

Anthropology 370: Theory in Anthropology
Fall 2013: Monday, 1:30 – 4:20, Chambers 3155

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This seminar provides an overview of historical and contemporary anthropological theory. In this class, we will read samples of major theoretical works by anthropologists and other social and cultural theorists, and examine how they continue to inform both academic cultural theory and popular understandings of social life today. The goal of this seminar is to ground us in a wide variety of theoretical perspectives so that we can apply them to social issues of major concern to us today.

Our emphasis will be on understanding the premises and perspectives of different theorists and critically evaluating their assumptions and their reasoning. What were the historical and social positions that shaped the development of a particular theoretical perspective? What did they illuminate, and what did they obscure? Are they useful for us in understanding contemporary issues such as globalization, environmental issues, ethnic conflict, or social justice?

Course Readings

Erickson, Paul A. and Liam D. Murphy, ed. 2013. *Readings for a History of Anthropological Theory*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
ISBN: 9781442606562

Additional articles will be available on Moodle.

Course Requirements

The most important work in this course is to be prepared for each seminar meeting; this means having thoroughly read the material and being prepared to discuss particular points from the reading. Readings are due on the day listed in the class schedule. Your engagement with the material is vital for the success of this learning experience.

Seminar Participation: (25%) Students are expected to attend all classes, do the readings prior to class, and **discuss the implications of the issues** in the classroom. This includes your leading two seminar meetings (10%; we will schedule this on the first day of class).

Discussion Board: (10%) **Each week**, students will write a brief reaction towards an idea prompted by the reading. They are due prior to the start of each seminar meeting. I expect you to have also reviewed you're your peers have written – you may respond to what they have written, but I expect all exchanges to be as civil as if they were said in person during the seminar meeting. **LATE SUBMISSIONS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.**

Course Project: (65%)

The material for the course will be focused on a course group project, which you will do in pairs. Notice that there is nothing scheduled after 7 October. That's on purpose, because what you will be doing is designing the rest of the course based on your group project.

For the course project, groups will select a particular anthropological problem. You will then need to identify the main theoretical approaches that are necessary to adequately set up a project that would answer the issue. Because this is a class on theory, the main point is to understand how to think theoretically in anthropology and how to apply theory in conducting research on a relevant issue.

Proposal: 5% (due 9 September)

See the course handout on moodle. Include a tentative bibliography; the final bibliography will be due in the next assignment.

Bibliography: 10%: (due 30 September)

Make sure you submit the bibliography following AAA style; see the handout on Moodle. Page limit of 15 pages, single-spaced.

Literature Review: 25% (due 21 October)

In total, no more than 15 pages. See the handout.

Project: 15% (due 9 December)

The literature review is part of the project, and should be considered a draft.

All work is subject to the Davidson College Honor Code as stated in the student handbook. If there are individual accommodations for special needs, please let me know and authorize the Dean of Students to contact me so that we can work something out.

Initial Schedule

26 August: Introduction to the Course

2 September: Part One (Chapters 1-9)

9 September: Part Two (Chapters 10-20)

16 September: Part Three (Chapters 21-29)

23 September: TBD

30 September: Part Three (Chapters 30-35)

7 October: Part Four (Chapters 36-41)