ANTHROPOLOGY AND SOCIETY

Departmental Guidelines
The major in Anthropology and Sociology is designed to meet the educational needs of three kinds of students:

1. those whose interests focus on a liberal arts education and who wish to use the disciplines to understand cross-cultural patterns, social institutions, and socio-cultural change;
2. those who wish to use anthropology and sociology as a background for certain occupations such as law, social work, medical and health sciences, business, public service, and human service careers; and
3. those who expect to pursue graduate study in anthropology or sociology, leading to a teaching, administrative, or research career.

Faculty
Associate Professor Fareeda Griffith, Chair

Associate Professor Veerendra Lele; Assistant Professors John Davis, Shiri Noy, Jane Saftitz, Karen Powell Sears, Hosna Sheikholeslam; Visiting Assistant Professors John Soderberg and Gayatri Thampy; Academic Administrative Assistant Nancy Welu

View faculty profiles and contact information (https://denison.edu/academics/anthropology-sociology/contacts)

Anthropology and Sociology Major
A major in Anthropology and Sociology must complete ten courses within the department. Six of those courses comprise a core curriculum including:

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The other four courses are electives that a major may select from among the department offerings. At least three electives must be at the 300 level. ANSO 460 - Senior Research Seminar and one elective at the 300-level are waived for students undertaking a two-semester senior research in the department (ANSO 451 - Senior Research / ANSO 452 - Senior Research). In addition, majors in Anthropology and Sociology should select an advisor from the departmental faculty. Anthropology and Sociology advisors assist majors in both advance planning and selection of course work.

Anthropology and Sociology Minor
Completion of a minor in Anthropology and Sociology requires a student to complete ANSO 100 - People, Culture and Society, ANSO 290 - The Development of Social Thought, and either ANSO 316 - Contemporary Sociocultural Theory, ANSO 350 - Field Research Methods or ANSO 351 - Survey Research Methods and three electives for a total of 24 credits. At least one elective course must be at the 300-level. In addition, minors in Anthropology and Sociology should select an advisor from the departmental faculty (in addition to the advisor in their major). Anthropology and Sociology advisors assist minors in both advance planning and selection of course work.

Courses

ANSO 100 - People, Culture and Society (4 Credit Hours)
An examination of fundamental questions concerning the nature and foundations of sociocultural behavior. The course presents a variety of sociocultural approaches for understanding human nature and hominid evolution, cross-cultural similarities and differences, the sources of inequality, and the enormity of recent social change. This course is required of all majors and minors in Anthropology/Sociology.

ANSO 199 - Introductory Topics in Anthropology and Sociology (1-4 Credit Hours)
A general category used only in the evaluation of transfer credit.

ANSO 210 - Sex and Gender in Society (4 Credit Hours)
This course compares and evaluates a variety of theories which attempt to explain the origins, persistence and effects of gender in American society. In particular, it explores a number of settings that may include: the family, the work place, the political arena, religious activity, violence against women, and face-to-face interactional contexts. Special attention is given to the ways in which race, ethnicity, class and sexual orientation shape gender experiences. Although its primary focus is American society, the course compares problems of sexual inequality in American society with other, quite different, societies in order to gain a comparative understanding of how discrimination, prejudice, and structural inequality, wherever they are found, create special problems for women. Throughout, the focus is on learning to use structural, historical, and theoretical information as guides to understanding social change and the choices facing women and men.


ANSO 212 - Race and Ethnicity (4 Credit Hours)
Contrary to the expectations of many modern social theorists, race and ethnicity continue to be important elements in the lives of contemporary people, serving as frameworks through which individual identities, community actions, and cultural meanings are interpreted. This course will introduce students to the sociocultural analysis of racial and ethnic identities. How did ethnic and racial identities and communities develop over time? Why does race, though now understood to be a social rather than a biological category, continue to be (mis)understood as a biological category? How do aspects of political, class, gender, and sexual identities influence racial and ethnic identities? We will use a global perspective to understand the conception of race and ethnicity. We will explore these topics among others including cultural and historical variability of ethnic and racial categories, the dialectical formation of identity, and the persistence of certain forms of racial and ethnic prejudice. Students will be expected to examine critically their own common assumptions and presuppositions about race and ethnicity, and to begin developing the theoretical tools for interpreting life in an ethnically diverse world.

Crosslisting: BLST 212.

ANSO 217 - Religion and Society (4 Credit Hours)
This course investigates the relationship between religion and society, and the social dimension of religious truth-claims. The central theme entails a cross-cultural study of religious influences on both social stability and change or revolution. In exploring this tension between religion and existing socioeconomic and political orders, we will consider examples such as religious movements, as well as the ritual life of both the individual's life cycle and wider social and political institutions.
ANSO 221 - Contemporary Japan (4 Credit Hours)
Japan often conjures images steeped in tradition such as samurai warriors, sumo wrestlers, and geisha clad in kimono. At the same time, however, contemporary Japan is just as easily associated with businessmen, anime, automobiles, and high technology. How have "tradition" and "change" fueled competing visions of Japan what it means to be "Japanese"? How does one go about reconciling these conflicting views? How have these debates evolved over time? How have variously situated individuals and groups in society negotiated shifting circumstances? These questions will be at the heart of this seminar as we consider case studies from different segments of Japanese society.
Crosslisting: EAST 221.

