

INNOVATION, THE FUTURE & SOCIETY

SYLLABUS // ANTH 3331L // SPRING 2023

DETAILS

CLASS

Days: Tuesdays & Thursdays

Time: 12.30-1.50 PM

Room: ELA 229

PROFESSOR

Name: Dr. Angela K. VandenBroek

Call me: Dr. V., or Dr. VandenBroek

Pronouns: She/Her/Hers

Office Hours:

T & R 2:00 PM – 3:00 PM
or by Appointment

Email: akvbroek@txstate.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course explores the nature of innovation under late capitalism via entrepreneurship. Drawing on the anthropology of business, design, organizations, economics and technology, students will review with a critical lens how people strive for better futures and what anthropology can do to improve these efforts.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

This course provides an overview of issues related to innovation and entrepreneurship under late capitalism. Drawing on a range of anthropological literatures, including the anthropology of business, design, organizations, economics, and technology, we will critically examine popular ideologies of innovation emerging out of late capitalism. Finally, we will examine the role of anthropology in disrupting these ideologies and the roles of applied and practicing anthropologists in cultures of innovation. By the end of the course, you will be able to:

- describe the nature of innovation and entrepreneurship from an anthropological perspective
- analyze the history, discourse, and infrastructures of innovation and entrepreneurship from an anthropological perspective
- evaluate popular rhetoric about innovation and entrepreneurship
- apply anthropological thinking, practices, and theory to business, and organizational settings.

Mould, Oli. 2018. **Against Creativity**. London: Verso Books.

Tett, Gillian. 2021. **Anthro-Vision: A New Way to See in Business and Life**. Simon and Schuster.

GRADE BREAKDOWN

Requirement	Count	Points Each	Total Points	% of Grade
Prep & Attend	26	0	0	0%
Assess	5	300	1500	75%
Exams	2	100	200	10%
Pitch	1	300	300	15%
Total	8	—	2000	100%

COURSE REQUIREMENTS DETAILS

- Prep & Attend** For each class period, students are required to prepare for and attend class. Each prep assignment includes readings, reflections, or activities to help the student prepare for class discussion or activities. While no grade or points will be awarded, peer and professor feedback will be provided.
- Assess** At the end of each unit, each student will turn in an assessment of their learning and effort during that unit. Students should use the forms provided on Canvas to submit their assessments. Students will receive their self-assessed grade unless their self-assessment is dishonest (e.g., they give themselves an A but missed most of the class periods and provided no evidence of effort **or** they give themselves a C because they lack confidence but had perfect attendance and demonstrated effort in learning).
- Exams** There will be two collaborative exams during the semester. During the exams, students will be given an activity to complete. The students will work collaboratively on the activity using their notes and books as needed. Students will be graded based on their individual participation and on the class’s final submission.
- Pitch** The last three weeks of the semester will be dedicated to a class project. Students will work collaboratively during class to develop a pitch using what they learned this semester. The nature of the pitch will be developed based on student interests. The final exam period will be a presentation and discussion of the final pitch. Students will be assessed based on their individual participation in the workshops and on the class’s final pitch presentation.

COURSE SCHEDULE AT A GLANCE

WK	CLASS	TOPIC	DUE	
1	1	T 1/17	Welcome & Getting Started	
	2	R 1/19	Late Capitalism: Capitalism & Neoliberalism	Prep & Attend
2	3	T 1/24	Late Capitalism: Entrepreneurialism	Prep & Attend
	4	R 1/26	Late Capitalism: Innovation Capitalism	Prep & Attend
3	5	T 1/31	Hype: Stories	Prep & Attend + Assess 1
	6	R 2/2	Hype: Geniuses	Prep & Attend
4	7	T 2/7	Hype: Impact	Prep & Attend
	8	R 2/9	Hype: Efficiency	Prep & Attend
5	9	T 2/14	Hype: Techno-Solutionism	Prep & Attend
	10	R 2/16	Hype: Smart	Prep & Attend
6	11	T 2/21	Exam 1	Assess 2
	12	R 2/23	Impact: Radical Creativity	Prep & Attend
7	13	T 2/28	Impact: Innovation	Prep & Attend
	14	R 3/2	Impact: Abolition	Prep & Attend
8	15	T 3/7	Impact: Maintenance	Prep & Attend
	16	R 3/9	Exam 2	Assess 3
9	17	T 3/14	Spring Break	
	18	R 3/16	Spring Break	
10	19	T 3/21	Innovative Anthropology: Insights	Prep & Attend
	20	R 3/23	Innovative Anthropology: Strategy	Prep & Attend
11	21	T 3/28	Innovative Anthropology: Prediction	Prep & Attend
	22	R 3/30	Innovative Anthropology: Organization	Prep & Attend
12	23	T 4/4	Innovative Anthropology: Context	Prep & Attend
	24	R 4/6	Innovative Anthropology: Next	Prep & Attend
13	25	T 4/11	Pitch Workshop	Prep & Attend + Assess 4
	26	R 4/13	Pitch Workshop	Prep & Attend
14	27	T 4/18	Pitch Workshop	Prep & Attend
	28	R 4/20	Pitch Workshop	Prep & Attend
15	29	T 4/25	Pitch Workshop	Prep & Attend
	30	R 4/27	Pitch Workshop	Prep & Attend
16	31	T 5/9	Pitch / Final Exam Period 11AM-1:30PM	Prep & Attend + Assess 5

