

## **SOCIAL AND DIGITAL ANTHROPOLOGY**

**Grado en Comportamiento y Ciencias Sociales BBSS  
SEP-2023 SDA-BS.1.M.A**

Area Human Resources and Organisational Behaviour

Number of sessions: 30

Academic year: 23-24

Degree course: SECOND

Number of credits: 6.0

Semester: 1º

Category: COMPULSORY

Language: English

Professor: **DEEPIKA ROSE ALEX**

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Dr. Alex is a qualitative researcher whose interest areas include social inequality, women's studies, and South Asian Studies. She received her PhD from Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi in 2018. Dr. Alex has held visiting scholar positions at the South Asian Studies Program, University of Iowa and the Yale Institute of Sacred Music, Yale University. An award-winning researcher, she has conducted extensive fieldwork in rural parts of southern India, focusing on the everyday lives of marginalized castes and tribes. She has mapped how these groups interpret their identities by rearticulating the stigmatized elements of their existence. She has also researched political participation of women belonging to underserved communities, women and community reform movements, and women's occupational changes in the context of mechanization of artisanal fishing sector in India. Her articles and reviews have appeared in academic journals including Contemporary South Asia, Women's Studies, Newspaper Research Journal, Economic and Political Weekly, Social Action, and South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies.

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### **SUBJECT DESCRIPTION**

This course introduces students to the world of social anthropology. In brief, social anthropology is the study of how humans give meaning to the world through different social norms, values, practices, and means of organization. As such, the role of the social anthropologist is to examine other cultures and societies, and in so doing, to better understand his or her own worldview as well. Through critical, sensitive debate and analysis, students will develop the analytical skills necessary to see the world in an anthropological way to make the strange familiar, and the familiar strange.

Over the duration of the course, students will explore topics spanning the key themes of research in social anthropology, including an introduction to thinking anthropologically, anthropological research, religion, witchcraft, personhood, and patterns of exchange and gifting.

Anthropology tries to understand what people DO around the world, so it is difficult not to consider the digital world—as the world went digital, anthropology has also gone digital. Anthropology, with its established theories and methods for understanding culture, is uniquely placed to unpack the relationship between humans and the digital and provides interesting ways of understanding the digital world.

During the second part of the course, students will learn about digital anthropology including the anthropological study of the relationship between humans and digital-era technology by referring to relevant key concepts in social anthropology taught earlier in the course.

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Describe how anthropology differs from and is similar to behavioral sciences.
- Articulate knowledge of the breadth of anthropology, including its main subfields (particularly Digital Anthropology), and its ties to other sciences and the humanities.
- Define theory and describe its role in building anthropological knowledge, comparing and contrasting basic theoretical orientations.
- Demonstrate knowledge and comprehension of culture and cultural systems, including ecological relationships, social organization, and belief systems.
- To read and critically comprehend academic papers.
- Strengthen student's ability to think holistically and comparatively in describing human ways of life, including the use of non-ethnocentric methods.
- To introduce students to a wide range of anthropological perspectives on digital culture around the world.
- To support students in conducting independent research on aspects of digital technologies that excite and interest them the most.

## TEACHING METHODOLOGY

IE University teaching method is defined by its collaborative, active, and applied nature. Students actively participate in the whole process to build their knowledge and sharpen their skills. Professor's main role is to lead and guide students to achieve the learning objectives of the course. This is done by engaging in a diverse range of teaching techniques and different types of learning activities such as the following:

Learning Activity	Weighting	Estimated time a student should dedicate to prepare for and participate in
Lectures	20.0 %	30.0 hours
Discussions	13.33 %	20.0 hours
Exercises in class, Asynchronous sessions, Field Work	20.0 %	30.0 hours

Group work	26.67 %	40.0 hours
Individual studying	20.0 %	30.0 hours
TOTAL	100.0 %	150.0 hours

## PROGRAM

### NOTE

PLEASE NOTE THAT THE SCHEDULE BELOW IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE BASED ON THE INTERESTS AND NEEDS OF THE STUDENTS. THE MOST UPDATED INFORMATION ABOUT WHAT YOU NEED TO DO FOR EACH SESSION WILL ALWAYS BE FOUND IN THE ANNOUNCEMENTS SECTION.

### SESSIONS 1 - 2 (LIVE IN-PERSON)

*Introduction to Social Anthropology*

Topics discussed in class:

- Objectives of the course. Expectations. Evaluation criteria
- What is social anthropology and why is it relevant?
- Disciplinary collaborations, similarities, and differences between anthropology and behavioral science

Exercise:

Small groups: How to observe a “different” culture

No Readings due.

