

INTRODUCTION TO ANTHROPOLOGY: RACE, RELIGION AND CONFLICT
(also cross-listed with Religious Studies 1R03)
Fall 2021

Instructor: Basit Kareem Iqbal **Lectures:** Prerecorded, uploaded weekly (link on A2L)
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Course Description:

This course introduces students to the field of anthropology and its sub-disciplines through discussion of some of the big questions that anthropologists investigate in contemporary and past societies. Some of the issues explored in this course include race and racism, religion and worldview, power and inequality, and violence and conflict from archaeological, biological,

cultural, and linguistic perspectives. Through this course, you will develop an understanding of how the anthropological approach can be used to better understand the human condition, past and present.

Course Objectives:

By the end of this course, students will:

- Discover the diversity of research in the sub-disciplines of anthropology related to specific themes;
- Understand the theories, methods, and techniques used by anthropologists;
- Develop an understanding of the human place in nature from an anthropological perspective;
- Appreciate the relevance of anthropological knowledge and practices to society as a whole;
- Think critically about contemporary issues and debates; and
- Enhance their comparative, analytic, and critical thinking skills through reading and written assignments.

Class Format:

Lectures are asynchronous and prerecorded, and will be posted by 9 a.m. each Tuesday and Thursday to Avenue. Drop-in sessions (Zoom link on A2L) are 11:30a.m.-12:20p.m. on September 9 (course introductions); September 23 (unit 1); October 19 (unit 2); November 11 (unit 3); and December 7 (unit 4).

Teaching Assistants:

Every student is assigned a TA based on the alphabetical order of their last name. Your TA will be grading your assignments and will hold office hours each week. See your TA during their office hours if you have any questions or concerns about the assignments or grading. Your TA's name, office hour, and email will be posted to Avenue during the second week of class.

Required Materials:

1. Custom textbook: *Introduction to Anthropology: Race, Religion, and Conflict* (Oxford UP, 2020), available at the campus bookstore.
2. Additional material posted on Avenue, including short articles, videos, podcasts, and films.

Course Evaluation:

This course has two assignments and two exams. Each of these four components is worth 25% of your final grade:

1. Assignment #1: due October 7 by 11 p.m.
2. Midterm exam: held on October 21, covering the first half of course material.
3. Assignment #2: due December 2 by 11 p.m.
4. Final exam: held during the exam period, covering the second half of course material.

More details about the two essay-based assignments (approximately 1500 words each) will be provided closer to the due date. The midterm and final exams will be one hour long, completed on Avenue within a set 24-hour period, and consist of multiple choice and short answer questions. Each exam will cover half of the course material, including readings, lectures, videos, and films.

Weekly Course Schedule and Required Readings

Note: all readings below are from the custom course text, unless otherwise noted.

UNIT ONE: What Is Anthropology?

Week 1 (September 7 & 9): Syllabus Discussion and Introduction

Lecture 1: Course introduction

Material: course syllabus

Lecture 2: What is Anthropology?

Material: "What Is Anthropology?" (pp. 1-22)

**optional drop-in session on September 9 (course introductions)

Week 2 (September 14, 16): The Culture Concept

Lecture 1: Introducing the Culture Concept

Material:

- "Why Is the Concept of Culture Important?" (pp. 23-42)
- "Doing Anthropology" (8:14) <https://shass.mit.edu/multimedia/video-2008-doing-anthropology>

Lecture 2: *The Culture Concept at Work*

Material: Clifford Geertz, "Thick Description: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture," in *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), pp. 3-30 (*excerpts*)

Week 3 (September 21, 23): Ethnographic Distance and Ethics

Lecture 1: Ethnographic Distance

Material:

- Takeyuki Tsuda, "Is Native Anthropology Really Possible?" (pp. 62-68)
- Horace Minor, "Body Ritual Among the Nacirema" (pp. 228-230)

Lecture 2: Anthropological Ethics

Material:

- Richard Lee Borshay, "Eating Christmas in the Kalahari" (pp. 46-50)
- Philippe Bourgois, "Confronting Anthropological Ethics: Ethnographic Lessons from Central America," *Journal of Peace Research* 27, no. 1 (1990): 43-54

**optional drop-in session on September 23 (unit 1 review)

UNIT TWO: Race and Racism

Week 4 (September 28, 30): Race in Social Organization

Lecture 1: The Categories of Social Organization

Material:

- "Race, Ethnicity and Class: Understanding Identity and Social Inequality" (pp. 71-93)
- W.E.B. DuBois, "The Concept of Race," in *Dusk of Dawn: An Essay toward an Autobiography of a Race Concept* (1984 [1940]), pp. 97-133 (*excerpts*)

