstable and fluid in our society and around the world. Similarly, recent scholarship on "gender" has disputed conventional academic wisdom of how gender and sexuality are produced, embodied and performed by individuals. Anthropology and feminist theory have furthered these debates by offering a significant reappraisal of "gender" - as a concept, social relationship and category of analysis. In this course, we will develop a critical stance toward the study of gender and sexuality by taking anthropology's and feminism's insights into account as we explore the power dynamics that play into the social construction of the body. We will pay attention to how various peoples (including ourselves), living at different times, have fashioned social distinctions based on gender and sexuality, and how these distinctions have played a role in the organization of political, religious, economic and ideological practices. Among the topics we will cover are: the nature/nurture debate, kinship, psychoanalysis, transgender identity, race, gender under colonialism, and performativity.

GPA units: 1

Common Area: Cross-Cultural Studies, Social Science

Typically Offered: Alternate Years

**ANTH 257 – Anthropology of Debt** Course count: 1

In this course, we will explore anthropological work on debt, then use it to think through contemporary issues, both here in the US and elsewhere in the world. We will start by discussing the focal role of debt in a variety of religious traditions and revisiting the classical anthropology of exchange. Then we'll explore connections between debt, money, and finance, as they have appeared in different times and places. Along the way, we will consider everything from feuds and blood money, to debt peonage and slavery, to the origins of central banking and state finance, to structural adjustment programs and anti-debt activism. As we wrap up, we'll look at a number of recent trends in our own milieu, including the bail/bond system, subprime loans, and student debt, as well as matters from further afield, like microcredit schemes and the role of debt in migration.

GPA units: 1

Common Area: Cross-Cultural Studies

Typically Offered: Annually

**ANTH 260 – Medical Anthropology** Course count: 1

The course provides an overview of the ways that anthropologists have approached issues of sickness, disease, and healing, particularly in the study of the cultural construction of health and illness, the therapeutic process, social stratification, and health inequalities. Through case studies and synthesizing readings, the course will review key theoretical, conceptual, methodological and practical approaches to the study of health and illness, using a cross-cultural, global, and comparative perspective. As such, the course is designed to promote an appreciation for the variety of human suffering and responses to illness and healing, as well as to developing a crucial understanding of our own system of medicine as a cultural product. Key course objectives include: 1) to examine the historical trends of Medical Anthropology theory and practice; 2) to compare and contrast current issues and methodological approaches in the field; and 3) to examine ways that anthropological concepts and methods are used in research on national and international health issues

GPA units: 1

Common Area: Cross-Cultural Studies, Social Science

Typically Offered: Alternate Years

**ANTH 262 – Anthropology Of Religion** Course count: 1

A social scientific, cross-cultural consideration of religious worlds created in such locales as village and urban Indonesia, India, Papua New Guinea, and Africa, especially in terms of their power dynamics vis-a-vis social hierarchies. Covers classic topics such as the study of ritual and ecology, village myth, trance, shamanism, witchcraft, and sorcery accusations, but also deals at length with such matters as the connections between Christian missions and empire. Also turns an anthropological gaze on contemporary U.S. religions.

GPA units: 1

Common Area: Cross-Cultural Studies, Social Science

**ANTH 264 – Race, Racism and Anthropology** Course count: 1

This course will critically examine the social construction of race and racism in different cultural contexts. The course will question the biological basis of racial difference, and take anthropology to task for participating in a long history of scientific racism. After this quick historical background, we will tackle contemporary forms of racism across the world, and read about the struggles against racism and white supremacy, from the fight against settler colonialism and segregation, to Black Lives Matter and immigration rights. Racist ideologies are deeply entrenched in institutions and have ongoing effects on the health, wellbeing and livelihood of millions of people, so it is crucial we become aware of the way racism operates to begin the work of undoing it.

GPA units: 1

Common Area: Cross-Cultural Studies

Typically Offered: Annually

**ANTH 266 – Cultures and Politics of Latin America** Course count: 1

The main focus of this course will be the perennial question of inequality in Latin America a region of the world beleaguered by a long history of immense differences between the rich and the poor, the powerful and the powerless, the ruling elites and the people. We will pay close attention to the ways in which gender, race and sexuality inform those economic and political inequalities, and how they are being challenged by the region's important transformations over the last couple of decades. Throughout the course, we will keep in mind that Latin America cannot be examined in isolation, but in relation to foreign powers (including the United States) that have had vested interests in the region. We will tackle controversial topics such as the School of the Americas, the Rigoberta Menchú testimonial and affirmative action policies in Brazil. By the end of the course, students will be expected to have a good grasp of the amazing cultural diversity in Latin America, and its unique quandaries, social movements and hopes for the future.

