Department of Anthropology and Archaeology

Anthropology 391: Anthropolological Theory

“I chose anthropology [as a major], since it offered the greatest opportunity to write high-minded balderdash.”
— Kurt Vonnegut

Class time and location:
MWF, 10:00 – 10:50; Social Sciences 109

Instructor
Dr. Sabrina Perić
Earth Sciences 602H
speric@ucalgary.ca
Office Hours: W: 3:30 – 4:30 pm, or by appointment

Prerequisite: Anth 203

Course Description:

Broadly speaking, anthropology is a holistic study of all possible human lifeways. It focuses both on the variation between lifeways, but also their commonalities. In order to explain both the variations and commonalities, anthropologists have formulated theories that can be used to critically analyze observations of people in their daily lives. Though theory and ethnography are invariably separated out in anthropological writings and discussions, they are actually two sides of the same coin. Theory is used to illuminate or explain what happens in ethnography, and ethnography provides explanatory power to theory. In short, theory and ethnography, without one another, are pretty meaningless.

This course aims to introduce students to the fundamentals of anthropological theory through seven of the most important concepts in anthropology since the 19th century: race, history, society, function, structure, gender and representation. Through lectures and discussions, we will try and understand why theory is good to think with – how different theories can give us varying insight into the same event or phenomenon, and why certain theories do a better job of explaining than others.

Course Format:

This course will follow an interactive lecture and discussion style format, accompanied by the occasional film or documentary in class. Readings are crucial – they are the most important part of this class. Students are expected to come to class prepared to discuss the readings and ask questions. You do not have to purchase any textbooks. All course materials and information will be posted on the class website. A lecture outline for each class will be posted online immediately before the class. Only some of the supplementary video clips viewed in class will be available online.
Learning Outcomes:

This is an intensive introductory course to anthropological theory. By the end of this course, students should be able to:

- Read anthropological theory critically and analytically;
- Identify different anthropological schools of thought and thematic continuities/discontinuities between them;
- Summarize critically the main anthropological theories presented both in class discussion, and also in a coherent manner in writing;
- Evaluate critically the plausibility of claims and theories proposed by scholars;
- Apply anthropological theories to better understand everyday practices, local and global events, and ethnographic evidence.

Course Assignments and Assessment:

In addition to the readings, students are expected to complete 7 reading reflection forms throughout the course of the semester, take 5 surprise reading quizzes, write one in-class midterm examination, and write one final exam.

Students will be evaluated on the basis of a 100-point system, whereby:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7 Reading Reflections</td>
<td>35%</td>
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<tr>
<td>5 Reading Quizzes</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Midterm Exam</td>
<td>25% (October 26)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>35% (Dec 10-20 Exact date, time and location TBA)</td>
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The final mark out of 100, will then be converted to a letter grade as follows:

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<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>94.9 – 100%</td>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>89.9 – 94.8%</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>84.9 – 89.8%</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>79.9 – 84.8%</td>
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<td>B</td>
<td>74.9 – 79.8%</td>
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<td>B-</td>
<td>70.9 – 74.8%</td>
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<td>C+</td>
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<td>C</td>
<td>62.9 – 66.8%</td>
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<td>D</td>
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Assignment details:

Reading Quizzes:

- Students will be administered 5 reading quizzes, without advance warning throughout the semester.
- These reading quizzes will cover details about the readings for that day, to make sure that students have done the readings. For example, if you receive a quiz on the day we will be discussing Durkheim’s Elementary Forms of Religious Life, then the quiz will cover this same Durkheim text, and no other text.
- The quizzes will consist of **five multiple choice questions**, handed out at the beginning of class.
- You will get the full points for each quiz (1 % of your total grade) **just for being present in class and taking the quiz**. Even if you get a question wrong, you will still receive full points. Think of the quizzes as a type of participation grade. If you are in class to do all of the 5 quizzes, you will get a full 5% of your grade.
- The point of the quiz is to both ensure attendance, but also to practice answering multiple choice questions about theory, and to test yourself on your reading. The multiple choice questions on the quizzes will be similar to the multiple choice questions you can expect **on your midterm and on your final**.