### SESSIONS 3 - 4 (LIVE IN-PERSON)

*Conceptual Definitions*

Topics discussed in class:

- Society and Culture, Social and cultural Anthropology
- Origin of Social/Cultural Anthropology
- Theoretical orientations: Evolutionism and Functionalism

Exercise:

Small groups: Inaccuracies and stereotypes about indigenous people.

*Book Chapters: A brief history of Anthropology (Chapter 2, pages: 12-31). In T.H. Eriksen, Small places, Large Issues: An Introduction to Social and Cultural Anthropology (See Bibliography)*

### SESSIONS 5 - 6 (LIVE IN-PERSON)

*How Anthropological Studies are conducted*

Topics Discussed in class:

- Fieldworker and the field, participant observation
- Fieldwork’ in ‘other’ cultures

Exercises:

- Quiz #1
- Small Groups: Can you be a fieldworker and an activist simultaneously in the field?
- Guest Speaker: Shira Wollner. A non-native woman's journey as a participant observer in the Indian fashion Industry.

*Book Chapters: Fieldwork and its interpretation (Chapter 3, pages: 32-51). In T.H. Eriksen, Small places, Large Issues: An Introduction to Social and Cultural Anthropology (See Bibliography)*

## **SESSIONS 7 - 8 (ASYNCHRONOUS)**

*Museum visit and discussion forum*

Topic: Anthropological expeditions to Indigenous cultures and development of museums

Exercise:

Students are expected to visit 'Musio de América' and observe 'Etnografía de América' collection. Based on your observations and critical reading of an article on development of museums, you will have to individually prepare an essay. Questions and instructions will be available on blackboard.

*Article: Anthropology Association Apologizes to Native Americans for the Field's Legacy of Harm (Scientific American)*

## **SESSIONS 9 - 10 (LIVE IN-PERSON)**

*Introduction to key anthropological themes Part 1: Personhood*

Topics discussed in class:

- Culture and behavior
- How Anthropology and Behavioral Sciences approach the notion of social person

Exercises:

Small Groups: Socio-centric and ego-centric societies.

*Book Chapters: The social person (Chapter 4, pages: 52-73). In T.H. Eriksen, Small places, Large Issues: An Introduction to Social and Cultural Anthropology (See Bibliography)*

## **SESSIONS 11 - 12 (LIVE IN-PERSON)**

*Introduction to key anthropological themes Part 2: Religious Institutions*

Topics Discussed in Class:

- Social functions of religious institutions
- Religious mode of thought

Exercise:

- Quiz #2
- Small groups: Rethinking rationality in modern complex societies.

*Book Chapters: Religion and Ritual (Chapter 14, pages: 264-272). In T.H. Eriksen, Small places, Large Issues: An Introduction to Social and Cultural Anthropology (See Bibliography)*

## **SESSIONS 13 - 14 (LIVE IN-PERSON)**

*Introduction to key anthropological themes Part 2: Rituals*

Topics discussed in class:

- Rituals: types and functions

- Rituals as repetitive human behavior

Exercise:

- Small groups: Rituals as repetitive behavior
- Two water bottles and freezing cold showers: The story behind Rafael Nadal's rituals.
- The real magic of rituals.

*Book Chapters: Religion and Ritual and Modes of Thought (Chapter 14 pages 272-285). In T. H. Eriksen, Small places, Large Issues: An Introduction to Social and Cultural Anthropology (See Bibliography)*

*Article: Two water bottles and freezing cold showers: The story behind Rafael Nadal's rituals (mamamia.com.au)*

*Article: The real magic of rituals (nautil.us)*

## **SESSIONS 15 - 16 (LIVE IN-PERSON)**

*Introduction to key anthropological themes Part 3: Economic Exchange*

Topics Discussed in Class:

- Forms and functions of exchange in simple societies: Gift and reciprocity
- Non-capitalist forms of exchange in modern complex societies
- Mid semester exam review

Exercises:

Quiz#3

Small Groups: Gift Giving in your own cultures; Is there such a thing as a "Free gift"?

*Book Chapters: Exchange (Chapter 12, pages: 217-240). In T.H. Eriksen, Small places, Large Issues: An Introduction to Social and Cultural Anthropology (See Bibliography)*

## **SESSIONS 17 - 18 (LIVE IN-PERSON)**

Mid semester open book exam.

