

Global Capitalism, Culture, and Conflict
(ANTH2100M)

Department of Anthropology, York University

Summer Term S2, 2022

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Course Description

Welcome to *Global Capitalism, Culture, and Conflict*, an issues-based **upper-level** course in anthropology.

Social anthropology is a social science that examines contemporary questions and problems. Social anthropologists are specialists in **culture** and how it is bound up in the social and political systems in the world today. In this course, you will learn to think critically about how culture intersects with global capitalism and conflict.

This course analyzes social and cultural forms of global capitalism. Through an anthropological lens, we will explore and critique colonial histories as a fuel for globalization and what forms of conflict have risen as a result. The curriculum focuses on a critical examination of the social, political, and economic consequences of the production and circulation of global commodities, and how conflict affects a person's sensorium in different local contexts. We will frame the social navigation of markets and conflict through a politics of solidarity and of resistance, while critiquing victimization and allowing for the agency of individuals across the globe. We will gain insight into how the local and the global are interconnected through capitalism by exploring various topics such as migration, religion, racism, xenophobia, and nationalism. Through local issues, we will consider the various forms of conflict that arise resulting from the social injustices embedded in capitalism. A detailed reading of ethnographic texts covering case studies and issues will form the basis of active engagement, discussion, and debates. In this course, you will gain an understanding of how people navigate the consequences of production, consumption, and conflict.

This course has four modules. Each module will allow you to develop a critical sensibility for issues of conflict, inequality, and injustice, and gain insights into how people in different social and cultural contexts encounter the global markets and move throughout the conflicts they produce. The modules have been organized in sequential order, allowing you to build on a range of background knowledge that sets up the following modules.

Learning Objectives

In this course, you will develop research and analysis skills that can be applied to various disciplines in the social sciences and humanities. By the end of this course, you should be able to understand the foundations of modern global capitalist systems and describe elements of the transformations that would lead to the development of modernity. This process will involve assessing the sociocultural consequences of the rise of capitalism and bringing a critical sensibility to contemporary manifestations of social inequalities.

In this course, you will also continue to develop critical information literacy. Critical information literacy builds digital fluency, information literacies, critical thinking, and the ability to ask good questions, marshal evidence, and communicate effectively across varied media. You will continue to learn about how research is inquiry, scholarship is conversation, and how to search in strategic exploration.

Readings

Readings should be completed prior to the lecture assigned for that day. In order to succeed in this course, readings must be read. Do not skip readings and rely solely on lectures to understand the material, because doing so will not allow you to develop a complex understanding of the issues involved, and it will show on your exam results.

There is one required text to **purchase** in this course:

Textbook:

Robbins, Richard H., and Rachel A. Dowty. 2019. Global Problems and the Culture of Capitalism, 7th edition. Boston: Pearson.

The remainder of the readings are journal articles and book chapters, and will have links on the **eclass page**.

Participation

This course requires attendance and participation. During class **you must participate** by engaging in activities and discussion.

Rules for Productive Discussion

This course covers a number of topics that are potentially controversial. In order to keep the discussion productive, everyone must follow these rules:

1. Feel free to say what is on your mind as long as it is respectful.
2. Personal opinions and experiences can be productive parts of anthropological discussions. Try to think about them (and even critique them!) by using the anthropological concepts you are learning in this course.
3. Focus on the content of the readings, films, listening material, and lectures. Use the evidence and research that we study in this course to rethink your previous opinions and guide your questions.
4. Respect the fact that the student population of York University is very diverse, in terms of ability, age, culture, ethnicity, gender, religion, and sexuality. Each person in the class might not agree with your perspective and it is important to respect where each other is coming from as well as embrace and relish in the rich discussion that such diversity brings.
5. Remember that we are all individuals. Our identity can influence how we see things, but no one person is a representative of their entire “community”.

Office Hours

Office hours will be held during the last 30 minutes of each class.

Evaluation and Deadlines

Midterm	In-class exam	15%	July 18
Research Paper	Proposal	5%	July 7
	Bibliography	5%	July 14
	Peer Review	5%	July 25-27
	Presentation	15%	August 2-4
	Essay (2000 words)	20%	August 5
Final	In-class exam	20%	August 9
Participation		15%	
COURSE TOTAL		100	

Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Effort will be made to accommodate students with disabilities. Here is York University Senate's policy on accommodation:

<https://www.yorku.ca/secretariat/policies/policies/academic-accommodation-for-students-with-disabilities-policy/>

Students should register with Student Accessibility Services (<https://accessibility.students.yorku.ca/>).

Please feel free to discuss your needs and their impact on your participation in the course with Dr. Fulton-Melanson. If you have an accommodations letter, please send it to Dr. Fulton-Melanson by the third week of class.

Instructions: Instructions for each assignment will be posted on Moodle well in advance of the due dates.

Submitting Assignments

Submitting Work on Time: All assignments must be uploaded to the **Eclass page** by 11:59p.m. on the due date. The late penalty is 10% per day including weekends. After seven days, late work will not be accepted at all. Assignments will not be accepted by email.

Late penalties are strict, out of fairness to your colleagues who submitted their work on time.

Extensions: Extensions are only granted for documented medical and serious personal issues, and for religious observances. There are no extensions for computer crashes or other technology failures – back up your work regularly, in multiple formats, to avoid problems.

