



Master Course Syllabus

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

Semester: Fall

Year: 2025

Course Prefix: ANTH

Course and Section #: 4120-001

Course Title: History of Anthropology Thought

Credits: 3.0

Course Description

Surveys anthropological thought, theory and its philosophical roots from the nineteenth to the twentieth centuries. Focuses on the concepts and theoretical paradigms deployed in different social and intellectual conjunctures, as well as on the major debates that have formed the field and separated it from other social science disciplines.

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: Melinda Gurr

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion, students should be able to:

- 1 - Define the critical social issues of colonialism and social change in Europe that provided an impetus to the formation of a discipline.
 - 2 - Describe the changing set of issues that have guided the formation of debates and research in the field in different historical junctures.
 - 3 - Articulate the formation of American anthropology and how it differs from European and Latin America anthropologies.
 - 4 - Assess the crisis of theory, ethnics, and research that consumed anthropology in the sixties and seventies and the various paradigmatic responses to it that developed in the eighties.
 - 5 - Identify the origins of anthropological thought in philosophy and in other historic disciplines.
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Course Materials and Texts

- Moore, Jerry D. 2009. *Visions of Culture: An Introduction to Anthropological Theories and Theorists*, 3rd Edition. Altamira Press. –Available on Amazon
- King, Charles. 2019. *Gods of the Upper Air*. New York: Double Day. –Available on Amazon
- Erickson, Paul A. & Liam D. Murphy. 2022. *Readings for a History of Anthropological Theory*, Sixth Edition. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.—Available on Amazon

Course Requirements

Course Assignments, Assessments, and Grading Policy

Participation & Reading Notes – 20%

UVU policy requires a *minimum* of six hours of outside work for every three hours of time spent in lecture (see <https://www.uvu.edu/catalog/current/policies-requirements/academic-policies-and-standards.pdf>). Participation in class is expected to reflect that level of engagement outside of class. Every class period you will be given points for completing in-class assignments. Reference to specific passages in the assigned readings when making your contribution to the discussion is highly encouraged.

You will be occasionally asked to post to discussion boards throughout the semester.

Discussion Leader – 20%

During week 1, students will be assigned to lead class discussion 1x during the semester. The Discussion Leader is expected to read the assigned materials carefully, synthesize key ideas and themes, and present a series of generative questions to their peers. Your grade will be determined based on preparedness, and your ability to spark a thoughtful discussion on materials.

As discussion leader, your job is to:

- 1) Read the assigned readings.
- 2) Be prepared to summarize the major points of the readings--and explain what you thought was particularly relevant, interesting, confusing, and compelling.
- 3) Come up with a list of 3-4 synthetic questions -- to help your classmates reflect on and deepen their understanding of the text and how it fits within the larger history of anthropological thought.
- 4) Submit your list of questions/summary/analysis to Dr. Gurr before the class period (around 3:30-4:00 p.m. before class).

You are welcome to be creative in your role as discussion leader. For example, if your reading sparks reflections, thoughts, or connections with a film or more contemporary article or ethnography, and you'd like the class to see/read it, please discuss with Dr. Gurr before class.

Mid-Term Writing Assignment –30%

For your midterm essay, you will write a synthetic paper that analyzes the emergence of American anthropology in the 20th century. The essay should utilize assigned readings and demonstrate your ability to interpret and apply theoretical materials. **The prompt is already available to you. Please review it and use it to guide your reading!**

Final Writing Assignment –30%

The essay should utilize assigned readings and demonstrate your ability to interpret and apply theoretical materials and understand ongoing crises, conflicts, and contemporary debates.

Late Policy: I accept late work, but to encourage you to turn in assignments on time, the scores on late work will be reduced by 5%.