*Digital anthropology course briefing*

Topics discussed in class:

- What is Digital Anthropology?
- Internet as a field site

*Book Chapters: The digital and the human: A prospectus for digital anthropology (chapter 1 pages 3-35), In Digital Anthropology, Horst and Miller (eds) (See Bibliography)*

## **SESSIONS 19 - 20 (LIVE IN-PERSON)**

*How digital anthropological studies are conducted.*

Topics discussed in class:

- Field work in digital anthropology
- Online and offline fieldwork

Exercise:

Case study and discussion on online and offline fieldwork

*Article: Sinanan J, Hosein G., (2017) "Non-activism: Political engagement and facebook through ethnography in Trinidad" (Social Media and Society, Vol.3(3), pp.1-10) (SAGE)*

## **SESSIONS 21 - 22 (ASYNCHRONOUS)**

*The Anthropology of social media*

How do anthropologists define and study social media

Group exercise: Students are expected to review the "why we post" project and prepare a write-up as per the instructions given.

Why we post project: <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/why-we-post/why-we-post>

Article: Miller, D., Costa, E., et al. (2016). "Why we post" (*Anthropology News*, 57(9), e44-e47) (CED)

## **SESSIONS 23 - 24 (LIVE IN-PERSON)**

Guest speaker: Prof. Adolfo Estalella.

Prof. Adolfo will elaborate on his digital ethnographic projects in Madrid.

Topics discussed in class:

- Cities through digital anthropological lens
- New methodologies to study urban spaces.

Book Chapters: Estalella, A. (2016). *Prototyping Social Sciences: Emplacing Digital Methods*. In: Snee, H., Hine, C., Morey, Y., Roberts, S., Watson, H. (eds) *Digital Methods for Social Science*. Palgrave Macmillan, London (CED)

## **SESSIONS 25 - 26 (LIVE IN-PERSON)**

*Autoethnography and netnography*

Topics discussed in class:

- Autobiographic ethnography as a new form of knowledge representation in digital anthropology
- Netnography and Digital Anthropology

Final group projects review

Exercise:

Quiz #4

Article: Kozinets, R. V. (2002). "The Field behind the Screen: Using Netnography for Marketing Research in Online Communities" (*Journal of Marketing Research*, 39(1), 61–72) (CED)

Article: Ellis, C., Adams, T. E., & Bochner, A. P. (2010). "Autoethnography: An Overview" (*Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, 12(1) (CED)

## **SESSIONS 27 - 28 (ASYNCHRONOUS)**

*Doing Netnography*

Students will have to conduct netnography in a digital platform as per the instructions on blackboard. This will be a group exercise.

Article: Addeo, F., Paoli, A. D., Esposito, M., & Bolcato, M. Y. (2019). "Doing social research on online communities: The benefits of netnography" (*Athens journal of social sciences*, 7(1), 9-38) (CED)

## **SESSIONS 29 - 30 (LIVE IN-PERSON)**

FINAL GROUP PROJECT PRESENTATIONS

## EVALUATION CRITERIA

### A. CLASS PARTICIPATION AND ENGAGEMENT (25%)

Class Participation and Engagement (25%) - This component will be evaluated based on the quality of your participation in online forums, lectures, small groups, and other activities that take place during synchronous and asynchronous sessions. You should debate ideas in class on a regular basis. Listening is an equally important component of class participation. Please be mindful of how much you are speaking versus listening and ensure that this class is an environment in which all of us are encouraged to do both. Students who are disruptive will be asked to leave the classroom and will be counted as absent for that day. By disruptive, I mean chatting with your classmates during the lecture, using gadgets during the class to access content not related to this course, being disrespectful towards your classmates and the instructor, and unwillingness to participate in class discussions.

### B. INTERMEDIATE TESTS (10%)

Over the course of the semester, you will take 4 in-class quizzes. These quizzes are intended to evaluate your understanding of the material discussed in the prior classes. Each quiz will consist of 5 multiple choice questions.

### C. INDIVIDUAL EXERCISES (HOME) (20%)

Students will be required to write TWO assignments. The exact nature of each exercise will be explained at the end of the relevant lecture. Where applicable, students will be given the chance to present their work at the beginning of the class, helping them to boost their class participation. All assignments will be handed in electronic format. Please note that for all assignments with a deadline 20% points will be automatically deducted for each day the assignment is late, unless prior arrangements are made with the instructor due to any extraordinary circumstances.

### D. MID TERM EXAM (20%)

The Mid-term Exam will cover topics discussed in the class and material from the PowerPoint slides for the first 16 sessions of the course (i.e. Social Anthropology). The exam will be open-book, for a duration of 1.5 hours.

