Master Course Syllabus

For additional course information, including prerequisites, corequisites, and course fees, please refer to the Catalog: https://catalog.uvu.edu/

Semester: Spring
Course Prefix: ANTH
Course Title: Contemporary Theory and Debates

Year: 2025
Course and Section #: ANTH 4130 - 001
Credits: 3

Course Description

Explores social theory and other disciplines. Surveys current debate through exploration of the conceptual apparatuses that are deployed and the issues that motivate current research. Analyzes contemporary anthropological writings.

Course Attributes

This course has the following attributes:

☐ General Education Requirements
☐ Global/Intercultural Graduation Requirements
☐ Writing Enriched Graduation Requirements
☒ Discipline Core Requirements in Program
☐ Elective Core Requirements in Program
☐ Open Elective

Other: *Click here to enter text.*

Instructor Information

Instructor Name: Daniel Hernandez

Student Learning Outcomes

Summarize the role of structuralism and post-structuralist thought within the field.
Assess the development of anthropological postmodernism and its relationship to other concerns in the field, including the loss of the classic anthropological object.
Articulate the intellectual and social concerns that lead to the contemporary structure of the field.
Examine the theoretical and empirical issues in current, professional writings and debates.
Articulate the fundamental structure and concerns of the development of anthropological theory over the last thirty to forty years.

Course Materials and Texts

Text in this course includes written literature as well as audio and visual media. All materials will be available through the library, canvas, or public sources. These materials include academic articles, chapters from anthology books, podcast episodes, ethnographic films, and public intellectual works.

Course Requirements

Course Assignments, Assessments, and Grading Policy

Course Assignments and Grading

This class has four assignment groups detailed below. Your grade on each individual assignment will contribute to your grade for its designated assignment group.

For example, your overall grade on discussions and reflection posts is 30% of your total grade. So, if you score 50% on average on discussions and reflection posts, your overall grade will be 15 points (out of 30), and this will reduce your overall grade by 15% percentage. If you scored 100% on everything else, your final grade would be 85% or a B.

Your gradebook and assignment tabs in *Canvas* will help you keep track of your grade in each assignment group.

See below for an explanation of each assignment group.

Discussions and Reflection Posts: 30%

> You are required to do 6 out of 8 in-person discussions and reflection posts. The marking criteria will be based on a combination of your contributions and sharing of space in class as well as your written reflections you post online afterwards (approx. 250 words). You must demonstrate your engagement with the course materials for the week as well as any lecture content in your in-class contributions and reflection post. You do not need to summarize the content, but instead demonstrate your understanding of the material or questions you have of it. Additionally, insights and engagement after seeking an understanding first will improve the quality of your contributions and submissions for this assignment.

Seminars Presentations: 50%

> You will be responsible for contributing to running two of the seminars this semester worth 25% each (I and III OR II and IV). There are four seminar topics that we will all collectively choose out of eight seminar options that represent some cultural and anthropological debates and issues. You will then sign up for these and they will take place after spring break. Seminar topics will run for the whole week and you will need to work together with whoever else is running it with you that week to organize and decide who is doing what and when. You will be graded individually for your contribution (presentation) of materials for the topic, but will need to work and communicate well with others in the same seminar. For example, if there are 4 people in charge of one seminar topic, you are collectively in charge of that week. You can split up the two days between the four of you and each take up half of one class time. You can also all present on

one day and reserve the second day for questions and a class discussion that you all lead. The expectation is that you are well versed with all the material for the seminar, but you can split up materials for your individual presentation and focus more on what you agreed to be responsible to cover. You will collectively need to communicate your plan the week before so the instructor can let the class know what to expect and be prepared for.

Seminar Responses: 10%

You will be responsible for participating in questions and discussions when you are not leading a seminar and posting a reflection on the content worth 5% each. Your in-class participation will be depend on however your peers structure their seminar. You will submit a 250 words maximum discussion post on canvas. Your grade will be based on both in-class participation observation and your reflection post on canvas.

Comprehensive Reflection Discussion and Post: 10%

Our final class meeting will be an in-person discussion that comprehensively works through general themes and ideas throughout the course. This is an opportunity to share takeaways that meaningful for developing positive trajectories in anthropology. You will be required to write some of your thoughts down in an organized manner in a final reflection post that builds off our in-person discussion (500 words maximum). You will be marked based on both in-person and online post, but like other assignments you can make up some on one end or the other due to the limitations of our class time and setting.