**Reading Reflections:**

- Students are expected to fill in the Reading Reflection form (see D2L website) for 7 weeks worth of reading – that is, they must hand in 7 forms throughout the course of the semester. You will notice that there are 9 opportunities to hand in reading reflections – you only have to give in reading reflections on 7 of those 9 opportunities. You are given a few extra opportunities to account for weeks that may be really busy and you may not have time to do a reading reflection.
- Reading Reflection forms are meant to **summarize** what you have learned over the course of the week, and not only clarify some of your ideas about the readings, but also act as a study guide later on for your midterm and final examinations.
- The Reading Reflection form must **be printed out, filled out to completion by hand,** and **handed in on Monday the following week, at the beginning of class**. For example, if you are doing a reading reflection for Week II, you must hand the reading reflection in on the Monday of Week III. You **cannot** hand in, for example, a reading reflection for Week II on Monday of Week IV. Look at your calendar in advance, pick out the reflections you will do and hand them in **on their due date**.
- You can only hand in paper copies of your reading reflections at the beginning of class. **No emailed reflections will be accepted.**
- **No late reflections will be accepted.** Late reflections will automatically receive a grade of zero.

**Midterm exam:**

- Students will be administered an in-class midterm exam (50 minutes) that will have two sections: multiple choice questions and short answer questions.

**Final exam:**

- Students will be administered a final exam (2 hours) during the final exam period that will have three sections: multiple choice, short answer and **one** essay questions. Students will have two essay questions to choose from on the final exam. In the essay question, students will be asked to answer the question while discussing 4-5 texts from the semester. Each exam question will cover different theoretical texts.
Important to consider:

1) Deferred exams are possible only for serious reasons (and the request for a deferral must be backed up with written documentation). A missed exam automatically receives a grade of zero. In the event of an emergency, the office of the Department of Anthropology and Archaeology must be contacted immediately and before the start of the exam: (403) 220-6516.

2) Students are responsible for materials covered in the readings and in the lectures. Classroom materials missed due to absences are the sole responsibility of the student.

A note on plagiarism:

Any plagiarism will automatically result in a failing grade for the submission. Any student caught plagiarizing will also be subject to additional University sanctions. Students should familiarize themselves with the Faculty of Arts’ policy on intellectual honesty:

https://arts.ucalgary.ca/plagarismcheating

Required books for purchase: NONE! YAY!

Please note: the readings marked “*In class” DO NOT have to be read in advance. They will be read and discussed in class.

September 7: Introduction to the course

No readings for today.

Discussion of course outline and assignments

Week I. Introduction to Theory

September 10: What is theory? Explanatory methods – why we do it

No readings for today.

*In class:
September 12: “Theorizing Society”: A Closer look at the Murder of Captain Cook

No readings for today.

*In class:


September 14: The Ethics and Effects of Theory


Week II. Race, Biology and the Study of Difference

September 17: Predecessors: Colonialism and Race in the 19th century


September 19: Is race biological? The American Challenge


September 21: SO WHAT, Joseph Arthur and Franz? Race as Constructed

Week III. The Logics of History and its Consequences

September 24: Predecessors: Diffusionism, Ladders of Civilization and Human Progress

***READING REFLECTION FOR WEEK II IS DUE TODAY, AT THE BEGINNING OF CLASS.***


September 26: Society and evolution


http://darwin-online.org.uk/content/frameset?itemID=F373&viewtype=text&pageseq=1

September 28: SO WHAT, Charles? Contemporary evolutionism, diffusionism and progress

Harry Truman’s 1949 Inaugural Address, also known as “The Four Point Speech.”

http://www.bartleby.com/124/pres53.html

*In class:
Week IV. WMD I: What is ‘society’? The Collective

***READING REFLECTION FOR WEEK III IS DUE TODAY, AT THE BEGINNING OF CLASS.

October 1: Durkheim - Structures and Solidarities in 19th century society:


http://soc100willse.voices.wooster.edu/files/2012/01/Durkheim-Div-of-Labor.pdf

October 3: Durkheim and the Collective


October 5: SO WHAT, Émile? Nationalism and Solidarity in Contemporary Europe


https://www2.bc.edu/marian-simion/th406/readings/0420anderson.pdf

Please watch the following before class:

Note: The following video contains hateful language, as well as bigoted and racially prejudiced statements. We are watching it in order to analyze contemporary notions of identity amongst certain European citizens more thoroughly.

