

**Introduction to Anthropology (ANT001E)****1. Course title:****Introduction to Anthropology (ANT001E)****2. Professor:****Fiona Gedeon Achi**

Fiona Gedeon Achi is Assistant Professor in Anthropology at UM6P. Her research focuses on international development, policymaking, and infrastructure. She has conducted fieldwork research in Kenya, India, and the United States, and has taught about anthropology and sociology in Canada, France, and Turkey. She holds a PhD degree (2020) in Anthropology from McGill University in Canada.

**3. Presentation and Description of Course Objectives:**

The course introduces students to social and cultural anthropology, focusing on its relevance to both understand and act on pressing social issues. We will learn about the history of the discipline, the methods it uses to know the world, and the diversity of topics studied by anthropologists today. We will also collectively reflect on the core concepts mobilized by anthropologists to analyze the world, and in this way we will to examine both the strengths and limitations of what anthropologists can teach us about ourselves and our universe.

**4. Pedagogical Organization:**

Each class session will follow an interactive format through a combination of short lectures, always interspersed by in-class activities (e.g. debates, class discussions, etc.). Students will be assigned weekly readings that they should read in advance of the class session. There will be no formal TDs/lab works because this time will be allotted so that students can work on their research group projects which include a research proposals, drafting data collection tools, data collection, data reporting (including an oral presentation). Note: The research group projects' presentation, currently taking place in Sessions 14 and 15 could take place in TDs sessions if necessary to accommodate the class schedule and material.

**5. Main References:**

Each week, the student will be assigned readings, either an excerpt from a scholarly book, a journal article, or possibly a novel - and possibly also an online resource to look at such as a TED talk. All assigned readings should be made available on Canvas. I assigned limited readings to ensure that students have time to read them, to allow ample space for discussions and for understanding of key arguments. Students are expected to read the day's readings in advance of the class and to think about them carefully. It is fully normal to experience difficulties with the assigned readings and have many questions about them. I encourage students to write them down and bring them to class, so that we can address those curiosities and concerns together.

**6. Complementary Refereces:****7. Evaluation and Garding:**

Participation : 10%

Présentations et Travaux Oraux : 10%

Projets (Individuels ou en Groupe) : 20%

Examen de Mi-Parcours : 30%

Examen final : 30%

**8. Plan détaillé du cours :**

Sessions	Detailed Content and Evaluations
Session 1	<p><b>Session Title: 2 hours</b> Introduction: Welcome &amp; what is anthropology?</p> <p><b>Course Plan, Objectives and Key Learnings:</b> This session will present the goals and relevance of a course introducing anthropology to students. I will detail the syllabus, including course objectives, schedules, evaluations, and other broader expectations. It will also serve as a moment to get to know each other. The session will present the contemporary stakes of studying anthropology, especially to open up and scrutinize the ubiquitous concept of "culture". It will show how anthropology is a crucial discipline to examine questions of racism, discrimination, and prejudice with reference to "cultural essentialism". It will start sensitizing students to the importance of not taking "concepts" or "ideas" as given but use empirical inquiry to open up common sense. This session will also detail the <b>READING RESPONSE ASSIGNMENT</b>, which will NOT have a specific due date, as each student will choose one reading to comment on <b>BEFORE</b> the midterm exam.</p> <p><b>Session Preparation, Readings and Resources:</b> None *In class: We will watch the TED talk by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, The danger of a single story accessible at <a href="https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_ngozi_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story?language=en#t-1505">https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_ngozi_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story?language=en#t-1505</a></p>
Session 2	<p><b>Session Title: 2 hours</b> The history of anthropology and the concept of 'culture'</p> <p><b>Course Plan, Objectives and Key Learnings:</b> This session will introduce students to the beginnings of social and cultural anthropology as a discipline based in travels and fieldwork research. It will tell students about the "colonial" and "imperial" roots of anthropology as "the study of primitive societies". In the process, it will show how anthropology is historically different from sociology so that students can understand both the similar and different stakes borne out by these two disciplines. This session will also delve into the concept of culture and its multiple uses and meanings within anthropology. This will mean covering and debating topics such as cultural relativism and universalism. References will also be made to evolutionary theory and its appeal to civilization, progress, development, and telos.</p> <p><b>Session Preparation, Readings and Resources:</b> Engelke Matthew. How to think like an anthropologist. Princeton University Press, 2018. "Introduction" &amp; "Culture", pp.1-55.</p>
Session 3	<p><b>Session Title: 3 hours</b> Fieldwork &amp; the native's point of view</p> <p><b>Course Plan, Objectives and Key Learnings:</b> This session be dedicated to discussing the main methods and approaches that characterizes anthropology as a discipline grounded in fieldwork and understanding the "native's point of view". It will describe how anthropologists in the early 1920s sought to establish anthropology as a scientific discipline grounded in empirical observation of contextual facts and narratives which aimed to "make the strange familiar and the familiar strange". It will aim to show excerpts of an early ethnographic FILM in class. This session will also familiarize students with the process of ethnographic observation and interviewing by emphasizing how these methods are centered on openness and listening. It will detail the guidelines of their <b>RESEARCH GROUP PROJECTS</b> and ask them to submit a short research proposal for Session 4.</p> <p><b>Session Preparation, Readings and Resources:</b> Malinowski, Bronislaw. Argonauts of the Western Pacific: An account of native enterprise and adventure in the archipelagoes of Melanesian New Guinea. Routledge, 1922. "Introduction: The subject, method, and scope of this inquiry", pp.1-20. *Optional reading: Rabinow, Paul. Fieldwork Reflections on Morocco. Quantum Books, 1976. "Ali: An Insider's Outsider", pp.31-69.</p>