GPA units: 1

Common Area: Cross-Cultural Studies, Social Science  
Typically Offered: Alternate Years

**ANTH 267 – Political Anthropology** Course count: 1

This course takes a broadly comparative and historical perspective, using cross-cultural analysis to understand the workings of politics and power, in Western and non-Western contexts. Topics include: colonialism and its impact on colonized populations; the formation of post-colonial national states; leadership, authority, and the construction of political subjects; and the links between local processes and global political systems.

GPA units: 1

Common Area: Cross-Cultural Studies, Social Science  
Typically Offered: Alternate Years

**ANTH 268 – Economic Anthropology** Course count: 1

An introduction to the issues, methods, and concepts of economic anthropology. This course places economic features such as markets, commodities, and money into a larger cross-cultural context by exploring relations of power, kinship, gender, exchange, and social transformation.

GPA units: 1

Common Area: Cross-Cultural Studies, Social Science  
Typically Offered: Every Third Year

**ANTH 269 – Fashion & Consumption** Course count: 1

A comparative, cultural anthropological exploration of fashion and consumption as tools for the creation, expression, and contestation of social, cultural, economic, political and individual identities. Topics include: anthropological and semiotic theories of materialism and consumption, subcultural styles, colonialism, race, gender, religious dress, globalization and ethnic chic.

GPA units: 1

Common Area: Cross-Cultural Studies, Social Science  
Typically Offered: Every Third Year

**ANTH 273 – Anthropology of Africa** Course count: 1

This course provides an introductory anthropological account of 20th- and 21st-century Africa. The central theme is the "representation" of Africa and Africans, including the manner in which outsiders have portrayed the continent and its peoples in the past, African responses and rejoinders, and current scholarship and forms of self-representation. We will cover a number of broader themes, including music, race, art, ethnicity, youth, economic activity, "tradition" and "modernity," and the politics of cultural translation.

GPA units: 1

Common Area: Cross-Cultural Studies, Social Science  
Typically Offered: Annually

**ANTH 277 – Coming of Age at the Border** Course count: 1

Nearly a century ago, anthropologist Margaret Meads "Coming of Age in Samoa" introduced a broad public to the issues facing youth in modern society and proposed various approaches to understanding these problems. Paying homage to Meads seminal work, this course examines the subjectivities and daily life experiences of youth navigating the conceptual, territorial and affective borders created by nationalism, war, displacement, occupation, colonialism and other social and political contexts in a variety of global situations. At a time when we are bearing (painful) witness to the suffering of those forced to navigate the unwieldy terrains of a reinstating and strengthening of borders and border walls, we will examine how youth in Israel/Palestine, Kashmir, the U.S./Mexico border, and our nation's own internal "others" 'come of age' by negotiating the construction of identities, movement across (often militarized) spaces, and political violence as they push up against carceral and colonial state formations. At the same time, we will attend to the politics of such witnessing, and the potentials (and impossibilities) of ethnographic engagement with youth struggling to define themselves, their communities and their futures at the border.

GPA units: 1

Common Area: Social Science

**ANTH 278 – African Infrastructures** Course count: 1

This course aims to develop students ability to think ethnographically and comparatively about contemporary Africa, using the theme of "infrastructure" as a starting point. For our purposes, the term infrastructure points to both material connections like utilities, transport, and financial systems and the diverse social connections that constitute everyday life. We will engage the literature about infrastructure, especially in African towns and cities and consider the way that specific local experiences fit into wider political, economic, and social trends on the continent. We will also discuss matters of culture, race, gender, generation, migration, and representation, and the ways that each is implicated in African social geographies and socio-technical networks. The joint result is a course that provides an introduction to both contemporary Africa and the literature on infrastructure and urban life in the global South.