Bjorn Hocke’s speech in Munich on the Refugee Crisis in Europe:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jjIKO6hCRoc

Week V. WMD II: What is ‘society’? Structure
October 8: NO CLASS - THANKSGIVING

October 10: Marx: The Structure of History

***READING REFLECTION FOR WEEK IV IS DUE TODAY, AT THE BEGINNING OF CLASS.


October 12: Marx: Capitalist Formations


*In class: *Metropolis* (1927) dir. Fritz Lang

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Week VI. WMD III: What is ‘society’? Ideology

- October 15: SO WHAT, Karl? Marx and Capitalism today

***READING REFLECTION FOR WEEK V IS DUE TODAY, AT THE BEGINNING OF CLASS.


October 17: Weber: Taking Marx's Camera Obscura seriously


October 19: Weber: The Elective Affinities of Protestantism and Capitalism


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Week VII. Rationalization and Midterms
October 22: SO WHAT, Max? Rationalization and Capitalism Today

NO READING REFLECTIONS ARE DUE TODAY BECAUSE OF THE UPCOMING MIDTERM.

Ritzer, George. The McDonaldization of Society

October 24: Review for midterm

October 26: MIDTERM EXAM

Week VIII. What’s your Function? (and structure?)

October 29: Malinowski: Stranded on an Island with nowhere to go

THERE IS NO READING REFLECTION DUE TODAY BECAUSE OF MIDTERM AND REVIEW.


October 31: Radcliffe-Brown and an elaboration of function


November 2: SO WHAT, Brony and Alfred? Structural Functionalism in Sudan and Iraq Today


IX: Structuralism

November 5: Linguistic Structuralism
**READING REFLECTION FOR WEEK VIII IS DUE TODAY, AT THE BEGINNING OF CLASS.**


**November 7: French Structuralism**


[https://monoskop.org/images/e/e8/Levi-Strauss_Claude_Structural_Anthropology_1963.pdf](https://monoskop.org/images/e/e8/Levi-Strauss_Claude_Structural_Anthropology_1963.pdf)

+ So what, Ferdinand and Claude? : In-class exercises on kinship

**November 9: The ‘original’ binary structure: male and female**


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**X: The ‘structure’ of gender**

**November 19: Male and Female as Binary Structure**

**READING REFLECTION FOR WEEK IX IS DUE TODAY, AT THE BEGINNING OF CLASS.**

Ortner, S. B. (1972). Is female to male as nature is to culture?. *Feminist studies, 1*(2), 5-31. [ucalgary link](#)

**November 21: Feminists rethinking the institution of The Family**


**November 23: SO WHAT? Beyond the Binary**


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**XI: Post-structure and Post-structuralism**

**November 26: Foucault**

***READING REFLECTION FOR WEEK X IS DUE TODAY, AT THE BEGINNING OF CLASS.***


**November 28: Foucault**


**November 30: SO WHAT, Michel? The Performance of Gender**


*In class: *Paris is Burning (1990) excerpts.  [Link here](#).

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**Week XII: Beyond binaries: “Writing Culture” and Representation**

**December 3: Is ethnography truth? Is Male to Female as West is to East?**

***READING REFLECTION FOR WEEK XI IS DUE TODAY, AT THE BEGINNING OF CLASS.***


**December 5: So what, Writing Culture?**

Optional:

**December 7: Q&A Session and Exam Review**

**FINAL EXAMINATION: REGISTRAR’S SCHEDULE TBA**
ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS
http://www.ucalgary.ca/access/accommodations/policy
Students needing an Accommodation because of a Disability or medical condition should communicate this need to Student Accessibility Services in accordance with the Procedure for Accommodations for Students with Disabilities
Students needing an Accommodation based on a Protected Ground other than Disability, should communicate this need, preferably in writing, to the instructor of this course.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY
Academic integrity is essential to the pursuit of learning and scholarship in a university, and to ensuring that a degree from the University of Calgary is a strong signal of each student’s individual academic achievements. As a result, the University treats cases of cheating and plagiarism very seriously. Non-academic integrity also constitutes an important component of this program.

