

PROFESSIONAL ETHICS IN ANTHROPOLOGY

SYLLABUS // ANTH 7341 // FALL 2023

DETAILS

CLASS

Type: Seminar
Days: Mondays
Time: 3.30-6.20 PM
Room: ELA 245

PROFESSOR

Name: Dr. Angela K. VandenBroek
Call me: Angela, Dr. V., or Dr. VandenBroek
Pronouns: She/Her/Hers
Office Hours:
Mondays & Wednesdays 2.00 – 3.00 PM
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COURSE DESCRIPTION

Anthropologists face a variety of ethical issues as they engage in research with human and animal subjects. In this course, students will focus on many topics including review boards (IRB, IACUC), collaboration with human groups, bioethics, advocacy and activism, repatriation, intellectual property and publication, cultural heritage preservation, and workplace ethics.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Anthropologists face a variety of ethical issues as they engage in research with human and animal subjects. In this course, students will focus on many topics including review boards (IRB, IACUC), collaboration with human groups, bioethics, advocacy and activism, repatriation, intellectual property and publication, cultural heritage preservation, and workplace ethics. This course is designed to fulfill the Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) requirement by the National Science Foundation and National Institutes of Health for grant recipients.

At the end of this course students will be able to

- explain ethical issues inherent in anthropological research and practice in each subdiscipline of anthropology
- analyze professional resources regarding ethical issues of research and practice
- critique the ethical issues surrounding their areas of professional interest
- apply ethical best practices appropriate to their research specialization

REQUIREMENTS

Hooks, Bell. (1984) 2000. Feminist Theory: From Margin to Center. Pluto Press.
 Graeber, David. 2004. Fragments of an Anarchist Anthropology. Chicago: Prickly Paradigm Press.
Various Articles and Chapters as Assigned

COURSE SCHEDULE AT A GLANCE

WK	TOPIC	MILESTONES
1	8/21 Codes of Ethics	
2	8/28 What Ethics Do and For Whom	
3	9/4 Labor Day Break	
4	9/11 Dr. V.'s Ethical Context	
5	9/18 Policy, Law & Ethics	Assessment
6	9/25 Professionalization & Misconduct	
7	10/2 Activism & Politics	Ethical Context Bibliography
8	10/9 Research Integrity / Ethical Context 1	
9	10/16 Stakeholders & Publics / Ethical Context 2	Assessment
10	10/23 Collaborations / Ethical Context 3	
11	10/30 Ownership & Curation / Ethical Context 4	
12	11/6 Writing & Publishing / Ethical Context 5	
13	11/13 Ableism & Accessibility / Ethical Context 6	Assessment
14	11/20 Bioethics / Ethical Context 7	
15	11/27 Application, Practice & Working	
		Assessment
16	12/4 Final Exam Period (5-7:30PM)	Letter to Yourself Class Project

GRADE BREAKDOWN

Requirement	Count	Points Each	Total Points	% of Grade
Prep & Attend	14	—	—	—
Assess	4	100	400	40%
Ethical Context Bibliography	1	200	200	20%
Letter to Yourself	1	300	300	30%
Class Project	1	100	100	10%
Total	—	—	1000	100%

COURSE REQUIREMENTS DETAILS

Prep & Attend	For each class period, you are required to prepare for and attend class. Each prep assignment includes readings and reflections that are posted to the class discussion board. These assignments are not individually graded but will be graded as part of the Assess assignment.
Assess	Periodically throughout the semester, you will turn in an assessment of your learning and effort up to that point. You should use the form provided on Canvas to submit your assessments. Students will receive their self-assessed grade unless their self-assessment is dishonest or inaccurate (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).
Your Ethical Context Bibliography	In preparation for your letter assignment, you will compile an annotated bibliography of texts that guide or inspire your personal ethics as a professional in anthropology. You will present your ethical context in class and lead a discussion session on a selection of these texts that will be assigned to your classmates as readings. A bibliography of texts has been provided at the end of this syllabus to get you started.
Letter to Yourself	Over the course of the semester, you will craft a letter to yourself describing, justifying, and contextualizing your professional ethics. This letter is intended to serve as a guide to you throughout the program as you navigate the ethics of your workplaces, lab and field research, teaching, publication, advocacy, and professionalization. You will be expected to discuss your thinking and reflections on your personal ethics during each class period.
Class Project	The final hour of each class period will be spent on a class project that develops a product that promotes ethics in anthropology for a general or student audience. The nature of the project will be determined collaboratively between me, you, and your peers based on feasibility and your interests. Last year, the class created a podcast. Other options include a zine, pamphlets, blog, website, poster, or other medium.