ASSESSMENT

Prep & Attend + Assess

Student will be evaluated based on their overall learning, participation, and effort. Each class period, students will receive peer and faculty feedback on their work, contributions, and collaborative behavior as part of the Prep & Attend assignment. This feedback will help the student understand how they are doing and progressing. At the end of each unit, students will conduct a guided self-assessment and give themselves a grade. I will review their assessment for honesty and accuracy and either award the grade or adjust if needed. The guided self-assessment will include written reflections as well as grading rubrics.

Exams & Pitch

At the end of the collaborative exam and pitch workshops/exam, students will conduct peer- and self-assessments. I will use these assessments to guide each student's individual grade for the exam. Additionally, the final submission for the exam or pitch will receive one grade that all students receive. The combination of these two will be the student's final grade on the exam/pitch.

Rubrics, Letters, & Points

Rubrics will use letter grades for each assessment criteria. These grades are equal to a percentage of the points for that assessment. This means that students will receive points using the following categorical scale (rather than a sliding scale). I find that categorical scales for qualitative assessments are better for me to assess student work fairly—as the difference between an A and a B can be meaningfully described while the difference between an 84 and an 83 is largely subjective and prone to bias.

Letter Grades	A	B	C	D	F (Credit)	F (No Credit)
% of Points	100%	85%	75%	65%	55%	0%

This scale includes two failing grades. An F with credit acknowledges that the student tried and put in a minimal amount of effort. An F without credit is used for missed assignments or criteria, issues of academic honesty, and for extreme cases of poor quality. This means that a student that attempts an assignment and puts in minimal effort will receive at least 55% of the assignment's points. This is still failing, but it has a significantly lower impact on the student's overall grade.

Final grades will be calculated by totaling the student's earned points and comparing to this scale.

Letter Grades	A	B	C	D	F
% of Points	100 % to 90.0%	< 90.0 % to 80.0%	< 80.0 % to 70.0%	< 70.0 % to 60.0%	< 60.0 % to 0%
Total Points	3000-2700	2699-2400	2399-2100	2099-1800	< 1800

COMMUNICATION

Name

Please call me Dr. VandenBroek or Dr. V. Please never call me Miss, Ms., or Mrs. VandenBroek as I do not wish to use honorifics focused on my gender and marriage status. I use she/her/hers pronouns.

Communicating

The best way to reach me is by email or by coming to office hours. Students should contact me as soon as possible, if they are struggling, have questions, or need assistance. You are also encouraged to come talk about your research interests, career plans, graduate school, or professionalization. I am a first-gen academic and so I know how difficult it is to navigate academics and a career without the knowledge others had. Please do not hesitate to reach out.

Hours

I am available in my office (ELA 271A) on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 2:00-3:00 PM.

I am generally reachable by email at any time. However, I receive a large volume of emails and requests. So, I may not respond immediately to your email, especially at night and on weekends. Please note any deadlines or urgent circumstances in the email to help me triage your request and respond appropriately.

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Every student has the right to a learning environment where you feel safe and welcome. This means statements and actions that promote—knowingly or unknowingly—discrimination or judgement based on race, sex, gender, age, sexual orientation, socioeconomic class, religion, physical appearance, physical or mental ability, or other aspect of one’s identity will not be tolerated. If you feel unsafe or unwelcome in the classroom, please approach me in confidence outside of class. If you are not comfortable speaking to me, please contact the university ombudsman for confidential consultation.

