

Department of Anthropology
ANTHRO 3378G-200 - Bio-Cultural Debates in Race and Ethnicity
Course Outline
Winter 2023

Revision date: January 13, 2023

Instructor:

Dr. Pamela Block
Office: SSC 3425
Office hours: By Appointment
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Classes:

Mode of Delivery: Blended format. 2 hours in-class (Thursdays 10:30am-12:30pm, Classroom: SSC-3227) and 1 hour asynchronous.

Requisites:

Antirequisites: None.

Prerequisite: Anthropology 2278A/B, the former 2278F/G, or permission of the instructor.

Course Description:

This course addresses anthropological approaches to race and ethnicity in historical and contemporary literatures from 19th-21st centuries, studying experiences of racialized groups such as African Diaspora, Uyghur, Latinx, and Indigenous peoples. We will look at anthropology's troubled legacy and the voices of emerging scholars who are forging new approaches. The course will be structured so that readings are responsive to student areas of interest. Students are encouraged to focus on particular topics of interest to them and incorporate their interests into weekly discussions.

The course will be hybrid synchronous and asynchronous. Students will take turns as discussion leaders (both synchronous and asynchronous components), assignments will include weekly reflections and responses to each others' reflections (OWL discussion Forum), one essay and either another essay or an alternative format assignment.

A full course schedule including a week-by-week breakdown of topics and assigned readings will be available on the course's OWL site before the first day of class.

Learning Outcomes:

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Analyze the how racialized groups have been depicted in anthropology in the 19th through 21st centuries.
- Assess the methodologies used by anthropologists who have written about race and ethnicity and the ethical considerations involved.

- Propose alternative ways for anthropologists to research race and ethnicity

Topics Covered:

The course will cover topics including

- Willis and more recent critiques of Anthropological treatment of race and ethnicity
- 19th Century Anthropologists (Boas, Anthropometry, Craniometry etc.)
- 20th Century Anthropologists (Malinowski, Lewis and critics)
- 21st Century Anthropologists and relevant theorists chosen by the class. For example: Nichols, Byler, Ralph, Shange, Matthews, Ahmed, Schalk)

Course Materials:

Available via OWL course site or UWO Library.

Evaluation:

Discussion Participation – 25%

Students will be expected to touch base regularly with the course instructor, individually or with their study group either during office hours, or by appointment.

Students will be expected to actively engage synchronously and asynchronously. You will post/share Discussion Questions (DQs) and Weekly Reflections (WR) on the readings for 9 out of 12 weeks. I will be expecting you to share DQs and WRs for the main reading assignments with your study group in OWL discussion Forum (or other approved method), respond to other students' posts and then discuss further in class. Discussion questions should be essay-type questions that don't have a simple yes or no answer. Weekly Reflections can be anything that connects the readings to your particular research interests as well as experiences/evidence out in the world. They might be drawn from literature, film, social media, news articles, blogs or personal experiences. Each study group should put together a course journal that includes discussion questions, key concepts, reflections, from all group participants. Each weekly journal entry for all groups should be made available to all course participants as a form of collective access note taking and weekly discussion leaders should be available to answer any asynchronous questions during the week they are leading (see below).

Discussion Leadership 25%

Students will rotate responsibility for leading a class during the term, choosing the readings with Dr. Block's help and leading the synchronous and asynchronous discussions (see above).

Essays – 50%

Twice, during this course, you will be expected to turn in a paper of 1000-1500 words. One of these might be submitted in an alternative format (video, poster, podcast, graphic narrative etc.) on a topic of your choosing as long as they are relevant to and cite class readings and discussions. Go to OWL Assignments Tab for due dates. Accommodations or extensions to these deadlines may be provided on a case-by-case basis upon formal request, possibly in consultation with students' academic counselors.

Note: Examples of possible essay formats may be to: compare readings or analyze or synthesize the authors' differing approaches. You may write in support or disagreement with the authors,

discussing what you consider to be the strengths and weaknesses of the approaches used in the readings. You are expected to provide evidence for all your assertions using the texts assigned or in supplemental materials. Use your DQs and RWRs to explore possible topics. Essays may be expansions of these.