***GRADE SCALE:

93- 100% = A
90 – 92% = A-
87 – 89% = B+
84 – 86% = B
80 – 83 = B-
77 – 79 = C+
74 – 76% = C
70 – 73% = C-
67 – 69% = D+
64 – 66% = D
60 – 63% = D-
Below 60% = E

Required or Recommended Reading Assignments
The Linguists Film
Anthropology on Trial Film
Agustin Fuentes Ch 1. Myths about human nature.
Nanny Diaries Film
Krippendorf's Tribe Film

Cultural Voyeurism by Andrew Hernandez
Karen Brodkin Interview Part I and II
Ishi the last Yahi Film
Was James Cook a White Supremacist by Anne Salmond
James Cook and White Supremacy by Lorena Gibson et. Al.
Comment on James Cook by Anne Salmond
Dark Perspective of Anthro by Arcia Tecun
Hau: Giving Voices to Ancestors– Amber Nicholson
Mauss Meets Kaupapa Māori – Georgina Stewart
Up the Anthropologist – Laura Nader
Anthro of Being (Me) by Paul Tapsell
The case for letting anthropology burn by Ryan Jobson
Anthro Pedagogies in a European Classroom by Olivia Barnett-Nagshineh
Ethnomusicology Section: Playlists and Interviews of Queen Latifah, Tupac, Lauryn Hill, and Lowkey
When Pretendian Investigations go Wrong
DNA Dot-Com by Kim Tallbear
Playing Indian by Phillip Deloria
Race Shifting of Pretendians
Epistemic Disobedience by Walter Mignolo
Colonizing Knowledges by Linda Smith
Unsettling Coloniality of Being by Sylvia Wynter
Coloniality of Being by Nelson Maldonado-Torres
Tavani by Tēvita Kaʻili
Pasifika Webinar Series featuring Tēvita Kaʻili
Tā Vā by ʻŌkusitino Māhina
Tongan Ark by Paul Janman
Moana Theory by Kaʻili et. Al.

Research topic materials are TBC based on responsive pedagogy approach with class

General Description of the Subject Matter of Each Lecture or Discussion
Introduction – Anthropology in the Popular Consciousness and Public Imagination, setting a context and premise for anthropology in a contemporary setting.

Anthropology on Trial – Criticisms of anthropology historically from within anthropology and with communities who have been the subject of study to contextualize current theoretical debates.

Research ethics – The legacy of extractive and prospecting and predatory research and the role of anthropology and changes through debates of the last half century. Exploration of contemporary debate topics to choose from for student led seminars.

Aotearoa New Zealand – Global anthropology debates and the distinctions and overlaps between commonwealth and US anthropology and debates on theory and ethics.

Positionality – Studying culture and power dynamics from emic and etic standpoints. Introduction of reflexivity in research and theory results and possibilities.

Ethnomusicologial cultural debates – Shifting the paradigm from academia to the organic intellectual, social and cultural issues are highlighted through community based discourse in popular musics.

Politics and theory – The contexts of power that theoretical debates emerge out of and respond to are explored as well as the application of theoretical frameworks based in reflexive positionality.

Coloniality theory – An introduction to multi-disciplinary discourse and theoretical debates in the context of modernity and contemporary arguments that frame an understanding of diverse forms of colonial and decolonial theories.

Indigenous theory – Oceanian context of Indigenous anthropological theory and debates on reality and realism in the tā vā tempo-spatial literature.

Additionally, there will be four seminars led by students of which topics and research items have yet to be finalized until later in the semester that will interrogate some of the contemporary theories and debates related to anthropology.

Required Course Syllabus Statements

Generative AI

STATEMENT ON AI

AI programs are not a replacement for your human creativity, originality, and critical thinking. Writing, thinking, and researching are crafts that you must develop over time to develop your own individual voice.

The use of generative AI tools (e.g. ChatGPT, Google Bard, etc.) is permitted in this course only for the following activities:

- Brainstorming and refining your ideas;
- Finding information on your topic;
- Checking grammar and style.

