

Course Descriptions

For all courses listed below, students without a stated course prerequisite can contact the course instructor and request a prerequisite override.

1202 Introducing Socio-Cultural Anthropology

3 credit hours

An introduction to the cultures and social systems of people from around the world. Topics include economics, politics, kinship, family, and religion, as well as the expressive aspects of culture such as the arts, myth, and ritual.

1271 Introducing Archaeology

3 credit hours

An introduction to archaeology and its contribution to an understanding of the development of culture. The course will investigate the history of the discipline and the development of techniques and principles used by archaeologists throughout the world.

1280 Introduction to Biological Anthropology

3 credit hours

A survey of human biological evolution. The principal topics are evolutionary theory, human genetics, the nature of race, living primates, and the fossil record of humanity.

1290 Introducing Language and Society

3 credit hours

Language is distinctively human and the basis for shared social interaction. Students are provided with basic concepts for understanding language and communication from the fields of anthropology and sociolinguistics.

2273 Who Owns the Past?

3 credit hours

Prerequisite: ANTH 1202, 1271, 1280, 1290, or 2282

Why preserve the past, and in what form? How has the past been used and abused for political purposes in different historical and cultural contexts? To what extent have administrative policies and ethnocentric attitudes towards indigenous peoples alienated indigenes from anthropologists? How do museums, collections, the restitution of cultural property and the illicit traffic in relics contribute to the situation?

2282 Introducing Forensic Anthropology

3 credit hours

This course is an introduction to the multidisciplinary nature of forensic anthropology. It explores the myths and realities of the search for human remains in crime scenes, what should be expected from a forensic anthropology expert in the courtroom, some of the challenges in mass fatality incident responses, and what a student should consider if they want to pursue a career in forensic anthropology.

2301 Anthropology of Childhood

3 credit hours

Prerequisite: ANTH 1202.

This course examines the nature of childhood in various societies with attention to the development and socialization of children from birth through adolescence. Primary emphasis will be given to a perspective that views children as active participants in their own worlds as well as the worlds of others. While focusing on the social and culture contexts of children's lives, we will explore topics that include parent-child relations, education, child labor, friendship, play, and the relationship of children to media technologies and consumer culture.

2301 Nature of Culture

3 credit hours

Prerequisite: Three (3) credit hours in ANTH, ACST, GEOG, HIST, IDST, POLI, SOCI, or WMST.

Students are introduced to the concept of culture as an essential aspect of human nature. Emphasis is given to contemporary theories concerning society and culture.

2311 Ethnology: Melanesia

3 credit hours

Prerequisite: ANTH 1202

Selected societies and cultures of Papua New Guinea and adjacent island clusters are examined. Special attention is given to cultural diversity within this region. Specific topics covered include variation in the relationship between men and women, variation in leadership patterns, warfare and descent systems.

2316 Indigenous Peoples of Canada

3 credit hours

Prerequisite: ANTH 1202

This course provides a survey of the varied Indigenous cultures of Canada. Some of the socio-cultural changes associated with contacts between indigenous peoples and Europeans are considered. Variation in roles assumed by men and women are also discussed.

2326 Contemporary East Asia

3 credit hours

Prerequisite: ANTH 1202

This course will consider East Asia as a region with shared cultural and historical legacies, while examining the radically diverse contemporary conditions of each country.

2327 Japanese Society

3 credit hours

Prerequisite: ANTH 1202

This course introduces Japanese society through a life course perspective. Topics include family, education, the work place, gender, class, ethnic minorities and contemporary social problems.

2392 Linguistic Anthropology [LING 2392]

3 credit hours

Prerequisite: One of ANTH 1202, ANTH 1290, LING 1200

Students explore the relationship between language and culture in diverse ethnographic settings. Attention will be paid to the unique contributions of anthropology to the study of language.

2401 Anthropology of Work

3 credit hours

Prerequisite: Three (3) credit hours in ANTH, ACST, HIST, IDST, POLI, SOCI, or WMST

Anthropologists have long been interested in work as an aspect of economy (that is, how productive tasks get accomplished), as a determiner of general social structure (that is, a core institution), and as a theme in the ethos of various societies (that is, work as an ethic). As anthropologists turn their attention to industrial societies (and as other disciplines adopt ethnographic methods), the workplace is often treated as were small communities in the past. Special attention is given to methods of data collection in workplaces in complex societies. There will also be an examination of the application of these techniques by scholars, development agencies, commercial enterprises, and political movements.

3201 The Anthropology of Food

3 credit hours

Prerequisite(s): ANTH 1202

The goal of this course is to understand the socio-cultural and economic dynamics that shape food and eating, and the roles that both play in shaping people's everyday lives. Students will critically examine a wide range of processes connected to food and eating around the world.

