

AANT 361 – Anthropology and Public Policy  
Spring 2012,  
T/TH 2:45PM – 4:05PM, HU 112

Instructor: Sarah Taylor  
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Office: 205 Arts & Sciences  
Hours : Tu, Th, 4:15pm-5:30pm  
& by appointment

**Course Description:**

Being a successful student is, in many ways, much like being an applied anthropologist. You are expected you consume and digest copious amounts of information at a rapid pace and produce clear analyses of this information, while “working for” professors of varied backgrounds and dispositions and “working with” your fellow students. You are constantly under project deadlines in 16-week increments, and are under pressure from “funders” to successfully complete the semester-long tasks while creating a vision of how they will fit together in the long run. Sounds like applied work to me!

This course will serve as an overview of applied anthropology and a history of its development in the U.S., as well as a presentation of the unique language used by applied or practicing anthropologists (e.g. needs assessment, impact analysis, evaluation, and development). Gaining proficiency in this terminology and its use will allow students to conceive of the role of social science in the “real world,” both in and out of anthropology and the academy. The numerous ethical dilemmas specific to applied work will also be reviewed and discussed.

The course consists of lectures, readings, and a review of applied fieldwork in a particular area (geographical, topical, etc...). Readings will focus on the relationship of applied anthropology to “academic” anthropology, the history of applied anthropology, methods in applied fieldwork, and ethics. The course will use the case study approach in which students read and analyze cases of anthropologists working in applied settings in order to gain a feel for the varied nature of applied practice and the types of problems encountered.

Finally, throughout the semester, you will reflect on your own skills and interests and attempt to match them with varying work contexts. This process will point out areas of strength and weakness in your academic preparation to date and suggest future directions you may wish to pursue in your academic career to better prepare you for the job market.

Treat this class as though you are an applied anthropologist under contract to get a good grade! Keep all of your course materials organized, and work throughout the semester to make sure you will have a successful project to submit at the end. In this type of work, a late project is a failed project.

*In this class, as in life, there are no exams.*

**Course Materials:**

**Required Texts:**

Ervin, Alexander (2005) *Applied Anthropology: tools and perspectives for contemporary practice*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. Needham Hts, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

McDonald, James H. ed. (2002) *The Applied Anthropology Reader*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.  
(Referred to as AAR in syllabus)

Guerrón-Montero, Carla, ed. (2008) *Careers in Applied Anthropology in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Perspectives from Academics and Practitioners*. NAPA Bulletin. Arlington, VA: American Anthropological Association. (Referred to as CAA in syllabus).

**Additional Readings will be available on BlackBoard**

**Course Requirements:**

500 possible points:

1. Participation (100)
2. Topic Response Paper (100)
3. Team Readings and Reflection (50)
4. Student Project (250)
  - Project Proposal (75)
  - Project Workshop (25)
  - Final Report (150)

Grading Scale:

- 90%-100% = A
- 80%-89% = B
- 70%-79% = C
- 60%-69% = D
- 59% or less = F

**1. Participation (100 points):**

This class will consist of both lecture and seminar discussions. Generally, I will spend Tuesday's class lecturing on the week's topic to give us an introduction and overview. Thursday's class will be spent discussing the readings. The class as a whole is expected to participate in this discussion. The assigned readings should be completed before Thursday's class each week so that you can come to the discussion prepared. If it seems that the group is having difficulty engaging a particular topic I will give a pop quiz at my discretion. Should you miss a class, you will be responsible for the material covered. Please note that you do not begin the class with 100 participation points...you must earn them. There will be three assignments that, while they will be completed in class, will require some preparation before class. Watch for these on the Course Schedule and see handouts for more information!

*FAO Case Studies*  
*Label Show and Tell*  
*HTS: What do you think?*

**2. Topic Response Paper (100 points):**

*Part 1: Critique*

Each student will submit a written critique of an applied anthropology project found in *Human Organization*. The critique will answer the following questions:

1. What was the problem the project sought to address?
2. What was the anthropologist's role, and what skills did they bring to the project?
3. Who else was involved in the project?
4. What, if any, difference did anthropology make?