Required or Recommended Reading Assignments

- King, Charles. 2020. *Gods of the upper air*, Chapters 1-14.
- Boas, Franz. "The Method of Ethnology," in Erickson, Paul A. & Liam D. Murphy. 2022. *Readings for a History of Anthropological Theory, Sixth Edition*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, pp. 101-108
- Hurston, Zora Neale. "Introduction and Part I, Folk Tales and the Frog." In, Erickson, Paul A. & Liam D. Murphy. 2022. *Readings for a History of Anthropological Theory, Sixth Edition*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press; pp. 161-169
- Hurston, Zora Neale. 2018. *Barracoon*. New York: Amistad. Introduction and Chapter 1.
- Sapir, Edward. "The unconscious patterning of society," in, Erickson, Paul A. & Liam D. Murphy. 2022. *Readings for a History of Anthropological Theory, Sixth Edition*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press; pp. 149-160
- Deloria, Ella Cara. 1999. *Water Lily*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press. Chapter 1.
- Moore, Jerry D. 2009. *Visions of Culture: An Introduction to Anthropological Theories and Theorists, 3rd Edition*. Altamira Press, Chapters 1-10.
- Bourdieu, Pierre. 1984. *Distinction: A Social Critique in the Judgement of Taste*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Emile Durkheim. 1912. "Elementary Forms of Religious Life." In, Erickson, Paul A. & Liam D. Murphy. 2022. *Readings for a History of Anthropological Theory, Sixth Edition*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press; pp. 161-169
- Turner, Victor. 1969. *The Ritual Process*. Aldine Publishing Company.
- Mauss, Marcel. 1973. "Techniques of the Body." *Economy and Society*, 2(1), 70–88.
- Douglas, Mary. 2002. *Purity and Danger*. New York and London: Routledge.
- Mead, Margaret. 1928. *Coming of Age in Samoa*. New York: William Morrow & Company.
- Malinowski, Bronislaw. "The Subject Method & Scope of this Inquiry [*Argonauts of the Western Pacific*]." In, Erickson, Paul A. & Liam D. Murphy. 2022. *Readings for a History of Anthropological Theory, Sixth Edition*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Levi-Strauss, Claude. 1961. *Tristes Tropiques*. New York: Criterion Books.
- Ortner, Sherry. 1975. "Woman the Gatherer," in, Erickson, Paul A. & Liam D. Murphy. 2022. *Readings for a History of Anthropological Theory, Sixth Edition*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

General Description of the Subject Matter of Each Lecture or Discussion

Aug 21 – Introductions and course orientation
Aug 28—What is anthropological theory?
Sep 2—Franz Boas
Sep 4—John Wesley Powell
Sep 9—Lewis Henry Morgan
Sep 11—Cultural Relativism
Sep 16—Margaret Mead
Sep 18—Coming of Age in Samoa, Film: Strangers Abroad
Sep 23—The limits of theory
Sep 25—Ruth Benedict
Sep 30—Folklore studies
Oct 3—Case Study: Africatown
Oct 7—Linguistic Anthropology
Oct 9—Ella Cara Deloria, Water Lily
Oct 14—World War and Anthropology
Oct 21—Finalizing the Boasians: Lessons for Today
Oct 23—Submitting Mid-Term Exam
Oct 28—Durkheim: Society Studies
Oct 30—Marcel Mauss: Techniques of the Body
Nov 4—Malinowski: Argonauts of the Western Pacific
Nov 6—Levi Strauss: Functionalism
Nov 11—Victor and Edith Turner: Rituals and Performance Studies
Nov 13—Mary Douglas, Purity and Danger
Nov 18—Sherry Ortner, Symbols and Gender
Nov. 20—Pierre Bourdieu, Practice Theory, Distinction
Dec 2.—Contemporary Theory and Debates
Dec. 4—Presentations of Final Projects
Dec. 9—Submission of Final Projects

Required Course Syllabus Statements

Generative 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. At the same time, you should learn how to use AI and in what instances AI can be helpful to you.

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

- Brainstorming and refining your ideas;
- Fine tuning your research questions;
- Drafting an outline to organize your thoughts; and
- 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 completing your written assignments. Be assured that you will not earn full points should you do so, as prompts have been written to elicit your own personal perspective.
- Completing group work that your group has assigned to you, unless it is mutually agreed upon that you may utilize the tool.
- 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.