DESCRIPTION

READINGS

WEEK 1: CODES OF ETHICS IN ANTHROPOLOGY

Let's get to know each other and discuss course objectives, requirements, and policies. Then, we'll start with an introductory discussion on the basics of professional ethics in anthropology through a review of codes of ethics.

Required

Dumit, Joe. 2012. "How I Read." Dumit Blog (blog). September 27, 2012. <https://dumit.net/how-i-read/>.

AAA Statement on Ethics
<https://ethics.americananthro.org/category/statement/>

Choose Two

SfAA Statement of Ethics & Professional Responsibilities
<https://www.appliedanthro.org/about#:~:text=Statement%20of%20Ethics%20%26%20Professional%20Responsibilities>

SAA Ethics in Professional Archaeology
<https://www.saa.org/career-practice/ethics-in-professional-archaeology>

AABA Code of Ethics
<https://physanth.org/documents/3/ethics.pdf>

ABFA Code of Ethics & Conduct
https://www.theabfa.org/_files/ugd/fa3926_519de4e7ede14e7e8c35ed6e1eb95f9b.pdf

Or any professional code of ethics relevant to your research area.

WEEK 2: WHAT ETHICS DO AND FOR WHOM

This week we will discuss what professional ethics are meant to do and for whom. That is, who benefits from or is protected by common ethical practices, guidelines, and reviews? Who is left out? How and why?

Required

Mattingly, Cheryl, and Jason Throop. 2018. "The Anthropology of Ethics and Morality." *Annual Review of Anthropology* 47 (1): 475–92.

González-Ruibal, Alfredo. 2018. "Ethics of Archaeology." *Annual Review of Anthropology* 47 (1): 345–60.

Turner, Trudy R., Jennifer K. Wagner, and Graciela S. Cabana. 2018. "Ethics in Biological Anthropology." *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* 165 (4): 939–51.

Tashima, Nathaniel, and Cathleen Crain. 2016. "Weigh Competing Ethical Obligations to Collaborators and Affected Parties." In *Anthropological Ethics in Context: An Ongoing Dialogue*, edited by Dena Plemmons and Alex W. Barker, 145–66. Left Coast Press.

Shannon, Jennifer. 2007. "Informed Consent: Documenting the Intersection of Bureaucratic Regulation and Ethnographic Practice." *Political and Legal Anthropology Review* 30 (2): 229–48.

WEEK 3: LABOR DAY

There will be no class this week.

Required

Get started on next week's readings after the holiday.

WEEK 4: DR. V'S ETHICAL CONTEXT

This week Dr. V. will present her own ethical context as an example for crafting your own.

Required

- hooks, bell. (1984) 2000. *Feminist Theory: From Margin to Center*. Pluto Press.
- Nader, Laura. 1972. "Up the Anthropologist—Perspectives Gained from Studying Up." In *Reinventing Anthropology*, edited by Dell Hymes, 284–311. New York: Pantheon Books.
- Haraway, Donna. 1988. "Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective." *Feminist Studies*: FS 14 (3): 575–99.
- Crenshaw, Kimberle. 1990. "Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence against Women of Color." *Stanford Law Review* 43: 1241.
- Graeber, David. 2004. *Fragments of an Anarchist Anthropology*. Chicago: Prickly Paradigm Press.

WEEK 5: POLICY, LAW, & ETHICS

Law and policy are often seen as straightforward rules for governing behavior and practice. However, the anthropology of policy demonstrates how policy comes alive and give rise to intended and unintended relationships, practices, and consequences. This week we will examine how laws and policy governing anthropological ethics "live" within anthropology.