3302 Social Organization

3 credit hours

Prerequisite: ANTH 1202

This course introduces the student to the basics of social structure and social organization. Emphasis is placed upon the importance of kinship, politics, economics, beliefs, and the arts for an understanding of human socio-cultural life.

3303 Sex, Gender and Society [WMST 3303]

3 credit hours

Prerequisite: ANTH 1202, ANTH 1290, or three (3) credit hours in ACST, HIST, IDST, POLI, SOCI, or WMST.

Students are introduced to an anthropological perspective on the relationship between culture, biology, and social expectations of male and female behavior. Emphasis is given to examining how individuals and societies imagine, negotiate, perform and contest dominant gender ideologies, roles, relations and identities.

3307 Visual Anthropology

3 credit hours

Prerequisite: Six (6) credit hours in ANTH

Students are introduced to the field of visual anthropology. The course has two major foci: 1.) Examination of the use of visual material in anthropological research and in the presentation and consumption of anthropological knowledge, focusing particularly on photography and film, and 2.) Addressing visibility as a domain of anthropological inquiry, exploring ways of seeing in culturally and historically specific contexts.

3308 Signs and Symbols

3 credit hours

Prerequisite: ANTH 1202 or ANTH 1290

We perceive the world around us through the logic of signs. This course is an introduction to the fields of symbolic and semiotic anthropology, examining the role of symbols in constituting cultural reality. Special attention will be paid to both universal and culturally specific symbolic practices as well as considering the role symbols play in our own lives.

3309 Peasants

3 credit hours

Prerequisite: ANTH 1202

A number of substantive studies of peasant society and culture are examined. Examples are drawn from diverse regions including Mexico, India, China, Japan, Europe and Southeast Asia. Theories related to similar and contrasting features of peasant culture are considered.

3316 Anthropology of Religion [RELS 3316]

3 credit hours

Prerequisite: Any one of ANTH 1202, RELS 1210, 1211, 1220, 1221, 1251

This course surveys major developments in the anthropological study of religions. The course will provide a solid theoretical foundation for the field study of contemporary religions.

3320 Anthropology in Hollywood

3 credit hours

Prerequisites: Twelve (12) credit hours in ANTH

Students explore the anthropological analysis of cinema and the public image of anthropology as represented in popular movies.

3334 Warfare

3 credit hours

Prerequisite: ANTH 1202

The course will examine the nature and structure of human conflict by evaluating anthropological theories of warfare and aggression in light of the case materials available on small-scale societies. In addition, particular attention will be devoted to: 1) the role of racism in human conflict, and 2) a critique of socio-biological theories of human aggression.

3373 Fieldwork in Archaeology

3 credit hours

Prerequisite: ANTH 1271

This course offers detailed instruction with practical application of archaeological field techniques. This course is generally off-campus at an archaeological site. As such, the course is dependent upon external funds and has a limited enrollment. Please consult the Departmental Chairperson regarding availability.

3374 Archaeology Laboratory

3 credit hours

Prerequisite: ANTH 3373

The course offers training in the laboratory, analysis of materials recovered from an archaeological site. To maintain continuity of the learning experience, students must take ANTH 3373 in the same year this course is offered.

3375 World Prehistory

3 credit hours

Prerequisite: ANTH 1271

Students examine archaeological evidence of early human activity and how this evidence has been interpreted. We examine human origins, cultural adaptations, and the notion of “human nature”..

3376 Archaeology of Death

3 credit hours

Prerequisite: ANTH 1271

This course will examine funerary customs within a global framework. Mortuary rituals afford not only insight into the death practices of past societies, they may also provide a basis from which to investigate a broad range of important social and anthropological questions, from social organizations, gender relations, and social inequality, to health and disease, diet, and biological affinity, to the ethical and legal aspects of exhumation and reburial of skeletal remains.

3378 Landscape Archaeology

3 credit hours

Prerequisite: ANTH 1271

This course offers an introductory survey to both the empirical and interpretive aspects of Landscape Archaeology incorporating real-world case studies drawn from local archaeological resources. It emphasizes the human-scale experience of the past rather than grand, overarching models, and borrows liberally from socio-cultural anthropology.

3379 The Archaeology of Acadia

3 credit hours

Prerequisite: ANTH 1271

Drawing upon primary source evidence, and placing a particular emphasis on materiality, thematic emphasis is given to colonial Nova Scotia as a stage for conflict and negotiation

between Aboriginal and European peoples and adaptation of European social, political, and economic practices to a North American environment. This course explores the European colonization of the Maritime Provinces from contact to the middle of the 18th century.

3381 Anthropological Genetics

3 credit hours

Prerequisite: ANTH 1280

A survey of human genetics, including Mendelian genetics, multifactorial genetics, cytogenetics, and population genetics, intended to enhance understanding of human biological variation.