ANSO 224 - Human Origins and Prehistory (4 Credit Hours)
This course begins with a review of biological anthropology's view of humanity. How do humans appear when studied with the tools biologists have developed to understand other species? We then explore what we know about the lives of our earliest ancestors and the clusters of new human-like species emerging over the next few million years, including our own about 200,000 years ago. The part of the class turns to archaeological views of humanity. We survey the diversity of human experiences as our ancestors spread around the globe, creating art, starting farms, and building cities. Throughout, our emphasis will be on how researchers know what they know and what assumptions are built into different narratives of human origins.

ANSO 245 - Studies in Anthropology and Sociology (4 Credit Hours)
Special topics in Anthropology and Sociology.

ANSO 290 - The Development of Social Thought (4 Credit Hours)
An investigation of the classical foundations of social thought and sociocultural theory in sociology/anthropology. The course will concentrate on the original works of authors such as Marx, Nietzsche, Freud, Weber, Durkheim, Martineau, DuBois and other significant authors of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This course is required of all majors and minors in anthropology and sociology. No First Year students.
Prerequisite(s): ANSO 100 or consent.

ANSO 299 - Intermediate Topics in Anthropology/Sociology (1-4 Credit Hours)
A general category used only in the evaluation of transfer credit.

ANSO 316 - Contemporary Sociocultural Theory (4 Credit Hours)
Analyses of central theoretical questions in anthropology and sociology. Historical developments and major paradigms within the two disciplines are explored. The process of theory construction is examined and a critical perspective developed. Required of majors.
Prerequisite(s): ANSO 100 and ANSO 290.

ANSO 320 - Contemporary African Peoples in Historical Perspective (4 Credit Hours)
This course is an examination of the historical, ethnic and socio-cultural diversity of sub-Saharan Africa societies. Central to this overview is an emphasis on the pre-colonial, colonial and postcolonial eras. It considers questions of economic development, urbanization, agricultural production and the relationship of the contemporary African state to rural communities. This course also explores symbolic systems in the context of rituals, witchcraft, indigenous churches, and new forms of Christianity currently spreading in Africa.
Prerequisite(s): ANSO 100 or by consent.

ANSO 321 - Anthropology of Human Rights (4 Credit Hours)
This seminar interrogates the social life of rights by situating human rights within critical analyses of law, society, and culture. A brief examination of key human rights documents and institutions will be followed by an analysis of topics and case studies selected to juxtapose Asian and Western contexts. A primary concern of this seminar will be to scrutinize how human rights get reworked and re-fashioned in a range of local settings by various actors on the ground pursing social justice.
Prerequisite(s): ANSO 100 or consent.

ANSO 331 - Culture, Society and the Individual (4 Credit Hours)
This course examines the relationship between individuals, their society and culture. This involves looking at differing cultural conceptions of "human nature", and the way in which both "intelligence" and the emotions are "cultural performances." The nature of the "self", indeed, the structure of perception and cognition, are not separable from specific patterns of sociocultural life. Finally, Western and cross-cultural examples will be used to assess different models of social determinism and the cultural impact of human decisions and action.
Prerequisite(s): ANSO 100 or consent.

ANSO 338 - Social Structure and Popular Culture (4 Credit Hours)
Under study here are the production and distribution, form and content, and artists and audiences of popular culture internationally. We will consider prominent social theories, from the Frankfort School's critique of popular culture, through the writings on mass culture in the United States, to the recent rehabilitation of popular culture by British writers like Stuart Hall and Paul Gilroy. Some of the major questions addressed will include: How do the social arrangements and the technologies of production shape the messages conveyed in popular media? What is the relationship between popular culture and "high" culture? Under what conditions does popular culture distract people from the struggles for equality and social justice, lulling them to passivity, and when can it inspire protest, or even transform people's behavior?
Prerequisite(s): ANSO 100 or consent.

ANSO 339 - Culture, Identity and Politics in Caribbean Society (4 Credit Hours)
This course focuses on the social, cultural and political life of the Caribbean area, especially the English and French speaking areas. A fragmented group of nations decidedly on the periphery of the global economy, the Caribbean was once one of the richest areas of the world. Its riches then depended on the labor of enslaved Africans; the fruits of the plantation economy were enjoyed mainly by European planters. What is the legacy of such a history? We review the variety of Caribbean policies, from the strong democratic traditions of Jamaica to the autocratic rulers of Haiti, and explore how the Caribbean's unique combination of cultural influences affect the political processes, ways of life, class divisions and ethnic stratification evident in the Caribbean today.
Prerequisite(s): ANSO 100 or consent.