Required

- Shore, Cris, and Susan Wright. 2011. "Introduction. Conceptualising Policy: Technologies of Governance and the Politics of Visibility." In *Policy Worlds: Anthropology and the Analysis of Contemporary Power*, edited by Cris Shore, Susan Wright, and Davide Però, 1–25. EASA Series. New York: Berghahn Books.
- Chin. 2013. "The Neoliberal Institutional Review Board, or Why Just Fixing the Rules Won't Help Feminist (activist) Ethnographers." In *Activist Ethnography: Counterpoints to Neoliberalism in North America*, edited by Christa Craven and Dána-Ain Davis, 201–16. Lanham: Lexington Books.
- Shannon, Jennifer. 2007. "Informed Consent: Documenting the Intersection of Bureaucratic Regulation and Ethnographic Practice." *Political and Legal Anthropology Review* 30 (2): 229–48.
- Lesciotto, Kate M. 2015. "The Impact of Daubert on the Admissibility of Forensic Anthropology Expert Testimony." *Journal of Forensic Sciences* 60 (3): 549–55.
- Kakaliouras, Ann. 2017. "NAGPRA and Repatriation in the Twenty-First Century: Shifting the Discourse from Benefits to Responsibilities." *Bioarchaeology International* 1 (3-4): 183–90.

WEEK 6: PROFESSIONALIZATION & MISCONDUCT

We often think of anthropological ethics happening "out there," in the field between "us" and "them." This week we are going to turn inward to examine how ethics shape the discipline of anthropology and what happens when they fail.

TW: Readings describe instances of harassment and assault.

Required

- Singh, Vineeta, and Neha Vora. 2023. "Critical University Studies." *Annual Review of Anthropology*, October.
- Dennis, Dannah, Dada Docot, Danielle Gendron, and Ilana Gershon. 2022. "The Worst of Anthro Job Ads for 2021." *American Anthropologist*, October. <https://doi.org/10.1111/aman.13781>.
- Brodkin, Karen, Sandra Morgen, and Janis Hutchinson. 2011. "Anthropology as White Public Space?" *American Anthropologist* 113 (4): 545–56.
- Voss, Barbara L. 2021. "Documenting Cultures of Harassment in Archaeology: A Review and Analysis of Quantitative and Qualitative Research Studies." *American Antiquity* 86 (2): 244–60.
- Ahmed, Sara. 2021. "Mind the Gap! Policies, Procedures, and Other Nonperformatives." In *Complaint!* Duke University Press.
- Cho, Isabella B., and Ariel H. Kim. 2022. "38 Harvard Faculty Sign Open Letter Questioning Results of Misconduct Investigations into Prof. John Comaroff." *The Harvard Crimson* (blog). February 4, 2022.
- "Margaret Czerwienski, Lilia Kilburn, and Amulya Mandava v. Harvard University and the President and Fellows of Harvard College." Lawsuit filed in United States District Court for the District of Massachusetts 2022.

WEEK 7: ACTIVISM & POLITICS

Historically, anthropologists eschewed politics and activism in the name of objectivity. However, in our current situated reality, many anthropologists have embraced activism as not merely ethical in nature but as an ethical imperative. This week, we will discuss this intersection of ethics, politics, and activism.

Required

- Willow, Anna J. 2020. "All I Can Do: Why Activists (and Anthropologists) Act." In *Anthropology and Activism: New Contexts, New Conversations*, edited by Anna J. Willow and Kelly A. Yotebieng, 85–97. New York: Routledge.
- Blakey, Michael L., and Rachel Watkins. 2022. "William Montague Cobb: Near the African Diasporic Origins of Activist and Biocultural Anthropology." *The Anatomical Record*.
- Scheper-Hughes, Nancy. 2004. "Parts Unknown Undercover Ethnography of the Organ-Trafficking Underworld." *Ethnografeast* 5 (1): 29–73.
- Shange, Savannah. 2022. "Abolition in the Clutch: Shifting through the Gears with Anthropology." *Feminist Anthropology*, August. <https://doi.org/10.1002/fea2.12101>.
- Cobb, Hannah, and Rachel J. Crellin. 2022. "Affirmation and Action: A Posthumanist Feminist Agenda for Archaeology." *Cambridge Archaeological Journal* 32 (2): 265–79.