The choice of topic will correspond with the weekly topics during the first half of the class. Responses are due on the day of the topic's discussion, and students should come to class prepared to discuss the project they researched. Each summary should be approximately 4 pages (double-spaced), and must follow proper style and citation conventions.

*Part 2: Review and Revision*

The second part of this assignment is a peer review process. Each student's critique will be given to one of his or her peers who also submitted a critique on the same topic. The reviewer will be responsible for editing the critique and returning it. Reviews are due by the Tuesday after the topic is discussed. The author will then revise their paper and resubmit it for a grade. Revisions are due one week after reviews are received.

### **3. Team Readings and Reflection (150 points):**

On the first day of class, 4 reading teams will be formed. Each team is assigned a particular chapter for our discussions, and is expected to organize a handout and a plan for the discussion among the group. Remember, this is not a presentation, per se, and you are not expected to prepare a lecture. Instead, this is a way to present talking points and raise questions in order to engage your fellow students in a lively and productive discussion. It is up to each group to decide how to divide the work. Each student will submit a 2 page reflection paper on the last day of class that discusses how applied anthropology may (or may not) be useful to you in the future, and what you enjoyed (or did not) about working through the readings with your team mates.

### **4. Student Project (250 points):**

This project consists of four parts, all of which are due at different times throughout the semester and each of which are weighted differently. Taken as a whole, this project will represent a synthesis of the knowledge you gain through the study of applied anthropology and will, ideally, be useful to you beyond the context of this class. After being introduced to the main domains of application of anthropological method and knowledge, you will be expected to choose a topic within the purview of applied anthropology for further investigation. A handout with possible topics will be provided in the third week.

#### **Project Proposal (75 points):**

*Due March 8th*

The Project Proposal consists of a 4-5 page (double-spaced) paper that introduces your topic and explains why it is useful or relevant. That is, what makes it applied? You will also be expected to submit a preliminary bibliography with your proposal (not included in the page requirement). This can consist of as many references as you would like, however it is in your best interest to submit a proposal based on a preliminary bibliography that is well developed. The more research you do at this point, the easier the next portion of the assignment will be!

#### **Project Workshop (25 points):**

*Beginning May 1st*

Each student will have a chance to present their project and receive feedback from their reading team. While students will not be familiar with each of the specific topics presented during workshops, we will all be familiar with the methodologies and broad concepts discussed. Students will take notes while workshop presenters are discussing their projects, and will submit evaluations of each project so that the presenters have the feedback for use later. Evaluation forms will be provided. It is expected that your research project is at an advanced stage at the time of your workshop. This will allow you to make use of the suggestions offered and complete your final project. Each student will prepare handouts for the class outlining the major points of your project.

#### **Final Report (150 points):**

*Due May 16th*

The final report represents a culmination of your research on the chosen topic. The paper will be 10-15 pages in length, not including references, notes, and appendices. When you submit your final report you should include as appendices the graded project proposal and notes from the project workshop. For specific information about the report format and requirements please see the Writing Guidelines handout.

Course Schedule:				
Date	Topic	Assignments	Reading	Notes
1/19	Course introduction; What is Applied Anthropology?		N/A	
1/24	Applied Anthropology in a Historical Perspective.	Choose topics.	Ervin, Chapters 1 and 2	
1/26			AAR , Section 2	
1/31	Public Policy		Ervin, Chapters 4 and 5	
2/2		Begin Discussion	AAR, Section 5 1. Finan 2. Channa 3. Howell 4. Weldel, et al ( <i>PDF on Blackboard</i> )	
<b>I. ARENAS FOR THE APPLICATION OF ANTHROPOLOGY</b>				
2/7	Urban Anthropology		CAA, Part 1 (pp. 1-28)	
2/9			AAR, Section 6 1. Lewis 2. Bourgois 3. Vigil 4. Grobsmith	
2/14	Medical Anthropology		CAA, Young and Lassiter (pp. 56-86)	
2/16			AAR Section 7 1. Foster 2. Singer, et al. 3. Green and Isley 4. Welsch	
2/21	Development Anthropology		CAA, Moreno-Black and Homchampa (pp. 87-109)	

