

Anthropology for Liberation?

ANT 324L/AFR 372C/WGS 340

Fall 2014

Professor: Christen A. Smith, Ph.D.

Office Location: SAC 5.126

Email: christen.smith@austin.utexas.edu

Office Hours Th:1:00pm-2:00pm and by appointment

The discipline of anthropology has a long, tense history with its colonial past. As a field, it emerged out of the slavery/conquest/colonial era, and in many ways cannot be separated from the legacies of racism, sexism, classism and colonialism that shaped its beginnings. Given this backdrop, what does an anthropology for liberation look like? Is this even possible? If so, what might be a methodology for this model? What questions would an anthropology for liberation ask, and what models would it uphold? The purpose of this class is to explore these questions and others as we take a critical look at anthropologists' quests to shifting the legacy of anthropology from the colonial toward freedom and liberation. Through critical readings, we will explore anthropology's relationship to human rights, violence, questions of race, gender and sexuality, imperialism and neoliberalism, and some of the ways that some anthropologists have chosen to use their field work to turn anthropology on its head rather than reinscribe its divisive past.

Keywords: human rights, decolonization, race, racism, sexism, gender, inequality, violence, activism

Requirements: Midterm 25%; Final 25%; Independent Research Project 20%; Class Participation 20% (10% Attendance + 10% Discussion); Research Team Presentation 10%

Course Schedule

People on Display: Anthropology and Colonialism/Conquest/Slavery

Week 1: Course Introduction

January 14 & 16 – Analyzing the gaze...

Reading: - "The Other History of Intercultural Performance" – Coco Fusco (1994)

Week 2: The Politics of Exhibition Pt.1

January 21 & 23 – Ethnography, Museums and Artifacts

Reading: - "The Poetics and the Politics of Exhibiting Other Cultures" in Representation ed. Stuart Hall (1997) [Introduction, 2, 3]

Week 3: The Politics of Exhibition Pt.2

January 28 & 30 – Colonial Spectacles, Anthropological Knowledge

Reading: - "The Poetics and the Politics of Exhibiting Other Cultures" in Representation ed. Stuart Hall (1997) [4,5,6, Readings]

Film: The Life and Times of Sara Baartman: The Hottentot Venus

Anthropology, Violence and the State

Week 4: Anthropology and Genocide

February 4 & 6 – Violent Praxis

- Reading: - “From Ishi in Two Worlds: A Biography of the Last Wild Indian in North America”
Theodora Kroeber (2004)
- Ishi’s Brain, Ishi’s Ashes: Anthropology and Genocide – Nancy Scheper-Hughes (2004)

*February 6 – Research team assignments

Week 5: Secrecy and Spying

February 11 & 13 – Selling Knowledge

- Reading: - “America the Ambivalent: Quietly Selling Anthropology to the CIA” – David Price (2005)
- “Past Wars, Present Dangers, Future Anthropologies” – David Price (2002)
- “The AAA and the Cia?” – David Price (2000)

Week 6: Taking up arms

February 18 & 20 – Ethical dilemmas in engaged research

- Reading: - “The Anthropologist as Terrorist” – Joseba Zulaika (1995)

Week 7: Solidarity and Danger

February 25 & 27 – Police states, wars and safety

- Reading - “State Violence and the Ethnographic Encounter: Feminist Research and Racial Embodiment”
(2012)

Week 8:

March 4 MIDTERM (IN-CLASS)

March 6 FINAL RESEARCH PROJECT PROPOSALS DUE

Film Screening “Bad Friday: Rastafari After Coral Gardens” – Deborah Thomas and John Jackson
(2011)

SPRING BREAK MARCH 10-15

Decolonizing Anthropology

Week 9: Engaged in Struggle

March 18 & 20 – Feminist praxis and engagement

- Reading: - *Black Women against the Land Grab* – Keisha-Khan Perry (2013)

Week 10: Activist Anthropology

March 25 & 27 – Activism and the academy

- Reading: - “Activist Research v. Cultural Critique: Indigenous Land Rights and the Contradictions of Politically Engaged Anthropology” – Charles Hale (2008)
- “Solidarity Work in Transnational Feminism” – Linda Carty and Monisha Das Gupta (2009)

Week 11: Crossing Boundaries/Engaging Contradictions

April 1 & 3 – Race, Gender, Sexuality, Politics

Reading: - “Three Dilemmas of a Queer Activist Scholar of Color” – Michael Hames-García (2009)
- “Solidarity with Palestinian Women: Notes from a Japanese Black U.S. Feminist” – Margo Okazawa-Rey (2009)

Week 12: Liberation?