Session 4	<p><b>Session Title: 3 hours</b> Who speaks of who &amp; anthropology in crisis</p> <p><b>Course Plan, Objectives and Key Learnings:</b> This session will examine what it means to write about "the others" through tackling issues around questions of cultural representations and the power between those who write and those written about, especially within the history of anthropology and its "colonial encounter". It will present a major shift happening in the 1980s to "anthropologize the west" and "enter the citadels of modernity", turning away from "natives" as our sole interlocutors to include neighbors, experts, and others. <b>RESEARCH PROPOSALS &amp; INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRES DUE.</b></p> <p><b>Session Preparation, Readings and Resources:</b> Asad, Talal. Anthropology and the colonial encounter. Ithaca Press, 1973. "Introduction", pp.9-19. Rachik, Hassan. dans Le proche et le lointain - Un siècle d'anthropologie au Maroc, Marseille, Éd. Parenthèses, Maison méditerranéenne des sciences de l'homme. « Introduction : l'arroseur arrosé », pp.7 à 22. *Optional reading: Rees, Tobias. After Ethnos. Duke University Press, 2018. "Chapter I: On anthropology (free from ethnos), pp.7-34.</p>
Session 5	<p><b>Session Title: 2 hours</b> Medicine, global health, and development</p> <p><b>Course Plan, Objectives and Key Learnings:</b> Starting with this session, the course will introduce students to key contemporary topics studied by anthropologists, such as medicine, to tackle topics such as inequality, governance, power, and the future. It also introduces students to how "development" and "global health" as have been understood by anthropologists. It shows students how anthropologists have both taken part in the project of international development, as well as critiqued it. At the same time, it will constitute an opportunity to discuss and provide peer feedback on group research proposals.</p> <p><b>Session Preparation, Readings and Resources:</b> Ferguson, James. The Anti-Politics Machine: Development, Depoliticization, and Bureaucratic Power in Lesotho. University of Minnesota Press, 1994. "Preface &amp; Introduction", pp. xiii-xvi &amp; 3-21. *In class: clips from the movie "Survivors" (2018) by Arthur Pratt on the Ebola Epidemic</p>
Session 6	<p><b>Session Title: 2 hours</b> Economy &amp; finance</p> <p><b>Course Plan, Objectives and Key Learnings:</b> This session will be dedicated to anthropologists who have studied finance and banking as a way to ask questions about the economy, value, and ultimately capitalism.</p> <p><b>Session Preparation, Readings and Resources:</b> Ho, Karen. Liquidated: an Ethnography of Wall Street. Duke University Press, 2009. "Chapter I: Biographies of Hegemony", pp.39-72.</p>
Session 7	<p><b>Session Title: 3 hours</b> Infrastructure &amp; basic services</p> <p><b>Course Plan, Objectives and Key Learnings:</b> This session will introduce students to the growing field of the anthropology of infrastructure. It will show how the technological systems that sustain our lives and access to basic services (water, electricity, etc.) are not only the product of expertise and the built environment, but are centrally made through multiple formal and informal relations. <b>FINDING REPORTS FROM GROUP PROJECTS DUE.</b></p> <p><b>Session Preparation, Readings and Resources:</b></p>

