George Mason University
Graduate Course Approval/Inventory Form

Please complete this form and attach a copy of the syllabus for new courses. Forward it as an email attachment to the Secretary of the Graduate Council. A printed copy of the form with signatures should be brought to the Graduate Council Meeting. Complete the Coordinator Form on page 2, if changes in this course will affect other units.

Please indicate:  X NEW  ____ MODIFY  ____ DELETE

Local Unit:  SOAN  Graduate Council Approval Date:

Course Abbreviation:  ANTH  Course Number: 535

Full Course Title: Anthropology and the Human Condition: Seminar I

Abbreviated Course Title (24 characters max.): ANTH HUMAN COND I

Credit hours: 3  Program of Record: ANTH

Repeatable for Credit?  ___ D=Yes, not within same term  Up to hours
___ T=Yes, within the same term  Up to  hours
X  N=Cannot be repeated for credit

Activity Code (please indicate):  ___ Lecture (LEC)  ___ Lab (LAB)  ___ Recitation (RCT)
___ Studio (STU)  ___ Internship (INT)  ___ Independent Study (IND)  X  Seminar (SEM)

Catalog Credit Format  3 :3   :0  Course Level:  GF(500-600) X  GA(700+)

Maximum Enrollment: 18  For NEW courses, first term to be offered: Fall 04
Prerequisites or corequisites:  Graduate standing or permission of instructor.

Catalog Description (35 words or less)  Please use catalog format and attach a copy of the syllabus for new courses. ANTH 535 Anthropology and the Human Condition: I. (3:3:0). Graduate Standing or Permission of Instructor. Examination of some of the major theorists of 19th and early 20th century cultural theory. Marx, Freud, Durkheim and Weber are surveyed as foundational thinkers for reading the works of such 20th century theorists as Boas, Malinowski, Benedict and Sapir.

For MODIFIED or DELETED courses as appropriate:
Last term offered:  Previous Course Abbreviation:  Previous number:

Description of modification:

APPROVAL SIGNATURES:
Submitted by: ________________________________ email: pblack@gmu.edu

Department/Program: ________________________________ Date: __________________

College Committee: ________________________________ Date: __________________

Graduate Council Representative: ________________________________ Date: __________________
For the most part, "theory" in sociocultural anthropology consists of general paradigms or perspectives--collective standards of what matters, of what needs to be studied and how, changing over time. These paradigms or perspectives may not be strictly testable by the standards of science as it is conventionally thought of, but they can be and are evaluated by norms similar to those found in other branches of scholarship – in history, for example. Are the findings generated by a particular perspective based on long-term, detailed research (fieldwork in the case of cultural anthropology; working with primary documents in the case of historians)? Do they represent research that to some degree can be repeated by other scholars? Do the findings match up in convincing ways with prior scholarship on related topics? Are they generally free of obvious forms of personal, political or cultural bias? Are they consistent with perspectives and findings in related fields? Over the last 130 years, in any case, there have been many such theories in cultural anthropology. Covering a representative sample of them in proseminar, such as the present one, is a daunting task.

We will examine some of the major theories of the 19th and early 20th centuries in cultural theory. We will first consider the works of Marx, Freud, Durkheim, Spencer and Weber, who are foundational thinkers for beginning to read the works of such 20th century theorists as Boas, Malinowski, Benedict, and Sapir.

Course Requirements

This course is the first part of a two-part sequence and should be taken prior to ANTH 536. Both parts of the Proseminar require a substantial amount of reading (on average 150 pages a week), but you may read in the survey mode, as you might when compiling an annotated bibliography – for a given week's readings, skim some, read others more deeply. Students are expected to do assigned reading in advance of class meetings, as listed.

Course requirements include for each semester a midterm examination (20%), final examination (25%), weekly reading summaries of 1-2 pages (30%), and two papers of 7-10 pages (20% each) each during the semester. Each of the papers must incorporate course material, although you may choose your own theme or topic. Your bibliography must include at least two articles from journals in the area of anthropology. In some cases, more detailed guidelines as to the content of reading comments may be specified, requiring students to evaluate readings in the light of particularly salient debates in the field of anthropology.

You will also be graded on the basis of the frequency and quality of your general classroom participation. Every student will be expected to talk for 2 or 3 minutes on their reactions to the readings each week (5%).

Required Texts


Course packets will be available in the bookstore. Some readings will be on reserve at the Johnson Center. This will be announced in class.
SYLLABUS AND SCHEDULE OF READINGS

WEEK 1  INTRODUCTION

Montaigne, 1580 (1948). "Of Cannibals," from The Complete Works of Montaigne, translated by Donald M.

WEEK 2  THEORY, PHILOSOPHY, EPISTEMOLOGY


WEEK 3  THE 19TH CENTURY BACKGROUND: IDEALISM AND MATERIALISM

K. Marx, The German Ideology (selections), Eighteenth Brumaire

WEEK 4  SOCIAL ORDER AND SOCIOLOGICAL METHOD-I

E. Durkheim, Rules of the Sociological Method; Elementary Forms of the Religious Life (selections)

WEEK 5  KULTUR AND PSYCHE

S. Freud, Interpretation of Dreams ; Totem and Taboo; Civilization and Its Discontents; The Future of an Illusion (selections)

WEEK 6  CULTURAL EVOLUTIONISMS: IDEALISM AND MATERIALISM

PAPER 1 DUE

Morgan, Lewis Henry. in High Points in Anthropology, Paul Bohannan and Mark Glazer, New York, Knopf, 32-47.
Tylor, E. B. 1873. in High Points
Spencer in High Points
WEEK 7  SOCIAL ORDER AND SOCIOLOGICAL METHOD-II


WEEK 8  EARLY-TWENTIETH CENTURY APPROACHES

TAKE HOME MIDTERM DUE

Barnard, Alan. History and Theory, pp. 47-60.

Boasianism


WEEK 9  FIELDWORK AND FUNCTIONALISM

Barnard, Alan. History and Theory, pp. 61-79.


WEEKS 10 and 11

STRUCTURAL-FUNCTIONALISM AND THE L'ANNEE SOCIOLOGIQUE

Mauss, Marcel. The Gift
WEEKS 12 and 13  MID-TWENTIETH CENTURY APPROACHES


WEEKS 14 AND 15

PAPER 2 DUE

Barnard, Alan. History and Theory, pp. 80-98.


FINAL EXAM