Lecture 2: Natural and Social Types

Material:

- *Film: The Shackles of Tradition: Franz Boas* (1985, 52 min) (link on Avenue)
- Franz Boas, "Race and Progress," *Science* 74, no. 1905 (July 3, 1931): 1-8

Week 5 (October 5, 7): Contending with Racial Hegemony

Lecture 1: Living in the White World

Material:

- Setha Low, "Maintaining Whiteness: The Fear of Others and Niceness" (pp. 147-155)
- Lalaie Ameeriar, "The Sanitized Sensorium," *American Anthropologist* 114, no. 3 (2012): 509-522

Lecture 2: Race and Justice

Material:

- Yarimar Bonilla and Jonathan Rosa, "#Ferguson: Digital Protest, Hashtag Ethnography, and the Racial Politics of Social Media in the United States" (pp. 181-189)
- *Film: Raoul Peck (dir.), I Am Not Your Negro* (2016, 1hr 33min) (on Kanopy)

** Assignment #1 due October 7

Week 6 (October 12, 14): Mid-term recess, no class

Week 7 (October 19, 21): Scientific Racism & Midterm exam

Lecture 1: Race and Biology (guest lecture TBA)

Material:

- Race in Biological Anthropology video (4:15), Dartmouth Ethnography Lab, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-WMRy4QgTuc&feature=youtu.be>
- Scientific Racism podcast, <https://culanth.org/fieldsights/anthrobites-scientific-racism>

**optional drop-in session on October 19 (unit 2 review)

**MIDTERM EXAM on Oct 21 (*one hour long, to be completed anytime this day*)

UNIT THREE: Religion

Week 8 (October 26, 28): The Invention of Religion

Lecture 1: Between Belief and Practice

Material: "Worldview and Religion" (pp. 210-224)

Lecture 2: Ritual Practice

Material:

- Victor Turner, "Liminality and Communitas," in *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure* (Chicago: Aldine Publishing, 1969), pp. 94-113, 125-130 (*excerpts*)
- George Gmelch, "Baseball Magic" (pp. 231-237)

Week 9 (November 2, 4): What Is Real

Lecture 1: Witchcraft and Rationality

Material:

- E.E. Evans-Pritchard, *Witchcraft, Oracles, and Magic among the Azande* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976), pp. 18-32 (*excerpts*)
- *Film: Strange Beliefs: Sir Edward Evans-Pritchard* (1985, 52 min) (link on Avenue)

Lecture 2: Anthropological Reason

Material:

- Alexandra Crampton, "'No Peace in the House': Witchcraft Accusations as an 'Old Woman's Problem' in Ghana" (pp. 238-245)
- Katherine Ewing, "Dreams from a Saint: Anthropological Atheism and the Temptation to Believe," *American Anthropologist* 96, no. 3 (September 1994): 571-583

Week 10 (November 9, 11): History and Prehistory

Lecture 1: Religion and Archeology (guest lecture TBA)

Material: TBA

Lecture 2: Secular Politics of Religion

Material:

- Lila Abu-Lughod, "Do Muslim Women Really Need Saving? Anthropological Reflections on Cultural Relativism and Its Others" (pp. 56-61)
- James Bielo, "Religion and Power: Entertainment in Creationist Publicity" (pp. 246-254)
- Jean-Michel Landry, "Niqab, Sunglasses, and the Sincerity of Belief," *The Immanent Frame*, <https://tif.ssrc.org/2018/10/02/niqab-sunglasses-and-the-sincerity-of-belief/>

**optional drop-in session on November 11 (unit 3 review)

UNIT FOUR: Conflict

Week 11 (November 16, 18): Political Organization

Lecture 1: The Terms of Political Anthropology

Material: "Political Anthropology" (pp. 255-271)

Lecture 2: Forensic / Bioarcheological Anthropology (guest lecture TBA)

Material: TBA

Week 12 (November 23, 25): Structural Violence

Lecture 1: Visible and Invisible Power

Material:

- Paul Farmer, "An Anthropology of Structural Violence" (pp. 295-302)
- Michael Vicente Perez, "The Non-National in Jordan: Statelessness as Structural Violence Among Gaza Refugees in Jordan" (pp. 337-344)

Lecture 2: Extractive Development

Material: Film: Stephanie Black (dir.), *Life and Debt* (2001, 1h 26min)

Week 13 (November 30, December 2): Anthropology of a Burning World

Lecture 1: Displacement and Refuge

Material:

