

Carleton University
Department of Sociology and Anthropology
ANTH 2500: Culture and Symbols
Winter 2023

Instructor: Meysoon Amin

Office hours: Wednesdays 6:30-7:30pm (EST) or by appointment. Link to online office hours provided on Brightspace.

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TA Information: Fayssal Yatim (FayssalYatim@email.carleton.ca)

Pre-requisite(s): None. Precludes additional credit for ANTH 3304 (no longer offered).

Method of delivery: In-person. Class meets on Tuesdays at 6:05pm-8:55pm (EST) in Tory Building 446.

Course Description

This course will introduce students to the anthropological study of culture and symbols. It will examine the various ways in which anthropologists have approached this relationship, and how it has shaped our understanding and engagement with our social worlds. This will include an exploration into how signs and symbols are created, structured, and interpreted. We will also look at how they give meaning to many aspects of human life such as language, religion, mythmaking, bodily practices as well as other components of culture and society.

Learning Outcomes

- To help students develop an understanding of signs and symbols (semiotics), and their importance to our perception and experience of culture and society.
- To introduce students to classic and contemporary anthropological texts on semiotic concepts and their social uses.
- To give students the opportunity to develop their critical thinking and writing skills and apply their knowledge of semiotics through course assignments.

Course Readings

There is no required textbook for this course. Instead, you will engage with a variety of anthropological literature, ethnographies and multi-media sources that speak to the major themes and topics in the historical and contemporary study of culture and symbols. Your assigned material and links to free streaming platforms such as YouTube, will be made available through Brightspace. They will be posted on Wednesdays in the corresponding week's folder.

Assignments and Evaluations

Assignments	Grade Percentage	Due Dates
Reading Reflections and Responses	30%	Continuous
Midterm Test	20%	February 14 th
Annotated Bibliography	20%	March 14 th
Final Essay	30%	April 11 th (Tentative Date)

Reading Reflections & Responses

Reading reflections provide students with the opportunity for more focused and continuous engagement with the course material. You will **submit (4) reading reflections** throughout

the duration of the course. Topics for each reflection will be posted onto Brightspace on Tuesday's at 11:59pm (EST) under the corresponding week (refer to course schedule).

Your reflection should reference the assigned material and lecture content and should be **300 words in length with a proposed discussion question** (not part of word count). All reading reflections should be uploaded onto Brightspace under the designated folders. Please watch for spelling and grammar and remember to include in-text citations (APA, MLA or AAA style accepted). **Each reflection is worth 5% for a total of 20%.**

You will also be asked to **write (2) responses based on your classmate's discussion questions from Reflections 1 or 2** (in the first half of the course), **and Reflections 3 or 4** (in the second half of the course). I will compile a list of your classmates' discussion questions and upload them onto Brightspace a week before each response is due. Your response should be **100-150 words in length and must include the question that you are responding to** (not part of the word count). All responses should be uploaded onto Brightspace under the designated folder. Please watch for spelling and grammar. **Each response is worth 5% for a total of 10%.**

*Refer to the course schedule below for due dates.

Midterm Test

Online midterm consisting of (4) short answer questions. Each question is worth 5% for a total of 20%. The midterm will cover material from Weeks 2 to 5 and will be available on Brightspace during our regularly scheduled class time (6:05pm-8:55pm) in Week 6.

Annotated Bibliography

The annotated bibliography is a list of sources (e.g., books, journal articles etc.) that can assist you in preparation for your final essay. Your annotated bibliography should include 5 sources. Each annotation should be 4-5 sentences in length. You will receive a portion of your mark for submitting on time and the majority for the quality of your annotation (summary, assessment, and reflection).

Some helpful points to consider from each source:

- What are the main arguments?
- What is the point? What is the author's point of view?
- Are there specific topics that reading covers?
- What is the goal of the reading?
- What is important for me to know about this reading?

