

ANTHROPOLOGY 2262B-001

Global Commodities

Department of Anthropology

BRIEF COURSE OUTLINE

Winter 2025

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Course Description

What do bananas, sugar, gold, sapphires, coffee, oil, rare earth minerals, and tourist crafts have in common? They are all 'global commodities' that connect producers and consumers from different parts of the world in ways we rarely think about. In this course, we will approach global commodities from an anthropological perspective to shed light on important, often overlooked, aspects of globalization and the global economy. Beginning with coffee, we will consider how the global circulation of commodities reflects certain key global historical trends and processes. The course is designed to encourage students to think differently about the global economy, and, more particularly, about how the producers and consumers of global commodities live interconnected lives. You do *not* need a background in anthropology to succeed in this course.

Technology permitting, in-person lectures will be recorded and posted so that students can catch up on missed classes or review ahead of the midterm and final.

All quizzes and reflections will be completed on-line before class. Lectures, midterm and final exam are in person.

Learning Outcomes

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

- Students will learn key theoretical approaches and research methods used by anthropologists and other social scientists to study the workings of the global economy.
- Students will develop an awareness of how certain global commodities move around the world, and of how their own consumption choices connect them to others.
- Students will develop critical thinking skills necessary for understanding how the global flow of commodities affects people at multiple points along global commodity chains.

Course Materials

Registered students will be able to access course readings through the course site in OWL. Weekly readings will be accompanied by guiding questions and lists of key topics.

Weekly lectures will be recorded and posted on the course OWL site for students who want to review them.

Students will be able to access weekly readings on the course OWL site.

Evaluation Breakdown

20% -- Weekly online quizzes/reflections. Over the course of the term, students will complete short weekly quizzes or reflections related to assigned readings. These quizzes and reflections will be completed online *before* the start of weekly lectures.

35% -- Midterm (in-class, to be held during our usual class time)

45% -- Final Exam (during the final exam period)

PLEASE NOTE: *The evaluation methods described in this course outline are essential requirements for the course. The midterm and final exam make use of multiple-choice questions to evaluate student learning. The multiple-choice format allows for assessment of students' detailed knowledge of a broad range of concepts, theories, principles, and research that other formats do not permit.*