ANSO 340 - Social Movements (4 Credit Hours)
In this course we explore social movements as a primary means of social change. We attempt to understand the conditions which precede, accompany and follow collective action. Particular case studies for analysis will be drawn from the United States and cross-cultural contexts to illustrate that social movements are human products that have both intended and unintended consequences.
Prerequisite(s): ANSO 100 or consent.
ANSO 342 - Non-Governmental Organizations, Development and Human Rights (4 Credit Hours)
This course is a critical and inter-disciplinary examination of the role and consequences of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in the development industry. The course explores the history, organization and agenda building of NGOs since the 1950’s. Power relationships between NGOs and states, particularly in the southern hemisphere, as well as with bilateral and multi-lateral institutions are pivotal to our examination. The ideological, programmatic and conceptual differences among NGOs are examined within the broader context of theories of development. We ask why growing numbers of people see NGOs as the answer to ameliorating poverty, disease, violations of human rights and environmental degradation, among others. Some of the organizations that we examine include Greenpeace, Amnesty International, the Grameen Bank and Working Women’s Forum.
Prerequisite(s): ANSO 100 or consent.

ANSO 343 - Demography of Africa (4 Credit Hours)
In this course, we begin by reviewing current literature to clearly define the term, Demography. Next, we examine the demographic processes of population change in the continent of Africa. Demographic processes include mortality, fertility and migration. In addition, we explore patterns of urbanization, economic development and educational attainment. We analyze survey data from the African Census Analysis Project and Demographic Health Survey. Upon completion, you should be familiar with a variety of demographic processes that allow an examination of interesting demographic, social and anthropological questions.
Prerequisite(s): ANSO 100.

ANSO 345 - Special Topics (4 Credit Hours)
Special topics offered at an advanced level not covered in regular courses.

ANSO 347 - Power in Society (4 Credit Hours)
Using theoretical approaches and methodological tools from anthropology and sociology, this course explores the nature of social power and its distribution in a variety of social settings. Under what conditions do specific types of power distributions emerge, and what consequences do they have for people's social and economic lives? When do political systems change, and why? How do social and cultural factors influence people's participation in political action? A variety of social institutions relevant to politics are examined in this course, including interest groups, political parties, the state and transnational organizations. Processes such as legitimization of authority, social influences on policy formation, political socialization, mobilization and co-optation are analyzed in the contexts of local, national and international politics.
Prerequisite(s): ANSO 100 or consent.

ANSO 348 - Semiotic Anthropology (4 Credit Hours)
This course is an introduction to semiotic anthropology. Semiotic is the study of signs and representation, the study of how meaning works. This course will cover the basic aspects of semiotic theory focusing primarily on the semiotics of Charles Sanders Peirce. As an anthropology course, we will study human meaning and human semiosis in our cultural, empirical world. We will explore issues of meaning and material culture, language and linguistic practices, the boundaries of 'human being', and racial, ethnic and gender identity formations in various communities throughout the world. And we will explore the semiosis of these topics through cultural practices ourselves, including some combination of the following: horseback riding, museum visits and artefact analysis, clothing and fashion, playing soccer, attending a sporting match, and musical performance.
Prerequisite(s): ANSO 100.

ANSO 350 - Field Research Methods (4 Credit Hours)
This course provides experience in the design and implementation of field research. In addition to techniques of collecting, analyzing, interpreting and reporting data, we examine the history of social research, ethical questions involved in field research, and the theoretical assumptions on which various research strategies are based. Students will construct and implement research designs using field research techniques including ethnography, participant observation, and content analysis. Quantitative analysis including descriptive statistics will be included. Required of majors. ANSO 350 and ANSO 351 may be taken in any order.
Prerequisite(s): ANSO 100 or consent.

ANSO 351 - Survey Research Methods (4 Credit Hours)
This course provides experience in the design and implementation of sociocultural research. In addition to techniques of collecting, analyzing, interpreting and reporting data, we examine epistemological issues that underlie social research, ethical questions involved in research, and the theoretical assumptions on which various research strategies are based. Students will construct and implement research designs using survey research and secondary data analysis. Quantitative analysis, including descriptive and inferential statistics, analysis of variance, and simple regression will be included. Required of majors. ANSO 350 and ANSO 351 may be taken in any order.
Prerequisite(s): ANSO 100 or consent.

ANSO 361 - Directed Study (1-4 Credit Hours)
ANSO 362 - Directed Study (1-4 Credit Hours)
ANSO 363 - Independent Study (1-4 Credit Hours)
ANSO 364 - Independent Study (1-4 Credit Hours)
ANSO 399 - Adv topics Anthropology/Soc (1-4 Credit Hours)
A general category used only in the evaluation of transfer credit.

ANSO 450 - Senior Research (4 Credit Hours)
ANSO 451 - Senior Research (4 Credit Hours)

ANSO 460 - Senior Research Seminar (4 Credit Hours)
An integrative course designed to be a culmination of students' work in the major. This course focuses on the design and completion of semester-long research projects by senior majors. The course will provide the basis for reflection about the nature and importance of anthropology and sociology as disciplines and in relation to our role as researchers and citizens. Required of Senior Majors.