WEEK 8: RESEARCH INTEGRITY + ETHICAL CONTEXT 1

Let's discuss how to do research with integrity. How are the mundane practices of research steeped in ethical decision making and can we make more just and equitable decisions?

Required

- Kelly, Allen L. 2013. "Navigating the Minefields: Ethics and Misconduct in Scientific Research." In *Ethics for Graduate Researchers*, edited by Cathriona Russell, Linda Hogan, and Maureen Junker-Kenny, 27–38. Elsevier.
- Mills, Mara, ed. 2021. "Roundtable: Citation Networks as Antidiscriminatory Practice." *Catalyst: Feminism, Theory, Technoscience* 7 (2). <https://catalystjournal.org/index.php/catalyst/issue/view/2539>.
- Redman, Barbara K., and Arthur L. Caplan. 2017. "Improving Research Misconduct Policies: Evidence from Social Psychology Could Inform Better Policies to Prevent Misconduct in Research." *EMBO Reports* 18 (4): 511–14.

Additional Readings TBA for Ethical Context Presentation

WEEK 9: STAKEHOLDERS & PUBLICS + ETHICAL CONTEXT 2

This week we will discuss the ethics at the intersection of anthropologists and their publics. To whom are we beholden and what do we owe them?

Required

- McDavid, Carol, and Terry P. Brock. 2015. "The Differing Forms of Public Archaeology: Where We Have Been, Where We Are Now, and Thoughts for the Future." In *Ethics and Archaeological Praxis*, edited by Cristóbal Gnecco and Dorothy Lippert, 159–83. New York, NY: Springer New York.
- Adams, Donovan M., Justin Z. Goldstein, Mari Isa, Jaymelee Kim, Megan K. Moore, Marin A. Pilloud, Sean D. Tallman, and Allysha P. Winburn. 2022. "A Conversation on Redefining Ethical Considerations in Forensic Anthropology." *American Anthropologist* 124 (3): 597–612.
- Harms, Erik. 2021. "Antennas Up! Laura Nader's Undergraduate Lecture Courses as Public Anthropology." *Public Anthropologist* 3 (2): 210–31.

Additional Readings TBA for Ethical Context Presentation

WEEK 10: COLLABORATION + ETHICAL CONTEXT 3

In recent decades, collaboration has been prescribed as the answer to many of anthropology's ethical ills. But what does collaboration mean and what are the ethical contours of collaborative work, relationships, and infrastructures?

Required

- Kelley, Alan D., Angela J. Neller, and Carlton Shield Chief Gover. 2022. "Some Indigenous Perspectives on Artifact Collecting and Archaeologist-Collector Collaboration." *Advances in Archaeological Practice* 10 (1): 10-13.
- Supernant, Kisha. 2020. "Decolonizing Bioarchaeology? Moving beyond Collaborative Practice." In *Working with and for Ancestors: Collaborations in the Care and Study of Ancestral Remains*, edited by Chelsea H. Meloche, Laure Spake, and Katherine L. Nichols, 268-80. Routledge
- Vaeau, Tarapuhi, and Catherine Trundle. 2020. "Decolonising Māori-Pākehā Research Collaborations: Towards an Ethics of Whanaungatanga and Manaakitanga in Cross-Cultural Research Relationships." In *Indigenous Research Ethics: Claiming Research Sovereignty Beyond Deficit and the Colonial Legacy*, edited by Lily George, Juan Tauri, and Lindsey Te Ata o Tu MacDonald, 207-22. Emerald Group Publishing.

Additional Readings TBA for Ethical Context Presentation

WEEK 11: OWNERSHIP & CURATION + ETHICAL CONTEXT 4

This week, we will explore what happens to the collections that result from anthropological research. What are the ethics of ownership, curation, or dissemination of human remains, data sets, and artifacts?