Accommodations or extensions to these deadlines may be provided on a case-by-case basis upon formal request, possibly in consultation with students' academic counselors but this request must be made before the late submission window closes.

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>).

Academic Statements and Policies:

Course Specific Conditions Required to Pass this Course

As an essay-designated course, both essay assignments must be submitted and receive passing grades in order to pass this course.

Accessible Education

Students with disabilities work with Accessible Education (formerly SSD) which provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive testing. More information can be found on the [Accessible Education site](#), as well as the accommodation policy in the [Academic Calendar](#).

Accommodation, Illness Reporting and Academic Considerations

It is important that you please contact me as soon as possible **in advance of any due dates** if you are seeking academic consideration.

For work totaling 10% or more of the final course grade, you must provide valid medical or supporting documentation to the Academic Counselling Office of your Faculty of Registration as soon as possible. For further information, please consult the University's medical illness policy at

https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf

Collective Access

In this course we are all "in it" together. It is our shared responsibility to ensure that everyone has access to information and needed supports to be successful this course. This may mean describing images, making sure videos are captioned, taking notes collectively, etc. Collective access needs vary from course to course, so I will let you know of any specific access guidelines that we need for this course. This site discusses some examples of [collective access](#). I would suggest briefly describing any photos you post and make sure any videos you post (including ones you personally make) are captioned. Auto-Captioning is very easy to do on [YouTube](#). If you have access needs or concerns feel free to contact me, and I will be happy to meet to discuss how to best support your success in this course.

Learning Community

Just like there are many learning styles there are also many teaching styles. Some courses are structured with information flowing primarily from the instructor to the student and then flowing back from the student to the instructor, perhaps mediated by teaching assistants. This is effective for lower levels of knowledge acquisition: remembering and understanding. This is not how I am teaching this course. For higher levels of knowledge acquisition: applying, analyzing, evaluating and creating, we will establish what is called a learning community. Knowledge in a learning community circulates, flowing between all participants through online and small group discussions. The instructor assumes a mentoring role rather than as sole authority and there is recognition of different sorts of knowledge available in the classroom, especially when learners come from many disciplines and backgrounds. Research shows students reach higher levels of understanding when they are actively engaged in the learning process in this way. [Here is a site with some more information.](#) As well as [this PDF article.](#)

This style may not work for everyone, indeed may make even some people uncomfortable. I invite you to review our syllabus carefully and consider if you are prepared for this level of engagement. Your active weekly participation and engagement in this course through direct communication with other students during discussions is essential to your success here.

Statement on Plagiarism:

Students must write their assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing. It is also a scholastic offence to submit the same work for credit in more than one course. **Plagiarism is a major scholastic offence.** See link below for more details on the penalties for plagiarism. All assignments will be evaluated using Turn-It-In in the Assignments portal (video/audio submissions must include a transcript). **All assignments are required to have a Turn-It-In score below 15%.**

Religious Accommodation

Students should consult the University's list of recognized religious holidays, and should give reasonable notice in writing, prior to the holiday, to the Instructor and an Academic Counsellor if their course requirements will be affected by a religious observance. Additional information is given in the [Western Multicultural Calendar.](#)

Academic Rights and Responsibilities

All students should familiarize themselves with Western's current [Academic Policies in the Academic Calendar](#) which include, but is not limited to, academic consideration for medical illness, accommodation for religious holidays, academic appeals, academic accommodation for students with disabilities, as well as scholastic discipline.

Contingency plan for an in-person class pivoting to 100% online learning

In the event of a COVID-19 resurgence during the course that necessitates the course delivery moving away from face-to-face interaction, affected course content will be delivered entirely online, either synchronously (i.e., at the times indicated in the timetable) or asynchronously (e.g., posted on OWL for students to view at their convenience). The grading scheme will not change. Any remaining assessments will also be conducted online as determined by the course instructor.