

# ANT 4851 Digital Anthropology

UF Online, Spring 2022

**Instructor:** Alix Johnson ([alix.johnson@ufl.edu](mailto:alix.johnson@ufl.edu))

**Office hours:** Tues 2-3:30pm (via Zoom except by request: <https://ufl.zoom.us/j/94711539851>)

**Course description:** Digital anthropology is the study of how digital technology shapes, and is shaped by, human culture. This course introduces students to the foundational theories of this subfield, and to some of its key methodologies. In addition, the class considers some of the practical and ethical challenges of conducting research using digital technologies and/or in digital space.

**Pre-requisites:** None

**Required text:** *Digital Anthropology* (2021, second edition), edited by Haidy Geismar and Hannah Knox. Routledge. Additional readings will be posted on the [home page](#) of the Canvas site.

## *Course expectations and assessment*

Digital Anthropology is a fully online, asynchronous course. Each week you will be expected to: 1) complete a reading (or set of readings), 2) watch a video lecture, and 3) complete a short assignment – all of which can be found on the [home page](#) of this site.

Your grade will be calculated based on the following components:

Weekly assignments (10 points each): 50%

Midterm paper (20 points): 20%

Final project (30 points): 30%

*Weekly assignments* ask you to reflect briefly on a topic related to the week's readings and video.

The [Midterm Paper](#) uses a course theme from weeks 1-6 to analyze a real-life example of your choice.

The [Final Project](#) invites you to conduct independent research on a topic related to digital anthropology

**Late work:** All assignments are due by 11:59pm on their listed due dates. Late work will drop one letter grade per day, and will not be accepted after one week (7 days).

**Grading scale:**

A 100 – 92	C+ 79 – 78
A- 91 – 90	C 77 – 72
B+ 89 – 88	C- 71 – 70
B 82 – 87	D+ 69 – 68
B- 80 – 81	D 67 – 60

**Academic integrity:** Cheating, plagiarism, violation of test conditions, complicity in dishonest behavior, or other falsification of academic work is a serious breach of College expectations and is subject to immediate disciplinary action. Plagiarism: There is no more serious academic offense than plagiarism. Plagiarism is academic theft, where the writer passes off as his or her own the ideas or words of another. If you plagiarize, you will receive a zero for that assignment and I will refer the matter to the Dean of Students for further disciplinary action. You must be familiar with the College's policies on plagiarism. If you have any questions please refer to the University's Honor Code, which is available online at:  
<http://www.registrar.ufl.edu/catalog/policies/students.html>.

***University Resources***

**Accessibility and 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. The Disability Resource office is located in 001 Reid Hall. Further information can be found at: [www.dso.ufl.edu/drp](http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drp).

**Mental health:** The university offers confidential counseling services to help students deal with personal concerns that interfere with learning and academic progress. The Counseling Center's professional counselors provide individual and group counseling and crisis intervention on short-term and emergency issues as well as consultation and referral services. All services are strictly confidential and are not part of students' college records.

1. University Counseling Center, 301 Peabody Hall, 392-1575
2. Student Mental Health, Student Health Care Center, 391-1171 (personal counseling)
3. Sexual Assault Recovery Services (SARS), Student Health Care Center, 392-1161
4. Career Resource Center, Reitz Union, 392-1601

## ***Course schedule***

See Course [Home Page](#) for all readings, videos, and assignments

[DA = Digital Anthropology, C = Canvas]

### **Week 1: Introductions**

Reading: Course syllabus (C)

Assignment: Who Are You? (Due 1/7)

### **Week 2: What is Digital Anthropology?**

Reading: Daniel Miller, “Digital Anthropology” (C)

Assignment: Who Do You Know? (Due 1/14)

### **Week 3: Digital Space and Digital Ethics**

Reading: "Facebook's Terms of Service" (C); "What happens when you click 'agree'?" (C)

Assignment: Terms of Service / Terms of Research (Due 1/21)

### **Week 4: Social Media**

Reading: Daniel Miller, “The Anthropology of Social Media” (DA)

Assignment: Setting Up Twitter (Due 1/28)

### **Week 5: Digital Communities**

Reading: Faye Ginsburg, “Disability in the Digital Age”

Assignment: Digital Communities (Due 2/4)

### **Week 6: Digital Selfhood**

Reading: Natasha Dow-Schüll, “Data For Life” (C)

Assignment: Our Data, Ourselves (Due 2/11)

### **Week 7: Methods I – Ethnography**

Reading: Tom Boellstorff, "Participant Observation in Virtual Worlds" (C)

Assignment: Ethnographic Observation (Due 2/18)

### **Week 8: Methods II – Social Network Analysis**

Reading: Borgatti et. al., "Network Analysis in the Social Sciences" (C)

Assignment: Networking (Due 2/25)

### **Week 9: Methods III – Textual Analysis**

Reading: Wendy Hsu, "Digital Ethnography Toward Augmented Empiricism" (C)

Assignment: Midterm Paper (Due 3/4)

### **Week 10: SPRING BREAK**

[No reading / assignment]

### **Week 11: Research Design**

Reading: [Review reading needed to prepare Final Project Prospectus]

Assignment: Final Project Prospectus (Due 3/18)

### **Week 12: Digital Economies**

Reading: Bill Maurer, "Blockchain" (DA)

Assignment: Digital Value, Digital Values (Due 3/25)

### **Week 13: Digital Archives**

Reading: Quentin Jones, "Virtual Communities, Virtual Settlements and Cyber-Archaeology" (C); Rodney Harrison, "Excavating Second Life" (C)

Assignment: Digital Excavation (Due 4/1)

### **Week 14: Digital Archaeology**

Reading: Gemma Tarlach, "How Google Earth has Revolutionized Archaeology" (C);  
"International Principles of Virtual Archaeology" (C)

Assignment: Digital Archaeology (Due 4/8)

### **Week 15: Applying Digital Anthropology**

Reading: Haidy Geismar, "Museum + Digital = ?" (DA); "Community-makers, Major Museums and the Keet S'axw"

Assignment: Digital Exhibitions (Due 4/15)

### **Week 16: Final Project**

Reading: Sarah Pink, "Digital Futures Anthropology" (DA)

Assignment: Final Project (Due 4/22)