Zero Tolerance for Academic Dishonesty

Plagiarism is representing someone else's ideas, writing, or other intellectual property as your own.

There is zero tolerance for plagiarism, and the penalties are serious even on a first offence.

Any assignment which contains one or more instances of uncited or improperly cited material from other sources will receive a grade of zero, and will result in an Investigation of Potential Academic Misconduct as per Senate policy, and possible further sanctions.

Even if you state someone else's idea in your own words (paraphrasing), you must always provide a citation that includes the number of the page you got the idea from.

Feel free to ask any questions about plagiarism and how to avoid it. It is your responsibility to understand plagiarism.

Sharing work is an equally serious act of academic dishonesty. In cases in which two or more assignments include matching sentences or paragraphs, and/or sentences that include a blend of matching content and variations in wording, these assignments will be flagged by Turnitin, receive grades of zero, and result in Investigations of Potential Academic Misconduct as per Senate policy.

Requests for Additional Feedback and Regrades

Requests for additional feedback: Dr. Fulton-Melanson will provide a numeric grade and written feedback on all coursework.

If you have questions about your grade or would like additional feedback, you can contact Dr. Fulton-Melanson via email. Please be as specific as possible in outlining which points you need clarified.

Requests for additional feedback are due 7 days after you received the feedback.

All requests for regrades must follow the policies outlined below.

Requests for regrades: If you believe there has been an error made in the grading your work, you can request a regrade.

The request should be one or two paragraphs long. It must identify the specific error(s) that you believe were made in grading your work. It must explain why your work merits a different grade by quoting the exact wording of the assignment instructions and of your submission.

Please do not mention other issues such as the effects of the grade upon your course total or GPA, as these are not considered in regrading.

Your mark may increase, decrease, or remain the same as a result of reassessment. The reassessed grade is final.

Requests for regrades are due within seven days of receiving the grade.

Dr. Fulton-Melanson will inform you of the results by email.

Course Schedule

Module 1: The Global Market

1. June 27: Welcome to Global Capitalism, Culture, and Conflict

NO READINGS

2. June 28: Money Magic, the Consumer, Laborer, and Merchant

READ: Syllabus and Assignment Instructions

3. June 29: Ideologies of “Progress” and the Nation-State

READ: Textbook Chapter 4: The Nation-State in the Culture of Capitalism

4. June 30: Marx and Capital

READ: Marx, Karl, and Friedrich Engels. 2015 [1848]. The Communist Manifesto. Pluto Press: Web.

5. July 4: Neoliberalism, De-industrialization, Meaningful Work

READ: George, Susan. 1999. “A Short History of Neoliberalism”

6. July 5: Liquidated

NO READINGS

MODULE 1 WRAP UP

Module 2: Suffering from Capitalism: “Developing” the World

7. July 6: Poverty

READ: Textbook Chapter 6: Hunger, Poverty, and Economic Development

8. July 7: Commodified Objects and Social Injustice

READ: Mintz, Sydney. 1986. “Introduction.” In *Sweetness and Power: the place of sugar in modern history*. New York: Penguin Books.

9. July 11: Urban and Rural Social Changes

READ: Appadurai, Arjun. 1990. Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy. *Theory, Culture, and Society* 7:295-310.

10. July 12: Indigenous Issues I: International Issues

READ: Textbook Chapter 9: Indigenous Groups and Ethnic Conflict

11. July 13: Indigenous Issues II: Oil

READ: Sawyer, Suzana. 2004. “A Note on Names” and “Openings”. In *Crude Chronicles: Indigenous Politics, Multinational Oil, and Liberalism*. Durham: Duke University Press.

12. July 14: Development Theory,

NO READINGS

MODULE 2 WRAP UP

13. July 18: In-Class Midterm

Module 3: Migration: Movement as Capital

14. July 19: The “Other”

READ: Textbook Chapter 5: Population Growth, Migration, and Urbanization

15. July 20: Refugees, Undocumented Migrants, Social Exclusion

READ: Liliana Suarez-Navaz. 2005. “Introduction”. In *Rebordering the Mediterranean: Boundaries and Citizenship in Southern Europe*. New York: Berghahn Books.

16. July 21: Orientalism

READ: Said, Edward W. 1978. *Orientalism*. New York: Routledge and Kegan.

17. July 25: Clash of Civilizations

READ: Huntington, Samuel. 1993. The Clash of Civilizations? *Foreign Affairs* 72 (3):22-49.

18. July 26: Environment and Consumption

READ: Textbook Chapter 7: Environment and Consumption

19. July 27: Health and Disease

READ: Textbook Chapter 8: Health and Disease

20. July 28: Immigration Sentiments

NO READINGS

MODULE 3 WRAP UP

Module 4: Discontent, Opposition, Resistance

21. August 1: Civic Holiday – No Class

22. August 2: Religion and Anti-systemic Protest

READ: Textbook Chapter 11: Anti-Systemic Protest
Textbook Chapter 12: Religion and Anti-Systemic Protest

23. August 3: Revolutions and Violence

READ: Sorge, Antonio. 2015. *Legacies of Violence: History, Society, and the State in Sardinia*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

24. August 4: Victimization and Agency

READ: Textbook Chapter 10: Peasant Adaptation and Resistance in the Face of Uncertainty

MODULE 4 WRAP UP

25. August 8: Review

READ: Textbook Chapter 13: Some Options and Courses of Action

26. August 9: In-Class Final Exam