	<p>Gupta, Akhil. 2015. An anthropology of electricity from the global south. <i>Cultural Anthropology</i>, 30(4), pp. 555-568.</p> <p>Street, Alice. 2014. Rethinking Infrastructures for Global Health: A View from West Africa and Papua New Guinea. <i>Somatosphere: Ebola fieldnotes</i>. Available at <a href="http://somatosphere.net/2014/rethinking-infrastructures.html/104">http://somatosphere.net/2014/rethinking-infrastructures.html/104</a></p> <p>*In class: TED talk: Robin Nagle, 2013. What I discovered in New York City trash</p>
Session 8	<p><b>Session Title: 2 hours</b> Group projects' presentations</p> <p><b>Course Plan, Objectives and Key Learnings:</b> This class will be organized like a mini-conference to present, comment, and discuss students' group projects. <b>GROUP PRESENTATIONS DUE.</b></p> <p><b>Session Preparation, Readings and Resources:</b> None</p>
Session 9	<p><b>Session Title: 2 hours</b> Group projects' presentations</p> <p><b>Course Plan, Objectives and Key Learnings:</b> This class will be organized like a mini-conference to present, comment, and discuss students' group projects. <b>GROUP PRESENTATIONS DUE.</b></p> <p><b>Session Preparation, Readings and Resources:</b> None</p>
Session 10	<p><b>Session Title: 3 hours</b> Anthropology beyond the human &amp; class wrap up</p> <p><b>Course Plan, Objectives and Key Learnings:</b> This course will introduce students to the idea that anthropology can also focus on "non-human things" to decenter "human exceptionalism", and attune students to questions related to "anthropocene" and human impact on earth. It will also be a course wrap-up where students can ask questions about the course material.</p> <p><b>Session Preparation, Readings and Resources:</b> Raffles, Hugh. <i>Insectopedia</i>. Penguin Random House, 2010. "In the beginning" &amp; "Chernobyl", pp. 3-4 &amp; 15-27</p>

### 9. Complementary Activities:

Activities	Detailed Content and Evaluation
Activity 1	<p>Reading response assignment</p> <p>The objective of this activity is to allow students to analytically and critically examine a text. Students will be asked to provide an analytical summary of the text whereby the focus is NOT to paraphrase what the author has stated. Instead, the student should identify what seems the main important points of the text and to explain their relevance in his/her own terms. I encourage students to include questions about the texts (things they wish to know further, things they did not understand, etc.) as part of their reading response.</p> <p>You will choose one reading of the course (<b>between Weeks 3 and 6</b>) which you will comment before the class for which the reading is due. For example, if you choose the reading for Session 3, your reading reflection is due at the latest one day before the Session 3 class via EMAIL to me. While you should explain the main arguments, questions, and research methods of the text, the reading reflection is NOT primarily a summary of the reading. Rather, you should analytically and critically examine the texts, pulling out its main arguments and stakes. Finally, you should provide a few questions that the text triggered for you, perhaps even including what you wish the text had discussed but didn't. The length of the reading reflection should be between 250 and 300 words. You are responsible for making sure that you submit this assignment and do so on time; no late assignment accepted.</p>

## Activity 2

## Research Group Project

The aim of this activity is to familiarize student with the process of anthropological research, by using ethnographic observation, open ended interviews and in depth listening, which are key features of anthropological practice. It will also teach students to work collaboratively on a topic of their choice, and to carry out a research project from start to end, including data collection, analysis, and reporting in front of an audience, like an anthropologist would do. This project will also allow students to strengthen their presentation skills in English.

Students will choose a topic, devise an interview questionnaire, conduct at least 2 or 3 depending interviews depending on group size, write a finding reports, and then present their findings (with visual support) in class to their peers.

**Regarding how to write and present:** presentations skills are vital, in and outside of anthropology and academia. Communicating content clearly in an engaging manner is not a natural capacity but a skill that one acquires through practice. The objective of the presentation is for students to develop these skills and for the other students to learn from their peers. The general ideas which make a good presentation also apply to make a strong paper or written report. It is essential to put yourself in the shoes of the audience: this is the key to a good presentation. Ask yourself: would I understand this set of arguments if I had not conducted the fieldwork myself? Would I understand this concept if I had not read the article? How would I react to the presentation? What is the message that I would remember? Do not read from notes or from the powerpoint. This makes presentations difficult to follow and is not well received by the audience. However, you can certainly use written notes to support your memory, to remember the structure or some keywords. Also, you should not try to learn by heart your presentation; rather, and thanks to your slides, you should be able to speak relatively naturally.