ANTH 1100 Understanding Anthropology

The Chinese University of Hong Kong | Fall 2025

Lecture: Monday, 2:30pm-4:15pm (UCC111)
Tutorial 1: Monday, 4:30pm-5:15pm (UCC111)
Tutorial 2: Monday, 5:30pm-6:15pm (UCC111)

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Office Hours: by appointment (NAH 324)

Course Description

This team-taught class will teach you what it means to practice anthropology. After an initial class on how to think anthropologically, the course will turn to examine different topics in anthropology, as practiced by department's different teachers. Each week, a different teacher will discuss her or his own research and teaching, in the context of one of the anthropological fields, which enable you to better understand different ways in which anthropology is learned, practiced, and pursued.

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this course, students taking this course will:

- learn about how anthropology is practiced in different areas and fields;
- know the basics of how to write paper and how to pursue their studies as anthropology students in the university;
- know the department's different teachers and different ways in which they envision anthropology;
- have a broad overall sense of what anthropology as a discipline consists of.

Reading Materials:

All readings will be posted on Blackboard.

Course Requirements:

- **Participation (10%): Attending lectures and tutorials is mandatory.** Students are expected to submit **one** question/comment in **3 different weeks** of the semester. Please post the question/comment (less than 50 words) based on that week's readings in the "Discussion Board" section of the course Blackboard site **no later than 1:00 pm each Monday**.

- **Response Papers (30% x 3 = 90%):** Write **three** papers (800 – 1000 words) on the topic "How and why anthropologists study_?" Response papers should address the question with reference to the assigned readings. Instead of merely summarizing the readings and lectures, you should use them to make a cohesive argument of "How and why anthropologists study_____?" and include <u>one</u> example of your own to support your point. Students should choose one of the topics given in each of the sections (Section I: Weeks 2 – 4; Section II: Weeks 6 – 8, and Section III: Weeks 10– 12) and submit their paper by the end of each section (**Due dates: Oct 4, Nov 1; Dec 2 - all by midnight**). *

*After finishing your written assignments, please submit <u>soft copies to both VeriGuide and to the course website (Blackboard).</u> Hard copies are not required, but <u>you need to sign the veriguide report</u>. When you name your files, please indicate the topics that you are responding to. **An assignment without a veriguide report will not be graded!**

*The paper should be written in the following format: Double line spacing, Times New Roman, and font 12. Please submit your assignment on time. **Marks will be deducted for late submission.**

VeriGuide requirements: Students are required by university policy to submit all exam papers to VeriGuide (https://academic.veriguide.org/academic/login_CUHK.jspx). A Reading Response and a Response paper assignment without a signed declaration from VeriGuide will not be graded.

Grade Descriptors (Course Specific Descriptor):

A: Outstanding performance on all learning outcomes.

(The work has creatively synthesized course materials and key ideas in an original way. The argument is logical and cohesive, the discussion is well-organized, and the writing is clear. The work goes beyond merely summarizing key ideas. The work clearly differentiates between the position of the author versus the position(s) the author wishes to challenge. Concrete evidence corresponds to statements and claims).

A-: Generally outstanding performance on all (or almost all) learning outcomes.

(The work synthesizes course materials and key ideas in an original way, but there are areas for improvement).

B: Substantial performance on all learning outcomes, OR high performance on some learning outcomes which compensates for less satisfactory performance on others, resulting in overall substantial performance.

(The work demonstrates a solid grasp of course materials and key ideas. There are areas for improvement with respect to building a cohesive argument, organizing the discussion, communicating clearly, and/or identifying relevant evidence. There is some confusion over what position the author has taken versus the position(s) the author wishes to challenge).

C: Satisfactory performance on the majority of learning outcomes, possibly with a few weaknesses.

(The work shows some effort, but course materials have not been sufficiently engaged or the paper fails to directly address the prompt. The argument and the writing is not clear).

D: Barely satisfactory performance on a number of learning outcomes.

(The work shows little effort to engage course materials. There are major problems with clarity of argument and writing).

F: Unsatisfactory performance on a number of learning outcomes, OR failure to meet specified assessment requirements.

(The work has failed respond to the assignment prompt).

AI Policy: All use of AI tools is prohibited

In any kind of learning activity or assessment that will be counted towards the final course grades (or used for evaluating attainment of the desired learning outcomes), students are not allowed to submit work which is produced with the collaboration of or supported by the use of any AI tools (e.g. ChatGPT, etc.)

Improper/unauthorized use of AI tools in learning activities and assessments will constitute acts of academic dishonesty and will be handled according to the University's *Procedures for Handling Cases of Academic Dishonesty.*

Policies and Support:

- **Technology Use:** Please be respectful and do not distract yourself and your fellow students.

<u>Students are only allowed to use their tablets or laptops in class to take notes.</u> Please do not use your devices for non-class related activities. Mobile phones must be turned on silent (not vibrate).

- **Educational Technology:** This class relies on the use of Blackboard. All required class readings, the out-of-class assignment submissions, as well as announcements will be done through it. Note that it uses the email address assigned to you by the University, so it is your responsibility to have an electronic mail forwarded to your main email address.

- **Respectful Conduct and Discussion Rules:** We will discuss many interesting and important topics. While I encourage thoughtful, engaged, and controversial discussion, I expect you to be polite and respectful of your classmates' opinions, limit your statements to academic (not emotional) arguments, and not use offensive language or judgmental statements. Please give each other time to talk, do not interrupt, and most importantly listen to each other.

- **Late Submission:** Late submission will suffer a fraction of a grade per day. For example, an A will become an A-.