GPA units: 1

Common Area: Cross-Cultural Studies  
Typically Offered: Annually

**ANTH 299-F04 – Linguistic Anthropology** Course count: 1

This course provides an introduction to the methods and tools of linguistic anthropology, one of the disciplines four principal subfields in the American tradition. With contemporary and historical primary sources along with theoretical texts, we will consider how spoken language and its representation in other modalities become mechanisms through which differences of class, region, race, ethnicity, and sexuality are produced and contested. A basic premise of the course is that language functions as far more than a mere neutral medium to denote ideas but actively shapes our identities and the material conditions of our lives. The techniques of semiotic analysis, which we will develop through ethnographic case studies drawn from diverse cultural settings, will allow for nuanced insights into how modes of communication shape the complex lived experience of public discourse, media, performance, the political sphere, religious and magical language, temporality, personhood, stigmatized speech, and language ideology. The role of language in constructing epistemic authority and legitimizing the social order will be central themes. The semester will conclude with applied independent research into language use in specific cultural contexts through the presentation of original linguistic data.

GPA units: 1

**ANTH 299-S02 – Textiles: The Social Skin** Course count: 1

This course looks at cloth-making, cloth uses, and textile meanings both in broad, cross-cultural perspective and specifically in Southeast Asian cultures of Indonesia and Malaysia (well examine textiles from there in class from the Cantor Art Gallery study collection). Well ask: why does cloth mediate so many human social processes? Attention also to museum studies issues of representation and display.

Prerequisite: ANTH 101

GPA units: 1

Common Area: Cross-Cultural Studies

**ANTH 299-S04 – Anthropology of Emotion** Course count: 1

Where do our feelings come from? Who has the right to feel, and to feel what? What are the effects of emotions, on us and on others? How do we recognize emotions, how do we learn about them, and how do we manage them? These questions have interested anthropologists since the 1980s, as they began to explore how varied emotions are, how differently they are experienced, how they are recognized, which are legitimated and how, who is entitled to them and who isn't, how they are taught, and the frictions and management problems they pose in different parts of the world. We will follow such anthropological explorations in societies ranging from South America, to Africa, to Asia and the Pacific, and examine the politics and culture of emotions in the US.

GPA units: 1

Common Area: Cross-Cultural Studies, Social Science

**ANTH 310 – Ethnographic Field Methods** Course count: 1

An examination of cultural anthropology's main data-gathering strategy: long-term ethnographic fieldwork of small communities, often located in non-Western cultures. Topics include: review of the methodology literature, participant observation, in-depth interviews, designing field studies, oral histories, spanning deep cultural divides via fieldwork. Often involves hands-on fieldwork in Worcester.

Prerequisite: One previous ANTH course

GPA units: 1

Typically Offered: Spring

**ANTH 320 – Theory in Anthropology** Course count: 1

A historical examination of the development of different theoretical perspectives in cultural anthropology. This course explores, compares, and critiques different schools of thought about human society and culture, from the 19th to the 21st centuries, looking at the ways in which anthropological scholars and those from related disciplines have attempted to understand and explain the human condition.

GPA units: 1

Typically Offered: Fall

**ANTH 348 – Diaspora, Identity and Belonging** Course count: 1

Since the latter half of the nineteenth century, voluntary and forced migration from across the Eastern Mediterranean and North Africa to the Western Hemisphere has taken place for a number of economic, political, cultural, and other motivations. Individuals and their descendants from the region went on to create powerful diasporic communities in Latin America, making significant contributions to various social, political and cultural landscapes. While some readily assimilated into their new homes, others retained an indelible sense of dislocation from and belonging to their homeland.

GPA units: 1

Typically Offered: Alternate Years

**ANTH 386 – Global Queer Activism** Course count: 1

This course will critically examine the wide variety of approaches, tactics, discourses and objectives adopted by activists from around the globe in the effort to further LGBTQ+ rights, and discuss the ways that this activism centered on sexuality and/or gender identity intersects with race, class, religion, nationality and cultural identity. Although many nations around the world have experienced important advances over the last few decades in the effort to include LGBTQ+ populations, we cannot assume that progress on these issues is uniform or that it will look the same in different contexts. The course will push students to consider the ways that Western LGBTQ+ identities cannot be imposed on other contexts uncritically, and to consider how global activism can complicate efforts in different localities, render certain identities vulnerable, or participate in neocolonialist forms of pinkwashing. Queer activism that is truly global and sensitive to cultural difference requires queering activist practices themselves, and creating equal partnerships rather than top-down approaches to spreading LGBTQ+ rights.