Final Essay

Students will have the opportunity to draw on various themes and topics from the course to analyze a sign or symbol of their choice. Your analysis should be in essay format and 8-10 pages in length (double-spaced, Times New Roman, size 12-font). Additionally, you should include at least (3) sources from your annotated bibliography.

*Rubric and additional instructions will be posted on Brightspace.

Late Assignment Policy

Unless granted an extension at least one week prior to a due date (excluding extenuating circumstances), all late assignments will be deducted 1% per day. After 7 days a mark of zero will be assigned.

Course Schedule

Week	Topics	Announcements
1 (Jan. 10)	Introduction to the Course	
2 (Jan. 17)	Culture, Signs, and Symbols	Reading reflection #1: Topic posted on Brightspace
3 (Jan. 24)	Language and Linguistic Communication	Reading Reflection 1 due by Monday Jan. 23 @11:59pm (EST) Reading reflection #2: Topic posted on Brightspace.
4 (Jan. 31)	Metaphor	Reading Reflection 2 due by Monday Jan. 30 @11:59pm (EST)
5 (Feb. 7)	Religion, Rituals, and Symbols	Response #1 due by Monday Feb. 6 @ 11:59pm (EST).
6 (Feb. 14)	Online Midterm (no in-person class)	
Winter Break		
7 (Feb. 28)	Memory, Myth and Mythology	Reading reflection #3: Topic posted on Brightspace
8 (Mar. 7)	Taboo	Reading Reflection 3 due by Monday Mar. 6 @11:59pm (EST)
9 (Mar. 14)	Animals	Annotated Bibliography due by Tuesday @11:59pm (EST).
10 (Mar. 21)	Signs and the Body (I)	Reading reflection #4: Topic posted on Brightspace
11 (Mar. 28)	Signs and the Body (II)	Reading Reflection 4 due by Monday Mar. 27 @11:59pm (EST)
12 (Apr. 4)	Signs and Political Power	Response #2 due by Monday Apr. 3 @ 11:59pm (EST)
13 (Apr. 11)	Course wrap-up	Final Essay due by Tuesday @ 11:59pm (EST) *Tentative date

Territory Acknowledgement

Carleton University acknowledges the location of its campus on the traditional, unceded territories of the Algonquin nation. In doing so, Carleton acknowledges it has a responsibility to the Algonquin people and a responsibility to adhere to Algonquin cultural protocols. A link to the Centre for Indigenous initiatives can be found at:

<https://carleton.ca/indigenous/policies-procedures/algonquin-territoryacknowledgment/>

Diversity and Inclusion in Learning

This course provides a unique opportunity for us to learn with and from each other. In doing so, I ask that we respect each other's diverse backgrounds, gender identifications and sexual orientations, as well as our lived experiences that can shape our reception and engagement

with course material. Additionally, as some of the topics and issues that we cover in this course speak to the marginalization, exploitation, and exclusion of people; my expectation is that we all work together towards creating a safe and inclusive virtual learning space. This requires us to think and act with care.

In accordance with the Carleton University Undergraduate Calendar Regulations, the letter grades assigned in this course will have the following percentage equivalents:

A+ = 90-100	B+ = 77-79	C+ = 67-69	D+ = 57-59
A = 85-89	B = 73-76	C = 63-66	D = 53- 56
A- = 80-84	B- = 70-72	C- = 60-62	D- = 50-52
F= Below 50	WDB= Withdraw from the course		DEF= Deferred

Academic Regulations, Accommodations, Plagiarism, Etc.

University rules regarding registration, withdrawal, appealing marks, and most anything else you might need to know can be found on the university's website, here:

<https://calendar.carleton.ca/undergrad/regulations/academicregulationsoftheuniversity/>

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. For an accommodation request, the processes are as follows:

Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

The Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) provides services to students with Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/mental health disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), chronic medical conditions, and impairments in mobility, hearing, and vision. If you have a disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact PMC at 613- 520-6608 or pmc@carleton.ca for a formal evaluation. If you are already registered with the PMC, contact your PMC coordinator to send me your Letter of Accommodation at the beginning of the term, and no later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation (if applicable). After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with me to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. Please consult the PMC website for the deadline to request accommodations for the formally scheduled exam (if applicable).