For detailed information on what constitutes academic and non-academic misconduct, please refer to the following link: http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k-2-1.html

All suspected cases of academic and non-academic misconduct will be investigated following procedures outlined in the University Calendar. If you have questions or concerns about what constitutes appropriate academic behaviour or appropriate research and citation methods, you are expected to seek out additional information on academic integrity from your instructor or from other institutional resources.

Where there is a criminal act involved in plagiarism, cheating or other academic misconduct, e.g., theft (taking another student's paper from their possession, or from the possession of a faculty member without permission), breaking and entering (forcibly entering an office to gain access to papers, grades or records), forgery, personation and conspiracy (impersonating another student by agreement and writing their paper) and other such offences under the Criminal Code of Canada, the University may take legal advice on the appropriate response and, where appropriate, refer the matter to the police, in addition to or in substitution for any action taken under these regulations by the University

TEACHING EVALUATIONS / USRIS (Universal Student Ratings of Instruction)
At the University of Calgary, feedback provided by students through the Universal Student Ratings of Instruction (USRI) survey provides valuable information to help with evaluating instruction, enhancing learning and teaching, and selecting courses. Your responses make a difference, please participate! Website:
http://www.ucalgary.ca/usri/
WRITING ACROSS THE CURRICULUM
Writing skills are not exclusive to English courses and, in fact, should cross all disciplines. The University supports the belief that throughout their University careers, students should be taught how to write well so that when they graduate their writing abilities will be far above the minimal standards required at entrance. Consistent with this belief, students are expected to do a substantial amount of writing in their University courses and, where appropriate, members of faculty can and should use writing and the grading thereof as a factor in the evaluation of student work. The services provided by the Writing Support, part of the Student Success Centre, can be utilized by all undergraduate and graduate students who feel they require further assistance.

Emergency Evacuation Assembly Points: In the event of an emergency that requires evacuation, please refer to the following link to become familiar with the assembly points for the class: http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act: Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act
The University of Calgary is committed to protecting the privacy of individuals who work and study at the University or who otherwise interact with the University in accordance with the standards set out in the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. Please refer to the following link for detailed information: http://www.ucalgary.ca/legalservices/foip

The Department of Anthropology and Archaeology’s FOIP (Freedom of Information and Privacy) policy requires all reports/examinations to be returned to students during class time or the instructor’s office hours. Any term work not picked up will be placed in the Anthropology and Archaeology Office (ES620) for distribution. Any student not wishing to have their work placed in the office must make alternative arrangements with the course instructor early in the term.

Safewalk Information: Campus Security, in partnership with the Students’ Union, provides the Safewalk service, 24 hours a day to any location on Campus including the LRT, parking lots, bus zones and University residences. Contact Campus Security at (403) 220-5333 or use a help phone, and Safewalkers or a Campus Security Officer will accompany you to your campus destination.

Faculty of Arts Program Advising and Student Information Resources: Have a question, but not sure where to start? Arts Students' Centre
The Faculty of Arts Students' Centre is the overall headquarters for undergraduate programs in the Faculty of Arts. The key objective of this office is to connect students with whatever academic assistance that they require. In addition to housing the Associate Dean, Undergraduate Programs and Student Affairs and the Associate Dean for Teaching and Learning, the Arts Students' Centre is the specific home to:
- program advising
the Faculty’s Co-operative Education Program
the Arts and Science Honours Academy
the Faculty’s Interdisciplinary Programs
a Student Help Desk

Location: Social Sciences Room 102
Phone: 403.220.3580
Email: ascarts@ucalgary.ca
Website: arts.ucalgary.ca/undergraduate/

For registration (add/drop/swap), paying fees and assistance with your Student Centre, contact Enrolment Services at (403) 210-ROCK [7625] or visit them at the MacKimmie Library Block.

Contacts for Students Union Representatives for the Faculty of Arts:
arts1@su.ucalgary.ca
arts2@su.ucalgary.ca
arts3@su.ucalgary.ca
arts4@su.ucalgary.ca

Ombudsman’s office: http://www.ucalgary.ca/ombuds/