

ANG 5621 (Section DEPT)

Pro-seminar in Cultural and Linguistic Anthropology

URL: <http://users.clas.ufl.edu/ckshih/>

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Course Description

In search for answers to the big questions concerning human conditions, practicing anthropologists are in constant conversation with theories underpinning different understandings and approaches. Generations of anthropologists have advanced overarching paradigms since the inception of anthropology as an academic discipline. While theories in the past, together with the ever-changing methods adopted to embody the changed theories, have shaped our discipline, novel approaches are being proposed as we speak. Each theory we know today arose in response to the social conditions and intellectual climate of its time, as well as to other contemporary theories. It is thus important for a graduate student of anthropology to be familiar with anthropological theories as much as the historical factors that conditioned a particular theory. It is, however, even more important for the future scholar to cultivate power of critical thinking.

This course is designed to help students think theoretically in other courses throughout their graduate programs, as well as to enable them to theorize their own research in the future. Students will have a comprehensive and balanced exposure to anthropological theories ranging from the 19th century to the early 21st century. We will explore the philosophical foundations of anthropology as well as issues surrounding anthropological research and presentations. Students will have plenty of opportunities to actively tackle theoretical issues throughout the course by class discussion, writing essays critiquing what they read, and writing a term paper engaging their research interests with relevant theories.

Texts

Barth, Frederick et al. 2005. *One Discipline, Four Ways: British, German, French, and American Anthropology*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Clifford, James and George E. Marcus, eds. 2010. *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Lett, James. 1997. *Science, Reason and Anthropology: A Guide to Critical Thinking*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.

Moore, Henrietta L. and Todd Sanders, eds. 2014. *Anthropology in Theory: Issues in Epistemology*, 2nd ed. West Sussex, UK: Wiley Blackwell.

Terms

It is imperative that students attend each and every session on schedule and take an active part in class activities. In addition to reading assignments as laid out in this syllabus, required work include an oral presentation, two essays (ten to twelve pages each) and a term paper (twenty to twenty-five pages).

The oral presentation should include a summary, comments, additional background information as appropriate, and questions for class discussion. Choice of date and topic for oral presentation will be granted in the coordination session on a first-come-first-get basis.

The first essay should be a critique on any four sections in *Anthropology in Theory* (Moore and Sanders 2014). For the second essay, you can choose to either compare and contrast the four traditions of Western anthropology (*One Discipline, Four Ways*, Barth et. 2005), or pit postmodernism (*Writing Culture*, Clifford and Marcus 1986) against scientism (*Science, Reason, and Anthropology*, Lett 1997). An essay for this course differs from a book review in that it must be built on a central argument of your own.

The term paper must critically relate at least four different theories to your own research interest. Archeologists and biological anthropologists can use theories in your respective subfield in lieu of what is covered in this course, or a combination of both. In any case, however, you must explicate how the anthropological issues in epistemology are relevant to those theories and to your research interest.

Course grade will be based on the following scale:

Class performance:	5%
Oral presentation:	20%;
Essays:	20% each, 40% total;
Term paper:	35%;

Disability Accommodations

Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation.

Important Dates

Mon., Sep. 29	Frist essay due.
Mon., Nov. 03	Second essay due.
Mon., Dec. 08	Research paper due.

Reading Schedule

Mon., Aug. 25 Course overview and coordination

Reading: This syllabus.

Mon., Sep. 01 Labor Day, no class.

Mon., Sep. 08 Anthropology and Epistemology; Culture and Behavior; Structure and System

Readings: Moore and Sanders 2014, pp. 1-87

Mon., Sep. 15 Function and Environment; Methods and Objects; Meanings and Objects of Study

Readings: Moore and Sanders 2014, pp. 90-190

Mon., Sep. 22 Language and Method; Cognition, Psychology, and Neuroanthropology; Bodies and Knowledge

Readings: Moore and Sanders 2014, pp. 192-281

Mon., Sep. 29 Coherence and Contingency; Universalisms and Domain Terms;

Readings: Moore and Sanders 2014, pp. 286-375

Mon., Oct. 06 Perspectives and Their Logics; Objectivity, Morality, and Truth; the Anthropology of Western Modes of Thought

Readings: Moore and Sanders 2014, pp. 378-474

Mon., Oct. 13 (Re)defining Objects of Inquiry; Subjects, Objects, and Affect; Imagining Methodologies and Meta-things; Anthropologizing Ourselves

Readings: Moore and Sanders 2014, pp. 476-575

Mon., Oct. 20 Four Traditions of Anthropology I: The British School

Readings: Barth et. 2005, pp. 3-57

Mon., Oct. 27 Four Traditions of Anthropology II: The German School

Readings: Barth et. 2005, pp. 61-153

Mon., Nov. 03 Four Traditions of Anthropology III: The French School

Readings: Barth et. 2005, pp. 157-253

Mon., Nov. 10 Four Traditions of Anthropology IV: The American School

Readings: Barth et. 2005, pp. 257-347

Mon., Nov. 17 Fieldwork and Post-modern Ethnography

Readings: Clifford and Marcus 1986, pp. 1-140

Mon., Nov. 24 Modernity, Post-modernity and Anthropology

Readings: Clifford and Marcus 1986, pp. 141-266

Mon., Dec. 01 The Nature of Knowledge and the Scientific Approach to Knowledge

Readings: Lett 1997, pp. 1-87

Mon., Dec. 08 Reason and Contemporary Anthropology

Readings: Lett 1997, pp. 89-132