*The deadline for contacting the Paul Menton Centre regarding accommodation for **December examinations (Fall) is November 11, 2022**, and for **April examinations (Winter) is March 15, 2023**.

For Pregnancy

Please contact your instructor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For accommodation regarding a formally-scheduled final exam, you must complete the Pregnancy Accommodation Form ([click here](#)).

For Religious Obligations

Please contact your instructor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details [click here](#).

For Survivors of Sexual Violence

As a community, Carleton University is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working, and living environment where sexual violence will not be tolerated, and where survivors are supported through academic accommodations as per Carleton's Sexual Violence Policy. For more information about the services available at the university and to obtain information about sexual violence and/or support, visit: <https://carleton.ca/equity/sexual-assault-support-services>

For Student Activities

Carleton University recognizes the substantial benefits, both to the individual student and for the university, that result from a student participating in activities beyond the classroom experience. Reasonable accommodation will be provided to students who compete or perform at the national or international level. Please contact your instructor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. <https://carleton.ca/senate/wp-content/uploads/Accommodation-for-Student-Activities-1.pdf>

Student Mental Health

As a university student you may experience a range of mental health challenges that significantly impact your academic success and overall well-being. If you need help, please speak to someone. There are numerous resources available both on- and off-campus to support you. Here is a list that may be helpful:

Emergency resources (on and off campus): <https://carleton.ca/health/emergencies-and-crisis/emergency-numbers/>

Carleton resources

- Mental Health and Wellbeing: <https://carleton.ca/wellness/>
- Health & Counselling Services: <https://carleton.ca/health/>
- Paul Menton Centre: <https://carleton.ca/pmc/>
- Academic Advising Centre (AAC): <https://carleton.ca/academicadvising/>
- Centre for Student Academic Support (CSAS): <https://carleton.ca/csas/>
- Equity & Inclusivity Communities: <https://carleton.ca/equity/>

Off campus resources

- Distress Centre of Ottawa and Region: (613) 238-3311 or TEXT: 343-306-5550, <https://www.dcottawa.on.ca/>
- Mental Health Crisis Service: (613) 722-6914, 1-866-996-0991, <http://www.crisisline.ca/>
- Empower Me: 1-844-741-6389, <https://students.carleton.ca/services/empower-me-counselling-services/>
- Good2Talk: 1-866-925-5454, <https://good2talk.ca/>
- The Walk-In Counselling Clinic: <https://walkincounselling.com>

Plagiarism

The University Academic Integrity Policy defines plagiarism as “*presenting, whether intentionally or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one’s own.*” This includes reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else’s published or unpublished material, regardless of the source, and presenting these as one’s own without proper citation or reference to the original source. Examples of sources from which the ideas, expressions of

ideas or works of others may be drawn from include but are not limited to: books, articles, papers, literary compositions and phrases, performance compositions, chemical compounds, artworks, laboratory reports, research results, calculations and the results of calculations, diagrams, constructions, computer reports, computer code/software, material on the internet and/or conversations.

Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to:

- any submission prepared in whole or in part, by someone else;
- using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, paraphrased material, algorithms, formulae, scientific or mathematical concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment;
- using another's data or research findings without appropriate acknowledgement;
- submitting a computer program developed in whole or in part by someone else, with or without modifications, as one's own; and
- failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another's work and/or failing to use quotations marks.

Plagiarism is a serious offence that cannot be resolved directly by the course's instructor. The Associate Dean of the Faculty conducts a rigorous investigation, including an interview with the student, when an instructor suspects a piece of work has been plagiarized. Penalties are not trivial. They can include a final grade of "F" for the course.