April 8 & 10 – Reformism, radicalism, revolution

Reading - “Anthropology and Liberation” – Edmund Gordon (1997)
- “Afterword: Activist Scholars or Radical Subjects?” – Joy James and Edmund Gordon (2008)

Memory and Affect

Week 13: Grief, anger, witnessing

April 15 & 17 –Rage, mourning, silence, reflection

Reading: - *The Day of Shelly's Death: The Poetry and Ethnography of Grief* – Renato Rosaldo (2014)
- “Expert Witness: Notes toward Revisiting the Politics of Listening” – Asale Angel-Ajani (2008)

Week 14: Final & final presentations

April 22 – Final (in-class)

April 24 – Team presentations

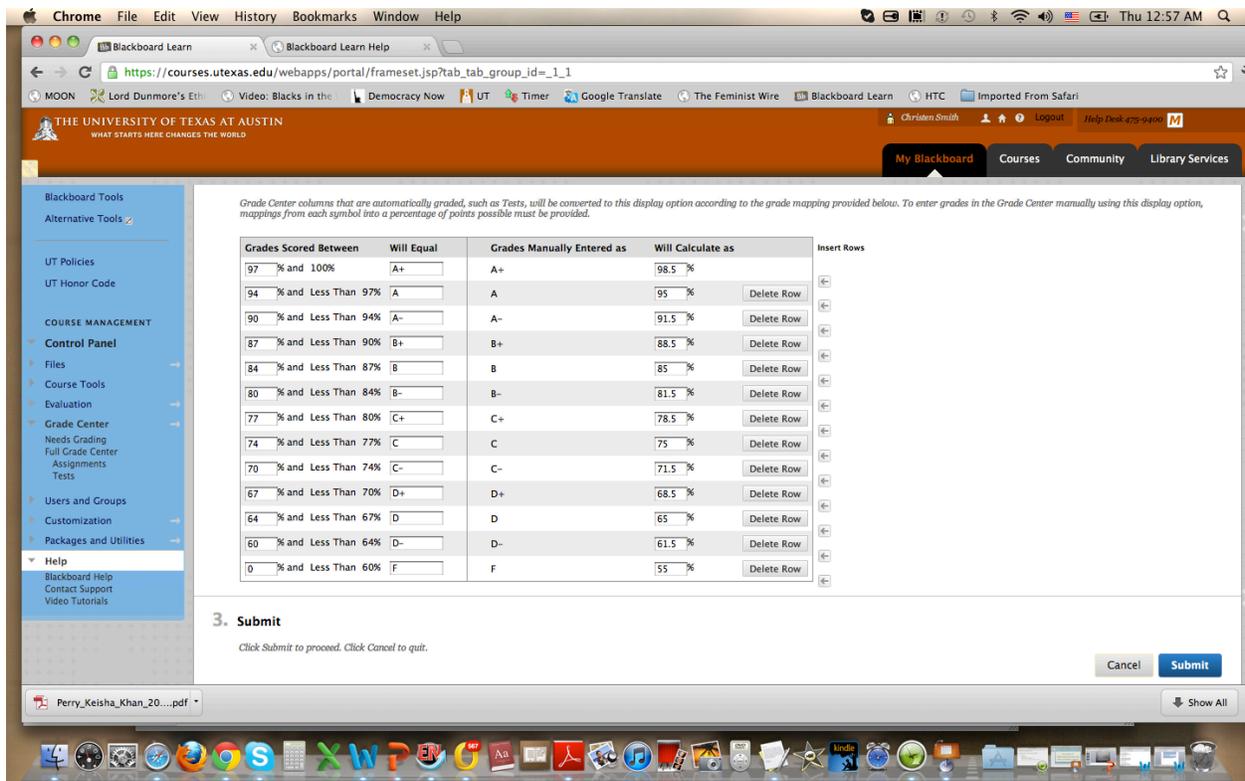
Week 15: Final presentations & wrap-up

April 29 & May 1 - Team presentations

Final Research Projects Due May 9

GRADING CRITERIA AND COURSE GUIDELINES

Grading Scale



How your grade in this class will be calculated:

Class Participation – 20%

- Attendance – 10%
- Engaged participation in class discussion and social media discussions– 10%

Midterm – 25%

Final – 25%

Final Research Project – 20%

Collaborative Team Presentation – 10%

Class Participation

Attendance and Engaged Participation

Students who acquire six or more unexcused absences will receive a failing grade.

