ANT 392M INTRODUCTION TO GRADUATE SOCIAL ANTHROPOLOGY

Unique | Day | Time   | Location
-------|-----|--------|----------
31915   | Tuesday | 2:00 - 5:00 | SAC 5.124

Instructor: Sofian Merabet (sofian.merabet@austin.utexas.edu)
Office Hours: Thursday 2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.
or by appointment in SAC 5.156

Course Description:

This course introduces doctoral students to major texts in sociocultural theory that have been central to the development of the discipline of anthropology from its colonial roots in North America and Western Europe to the contemporary period. While not a comprehensive history of anthropological theory, this course provides a chronological and contextualized perspective as it explores and interprets the relationships between varying and, at times, competing theoretical, epistemological, and ethical claims on anthropology and related disciplines. Based on classical scholarship by some of the “founding fathers” of modern social science, this course traces parts of the genealogical trajectories taken by the anthropological study of culture and society. Following that intellectual legacy, this course asks a central question: How can we make sense of sociocultural anthropology as an academic discipline today? Problematising the role the concept of “culture” has played in shaping the idea of the “field,” we will look at “location” as a principal site of epistemological limitation and possibility for anthropological research.
Required Texts (listed alphabetically): [ordered at the University Coop, www.universitycoop.com, 2246 Guadalupe Street, Austin, (512) 476-7211]


Course Requirements for Registered Students:

The class relies on the intellectual commitment and active participation of all students. It will be run primarily as discussions within a seminar format. In order for the course to be effective, all students must have the reading assignments completed and ready for in-depth discussion for each class. Regular attendance is required. Attendance in class, however, does not constitute participation. You must come to class having carefully read all materials and be prepared to discuss, question, and argue about issues raised in the readings. It will be beneficial for you to take excerpts/notes on any material that you find enlightening, controversial, or objectionable. You should also take notes in class on themes, key terms, and debates we tackle. These note-taking strategies will be crucial when you write your response papers. In short:

1) Do all assigned readings (while taking excerpts/notes!) by the date indicated on the syllabus and participate actively in the general class discussion.
2) Regular 15-minute presentations on the weekly readings to be assigned to students. They are intended to launch the general seminar discussions.
3) Four written Take-Home-Exams to be handed in in class or via email on Tuesday, September 25th, Tuesday, October 16th, Tuesday, November 6th, and Tuesday, December 4th. These exams cover a theoretical question based on the assigned readings [exactly 5-pages (double-spaced/12 point Times Roman font) + one cover page featuring your name and the prompt (if deemed necessary, you can add a 7th page with works cited)]. Prompts will be posted on CANVAS and sent to you via email on the Friday before the assignment is due.

THERE WILL BE NO MAKE-UP ASSIGNMENTS!

The writing assignments are designed to develop critical reading, analytical, and writing skills. Evaluation criteria include: critical and integrative analysis of texts, clarity of thought, ability to synthesize readings and, occasionally, class discussions into your own argument, and ability to formulate a theoretical grounding for it.

Every student is highly encouraged to visit the UNIVERSITY WRITING CENTER
Students who consult with the Writing Center and have the instructor officially notified by email will earn additional 2 points on their respective papers.
(http://uwc.utexas.edu/grad/)

The UWC offers free support for UT graduate students in all departments. UWC graduate services include individual consultations, writing groups, writing retreats, workshops, and presentations.
Consultations

- Graduate students can schedule up to two consultations a month with a professional writing consultant.
- Graduate student consultations can cover any writing project (e.g. dissertation chapters, articles, conference papers, grant proposals, etc.) at any stage in the writing process (e.g. analyzing CFPs, brainstorming, restructuring, etc.). Consultants can be particularly helpful in discussions of process, but can also review up to eight pages of writing during a session.
- Consultants do not proofread or edit writing, but rather provide non-directive, non-evaluative support about the audience, purpose and context of academic writing. Consultants also discuss how to improve the writing process, time management and motivation.
- In consultations covering co-authored projects, we encourage all authors of written material to be present.

Please note that appointments are made in advance on a first-come, first-served basis. If you must cancel your appointment, please do so at least 24 hours in advance. Students who miss two or more appointments will be unable to meet with a consultant until the following semester.

Other Resources

The UWC has resources for academic writers of all stages, including presentations, videos, and handouts that cover everything from grammar to citation styles. You are also welcome to visit our UWC Library, which contains books on discipline-specific writing styles, dissertation writing, and other topics relevant to writing in graduate school. Our books cannot be checked out, but you are welcome to stay and read them. Here are some additional resources for UT graduate students:

- UT’s Counseling and Mental Health Center offers free, confidential counseling and groups for graduate students, including a Dissertation Support Group and a Graduate Student Support Group. Graduate students who are UT employees are also eligible for counseling and stress reduction services through the CMHC’s Employee Assistance Program.
- Communications courses for international graduate students
- Writing and editing assistance for international graduate students
- Graduate writing services and advising at Sanger Learning Center
- Scholars Commons at PCL
- GSA Graduate Writing Groups
Grading Procedure:

- 4 Response Papers: 80% (20% each).
- Presentations of weekly readings: 20%.

Grading Distribution (Letter Grade: Points):

A: 100-95   A-: 94-90   B+: 89-87   B: 86-83   B-: 82-80   C+: 79-77   C: 76-73

Please note that the instructor reserves the right to make changes in the syllabus when necessary to meet learning objectives.

Reading Schedule: (this schedule is tentative and subject to possible revision)

Week 1:
- Tuesday, September 4th - Introduction to the seminar

Week 2:
- Tuesday, September 11th - Friedrich Engels (orig. 1884) The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State. Publisher: Penguin Classics.

Week 3:
Week 4:

- Tuesday, September 25th

  **First Response Paper due!**

Week 5:

- Tuesday, October 2nd

Week 6:

- Tuesday, October 9th

Week 7:

- Tuesday, October 16th
  - Sigmund Freud (orig. 1930) *Civilization and Its Discontents*. Publisher: W. W. Norton & Company.

  **Second Response Paper due!**

Week 8:

- Tuesday, October 23rd

Week 9:

- Tuesday, October 30th
Week 10:

- Tuesday, November 6th

*Third Response Paper due!*

Week 11:

- Tuesday, November 13th

Week 12:

- Tuesday, November 20th
  - AAA/Thanksgiving: READING PERIOD

Week 13:

- Tuesday, November 27th

Week 14:

- Tuesday, December 4th

*Fourth Response Paper due!*