

CARLETON UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY AND ANTHROPOLOGY
ANTH2001A
2026-2027
FOUNDATIONS TO SOCIO-CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY

Instructor: Vivian Solana

Office Hours: By appointment. Email Vivian to meet at Vivian's office (B745 Loeb Building) or through the Office Hours Zoom link available on the course's Brightspace under "Course Tools"

Email: vivian.solana@carleton.ca

Brightspace course page link: <https://brightspace.carleton.ca/d2l/home/448098>

Pre-requisites & Precluded Courses: ANTH1001 or ANTH1002

Method of Delivery: In person

Course Description and Objectives:

Rooted in an effort to understand cultures and societies far removed from the centers of Western colonial power, today you can find anthropologists from all backgrounds researching in a range of social settings: from Wall Street investor bankers, janitors in Silicon Valley, Palestinians in refugee camps, global factories in China, artificial intelligence labs in Japan, US military bases across the world, to Monarch butterflies' conservation sites. In this course, we will explore how 20th century European colonialism contributed to transform human cultures and societies globally, giving shape to the post-colonial, yet imperial, world order we live in today. Moreover, we will examine how European colonialism also gave shape to the methods and questions that anthropologists ask in the first place. In so doing, the course will cover theoretical concepts and debates that emerged through the study of subjects that have been of interest to socio-cultural anthropologists since the discipline's inception, namely: language, belief and religion, gender, race, kinship, governmental and economic systems, health and the body, human relationships with nature, tourism, migration, new technologies, development and humanitarian projects, practices of identity, power and violence, and other aspects of our changing social, environmental, political, economic and cultural worlds. By studying what it means to be human across time and place, anthropological research often challenges us to rethink our taken for granted social practices, norms, and ideologies: Welcome to the ride!

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this course, you will be able to:

1. Explain socio-cultural anthropology's history, its central methods and debates.
2. Identify socio-cultural anthropology's foundational concepts.
3. Understand what an ethnography is and its distinct role as a form of knowledge production.
4. Begin to understand how European colonialism has shaped the discipline of anthropology.
5. Begin to understand the complex ways in which the expansion of capitalism shapes human economies, governments, families, gender, race, spiritual practices and political violence globally.
4. Practice ethnographic methods and writing.
6. Hone your reading, writing, analytical, group discussion and oral presentation skills.

Course Expectations:

In this course, you are expected to learn from your texts, your teacher and from one another. This requires striving towards understanding each other, but it does not imply striving towards finding agreement. Our class will be racially, religiously, politically, culturally, generationally, and economically diverse. We will be of different gender identifications and sexual orientations and our lived experiences and reactions to the course material will reflect this diversity. Sharing our perspectives and interpretations on the course material will

enhance everyone's learning experience and you are encouraged to openly express any disagreements with the authors you will read, with your fellow classmates, or with the Professor in the different participation fora that are available for this course. However, you are expected to conduct yourself in such a way that shows the utmost respect to others who may – or may not – share your views. Derogatory comments and hateful behavior towards others (and their views) will not be tolerated.

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.

Readings:

There are two full books required for this course. During the fall term, we will read:

Sophie Chao. 2025. *Land of Famished Beings: West Papuan Theories of Hunger*, North Carolina, Duke University Press. 37.95 CAD. ISBN 9781478032038.

During the winter term, we will read:

Kristin E. Yarris. 2017. *Care Across Generations: Solidarity and Sacrifice in Transnational Families*. Stanford: Stanford University Press. \$38.50, ISBN 9781503602885

A copy of each book is available for free as an e-book through the MacOdrum Library portal, so students are not required to purchase textbooks or other learning materials for this course. However, should students chose to purchase their own copies these are available for either in-store or online purchase at the Carleton Boosktore: www.carletonshop.ca. Using second-hand copies is acceptable.

All other required course readings, films and podcasts are listed in the course outline and will be available online through the course's Brightspace and Ares.

Course Requirements & Methods of Evaluation:

Assignment	Due Date	Grade
Class Attendance	Ongoing	20 %
Group Presentation	Once throughout the fall and winter term	10 %
Quiz on course readings	December 1 March 30	15% 15%
Ethnographic practice	Submit 3-paged cuPortfolio collection:	
1. First Page: Description of your chosen field site, methods and social position within the site	October 6 (11.59 pm)	10%
2. Second Page: Ethnographic	December 8 (11.59 pm)	15%

description and analysis I		
3. Third Page: Ethnographic description and analysis II	April 6 (11.59 pm)	15%
Extra Credit Assignment	Optional submission for bonus at any point throughout the fall and/or winter terms of 2026-2027	5%