GPA units: 1

Common Area: Cross-Cultural Studies

Typically Offered: Alternate Years

**ANTH 399-S02 – Decolonizing Love** Course count: 1

This course explores the relationship between love and colonialism, and between Indigeneity and decolonial love. We will consider ways that love—familial, romantic, nationalist—serves to perpetuate colonial structures. Conversely, we will consider how alternative imaginaries and forms of love can serve, in anti-colonial struggles, to resist the intimacies of colonial violence or forms of oppression that are not necessarily tied to colonialism, expanding beyond the realm of human kinships to include land and the more-than-human. Students will gain a familiarity with anthropological concepts and methodological approaches to love, while exploring decolonial and Indigenous theories and praxes that help us reenvision our relationships to each other and love as a radical force for social change.

GPA units: 1

Common Area: Cross-Cultural Studies

**ANTH 400 – Tutorial** Course count: 1  
GPA units: 1  
Typically Offered: Fall, Spring

**ANTH 490 – Honors Colloquium** Course count: 0  
The Honors Colloquium will cover topics such as: strategies for thesis work, writing an intro to the thesis, IRB application and approval process, ways to write a review of the literature chapter, ethics in research, writing workshops for the students, practice sessions for the formal oral presentations for the April conferences, publication possibilities, etc. The colloquium will also feature guest speakers who will discuss aspects of graduate studies, professional issues, job market issues, and their own research. Department honors students will continue to be mentored by their individual honors thesis advisor.

GPA units: 0.5  
Typically Offered: Fall, Spring

**ANTH 491 – Honors Colloquium** Course count: 0  
The Honors Colloquium will cover topics such as: strategies for thesis work, writing an intro to the thesis, IRB application and approval process, ways to write a review of the literature chapter, ethics in research, writing workshops for the students, practice sessions for the formal oral presentations for the April conferences, publication possibilities, etc. The colloquium will also feature guest speakers who will discuss aspects of graduate studies, professional issues, job market issues, and their own research. Department honors students will continue to be mentored by their individual honors thesis advisor.

GPA units: 0.5  
Typically Offered: Fall, Spring

**ANTH 492 – Directed Honors Research** Course count: 1  
Honors students undertake a research project under the direction of a department faculty member. The results are presented in the form of a thesis and two semesters credit, granted at end of second semester. Candidates selected from invited applicants to the Department Honors Committee.

GPA units: 0  
Typically Offered: Fall, Spring

**ANTH 493 – Directed Honors Research** Course count: 1  
Honors students undertake a research project under the direction of a department faculty member. The results are presented in the form of a thesis and two semesters credit, granted at end of second semester. Candidates selected from invited applicants to the Department Honors Committee.

GPA units: 2  
Typically Offered: Fall, Spring

**ANTH 494 – Directed Research** Course count: 1  
Students may undertake independent research projects under the direct supervision of a faculty member. Individuals contemplating a research project should make inquiries during their third year, since the project is usually initiated by the beginning of the fourth year. Preference for sociology/anthropology majors.

GPA units: 1  
Typically Offered: Fall, Spring

**ANTH 495 – Directed Research** Course count: 1  
Students may undertake independent research projects under the direct supervision of a faculty member. Individuals contemplating a research project should make inquiries during their third year, since the project is usually initiated by the beginning of the fourth year. Preference for sociology/anthropology majors.

GPA units: 1  
Typically Offered: Fall, Spring

**ANTH 496 – Directed Readings** Course count: 1  
An individualized reading program usually addressing a topic in anthropology not covered in course offerings. Reading tutorials are under the supervision of an anthropology faculty member, usually limited to the fourth year students, and arranged on an individual basis. Preference to anthropology majors.

GPA units: 1  
Typically Offered: Fall, Spring

**ANTH 497 – Directed Readings** Course count: 1  
An individualized reading program usually addressing a topic in anthropology not covered in course offerings. Reading tutorials are under the supervision of an anthropology faculty member, usually limited to the fourth year students, and arranged on an individual basis. Preference to anthropology majors.

GPA units: 1  
Typically Offered: Fall, Spring

**ANTH 498 – Special Projects** Course count: 1  
Program for individual students who wish to pursue supervised independent study on a selected topic or an advanced research project. Ordinarily projects are approved for one semester. Open to selected third- and fourth-year students with preference to sociology/anthropology majors. Each project must be supervised by a faculty member.

GPA units: 1  
Typically Offered: Fall, Spring