2/23	Development Anthropology	<i>FAO Case Studies</i>	AAR, Section 8 1. Tax 2. Gross 3. Hansen 4. Schuler and Hashemi	
2/28	Environmental Anthropology		CAA, Gilden (pp. 41-55), Ervin Chapter 9	
3/1			AAR, Section 9 1. Liebow 2. Nigh 3. McGuire and Valdez-Gardea 4. Murray ( <i>PDF on BlackBoard</i> )	
3/6	Anthropology and Education		AAR, Section 10 1. Henry 2. McCarty 3. McCarty and Watahomigie 4. Vigil	
3/8		PROJECT PROPOSAL DUE	NO CLASS	
3/13 - 3/15	Spring Break			
3/20	Anthropology, Business, and Social Marketing	<i>Label Show and Tell</i>	CAA, Pillsbury (pp. 131-151) and Maynard-Tucker (pp. 181-194) Mead and Marketing readings on BlackBoard	
3/22			AAR, Section 11 1. Jordan 2. Rosenberger 3. Brown 4. McLaren	
<b>II. METHODS IN APPLIED ANTHROPOLOGY</b>				
3/27	What are “applied” methods?		Ervin, Chapters 11 and 12	
3/29			AAR, Section 4 1. Finan and van Willigen 2. Beebe 3. Singer 4. Sen ( <i>PDF on BlackBoard</i> )	
4/3	Ethics and Advocacy		Ervin Chapters 3 and 10	

4/5	Ethics and Advocacy		AAR, Section 3 1. Bourgois 2. Fluehr-Lobban 3. Beeman 4. Speed ( <i>PDF on BlackBoard</i> )	
4/10	Needs Assessment	<i>HTS: What do you think?</i>	HTS Readings TBA	
4/12			Ervin Chapters 6 and 13	
4/17	Program Evaluation		Ervin Chapters 7 and 8	
4/19			Program Evaluation readings on BlackBoard	
4/24	Participatory Methods		Ervin Chapters 14 and 15	
4/26			Participation readings on BlackBoard	
5/1	Conclusions		Ervin Chapter 16	
<b>III. APPLIED PROJECT WORKSHOP</b>				
5/3	Workshop		N/A	
5/8	Workshop		N/A	
5/16	Final Exam	FINAL PROJECT AND REFLECTION DUE	8:00am to 10:00am	

## Classroom Policies and Etiquette:

This class will emphasize discussion, participation, and sharing of different perspectives. While dissent from the prevailing notions presented in the readings and class discussions is accepted (and even encouraged!), it must be expressed in a manner respectful to the authors we are reading and to other members of the class.

No electronic devices are necessary for successful participation in class discussion, nor are they permitted. Please do not text, type, talk, etc...during the class unless it pertains to the week's topic and is something you would like to discuss with the class as a whole.

This class runs from 2:45pm to 4:05pm. This means that I am entitled to use the entire class time to present information, and it is therefore unacceptable for students to interrupt this discussion by shuffling papers, packing book bags, and other similar disruptive activities associated with the end of class.

Plagiarism is the use of another person's thoughts, ideas, and language without giving proper credit to the author. This is a grave breach of academic ethics and is, in effect, intellectual theft. **All cases of plagiarism in this class will be dealt with in strict accordance with university policy.** Other instances of academic dishonesty include cheating, multiple submission, forgery, sabotage, falsification, unauthorized collaboration, and bribery. It is the student's responsibility to know and to adhere to appropriate standards of academic integrity. The university policy on academic dishonesty can be found here:

[http://www.albany.edu/undergraduate\\_bulletin/regulations.html](http://www.albany.edu/undergraduate_bulletin/regulations.html)

Lastly, your success in this class is my main objective for the semester. Should you experience unexpected academic, personal, or work related issues that affect your participation in the class please contact me right away. I will not always be able to accommodate you; however the earlier you discuss the situation with me the more likely I will be able to assist.