1. **Lecture Attendance:** Your weekly lectures constitute the backbone of your course content. The professor will circulate a sheet of paper during lecture to register your weekly attendance. Every time you attend class you will receive 1% towards this portion of your evaluation. Sometimes and personal issues sometimes get in the way of attending class but please note that there is a total of twenty-four lecture sessions. This means that you can miss up to four sessions and still get full marks for this portion of your evaluation.
2. **Group Presentation:** You will be responsible for delivering a fifteen-minute presentation on the readings assigned on any given week. You will do in a pair or in a group of three and only once throughout the academic year (either in the fall or the winter). You are encouraged to organise your presentation around a collective response to the weekly reading prompt that Vivian will post on the Brightspace. Following your presentation, your group is required to come up with a question for the class based on the article you presented that will be used to lead a twenty-minute class discussion. Group presentations will start on week 4 October 6. A google doc is available on Brightspace for you to sign up to your preferred week. You will need to sign up to a group presentation by week 3 September 29. Once the schedule is finalised, you are expected to seek contact during class time with those who have signed up to present on the same week as you and exchange contact details. You are expected to come up with a date to meet outside of class to discuss your interpretations of the reading that you are meant to present on and to work on preparing the presentation in an equitable and collaborative manner.
3. **Quiz on course readings:** Keeping up with your weekly reading is a key component of your learning journey. On December 1 you will sit through a two-hour long quiz during class time (9 am – 11 am) that will be proctored by your professor and that will test your knowledge and comprehension of the fall term readings. On March 30 you will sit through a two-hour long, closed book, quiz held during class time (9 am – 11 am) that will be proctored by your professor and that will test your knowledge and comprehension of the winter term readings. The format will combine multiple choice questions with short-answer questions. The quizzes' questions will be accessed through Brightspace during the scheduled time, and the results of the quiz will also be made accessible through the courses' Brightspace once the quizzes have been graded.
4. **Ethnographic Practice:** Your capstone assignment is an experiential learning activity designed for you to practice anthropological research and writing firsthand. You will create a cUportfolio collection that will contain the following three pages
 - 4.1 **cuPortfolio page 1: Choose a Research Site:** This page will describe the social setting you have chosen to do your research in for this assignment. It needs to be a social site that you belong to

and attend regularly. For example: Your household, your workplace, a student club, a sports club, a dance club, a musical band, a place of worship, a gym, a neighborhood park, a workplace, etc. By the end of the day on October 6th, you will submit your first cuPortfolio page that will describe: 1. the research site you propose to undertake participant observation in for this assignment, 2. your methodology (i.e., how often will you attend the site, the focus of your observations while you are there, and how will you document your observations), 3. your own social position within this research location.

The use of cuPortfolio will allow you to include images (drawings, photography, maps, etc.), but also videos, and/or audio clips to enhance your description of the site with multiple media. Please don't upload images of human beings other than of yourself. Notice that you are required to choose a site that you are socially embedded in. This requirement has to do with the ethics of social scientific research, which is a topic we will discuss in class. Once your course instructor has approved your research site, you will begin keeping a field diary centered on your own first-hand experience and observations of the site and the socio-cultural worlds in it. Update your field diary once a week until week 12 of the course. The more details you include in your fieldnotes, the easier it will be for you to craft an ethnographic description of the site that develops an argument about its social life.

Word limit: 500 words. No references required. A more precise grading rubric will be shared through Brightspace and discussed in class.

- 4.2 cuPortfolio page 2:** Before the end of the day on December 8, you are due to submit a second cuPortfolio page that includes an ethnographic description based on the participant observations you have undertaken in your research site. The description should present an ethnographic argument that is centered around one or two of the topics covered in your fall term course: namely worldview, language, knowledge, economy, religion & belief, kinship, gender, violence and/or power.

The use of cuPortfolio will allow you to include images (drawings, photography, maps, etc.), videos, and/or audio to enhance your textual description of the site. For ethical purposes, please don't upload images of human beings in this research site other than of yourself.

Word limit: 1000 words. Note that, in developing your argument, you are required to draw on at least one of the readings assigned during the fall term. This means your cuPortfolio page 2 will contain a brief bibliography in the reference style of your choice. A more precise grading rubric will be shared through Brightspace and discussed in class.

Important: Note that you are required to bring a draft of the second page of your cuPortfolio to an online class on December 8 for a peer-review workshop that will help you improve your final submission.

- 4.3 cuPortfolio page 3:** Before the end of the day on April 6, you are due to submit a second cuPortfolio page that includes an ethnographic description based on the participant observations you have undertaken in your research site. Ideally, the same site that you carried out research in the Fall. The description in this third page should develop a new ethnographic argument, this time centered around one or two of the topics covered in your winter term.

The use of cuPortfolio will allow you to include images (drawings, photography, maps, etc.), videos, and/or audio to enhance your textual description of the site. For ethical purposes, please don't upload images of human beings in this research site other than of yourself.

Word limit: 1000 words. Note that, in developing your argument, you are required to draw on at least one of the readings assigned during the winter term. This means your cuPortfolio page 2 will contain a brief bibliography in the reference style of your choice. A more precise grading rubric will be shared through Brightspace and discussed in class.

Important: Note that you are required to bring a draft of the second page of your cuPortfolio to an online class on April 6 for a peer-review workshop that will help you improve your final submission.

<https://co-opcareercourse.ca/cuportfolio/secret-url/story.html>

- ### **Policy regarding extensions, late submissions and the use of AI**

All late assignments will be given a penalty of 2% per day, including weekends, and will not be accepted after seven days late. If an illness, injury, or other emergency impacts your coursework, it is your responsibility to contact your professor as soon as possible and in advance of your deadline to discuss if it would be in your best interest to drop the course or if it is possible to arrange an alternative deadline. The use of AI is strictly prohibited in this course and will be considered a case of plagiarism.