- **Academic Honesty and Plagiarism:** Academic honesty is crucial and plagiarism is a serious offense. The university has recently updated its policies on Academic Integrity and the penalties for plagiarism and cheating: http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/Eng_htm_files_%282013-14%29/p06.htm. You are required to cite properly (guidelines: http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/ant/tstyle.doc and http://www.ilc.cuhk.edu.hk/english/resource/referencing_avoidingplagiarism1.pdf) to avoid plagiarism. Any use of AI-based writing programs (such as ChatGPT) is not allowed and is considered plagiarism. Please do not hesitate to talk to me and ask questions about this.

- **Writing Assistance:** For additional help on your writing, consult the expert staff of the **English Language Teaching Unit (ELT).** https://eltu.cuhk.edu.hk/pts/index.html

- **Independent Learning Center:** If you need help with communication and learning skills, the University has a great resource for you. You can schedule a consultation or attend workshops on various strategies for improving learning outcomes https://www.ilc.cuhk.edu.hk/EN/mission.aspx

- **Special Accommodation:** If you need special accommodations or classroom modifications, you need to notify both me and the University's Wellness and Counseling Center (https://www2.osa.cuhk.edu.hk/disability/en-GB) no later than the third week of class.

Course Schedule
(Subject to modification)

INTRODUCTION

Week 1 [Sep 1] Introduction: What is Anthropology? (Tim Rosenkranz)
- No Readings

SECTION I

Week 2 [Sep 8] How and Why Anthropologists Study Drugs (Wyman Tang)
- Tang, Wai-man. 2015. "Effects of Transnational Migration on Drug Use: An Ethnographic Study of Nepali Female Heroin Users in Hong Kong." International Journal of Drug Policy 26(1):8-14.
- Tang, Wai-man. 2020. "You are (Hong Kong) Chinese! You should Understand our Culture!': Reflections of a Chinese Male Ethnographer on Researching Nepali Drug Users in Hong Kong." In Shirlena Huang and Kanchana N. Ruwanpura, eds., Handbook on Gender in Asia, pp.28-44. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.

Week 3 [Sep 15] How and Why Anthropologists Study Social Media (Tim Rosenkranz)
- Miller, Daniel. 2016. "Chapter 2: The Social Media Landscape". In: *Social Media in an English Village.* London. UCL Press: Pp. 19 – 44
- Taylor, Nicole & Mimi Nichter. 2021. "Media Landscape". In: *A Filtered Life: Social Media on a College Campus*. New York. Routledge: Pp. 28 – 54.

Week 4 [Sep 22] How and Why Anthropologists Study Sex (Sealing Cheng):
- Cheng, Sealing. 2012. "Private lives of public women: Photos of sex workers (minus the sex) in South Korea." Sexualities 16 (1/2): 30 -42
- Field Report of CUHK Anthropology Department Study Trip to Seoul (2023)

Week 5 [Sep 29] How to Write an Academic Paper (ELT Teacher)

SECTION II

Week 6 [Oct 6] How and Why Anthropologists Study Environment (Sidney Cheung)
- Cheung, Sidney. 2017. "New Orleans, New Territories." In Yiu-Wai Chu, ed., *Hong Kong Culture and Society in the New Millennium: Hong Kong as Method*, pp.79-90. Singapore: Springer.
- Lee, Miriam, and Sidney Cheung. 2017. "The World is Your Oyster." *Hong Kong Discovery* 98:14-43.

Week 7 [Oct 13] How and Why Anthropologists Study Ethics (Teresa Kuan)
- Shepard, Jim. 2009. "Your Fate Hurtles Down at You." *Electric Literature* 1:11-35.
- Kuan, Teresa. 2021. "Vicarious Responsibility and the Problem of 'Too Much': Moral Luck from the Perspective of Ordinary Ethics." *The Monist* 104(2):168-81.

Week 8 [Oct 20] How and Why Anthropologists Study the Illicit (Gordon Mathews)
- Mathews, Gordon. 2012. "I Don't Fit Anywhere, but then, Anthropologists Shouldn't Fit Anywhere." Paper delivered at the East Asian Anthropological

Association Meeting, Hong Kong, July 6-8, 2012, pp.1-6.
- Mathews, Gordon. 2011. "Laws." In *Ghetto at the Center of the World: Chungking Mansions, Hong Kong*, pp.151-194. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Week 9 [Oct 27] ELT Feedback Session (ELT Teacher)

SECTION III

Week 10 [Nov 3] How and Why Anthropologists Study Trash (Adam Liebman)
- TBA

Week 11 [Nov 10] How and Why Anthropologists Study Religion (Leilah Vevaina)
- Vevaina L. 2013. "Excarnation and the City: The Tower of Silence Debates in Mumbai." In: Irene Becci, Marian Burchardt, and Jose Casanova (Eds), *Topographies of Faith*, pp 73 -95. Brill: Leiden.

Week. 12 [Nov 17] How and Why Anthropologists Study the Past (Weng Cheong Lam)
- Johnson, Matthew. 1999. "Common Sense is not Enough." In Archaeological Theory: An Introduction, pp.1-12. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.
- Renfrew, Colin, and Paul Bahn. 2011. Archaeology Essentials: Theories, Methods, and Practice, pp.8-11. London: Thames & Hudson.
- Flannery, Kent. 1982. "The Golden Marshalltown: A Parable for the Archaeology of the 1980s." American Anthropologist 84(2):265-278.

Week. 13 [Nov 24] How and Why We Study Anthropology at CUHK?
- Reflections, Review, and Outlook