Please note that your success in this course depends on close reading and engagement with the texts (readings, films, video clips, web links and information posted to Canvas), as well as active and informed participation in class discussions. You will be responsible for checking the Canvas course site and your email regularly for additional texts and announcements.

Your class participation grade will be based on attendance and *meaningful* participation in class discussions. Meaningful participation is taken to be analytic engagement with the texts and course themes in class discussions (both in the classroom and in virtual classroom space i.e. the Canvas discussion board), not vague commentary or generalizations. Each student is expected to come to class prepared to participate actively in class discussions each week. This includes but is not limited to doing the assigned reading and preparing thoughtful questions to share with the class. You are expected to come to class prepared to discuss the readings. CLASS PARTICIPATION WILL BE GRADED BY RUBRIC.

Those students who take the initiative to *engage critically* with the readings and themes of the class *and* actively participate in class discussions by sharing their ideas and thoughts openly and respectfully on a regular basis will be graded highly. Those who do not participate in class discussions unless called upon will be graded down. *Always be prepared to speak when you are called upon.*

Social Media Discussions: As an extension of our classroom conversations, we will also engage in discussion for this course via social media, particularly Twitter and Facebook. Each student will be required to have a Twitter and Facebook account and share your information with the professor. If you don't have accounts for these sites please set them up. If you don't like the idea of having these accounts/joining these sites and/or sharing your information with the class, you can always set up an alias and delete the account after the course is over. From time to time, you will be asked to tweet and/or post your thoughts about current events, questions, etc. to share. This tool will allow us to share information quickly and easily with one another and insert our classroom conversations into public discussions. We encourage you to share links with the class about relevant topics and post your thoughts and reflections about the themes and ideas of the course. One of the goals of this requirement will be to help us to think through what it means to engage in public advocacy, criticism and reflection in responsible and provocative ways. We will discuss this more in class throughout the semester.

In-Class Assignments: Students will also be graded on their thoughtful completion of in-class assignments. In-class assignments will be assigned throughout the semester at the discretion of the instructor and will include but not be limited to free-writes and occasional peer review assignments. In-class assignments will be announced in class and/or posted to Canvas.

Research Teams and Team Presentations

The fourth week of the course each student will be assigned to a research team. Each research team will function as a study group and support network for students investigating similar topics for their final projects. In conversation with the students, the instructor will come up with a list of topics/themes and each student will pick a theme according to their interests. Each research team will prepare a 15min presentation on their team's research theme to give to the class. This presentation will be graded ***collectively and will occur the last two weeks of class.*** We will discuss research team assignments and details on this assignment in class.

Final Project

Each student will be responsible for a final project that reflects critically on one or more aspects of the themes of the course. Students may opt to write an 8-10pp final research paper (2500-3000 words) for this assignment or submit a proposal for a unique and creative final research project to the instructor for approval. Projects should either be ethnographically engaged or critique ethnographic methods/practices in some way. A creative project could include (but is not limited to) an ethnographic documentary, interactive website, performance art piece, zine, or art installation. Students do have the option of doing projects collaboratively, but ALL COLLABORATIVE PROJECTS MUST OBTAIN PRIOR APPROVAL AND NO MORE THAN THREE (3) STUDENTS CAN COLLABORATE ON A FINAL PROJECT. **All project topics and proposals must be submitted to the instructor by MARCH 6TH.**

GUIDELINES

ALL ASSIGNMENTS MUST BE SUBMITTED ELECTRONICALLY VIA CANVAS AND BY HARD COPY AT THE BEGINNING OF CLASS ON THE DUE DATE

LATE ASSIGNMENTS WILL BE HEAVILY PENALIZED

Due Dates/Late Policy: As a general policy late assignments will not be accepted without the instructor's prior approval. Any late assignments accepted will carry a penalty of 10% of the assignment grade per day late. — **six days late or more will automatically receive a grade of 0.**

I will make exceptions to this penalty policy **only** in the event of a documented medical or family emergency, or if you have official, documented University of Texas business off-campus; in such a case, please notify me as soon as possible.

Format Guidelines for Writing Assignments:

All coursework must be double-spaced and typed in 12pt Times New Roman font. All papers must have 1-inch margins on all sides. Please use the AAA Style Guide: http://www.aaanet.org/pubs/style_guide.pdf as a guideline for bibliographies and citations.

Grading Evaluation

Rubrics: Rubrics will be used as grading criteria for most course assignments including class participation. These rubrics will be available on Canvas and will be discussed in-class.