Pandemic Measures

It is important to remember that COVID is still present in Ottawa. The situation can change at any time and the risks of new variants and outbreaks are very real. There are [a number of actions you can take](#) to lower your risk and the risk you pose to those around you including being vaccinated, wearing a mask, staying home when you're sick, washing your hands and maintaining proper respiratory and cough etiquette.

Feeling sick?

Remaining vigilant and not attending work or school when sick or with symptoms is critically important. If you feel ill or exhibit COVID-19 symptoms do not come to class or campus. If you feel ill or exhibit symptoms while on campus or in class, please leave campus immediately. In all situations, you should follow Carleton's [symptom reporting protocols](#).

Masks

Masks are no longer mandatory in university buildings and facilities. However, we continue to recommend masking when indoors, particularly if physical distancing cannot be maintained. We are aware that personal preferences regarding optional mask use will vary greatly, and we ask that we all show consideration and care for each other during this transition.

Vaccines

While proof of vaccination is no longer required to access campus or participate in in-person Carleton activities, it may become necessary for the University to bring back proof of vaccination requirements on short notice if the situation and public health advice changes. Students are strongly encouraged to get a full course of vaccination, including booster doses as soon as they are eligible and submit their booster dose information in [cuScreen](#) as soon as

possible. Please note that Carleton cannot guarantee that it will be able to offer virtual or hybrid learning options for those who are unable to attend the campus.

All members of the Carleton community are required to follow requirements and guidelines regarding health and safety which may change from time to time. For the most recent information about Carleton's COVID-19 response and health and safety requirements please see the [University's COVID-19 website](#) and review the [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\)](#). Should you have additional questions after reviewing, please contact covidinfo@carleton.ca.

Winter 2023 Dates and Deadlines

January 2, 2023	Deadline for course outlines to be made available to students registered in full winter and early winter term courses.
January 4, 2023	University reopens.
January 9, 2023	Winter term begins. Full winter and early winter classes begin.
January 20-22, 27-29, 2023	Full fall and late fall term deferred final examinations will be held.
January 31, 2023	Last day to withdraw from full winter courses with a full fee adjustment. Withdrawals after this date will result in a permanent annotation of WDN on the official transcript.
February 17, 2023	April examination schedule available online.
February 20, 2023	Statutory holiday. University closed.
February 20-24, 2023	Winter break, no classes.
March 15, 2023	Last day for academic withdrawal from full winter, late winter, and fall/winter courses. Last day to request Formal Examination Accommodation Forms for April full winter, late winter, and fall/winter final examinations to the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities. Note that it may not be possible to fulfil accommodation requests received after the specified deadlines.
March 29, 2023	Last day for summative tests or examinations, or formative tests or examinations totaling more than 15% of the final grade, in full winter term or fall/winter undergraduate courses, before the official April final examination period (see examination regulations in the Academic Regulations of the University section of the Undergraduate Calendar/General Regulations of the Graduate Calendar).
April 7, 2023	Statutory holiday. University closed.
April 12, 2023	Winter term ends. Last day of full winter, late winter, and fall/winter classes. Classes follow a Friday schedule (full winter and late winter courses). Last day for final take-home examinations to be assigned, with the exception of those conforming to the examination regulations in the Academic Regulations of the University section of the Undergraduate Calendar/General Regulations of the Graduate Calendar. Last day for handing in term work and the last day that can be specified by a course instructor as a due date for term work for full winter and late winter courses.

April 13-14, 2023	No classes or examinations take place.
April 15-27, 2023	Final examinations in full winter, late winter, and fall/winter courses will be held. Examinations are normally held all seven days of the week.
April 27, 2023	All final take-home examinations are due on this day, with the exception of those conforming to the examination regulations in the Academic Regulations of the University section of the Undergraduate Calendar/General Regulations of the Graduate Calendar.
May 19-31, 2023	Full winter, late winter, and fall/winter deferred final examinations will be held.