While every student has the right to feel safe and welcome, this does not mean that you will always feel comfortable. We will be discussing topics, such as politics, gender, and racism, that may be difficult for you or for your classmates. In order to discuss these issues while maintaining a safe and welcoming learning environment, we all must understand that we are all learning—including me—and in good faith engage in respectful conversation free from attacks, accusations, and microaggressions. This means classroom discussions are for listening, learning, curiosity, and growth; they are not for anger, adversarialism, debate, or shame. Every student has the right to ask questions, share their experiences, and to say things that might be wrong. Likewise, every student is responsible for learning from their mistakes, maintaining empathy for others’ experiences, and learning to accept reasonable feedback and criticism as an opportunity to learn rather than as a failure or attack.

PARTICIPATING

There will be many collaborative activities and discussions throughout this course. Your participation will not be evaluated by measuring how often you speak but on your collaborative behavior. Participation is not just speaking, but also active listening, engaging your peers in thoughtful discussion, and making room for all students to contribute. When we speak in discussion it will be “to” each other not “at” each other. We will pose questions, articulate ideas for discussion, share relevant stories and knowledge, and provide constructive and thoughtful responses to each other. During activities, we will engage the task at-hand with openness, curiosity, and thoughtfulness.

ATTENDANCE

Attendance is mandatory for every class period. However, I understand that life is not simple and strict rules can create barriers for students unnecessarily. Thus, you are responsible for making good decisions about your attendance and to communicate with me in a timely and professional manner about your absences. Additionally, you are responsible for grading yourself fairly and honestly when absences occur. For each class period, additional reading or activities have been provided in the Prep & Attend assignment. Students may use this material to support their learning and effort when an absence is unavoidable.

This class is not a traditional lecture where I reiterate and elucidate on the material from a textbook. You cannot just read a textbook and gain the same knowledge and experience. Rather, in class, I will summarize, contextualize, and present knowledge and material that has taken me decades to gather and learn through literature reviews and field research. This knowledge and material will be presented in short lectures as well as highly collaborative discussions and activities. If you do not come to class, the only way to learn as much as you would in class is to do the research I've spent my life doing. In a pinch, you can supplement with a few key readings or activities. But, it is not the same. So, if your goal is to learn, then come to class and engage.

Casually skipping class is not recommended. Due to technological limitations and the nature of the course, video calls will not be available to attend in-person class sessions under any circumstances.

DEADLINES

You are expected to turn in all assignments by the deadline in the syllabus. That said, life is not simple and strict deadlines can create barriers for students unnecessarily. So, you will be responsible for making good choices about your workload and deadlines. I will not penalize you for late work.

The deadlines are intended to keep you on track throughout the semester and ensure that you do not fall irretrievably behind. Specifically, Prep & Attend assignments are tied to a specific class period. So, failing to prepare for class means that your experience in class will be diminished. So, although they are ungraded, these are the most important deadlines in the class.

In addition to the work you do for each deadline, I have work to do as well, including administrating grades and forms as well as providing individualized feedback. This is very labor intensive for me and when you fail to meet deadlines, it makes my work substantially more difficult.

I will always process assignments that are turned in by the deadline. For all late work, I will do my best to process them as quickly as possible. However, because the time I reserved to grade your work has passed, I cannot guarantee that the feedback will be as high quality or as timely, as it will need to be done between my other duties and responsibilities. Additionally, I cannot guarantee that late assignments submitted after the thirteenth week of class will be processed/graded, as I have a strict, unbreakable deadline to submit final grades to the university. If many students turn in late assignments after the thirteenth week, I may not have enough time to get through them all before my hard deadline. I will grade late assignments in the order they were received.

TURNING IN ASSIGNMENTS

All assignments should be turned in via Canvas. As a last resort, if you are experiencing a technical issue with Canvas, you may submit the assignment via email to akvbroek@txstate.edu from your TXST email account with the subject line "COURSE NAME, ASSIGNMENT NAME."

ACCESSIBILITY

I strive to create an inclusive and accessible learning environment. However, I may not always be aware of specific student's needs. If you require an accommodation to be successful and participate in the course, please privately contact me as soon as possible. I will ask you to register with the university's office of disability services so that we can access the full range of resources needed to best support your learning. (More information: <https://www.ods.txstate.edu/>)

"It is the University's goal that learning experiences be as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience physical or academic barriers based on disability or pregnancy, contact the Office of Disability Services as soon as possible at 512.245.3451 to establish reasonable accommodations. Please be aware that the accessible table and chairs in this room should remain available for students who find that standard classroom seating is not usable."