- Tricia Redeker Hepner, "The End of Refugees? Forced Migration and the New World Disorder" (pp. 345-352)
- *Cultural Anthropology* Hot Spot series "Refugees and the Crisis of Europe," June 28, 2016, <https://culanth.org/fieldsights/series/refugees-and-the-crisis-of-europe> (read the introduction and two other posts)

Lecture 2: Anthropology and Ways of Knowing

Material: Zoe Todd, "From Fish Lives to Fish Law: Learning to See Indigenous Legal Orders in Canada," *Somatosphere*, February 1, 2016, <http://somatosphere.net/2016/from-fish-lives-to-fish-law-learning-to-see-indigenous-legal-orders-in-canada.html/>

* *Assignment #2 due December 2*

Week 14 (December 7): Review

Lecture 1: Major Anthropological Concepts

**optional drop-in session on December 7 (unit 4 review)

* *Final exam held during exam period*

Course Policies

Assignment Submission

All assignments must be submitted on Avenue (assignments submitted over email will *not* be accepted). No extensions will be given unless written certification, approved by your Faculty office, is provided.

Late Assignments

All unexcused late assignments will be penalized at a rate of 10% per 24-hour period or part thereof.

Policy on Reappraisals of Assignments

If you are concerned or confused about the grading of your assignment after you get it back, then your first step is to see your TA during their office hours. After this, if you still have questions, then please see me during my office hours. If you would like me to reappraise your work, then please submit the original paper with a maximum 300-word explanation of why you think you deserve a higher mark. This must be done within seven calendar days of the release of your grade on Avenue. Although I will review your grade, it may stay the same or even go down. Please note that marks are not awarded for effort (unfortunately!) but for the quality of the final product (achievement). All deferred and makeup exams will be in essay format (no multiple choice).

Grades

Grades will be based on the McMaster University grading scale:

MARK	GRADE
90-100	A+
85-90	A
80-84	A-
77-79	B+
73-76	B
70-72	B-
67-69	C+
63-66	C
60-62	C-
57-59	D+
53-56	D
50-52	D-
0-49	F

MSAF (McMaster Student Absence Form)

In the event of an absence for medical or other reasons, students should review and follow the Academic Regulation in the Undergraduate Calendar "Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work". Please note these regulations have changed beginning Spring/Summer 2015. Note that all work must be completed: because each type of assessment in this course is worth 25%, you cannot use an MSAF. In the event of illness, you would have to request (with documentation) a faculty issued MSAF exception. If granted, note that we do not re-distribute/re-weigh grades in the event of an MSAF. An MSAF simply gives you an extension of 48 hours (from receipt of MSAF) on work missed.

Correspondence

You can expect an email response within 48 hours (excluding weekends). Please put 1AB3 in the subject line of your email and include your name and student number at the end of all correspondence.

Avenue to Learn

In this course we will be using Avenue to Learn. Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of this course, private information such as first and last names, usernames for the McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in this course will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure, please discuss this with the course instructor.

Turnitin.com

In this course we will be using a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal plagiarism. Students will be expected to submit their work electronically to Turnitin.com and in hard copy

so that it can be checked for academic dishonesty. Students who do not wish to submit their work to Turnitin.com must still submit a copy to the instructor. No penalty will be assigned to a student who does not submit work to Turnitin.com. All submitted work is subject to normal verification that standards of academic integrity have been upheld (e.g., on-line search, etc.). To see the Turnitin.com Policy, please to go www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity.

University Policies

Faculty of Social Sciences E-mail Communication Policy

Effective September 1, 2010, it is the policy of the Faculty of Social Sciences that all e-mail communication sent from students to instructors (including TAs), and from students to staff, must originate from the student's own McMaster University e-mail account. This policy protects confidentiality and confirms the identity of the student. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that communication is sent to the university from a McMaster account. If an instructor becomes aware that a communication has come from an alternate address, the instructor may not reply at his or her discretion.

Privacy Protection

In accordance with regulations set out by the Freedom of Information and Privacy Protection Act, the University will not allow return of graded materials by placing them in boxes in departmental offices or classrooms so that students may retrieve their papers themselves; tests and assignments must be returned directly to the student. Similarly, grades for assignments for courses may only be posted using the last 5 digits of the student number as the identifying data. The following possibilities exist for return of graded materials:

1. Direct return of materials to students in class.
2. Return of materials to students during office hours.
3. Students attach a stamped, self-addressed envelope with assignments for return by mail.
4. Submit/grade/return papers electronically.