Required

- Pels, Peter, Igor Boog, J. Henrike Florusbosch, Zane Kripe, Tessa Minter, Metje Postma, Margaret Sleeboom-Faulkner, et al. 2018. "Data Management in Anthropology: The next Phase in Ethics Governance?" *Social Anthropology* 26 (3): 391-413.
- Kersel, M. M. 2015. "Storage Wars: Solving the Archaeological Curation Crisis?" *Journal of Eastern Mediterranean* 3 (1): 42-54.
- Joannes-Boyou, Renaud, Alessandro Pelizzon, John Page, Nicole Rice, and Anja Scheffers. 2020. "Owning Humankind: Fossils, Humans and Archaeological Remains." *Heliyon* 6 (6): e04129.
- Tucker Law Group. 2021. "The Odyssey of the MOVE Remains: Report of the Independent Investigation into the Demonstrative Display of MOVE Remains at the Penn Museum and Princeton University." **Read Pgs. 1-85.**

Additional Readings TBA for Ethical Context Presentation

WEEK 12: WRITING & PUBLISHING + ETHICAL CONTEXT 5

We are ethically obligated to make our results accessible. This week we will talk about the ethical landscape of publishing and writing today in anthropology.

Required

- Barker, Alex W. 2016. "Make Your Results Accessible." In *Anthropological Ethics in Context: An Ongoing Dialogue*, edited by Dena Plemmons and Alex W. Barker, 107-18. Left Coast Press.
- Docot, Dada. 2022. "Dispirited Away: The Peer Review Process." *Political and Legal Anthropology Review: PoLAR*, April. <https://doi.org/10.1111/plar.12479>.
- Markham, Annette. 2012. "Fabrication as Ethical Practice." *Information, Communication and Society* 15 (3): 334-53.
- Conover, Adam, Emily Bender, and Timnit Gebru. 2023. A.I. and Stochastic Parrots with Emily Bender and Timnit Gebru, **Factually! With Adam Conover.** <https://open.spotify.com/episode/6W1WQSm75upEx9LgtvrDH9>.

Additional Readings TBA for Ethical Context Presentation

WEEK 13: ABLEISM & ACCESSIBILITY + ETHICAL CONTEXT 6

Anthropology and academics broadly have a long history of ableism and a lack of accessibility for disabled people in the classroom, the field, and the profession. This week we will talk about accessibility as an ethical practice that benefits us all.

Required

- Long, Rebecca-Eli, and Hannah Quinn. 2022. "Rupturing 'Capacity to Consent': Toward Anti-Ableist Research Relations." *Society for Cultural Anthropology*. #creator. September 6, 2022.
- Heath-Stout, Laura E. 2022. "Nothing About Us Without Us: Disabled Anthropologists, Disability Studies, and Building a More Strongly Objective Anthropology." CASTAC Invited Lecture at American Anthropological Association Annual Meeting, Seattle, WA.
- "Collective Access as a Presenter." n.d. American Anthropological Association. Accessed August 4, 2023. <https://annualmeeting.americananthro.org/accessibility/collective-access/>.

Additional Readings TBA for Ethical Context Presentation

WEEK 14: BIOETHICS + ETHICAL CONTEXT 7

Bioethics is a vast interdisciplinary field that frequently overlaps with anthropology. This week, we are going to explore one such intersection via anthropological use of DNA.

Required

- Reardon, Jenny, and Kim Tallbear. 2012. "'Your DNA Is Our History': Genomics, Anthropology, and the Construction of Whiteness as Property." *Current Anthropology* 53 (S5): S233-45.
- Wagner, Jennifer K., Chip Colwell, Katrina G. Claw, Anne C. Stone, Deborah A. Bolnick, John Hawks, Kyle B. Brothers, and Nanibaa' A. Garrison. 2020. "Fostering Responsible Research on Ancient DNA." *American Journal of Human Genetics* 107 (2): 183-95.
- DiGangi, Elizabeth A., and Jonathan D. Bethard. 2021. "Uncloaking a Lost Cause: Decolonizing Ancestry Estimation in the United States." *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* 175 (2): 422-36.