3382 Paleoanthropology

3 credit hours

Prerequisite: ANTH 1280

A survey of primate and human evolution as revealed in the fossil record.

3391 Learning a Field Language [LING 2391]

3 credit hours

Prerequisite: One of ANTH 1202, ANTH 1290, LING 1200

Learning a field language is an essential part of anthropological fieldwork. Students learn concepts and methods related to language elicitation, and acquisition of communicative competence in an unknown language. The practical application of these methods in ethnographic settings is stressed.

3396 Language Use and Issues in Canada [LING 3396]

3 credit hours

Prerequisite: ANTH 1290 or LING 1200

Geographically vast and linguistically diverse, Canada offers an ideal case study of contemporary issues in the study of language. Topics include official bilingualism, functional multilingualism, heritage languages, and indigenous languages. Questions of maintenance, revitalization, contact and change will be examined throughout.

3467 Cultural Resource Management (CRM) Archaeology

3 credit hours

Prerequisite: ANTH 1271

Cultural Resource Management (CRM), as an applied form of archaeological research, is a rapidly expanding field of practice where many students and graduates of archaeological curricula develop their professional careers. Students will be introduced to its principles and learn about legislation, policy and protocols that impact CRM archaeology. Students will also be introduced to applications of geomatics technology, including geographic information systems (GIS), for CRM archaeology. Case studies will comprise a fundamental source of information in this course. The format is that of a seminar.

3471 Forensic Skeletal Identification

3 credit hours

Prerequisite: Thirty (30) credit hours, including ANTH 1280 or ANTH 2282.

A detailed examination of bones of the human skeleton for forensic purposes.

Note: It is recommended that students who complete ANTH 3471 also complete ANTH 3472.

3472 Forensic Skeletal Analysis

3 credit hours

Prerequisite: ANTH 3471

A detailed analysis of the human skeleton aimed at creating profiles of decedents and understanding circumstances surrounding their deaths.

3473 Forensic Facial Anatomy

3 credit hours

Prerequisite: Thirty (30) credit hours

Students study facial anatomy and its importance in forensic human identification through an examination of topics such as human osteology, soft tissue anatomy, how the brain recognizes faces, collection of facial tissue depths using ultrasound, and 3-D facial reconstruction.

3474 Human Variation

3 credit hours

Prerequisite: Thirty (30) credit hours including ANTH 1280, or ANTH 2282.

Students examine the structure of human variation from a biological perspective through an exploration of topics such as: “race” and biology; eugenics; sex, gender and sexuality; and environmental racism.

3475 Palaeopathology

3 credit hours

Prerequisite: Thirty (30) credit hours including ANTH 1280 or ANTH 2282

Palaeopathology is the study of diseases in past human populations. In this course you will learn how to diagnose simple bone pathologies, and in the process gain an understanding of bone physiology and pathology and how these processes work. The main part of the course will focus on the major categories of disease that affect the skeleton. We will also examine how certain diseases have affected human history.

3571 Archaeological Mysteries

3 credit hours

Prerequisite: ANTH 1271

Students will survey spectacular claims about the past found in public discourse. Questions such as the nature of archaeological evidence, the degree to which archaeology can be said to be a science, and the treatment of alternative interpretations of the past will be addressed.

3572 Archaeology of Empire

3 credit hours

Prerequisite: ANTH 1271

This course examines the phenomenon of imperialism through an archaeological lens. Students will explore the relationships between material culture and systems of social power.

3573 Archaeology of Halifax

3 credit hours

Prerequisite: ANTH 1271

A variety of research methods associated with the study of urban materiality will be examined. Using Halifax as a case study, students will participate in research and field work that will contribute directly to an understanding of the urban archaeology and history of Halifax and its people.

3574 Public Archaeology

3 credit hours

Prerequisites: ANTH1271

Public archaeology concerns how archaeology and archaeologists function beyond the professional community. Students consider why it is important for people to know about archaeology. They also examine how governments, teachers, writers, and journalists interact with the discipline.

3701 Forensic Archaeology Field School

3 credit hours

Prerequisite: Sixty (60) credit hours.

This course is an introduction to forensic archaeology. It will teach students field recovery techniques of surface and buried remains as well as the protocol associated with crime scenes and exhibit documentation. Topics that will be covered include: introduction to forensic archaeology and anthropology (including roles of various law enforcement officials), crime scene safety and ethics, crime scene and exhibit documentation (scene photography, note taking, chain of custody of exhibits), establishing scene perimeters, searching for clandestine burials and human remains, forensic taphonomy, gridding scenes, mapping scenes, excavation techniques, soil analysis, and scene restoration.

3710 - 3719 Field Study in Anthropology

3 credit hours

Prerequisite: Twelve (12) credit hours in Anthropology and permission of the instructor

This course is designed to allow students to take advantage of field study, including international field study, opportunities not necessarily supervised by a member of the Department of Anthropology. Special arrangements for the course must be approved by the Department Chairperson, at the request of the student.