Class Policies

1. Again, please come to class on time and prepared to participate actively in class discussions each day.
2. Hot and cold beverages are okay to bring to class, but please NO FOOD ALLOWED IN THE CLASSROOM (unless you have brought a goodie for everyone and you have cleared it with me first).
4. Please be attentive and polite to one another during class. If you wish to read the *Texan*, surf the web, talk with your neighbor during lecture, sleep, or do anything else disruptive, then please go elsewhere.
5. Please respect your classmates and your instructor. In this course, there will be a lot of lively discussion and debate. Even if you don't agree with someone, you should still treat that person with respect and be kind. We are all here to learn!
5. Due dates for all assignments are listed on the syllabus and/or will be announced in class and/or will be announced on Canvas. Late assignments carry stiff penalties. Please see note on "due dates" above.
6. **ACADEMIC HONESTY IS IMPERATIVE.** I will refer all cases of academic dishonesty (i.e. cheating and plagiarism) to the Dean of Student's Office. If you have questions about what constitutes academic dishonesty, visit the University's official statement: http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/acint_student.php

Writing Center

I strongly encourage you to use the Undergraduate Writing Center, FAC 211, 471-6222 or <http://uwc.fac.utexas.edu> The Undergraduate Writing Center offers free, individualized, expert help with writing for any UT undergraduate, by appointment or on a drop-in basis. Any undergraduate enrolled in a course at UT can visit the UWC for assistance with any writing project. They work with students from every department on campus, for both academic and non-academic writing. Whether you are writing a lab report, a resume, a term paper, a statement for an application, or your own poetry, UWC consultants will be happy to work with you. Their services are not just for writing with 'problems'. Getting feedback from an informed audience is a normal part of a

successful writing project. Consultants help students develop strategies to improve their writing. The assistance they provide is intended to foster independence. Each student determines how to use the consultant's advice. The consultants are trained to help you work on your writing in ways that preserve the integrity of your work.

Documented Disability Statement

Any student with a documented disability who requires academic accommodations should contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) at (512) 471-6259 (voice) or 1-866-329-3986 (video phone). Faculty are not required to provide accommodations without an official accommodation letter from SSD. *(Note to Faculty: Details of a student's disability are confidential. Faculty should not ask questions related to a student's condition or diagnosis when receiving an official accommodation letter.)*

- Please notify me as quickly as possible if the material being presented in class is not accessible (e.g., instructional videos need captioning, course packets are not readable for proper alternative text conversion, etc.).
- Please notify me as early in the semester as possible if disability-related accommodations for field trips are required. Advanced notice will permit the arrangement of accommodations on the given day (e.g., transportation, site accessibility, etc.).
- Contact Services for Students with Disabilities at 471-6259 (voice) or 1-866-329-3986 (video phone) or reference SSD's website for more disability-related information: http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/for_cstudents.php

Behavior Concerns Advice Line (BCAL)

If you are worried about someone who is acting differently, you may use the Behavior Concerns Advice Line to discuss by phone your concerns about another individual's behavior. This service is provided through a partnership among the Office of the Dean of Students, the Counseling and Mental Health Center (CMHC), the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), and The University of Texas Police Department (UTPD). Call 512-232-5050 or visit <http://www.utexas.edu/safety/bcal>.

Religious Holy Days

By UT Austin policy, you must notify me of your pending absence at least fourteen days prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day. If you must miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day, I will give you an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

Q drop Policy

The State of Texas has enacted a law that limits the number of course drops for academic reasons to six (6). As stated in Senate Bill 1231:

“Beginning with the fall 2007 academic term, an institution of higher education may not permit an undergraduate student a total of more than six dropped courses, including any course a transfer student has dropped at another institution of higher education, unless the student shows good cause for dropping more than that number.”

Emergency Evacuation Policy

Occupants of buildings on the UT Austin campus are required to evacuate and assemble outside when a fire alarm is activated or an announcement is made. Please be aware of the following policies regarding evacuation:

- Familiarize yourself with all exit doors of the classroom and the building. Remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when you entered the building.
- If you require assistance to evacuate, inform me in writing during the first week of class.
- In the event of an evacuation, follow my instructions or those of class instructors.
- Do not re-enter a building unless you're given instructions by the Austin Fire Department, the UT Austin Police Department, or the Fire Prevention Services office.

Process for grade appeals (Liberal Arts): Students must first contact course instructor, then if dispute not resolved, they must

contact Associate Chair. If Associate Chair declines appeal, the student can appeal to the Dean. See below for details. (I have attached the linked pdf to this email as well)

http://www.utexas.edu/cola/student-affairs/_files/pdf/grade_appeals_form_student_version.pdf