Arrangements for the return of assignments from the options above will be finalized during the first class.

Course Modification

The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check his/her McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.

ADVISORY STATEMENTS

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behaviour in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity. **It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty.**

Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behaviour can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: "Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty"), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the [Academic Integrity Policy](https://secretariat.mcmaster.ca/university-policies-procedures-guidelines/), located at <https://secretariat.mcmaster.ca/university-policies-procedures-guidelines/>

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

- plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one's own or for which other credit has been obtained.
- improper collaboration in group work.
- copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

AUTHENTICITY / PLAGIARISM DETECTION

Some courses may use a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal authenticity and ownership of student submitted work. For courses using such software, students will be expected to submit their work electronically either directly to Turnitin.com or via an online learning platform (e.g. A2L, etc.) using plagiarism detection (a service supported by Turnitin.com) so it can be checked for academic dishonesty.

Students who do not wish their work to be submitted through the plagiarism detection software must inform the Instructor before the assignment is due. No penalty will be assigned to a student who does not submit work to the plagiarism detection software. **All submitted work is subject to normal verification that standards of academic integrity have been upheld** (e.g., on-line search, other software, etc.). For more details about McMaster's use of Turnitin.com please go to www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity.

COURSES WITH AN ON-LINE ELEMENT

Some courses may use on-line elements (e.g. e-mail, Avenue to Learn (A2L), LearnLink, web pages, capa, Moodle, ThinkingCap, etc.). Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of a course using these elements, private information such as first and last names, usernames for the McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in a course that uses on-line elements will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure, please discuss this with the course instructor.

ONLINE PROCTORING

Some courses may use online proctoring software for tests and exams. This software may require students to turn on their video camera, present identification, monitor and record their computer activities, and/or lock/restrict their browser or other applications/software during tests or exams. This software may be required to be installed before the test/exam begins.

CONDUCT EXPECTATIONS

As a McMaster student, you have the right to experience, and the responsibility to demonstrate, respectful and dignified interactions within all of our living, learning and working communities. These expectations are described in the [Code of Student Rights & Responsibilities](#) (the “Code”). All students share the responsibility of maintaining a positive environment for the academic and personal growth of all McMaster community members, **whether in person or online**. It is essential that students be mindful of their interactions online, as the Code remains in effect in virtual learning environments. The Code applies to any interactions that adversely affect, disrupt, or interfere with reasonable participation in University activities. Student disruptions or behaviours that interfere with university functions on online platforms (e.g. use of Avenue 2 Learn, WebEx or Zoom for delivery), will be taken very seriously and will be investigated. Outcomes may include restriction or removal of the involved students’ access to these platforms.

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students with disabilities who require academic accommodation must contact [Student Accessibility Services](#) (SAS) at 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or sas@mcmaster.ca to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. For further information, consult McMaster University’s [Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities](#) policy.

REQUESTS FOR RELIEF FOR MISSED ACADEMIC TERM WORK

[McMaster Student Absence Form \(MSAF\)](#): In the event of an absence for medical or other reasons, students should review and follow the Academic Regulation in the Undergraduate Calendar “Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work”: <https://academiccalendars.romcmaster.ca/content.php?catoid=44&navoid=9020#requests-for-relief-for-missed-academic-term-work>

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION FOR RELIGIOUS, INDIGENOUS OR SPIRITUAL OBSERVANCES (RISO)

Students requiring academic accommodation based on religious, indigenous or spiritual observances should follow the procedures set out in the [RISO](#) policy. Students should submit their request to their Faculty Office **normally within 10 working days** of the beginning of term in which they anticipate a need for accommodation or to the Registrar's Office prior to their examinations. Students should also contact their instructors as soon as possible to make alternative arrangements for classes, assignments, and tests.

COPYRIGHT AND RECORDING

Students are advised that lectures, demonstrations, performances, and any other course material provided by an instructor include copyright protected works. The Copyright Act and copyright law protect every original literary, dramatic, musical and artistic work, **including lectures** by University instructors. The recording of lectures, tutorials, or other methods of instruction may occur during a course. Recording may be done by either the instructor for the purpose of authorized distribution, or by a student for the purpose of personal study. Students should be aware that their voice and/or image may be recorded by others during the class. Please speak with the instructor if this is a concern for you.

EXTREME CIRCUMSTANCES

The University reserves the right to change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances (e.g., severe weather, labour disruptions, etc.). Changes will be communicated through regular McMaster communication channels, such as McMaster Daily News, A2L and/or McMaster email.