Additional Readings TBA for Ethical Context Presentation

WEEK 15: APPLICATION, PRACTICE, & WORKING

Like activism, applied anthropology has long had a negative reputation in anthropology on "ethical" grounds. However, with a declining academic job market and more anthropologists disaffected by an aloof academic anthropology, applied anthropology has grown substantially in recent decades and alongside this growth has developed new perspectives on applied ethics.

Required

- Rylko-Bauer, Barbara, Merrill Singer, and John Van Willigen. 2006. "Reclaiming Applied Anthropology: Its Past, Present, and Future." *American Anthropologist* 108 (1): 178-90.
- Ginsberg, Daniel. 2019. "Anthropology between Academia and Practice." *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Anthropology* (blog). October 30, 2019.
- Kawa, Nicholas C., José A. Clavijo Michelangeli, Jessica L. Clark, Daniel Ginsberg, and Christopher McCarty. 2019. "The Social Network of US Academic Anthropology and Its Inequalities." *American Anthropologist* 121 (1): 14-29.
- Waal Malefyt, Timothy de, and Robert J. Morais. 2017. "Introduction: Capitalism, Work, and Ethics." In *Ethics in the Anthropology of Business: Explorations in Theory, Practice, and Pedagogy*, edited by Timothy de Waal Malefyt and Robert J. Morais, 1-22. New York: Routledge.
- Mathur, H. M. 2019. "Anthropologists in Development Organizations." In *Development Anthropology: Putting Culture First*, edited by H. M. Mathur, 131-47. Lexington Books.

WEEK 16: FINAL EXAM & SUM UP

For the final exam, we will be discussing your ethics letters, the ethical journey we embarked on this semester, and where to go from here.

No assigned readings.

COMMUNICATION

Names

Please call me Dr. VandenBroek, Dr. V, or Angela. 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. If you choose to use my first name, please do so with respect for our professional relationship.

Professionalism

Please remember that in my professional role, I am obligated by ethics, policy, and law to report to the university if you tell me about or I observe certain behaviors or incidents, like sexual harassment or misconduct (see section on mandatory reporting). I am also obligated by the nature of my position to evaluate and recommend your learning, character, and professionalism in and beyond the classroom (e.g., for awards, scholarships, letters of recommendation, bi-annual reviews, etc.). So, consider this relationship in our communications. This does not mean our communications need to be formal or deferential to my credentials. As a first-generation college student, I understand the damage that can be done by enforcing strict formality and the so-called “hidden curriculum” of higher education. So, I will not demean, penalize, or dismiss you for failing to adhere to the traditions and formalities of academia. Rather, consider how, for example, gossiping about your peers or telling me things like “I never do the reading” or “I skipped class to go to the Schlitterbahn” will impact my professional evaluation of you.

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 one’s career without the knowledge others had. Please do not hesitate to reach out.

Hours

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.

MISCONDUCT & CRISIS REPORTING

As a university employee, 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, office hours, 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. If you choose to talk to me about misconduct (sexual or otherwise), I will take your report seriously and act on it as truth.

Texas State offers a number of services and resources for students in crisis—including counseling, mentorship, financial assistance, food assistance, and more. If you report or exhibit concerning behavior or circumstances, I may refer you to these university services and resources. I believe that it is my ethical obligation to connect students in crisis or in danger of reaching crisis to support. For more information, see the “Here to Help” university website (<https://www.dos.txst.edu/heretohelp.html>).

ASSESSMENT

Grading Methodology

This class uses a untraditional grading methodology, commonly called ungrading. Periodically throughout the semester you will use a guide and rubric to assess your own learning. I will review your work and assessment and then provide feedback. If your assessment is honest and accurate, you will receive the grade you give yourself.

“Why are we doing this? Are you just too lazy to do grading?” No. Ungrading is actually much more work for me, as it requires me to spend considerably more time crafting guidance and feedback. We are doing this because I found that the traditional transactional method of task completion in exchange for a grade incentivizes poor learning practices and disincentivizes good learning practices. For example, the traditional method encourages optimization mindsets where students focus more on how to optimize doing the least amount of work to achieve their target grade—leading to too much focus on what the student thinks the professor wants to hear, too much focus on procedural requirements (e.g., page limits, deadlines, number of citations), and limited interaction and contemplation of the material and how it connects with students’ goals, wider education, and life.

