

Department of Anthropology and Sociology (ANSO)

Academic year 2021-2022

Doctoral Research Seminar I: Themes and Debates

ANSO107 - Autumn - 6 ECTS

[Schedule & Room](#)

Course Description

This seminar introduces PhD students to central concepts and practices, as well as themes and debates, in contemporary anthropology and sociology. Through class readings, discussions, and assignments, we will explore how research problems and questions are defined and articulated, how theory is constructed as well as its relation to empirically-grounded research. Students will have the opportunity to connect these inquiries to further the development of their own particular research interests. In doing so, we will take into account the ways that the current pandemic may affect research, and work together to explore research methodologies and design that enable rigorous and responsible research during these times. In addition to grappling with key themes and debates, the seminar seeks to foster a strong sense of social and intellectual community and peer learning amongst doctoral candidates, who will be an integral part of the ANSO community over the coming four years.

> PROFESSOR

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Syllabus (subject to revision)

Objectives, organization, and assignments

Whether we meet in person, online, or a combination of the two, our objectives for this seminar are to introduce you to some of the core themes and concerns that animate intellectual life in our Department; to facilitate the development of your own ideas and plans for your dissertation research projects; and to afford you opportunities to engage meaningfully with each other through discussions and assignments. Further details on course organization and assignments will follow nearer the start of the semester.

Assignments and Evaluation:

Participation (30%)

As a seminar, this course relies crucially on your active participation each week. We expect you to read the assigned material carefully, to come to class prepared to share your ideas and questions, and to discuss them with your peers.

At several points during the semester you will have the opportunity to present and discuss your own research interests in class and through written work. Written assignments for these classes will count toward your participation grade (see below, Your Research in Focus).

If you need to miss class, or face issues that affect your attendance (e.g. time zone differences) please inform and discuss these with us in advance. We adhere to the Institute's policy, detailed in the Covid Protection Plan, regarding other aspects of attendance. We emphasize that students are expected to attend class in person, unless they are prevented from doing so because of health conditions or covid-related restrictions on travel.

In addition to your participation in the Doctoral Seminar, your attendance at the weekly ANSO colloquium will also be an element of your participation grade.

Reading responses, beginning in Week 2 (10%)

Over the course of the semester you will be required to write 3 reading responses. The responses should be 700 words, and address the following: 1) succinctly capture the arguments of at least three of the required readings; where possible, please indicate not only an author's argument but also what s/he is arguing against ; 2) contextualize the reading(s), for example by noting what debates a particular author is contributing to and/or by making connections with other readings for that week or other weeks of the semester; 3) raise questions and reflect critically on the ideas and arguments presented in the readings. You may use your responses to raise issues, make comments, or pose questions that you would like to take up in our class discussion.

Your responses should be posted on Moodle by 12pm on the Monday before class.

Monograph Reviews (10%)

Weeks 7 and 8 of the semester will consider contemporary ethnography as a method of anthropological research and writing. In conjunction with this class, each week you will be required to write a review of one of the two ethnographic monographs assigned for that week. Guidelines on the review will be discussed nearer the time. You should post your review on Moodle by 12pm on the Monday before class. We will be reading the works listed below. You will be expected to read two of them and will be able to make your selection at the beginning of the semester.

Craig Campbell. *Agitating Images: Photography Against History in Indigenous Siberia*. University of Minnesota Press, 2014.

Sarah Franklin. *Dolly Mixtures: The Remaking of Genealogy*. Duke University Press, 2007.

Dolly Kikon. *Living with Oil and Coal: Resource Politics and Militarization in Northeast India*. University of Washington Press, 2019.

Audra Simpson. *Mohawk Interruptus: Political Life Across the Borders of Settler States*. Duke University Press, 2014.

Your Research in Focus

[Weeks 3-5: Introducing Your Research Projects]

We will dedicate Weeks 3-5 to an initial presentation and discussion of the doctoral research project you will be developing over the coming years. On the Friday before the class in which you will present your project, you will need to post to Moodle a short précis (2-3 pages) describing your project and/or research problem you propose to develop. In doing so, we encourage you to draw on themes and ideas from our first two classes and readings, "A Sense of Place" and "Scales of the Global." You should read the précis submitted by your peers, and come to class prepared to discuss them.

[Week 9: Writing Literature Reviews]

With a view toward the final assignment for the course (see below), Week 9 will be dedicated to a discussion of literature reviews, of various kinds of review writing, and of the different purposes they serve at different stages of a research process. For this class, we ask that you select 2-3 significant articles (or books) which you see as representing one or more bodies of literature relevant for your research and produce a 1-2 page précis that succinctly captures the key claims advanced through these works and describes their significance for your research (conceptually or in terms of the questions they raise/address, the methodologies they employ etc.). You may also consider the various ways in which these works may help you develop or further refine your own object of study or observation.

Please submit these précis on the Friday before class. As with our sessions for Weeks 3-5, you should read the précis submitted by your peers, and come to class prepared to discuss them.

[Weeks 12-14: Workshopping Your Literature Reviews]

During our final three classes, you will again have the opportunity to present and discuss your own research interests which will have developed over the semester. You will also be assigned to act as a discussant for one or two of your peers. One week in advance of class you will be expected to circulate a preliminary draft of your literature review introducing and contextualizing your research topic, raising possible research questions or problems you wish to pursue for your doctoral research, and identifying provisional literatures and debates you wish to engage with.