### E. FINAL GROUP PRESENTATION (25%)

You will present your work in groups during Sessions 29&30. This group project provides a hands-on opportunity to practice the learnings from the whole course. You will be working on a mini-ethnographic study using new and existing methods of digital anthropology whilst reflecting on your Social Anthropology part of the course to explore specific experiences of living in Digital Madrid. No side conversations will be accepted during the presentation. Not submitting the Final Project Presentation slides before the sessions forfeits your grade for this assignment. Evaluation criteria and further instructions will be handed out and discussed in class. Please note that you will be expected to work on the project throughout the course, adding information as you learn the material in lectures.

criteria	percentage	Learning Objectives	Comments
Final Exam	0 %		
Intermediate Tests	10 %		Quizzes
Individual Work	10 %		Individual Assignment 1
Individual Work	20 %		Mid-semester open book exam
Individual Work	10 %		Individual Assignment 2
Group Presentation	25 %		Final Group Project
Class Participation	25 %		

## RE-SIT / RE-TAKE POLICY

Each student has four (4) chances to pass any given course distributed over two (2) consecutive academic years. Each academic year consists of two calls: one (1) ordinary call (during the semester when the course is taking place); and one (1) extraordinary call (or "re-sit") in June/July. Students who do not comply with the 80% attendance requirement in each subject during the semester will automatically fail both calls (ordinary and extraordinary) for that Academic Year and have to re-take the course (i.e., re-enroll) during the next Academic Year. The Extraordinary Call Evaluation criteria will be subject to the following rules: Students failing the course in the ordinary call (during the semester) will have to re-sit evaluation for the course in June / July (except those students who do not comply with the attendance rule, and therefore will not have that opportunity, since they will fail both calls and must directly re-enroll in the course during the next Academic Year). It is not permitted to change the format nor the date of the extraordinary call exams or deadlines under any circumstance. All extraordinary call evaluation dates will be announced in advance and must be taken into consideration before planning the summer (e.g. internships, trips, holidays, etc.) The June/July re-sit will consist of a comprehensive evaluation of the course. Your final grade for the course will depend on the performance in this exam or evaluation only. I.e., continuous evaluation over the semester (e.g. participation, quizzes, projects and/or other grade components over the semester) will not be taken into consideration on the extraordinary call. Students will have to achieve the minimum passing grade of 5 and the maximum grade will be capped at 8.0 (out of 10.0) – i.e., "notable" in the extraordinary call. Re-takers: Students who failed the subject on a previous Academic Year and are now re-enrolled as re-takers in a course will need to check the syllabus of the assigned professor, as well as contact the professor individually, regarding the specific evaluation criteria for them as re-takers in the course during that semester (ordinary call of that Academic Year). The maximum grade that may be obtained as a retaker during the ordinary call (i.e., the 3rd call) is 10.0 (out of 10.0). After exams and other assessments are graded by the professor (on either the ordinary or extraordinary call), students will have a possibility to attend a review session (whether it be a final exam, a final project, or the final overall grade in a given course). Please be available to attend the session in order to clarify any concerns you might have regarding your grade. Your professor will inform you about the time and place of the review session. Students failing more than 18 ECTS credits after the June/July re-sits will be asked to leave the Program. Please, make sure to prepare yourself well for the exams in order to pass your failed subjects. In case you decide to skip the opportunity to re-sit for an exam or evaluation during the June/July extraordinary call, you will need to enroll in that course again for the next Academic Year as a re-taker, and pay the corresponding tuition fees. As you know, students have a total of four (4) allowed calls to pass a given subject or course, in order to remain in the program. Students in their third attempt must do: Two short essays (20% each) and one final exam consisting of an in-class, closed-book exam (60%).

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

### Compulsory

- T. H. Eriksen. (2015). *Small places, Large Issues: An Introduction to Social and Cultural Anthropology*. 4th Edition. London: Pluto Press. ISBN 9780745335933 (Printed)

### Recommended

- Hannah Knox. (2018). *Ethnography for a data-saturated world*. Manchester. ISBN 9781526127600 (Digital)

- Heather A Horst and Daniel Miller. (2012). *Digital anthropology*. Bloomsbury. ISBN 9780857852915 (Digital)

## BEHAVIOR RULES



Please, check the University's Code of Conduct [here](#). The Program Director may provide further indications.

### **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

Please, check the University's Attendance Policy [here](#). The Program Director may provide further indications.

### **ETHICAL POLICY**

Please, check the University's Ethics Code [here](#). The Program Director may provide further indications.