Ungrading changes this dynamic by making the professor a guide and mentor to the student’s learning journey (rather than a taskmaster or cop) and by helping the student focus on learning, making connections, and thinking deeply about the course’s topic relative to their own goals. Since adopting this method, I have found that consistently students participate more, are more likely to complete assignments and readings, attend class, and achieve learning goals. There is always room for improvement though, and it can sometimes be an awkward transition. So, if you are struggling, have questions, or want to provide feedback, please reach out.

Categorical Grades

Students will receive a letter grade for each assessment criteria in the rubric. 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 a 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	1000-900	899-800	799-700	699-600	599-0

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 IN DISCUSSIONS

Academic discussions are a fraught practice—often associated with bombastic and meandering speeches, unproductive performances of knowledge, and deep anxieties of inadequacies and imposter syndrome. These bad discussion habits do not lead to understanding, exchange of ideas, or productive outcomes. Rather, they tend only to lift up the most confident voices, marginalize already marginalized voices, and generate egos rather than conversation. In this course, we will attend to our discussion practice as a methodology and take seriously the impacts of how our participation affects each other and the productiveness of the conversation. To that end we will use the following as a guide to improve our discussion practices.

(1) How we will read. Following Dumit (2012) the "Tips for Reading" on Canvas, we will adopt a reading practice that is close, constructive, positive, generous, archaeological, and ethical. In short, we will not indulge in easy highly critical discussions aimed only to demonstrate our cleverness and superiority over the authors we read. Rather, we will read for what coherent arguments are made, what they can teach us, how they fit within larger conversations within anthropology, and how they fit within our own understandings. That doesn't mean we cannot disagree with a text, only that we will treat each other and the authors we read as collaborators in the anthropological project not as adversaries to our own careers.

(2) How we will prepare. We will all arrive prepared to discuss the assigned readings every discussion period. You are not expected to have lavished over every word of every text. However, you should be able to discuss the main arguments of the text, how the arguments were supported, and have considered how they may be deployed. We will use the prep assignments to guide this preparation.

(3) How we will participate. Participation is not just speaking, but also active listening, engaging your peers in thoughtful discussion, and making room for all students to contribute. We will begin with the assumption that we all have valid and insightful perspectives on anthropology and that lack of knowledge of a particular theory or literature is not invalidating of that person's contribution to the conversation. 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.

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. These breaches give students unfair advantages that create inequalities, fail to acknowledge the work and contributions of others, and impede student learning. Thus, such breaches of academic honesty will result in a mandatory meeting with me and a grade of F on the assignment or in the class dependent on severity. 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 use “artificial intelligence” tools (i.e., large language model chatbots) in their work for this class. However, I caution students to consider the following.

(1) **AI is not actually intelligent.** Current AI technologies use models to predict the most likely string of text to follow the preceding string of text. The scale of these models makes their outputs impressive, but they do not evaluate or analyze the information they present, making them frequently inaccurate and poorly formulated. Do not rely on AI for informational inquiries.

(2) **Because AI is designed to predict the text most likely to come next (with a noise filter for a bit of randomness), AI generated text will always tend toward the most bland and popular text in its training data—**mostly the Internet. Additionally, in an effort to prevent the AI from “misbehaving” most AI chatbots have programmed guardrails that prevent them from producing results that their owners consider “controversial.” Thus, the kind of deep learning you will be expected to do in this class will be hindered by an overreliance on AI text generators. Instead, I find AI chatbots to be most useful for revising text (e.g., rewrite this paragraph to be more succinct), brainstorming wording for ideas (e.g., make a list of ten ways to say X), and for generating ideas (e.g., make a list of ten examples of Y).

(3) **While AI might be able to fool a professor into thinking you wrote a passable essay, it cannot fool you into thinking that you’ve learned something.** As you will be grading yourself, consider how AI might be actually useful to your learning rather than as a shortcut to checking boxes.