Literature Review (50%)

The final assignment for this course is an in-depth literature review, intended to help you develop research questions and make connections that relate your own research interests to wider scholarly literatures and debates. We strongly encourage you to use monographs (at least 5) as the backbone of your review, however, if appropriate in the context of your project you may also choose to review an equivalent number of journal articles. Crafting your literature review will require you to organize and thoughtfully navigate a significant body of literature, using it to develop arguments and research questions. You may choose to focus on a field closely linked to your own dissertation research interests, or you may select an unrelated field. The review will be evaluated based on the selection of key texts relevant for your research; the ability to organize, synthesize, and analyze a wide body of literature, and relate them to your own research project; and to develop sound, original arguments and questions on that basis. It will be due at 6pm (Geneva time) on 3 January 2022 (50% of total grade). The review should not exceed 5,000 words excluding bibliography and footnotes.

Academic Honesty

The free exchange of ideas, at the Graduate Institute and as members of a larger intellectual community, hinges on academic honesty and integrity. Plagiarism involves deliberately or inadvertently representing the work of others as one's own. Please refer to the Graduate Institute's policy on academic honesty and plagiarism, available in the "Academic Policies and Regulations" section of the Student Portal.

While research and knowledge advance in part because we use and build on the ideas of others, it is vital that we always acknowledge our sources. We encourage each of you to develop a consistent system for note taking, referencing, and citing your sources. Please use the Chicago author-date system for both in-text citations and bibliographies. See:
<http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/home.html>

If you are not familiar with bibliographic and referencing software such as EndNote and Zotero, which can be very helpful in developing your own reference library to support your doctoral studies, we encourage you to visit the Graduate Institute's Library where you will find information on training presentations.

Please do not hesitate to see us if you ever have any questions about academic honesty and how it applies to your work.

Week 1 | September 21 A Sense of Place

- Geertz, Clifford, "Being There: Anthropology and the Scene of Writing." in *Works and Lives: The Anthropologist as Author*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988. Chapter 1, pp. 1-24.
- Gupta, Akhil, and James Ferguson. "Anthropological locations : boundaries and grounds of a field science. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1997. Chapter One: Discipline and Practice: "The Field" as Site, Method, and Location in Anthropology"
- Postill, John and Sarah Pink, "Social Media Ethnography: The Digital Researcher in a Messy Web," *Media International Australia* 145 (1), November 2012, pp. 123-34.
- Harrison, F. V. (2016). "Theorizing in ex-centric sites." *Anthropological Theory* 16(2-3): 160-176.

Week 2 | September 28 Scales of the Global

- Appadurai, Arjun. *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996. Chapter Two: "Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy."
- . *The Future as a Cultural Fact: Essays on the Global Condition*. London: Verso, 2013. "How Histories Make Geographies: Circulation and Context in a Global Perspective."
- Trouillot, Michel-Rolph. 2003. *Global Transformations: Anthropology and the Modern World*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan. Introduction & Chapter 6 "Making Sense: The fields in which we work."
- Tsing, Anna. "Inside the Economy of Appearances," *Public Culture* 12, no. 1 (2000): 115–144.
- Lowe, Celia. 2010. "Viral clouds: becoming H5N1 in Indonesia." *Cultural Anthropology* 25 (4):625-49.
- Recommended: Sahlins, Marshall. "Cosmologies of Capitalism: The Trans-Pacific Sector of 'The World System.'" *Proceedings of the British Academy LXXIV*, 1988, pp.1-51.

Assignment: Reading Response

Week 3 | October 5 Your Research in Focus: Discussion of PhD projects

Assignment: 2-3 page description of your project (submit October 1)

Week 4 | October 12 Your Research in Focus : Discussion of PhD projects

Assignment: 2-3 page description of your project (submit October 8)

Week 5 | October 19 Your Research in Focus: Discussion of PhD projects

Assignment: 2-3 page description of your project (submit October 15)

Week 6 | October 26 Writing Culture

- Kirin Narayan, *Alive in the Writing: Crafting Ethnography in the Company of Chekhov*, University of Chicago Press, 2012. Preface, Chapters 1 & 2, pp. ix-xiii, 1-44
- Renato Rosaldo."From the Door of His Tent: the Fieldworker and the Inquisitor". In J Clifford and G Marcus (eds.)*The Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography*. Berkeley: University of California

Press. 1986 (pp 77-97)

Andrea Ballester and B. R. Winthereik. 2021. Experimenting with ethnography : a companion to analysis. Durham: Duke University Press. Please read Introduction and two other chapters of your choice.

Additional readings TBA

Assignment: Reading response

Week 7 | November 2 Contemporary Ethnographies

2 ethnographic monographs (select one to read)

Assignment: Monograph Review

Week 8 | November 9 Contemporary Ethnographies

2 ethnographic monographs (select one to read)

Assignment: Monograph Review

Week 9 | November 16 Literature Reviews: Creating, Defining & Mapping Fields of Study

Galvin, Shaila Seshia. 2018. "Interspecies Relations and Agrarian Worlds." *Annual Review of Anthropology* 47:233-49.

Additional readings TBC

Assignment: 1-2 page précis (see description above)

Week 10 | November 23 Guest class with Isabel Pike

Assignment: Reading response

**Week 11 | November 30 Conversation with Second, Third and Fourth Year PhD Students
(convened by course TA)**

Week 12 | December 7 Workshopping Your Literature Reviews

Week 13 | December 14 Workshopping Your Literature Reviews

Week 14 | December 21 Workshopping Your Literature Reviews