Note About Zoom

After classes were moved online during the pandemic, many students assumed that faculty's ability to move classes online meant that hybrid class accommodations were both easy to implement and a good accessibility accommodation. This is not true for many classes, including this one. Fully online classes and fully in-person classes are fundamentally different from a hybrid class where some students are in-person, and some are on Zoom. Hybrid classes require special equipment that we do not have, including classroom microphones, accurate captioning, and multiple projection systems. Without this equipment, it is not possible to conduct activities or discussions that are accessible to all students. Thus, I will not accommodate requests for Zoom attendance to in-person class. Zoom will only be used if we experience an extreme circumstance that requires the entire class to be moved online for a period of time.

ACADEMIC HONESTY

Academic honesty policies often focus on policing student work for violations. This creates an unproductive adversarial relationship between faculty and students. Therefore, I will not use services like TurnItIn to police your honesty. Rather, throughout the semester, we will build an educational relationship through which I will become familiar with your work. Cheating, plagiarizing, and other honesty violations in this environment thus become obvious without the need for surveillance and their discovery stems from an interest in your success and in the positive learning environment of the class.

Academic dishonesty is a breach of the positive learning environment and give students unfair advantages that create inequalities, fail to acknowledge the contributions of others, and impede student learning. Thus, such breaches of academic honesty will result in a mandatory meeting with me and a failing grade. Students that fail to attend the meeting or who dispute my claim will have their case escalated to the university honor board.

Note about ChatGPT and Other AI Writing Tools

Students are welcome to experiment with artificial intelligence tools in their work **for this class**. However, all text generated with AI, even if edited, should include a statement in a footnote that includes: (1) what service was used and what prompt(s); (2) how you used the generated text (e.g., whole paper but thoroughly revised; reorganizing existing text for clarity; etc.); (3) why you used the AI for this text (e.g., inspiration, summarizing, editing, etc.). Shorter passages should be encased in quotation marks or block quotes and cited. AI writing tools can be really helpful. But, to maintain the integrity of our work the use of such tools must be transparent, and we must never claim sole authorship of text we did not write. Further beware the trap of "sounding good." AI often sounds like high quality writing. However, it lacks depth of knowledge and reasoning and so, while sounding good, it is generally quite shallow and often inaccurate. It is up to you to add depth, analysis, and thoughtfulness.

MANDATORY REPORTING

As a faculty member, I am legally obligated to report all incidents of sexual assault, sexual harassment, stalking, and dating violence students tell me about (including in assignments, Canvas communications, classroom discussions, etc.) to the Office of Equal Opportunity and Title IX. If you would like to talk confidentially to someone who is not a mandatory reporter, please contact the Student Health Center, University Counseling, or the Attorney for Students.

RESTRICTIONS ON USE OF COURSE NOTES & MATERIALS

My lectures are protected by copyright law. They are my own original expression, and I record them at the same time that I deliver them in order to bring them under the protection of the U.S. copyright laws. Although you are authorized to take notes in class and create a derivative work from my lectures, the authorization extends only to recordings, notes, and other captures for your own personal use, to share with classmates in your section of this course, and no other. You are not authorized to provide class recordings, photographs, materials, or notes to outside parties, or to make any commercial use of them without my express prior permission.

Resource	Address
Professionalization in Anthropology	https://matthewwolfmeyer.com/professionalization-material/
Online Chicago Manual of Style	http://libproxy.txstate.edu/login?url=http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org
Purdue Writing Lab Logical Fallacies Reference	https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/general_writing/academic_writing/logic_in_argumentative_writing/fallacies.html
UNC Writing Center Clichés Guide	https://writingcenter.unc.edu/tips-and-tools/cliches/
Writing Center	https://www.writingcenter.txstate.edu/
Student Learning Assistance Center	https://www.txstate.edu/slac/
Library Research Tutorials	https://www.library.txstate.edu/research/diy-research.html
Library Research Consultation	https://txstate.libinsight.com/consultation/
Anthropology Librarian & Guides	https://guides.library.txstate.edu/prf.php?account_id=32671
University Counseling Center	https://www.counseling.txstate.edu/
Office of Disability Services	https://www.ods.txstate.edu/
Student Health Center	https://www.healthcenter.txstate.edu/
University Ombudsman	https://www.dos.txstate.edu/services/Ombuds-Services.html
University Honor Board	https://www.txstate.edu/honorcodecouncil/Student-Resources.html