The use of generative AI tools is not permitted in this course for the following activities:

- Impersonating you in classroom contexts, such as by using the tool to compose discussion board prompts/responses assigned to you or content that you put into a Teams/Canvas chat.
- Writing a draft of a writing assignment.
- Writing entire sentences, paragraphs or papers to complete class assignments.

You are responsible for the information you submit based on an AI query (for instance, that it does not violate intellectual property laws, or contain misinformation or unethical content). Your use of AI tools must be properly documented and cited in order to stay within university policies on academic honesty.

Any student work submitted using AI tools should clearly indicate what work is the student's work and what part is generated by the AI. In such cases, no more than 25% of the student work should be

generated by AI. If any part of this is confusing or uncertain, please reach out to me for a conversation before submitting your work.

Using Remote Testing Software

☒ This course does not use remote testing software.

☐ This course uses remote testing software. Remote test-takers may choose their remote testing locations. Please note, however, that the testing software used for this may conduct a brief scan of remote test-takers' immediate surroundings, may require use of a webcam while taking an exam, may require the microphone be on while taking an exam, or may require other practices to confirm academic honesty. Test-takers therefore shall have no expectation of privacy in their test-taking location during, or immediately preceding, remote testing. If a student strongly objects to using test-taking software, the student should contact the instructor at the beginning of the semester to determine whether alternative testing arrangements are feasible. Alternatives are not guaranteed.

Required University Syllabus Statements

Accommodations/Students with Disabilities

Students needing accommodations due to a permanent or temporary disability, pregnancy or pregnancy-related conditions may contact UVU [Accessibility Services](#) at [accessibilityservices@uvu.edu](#) or 801-863-8747.

Accessibility Services is located on the Orem Campus in BA 110.

Deaf/Hard of Hearing students requesting ASL interpreters or transcribers can contact Accessibility Services to set up accommodations. Deaf/Hard of Hearing services can be contacted at [DHHservices@uvu.edu](#)

DHH is located on the Orem Campus in BA 112.

Academic Integrity

At Utah Valley University, faculty and students operate in an atmosphere of mutual trust. Maintaining an atmosphere of academic integrity allows for free exchange of ideas and enables all members of the community to achieve their highest potential. Our goal is to foster an intellectual atmosphere that produces scholars of integrity and imaginative thought. In all academic work, the ideas and contributions of others must be appropriately acknowledged and UVU students are expected to produce their own original academic work.

Faculty and students share the responsibility of ensuring the honesty and fairness of the intellectual environment at UVU. Students have a responsibility to promote academic integrity at the university by not participating in or facilitating others' participation in any act of academic dishonesty. As members of the academic community, students must become familiar with their [rights and responsibilities](#). In each course, they are responsible for knowing the requirements and restrictions regarding research and writing, assessments, collaborative work, the use of study aids, the appropriateness of assistance, and other issues. Likewise, instructors are responsible to clearly state expectations and model best practices.

Further information on what constitutes academic dishonesty is detailed in UVU Policy 541: *Student Code of Conduct*.

Equity and Title IX

Utah Valley University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age (40 and over), disability, veteran status, pregnancy, childbirth, or pregnancy-related conditions, citizenship, genetic information, or other basis protected by applicable law, including Title IX and 34 C.F.R. Part 106, in employment, treatment, admission, access to educational programs and activities, or other University benefits or services. Inquiries about nondiscrimination at UVU may be directed to the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights or UVU's Title IX Coordinator at 801-863-7999 – TitleIX@uvu.edu – 800 W University Pkwy, Orem, 84058, Suite BA 203.

Religious Accommodation

UVU values and acknowledges the array of worldviews, faiths, and religions represented in our student body, and as such provides supportive accommodations for students. Religious belief or conscience broadly includes religious, non-religious, theistic, or non-theistic moral or ethical beliefs as well as participation in religious holidays, observances, or activities. Accommodations may include scheduling or due-date modifications or make-up assignments for missed class work.

To seek a religious accommodation, a student must provide written notice to the instructor and the Director of Accessibility Services at accessibilityservices@uvu.edu. If the accommodation relates to a scheduling conflict, the notice should include the date, time, and brief description of the difficulty posed by the conflict. Such requests should be made as soon as the student is aware of the prospective scheduling conflict.

While religious expression is welcome throughout campus, UVU also has a specially dedicated space for meditation, prayer, reflection, or other forms of religious expression.