3826-3849 Special Topics/Seminars in Anthropology

3 credit hours

Prerequisite: Six (6) credit hours at the 2000 level or above

To be offered in response to expressed student desire for advanced instruction in anthropological topics not covered intensively in substantive course offerings; or to take advantage of expertise of visiting scholars. The format is usually that of a seminar.

3876 - 3899 Directed Independent Study in Anthropology

3 credit hours

4378 Advanced Landscape Archaeology

3 credit hours

Prerequisite: ANTH 3378

This course offers a practical exploration of empirical landscape archaeological methods such as pedestrian and geophysical survey, and historical map and aerial photograph interpretation. Students apply these methods in the field and produce research reports in accordance with federal and provincial archaeology regulations.

4411 Ethnographic Research Methodology

3 credit hours

Prerequisite: ANTH 1202 or SOCI 1210

Students are introduced to the variety of ethnographic research methods applicable in the field setting. Through a series of exercises (that may include work in the local community) the students develop and design a long-term research project, and learn how to analyze their findings. A brief introduction to quantitative methods is offered.

4452 History of Anthropological Thought

3 credit hours

Prerequisite: ANTH 1202, 1271, 1280, and 1290

A history of anthropological theory focused on the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries.

4462 Method and Theory in Historical Archaeology

3 credit hours

Prerequisite: ANTH 1271

Concepts and methods of historical archeology, survey techniques, data collection, and laboratory analysis. Suggested for students who intend to take fieldwork courses in archeology.

4464 Advanced Fieldwork in Archaeology

3 credit hours

Prerequisite: ANTH 3373

Students are expected to have knowledge of field techniques used in archaeology. They assist a senior archaeologist in the excavation of an archaeological site, being responsible for all levels of recording. Please consult the Departmental Chairperson regarding availability.

4465 Advanced Archaeology Laboratory

3 credit hours

Prerequisite: ANTH 3374

Students must have a knowledge of laboratory techniques used in archaeology. They use this knowledge to record, analyze, and report on archaeological specimens. This course may be twinned with ANTH 4464, should the site being excavated produce sufficient archaeological materials.

4491 Language and Culture [LING 4491]

3 credit hours

Prerequisite: ANTH 1290 or LING 1200

This course examines topics in the field of linguistic anthropology, combining a sophisticated understanding of the structure of language with the cultural realities of its use. Students will learn about current debates and advanced concepts in the field, while being given the opportunity to conduct their own research on language behaviour.

4492 Ethnography of Communication [LING 4492]

3 credit hours

Prerequisite: ANTH 1290 or LING 1200

Linguistic anthropologists analyze the dynamics of communication through the medium of ethnography. This course critically examines how anthropologists collect and convey their findings on language use. Case studies combine ethnographic texts with theoretical background to allow students to evaluate recent anthropological research.

4501 Honours Thesis Research

3 credit hours

Prerequisite: Restricted to students who have been accepted by the department into the honours program.

The application of anthropological theory and methods to a well-defined area of study identified and communicated to the student's honours thesis committee prior to enrolment. Students will work closely with their principal advisors and two other committee members.

4502 Honours Thesis Writing

3 credit hours

Prerequisite: ANTH 4501

This course examines the communication of the results of anthropological inquiry to the scholarly community through the writing of an honours thesis. While students will work closely with their thesis committees, all faculty members of the department will evaluate theses on the basis of content and style.

4701 Internship in Forensic Anthropology

6 credit hours

Prerequisite: ANTH 3471 and 3472

This is a practical, hands-on course in forensic anthropology. Students will use their knowledge of forensic methodologies for the examination and identification of human remains as well as the writing of forensic anthropology reports through work in an official morgue.

4710 - 4719 Advanced Field Study in Anthropology

3 credit hours

Prerequisite: One of ANTH 3710 – 3719

Students will investigate and develop a response to a specific research questions in a particular field site (e.g. Japan, Arctic Canada, etc.), Students will travel to the field site with a faculty member. Students will apply anthropological theories and methods to complete a guided research project. This course generally takes place between May and August and involves additional costs. Locations and foci will vary from year to year. Please consult Departmental Chairperson for availability.

4826 - 4849 Special Topics/Seminars in Anthropology

3 credit hours

Prerequisite: Six (6) credit hours at the 2000 level or above

To be offered in response to expressed student desire for advanced instruction in anthropological topics not covered intensively in substantive course offerings; or to take advantage of expertise of visiting scholars. The format is usually that of a seminar.

4850 - 4875 Directed Independent Study in Anthropology

6 credit hours

4876 - 4899 Directed Independent Study in Anthropology

3 credit hours