(4) **Much of the hype and discussion of AI is currently dominated by deeply problematic TESCREAL ideologies** (transhumanism, extropianism, singularitarianism, cosmism, rationalism, effective altruism and longtermism). These ideologies are rooted in racism, misogyny, ableism, classism, and other forms of discrimination and have been adopted by an alarming number of AI companies’ leadership. So, when evaluating AI abilities, ethics, and applications, be sure to avoid the TESCREAL propaganda and rely instead on the peer-reviewed research of AI experts, such as Timnit Gebru, Margaret Mitchell, and Emily Bender.

(5) **All content generated by an LLM or other AI system must be placed in quotation marks or a block quote and cited as ([AI Service], [Date]) in-text and in the bibliography as: [AI Service]. [Year]. “[Full Prompt].” Prompted by [Name], [Full Date], [Name of AI Company], [URL of AI Service].** For example:

“Citing Language Learning Materials (LLMs) ensures academic integrity, acknowledges original authors, and provides students with resources for further study” (ChatGPT, 2023).

ChatGPT. 2023. “Write a very short sentence explaining the importance of citing LLMs for use on a graduate-level syllabus.” Prompted by Angela K. VandenBroek. August 7, 2023, OpenAI, <https://chat.openai.com/>.

ATTENDANCE

Attendance requirements are meant to protect students from failure when they may not understand how poor attendance affects their performance. 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.** You do not need explain or provide evidence for your absences.

That said, this is a highly collaborative class and there is no real substitute for participating in class discussions. Thus, you are expected to attend all classes, participate, and complete course requirements. Casually skipping class is not recommended. **Due to technological limitations and the nature of the course, video calls will not be offered as an alternative to attending class under any circumstances.**

If you must miss a discussion session, you should seek out alternative learning methods for the week's topic, such as independent research, writing an informal essay on the topic that puts the readings into conversation, or reaching out to peers to discuss outside of class. In your assessment assignments, absences should be documented and graded according to your effort.

LATE ASSIGNMENTS

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 are 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. Assignments are tied to specific class periods and your failure to complete readings and to submit your bibliography on time impacts your peer's ability to learn. **Failing to stay on schedule will diminish your experience of the assignments and classwork. So, consider it an ethical obligation to your self and your peers to take deadlines seriously.**

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 promptly 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 in my schedule to grade your work has passed, I cannot guarantee that the feedback will be high quality or timely, as it will need to be done between my other duties and responsibilities. Additionally, I cannot guarantee that late assignments submitted at the end of the semester will be processed/graded, as I have a strict, unbreakable deadline to submit final grades to the university. I will process late work in the order I receive it until I run out of time—if you submit late work, you assume the risk that it may not be evaluated before the university deadline. If you experience a crisis or emergency, contact me as soon as possible to discuss receiving an incomplete grade and a timeline for completing the work after the semester.

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." All files must be saved in a format accessible from a PC (e.g., DOCX, PDF, RTF, etc.). I will not accept files saved in a Mac only format (e.g., HEIC and Pages).

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. Hybrid classes require special equipment that we do not yet have, including classroom microphones, accurate captioning, and multiple projection systems to be accessible to all students. Additionally, while lectures are relatively easy to make hybrid, activities and discussions require a different form of engagement that is not possible with available technology. Thus, I will not accommodate requests for Zoom attendance to in-person class. Zoom will only be used if we experience a circumstance that requires the entire class to be moved online for a period of time.

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 making one set of notes for your own personal use, to share with classmates in your section of this course, and no other. You are not authorized to record my lectures, to provide class materials and notes to outside parties, or to make any commercial use of them without my express prior permission. Alternative provisions will be made for a student determined by the Office of Disability Services (ODS) to be entitled to academic accommodations. (<https://policies.txst.edu/division-policies/academic-affairs/02-03-31.html>)

STUDENT RESOURCES

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
Report Sexual Misconduct	https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?TexasStateUniv&layout_id=10
Report Discrimination	https://compliance.txst.edu/oeotix/discrimination.html
Ask for Help	https://www.dos.txst.edu/heretohelp.html

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