



# UNICUSANO

Università degli Studi Niccolò Cusano - Telematica Roma

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Antropologia Culturale c.a. (corso avanzato) = Cultural Anthropology c.a. (advanced)</b> [acronym: ACCA]
<b>Course</b>	Laurea Magistrale in <b>Scienze Pedagogiche LM-85 (Masters' level)</b>
<b>Scientific Classification of the Subject (SSD)</b>	<b>M-DEA/01</b>
<b>Year</b>	<b>Year 1 (2019-2020)</b>
<b>Credits</b>	<b>9 CFU (1 CFU = 1 ECTS)</b>
<b>Pre-requisites</b>	===
<b>Lecturer</b>	 <p><b>Mr Andrea Marcelli</b>            Facoltà: Scienze della Formazione            Nickname SOPHIA learning management system: <b>marcelli.andrea</b>            E-mail: <a href="mailto:andrea.marcelli@unicusano.it">andrea.marcelli@unicusano.it</a>            Meeting hours: published monthly on SOPHIA.            Lesson hours: <a href="https://www.unicusano.it/calendario-lezioni-in-presenza/calendario-area-formazione">https://www.unicusano.it/calendario-lezioni-in-presenza/calendario-area-formazione</a></p>
<b>Abstract</b>	<p>This year's subject is entitled <i>How to Apply Anthropology: From Thought to Action</i>. The subject aims to provide Masters' students with tools, useful reflections, and epistemological awareness, which may eventually guide them towards the completion of a research project in the field of cultural anthropology. Because of that, each Module will contain several "hooks", whose overall appreciation shall contribute to professional training – limitedly to some aspects of the field.</p> <p>The subject is divided into <b>three main themes</b>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Epistemology of Anthropology (<i>How is it possible to practice anthropology scientifically?</i>)</li> <li>▪ Anthropology of Violence (<i>How does violence affect anthropological practice?</i>)</li> <li>▪ Local Ethnographies of Alcohol Consumption (this theme will allow students to deal with more traditional topics, such as marginalisation and gender differences within the context of kinship studies).</li> </ul> <p>Moreover, each Module will answer a single investigative question.</p> <p>During the course, different materials and methods will be examined:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Participant observation</li> <li>▪ Interviews</li> <li>▪ Teleworking</li> <li>▪ Conflict resolution strategies</li> <li>▪ ECRIS method</li> </ul>
<b>Educational goals</b>	<p>The subject aims to guide Masters' students in order to develop their qualitative research skills, with particular attention paid to materials, methods, and the challenges of fieldwork. Side by side with such concern, several topics of general interest for cultural anthropologists will be examined.</p> <p><i>Specific learning outcomes:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Goal:</b> Understanding and re-interpreting the epistemological constitution of cultural anthropology  <b>Question:</b> <i>Under what conditions anthropology is said to "produce" knowledge?</i></li> <li>2. <b>Goal:</b> Appropriation of materials and methods through which anthropological research may be undertaken  <b>Question:</b> <i>How do the methods of cultural anthropology lead to knowledge?</i></li> <li>3. <b>Goal:</b> Learning how to deal with fieldwork challenges  <b>Question:</b> <i>How can we safeguard both the investigator and her research subjects?</i></li> <li>4. <b>Goal:</b> Understanding how to address social issues in a cultural perspective  <b>Question:</b> <i>How do different cultures deal with change?</i></li> <li>5. <b>Goal:</b> Learning how several fields have contributed to anthropological knowledge.</li> </ol> <p><b>Questions:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. <i>How can we compare the sociocultural relevance of violence in... Papua New Guinea, Central African Republic, Rwanda, Mali?</i></li> <li>b. <i>How do gender roles within traditional Mexican kinship systems relate to alcohol consumption?</i></li> </ol>
<b>Academic requirements</b>	Although there are no binding pre-requisites for the attendance of this subject, students are warmly recommended to learn the basics of demo-ethno-anthropological practice, whose knowledge is usually gained through the attendance of relevant Bachelor

	<p>subjects. Whoever feels the need to fill in some gaps might contact the instructor, who will provide them with further study material. Familiarity with the following handbook is desirable:  <b>Schultz, E. A. e Lavenda, R. H. (2013). <i>Cultural Anthropology: A Perspective on the Human Condition</i>. 9<sup>th</sup> ed. Oxford University Press.</b></p> <p>In order to attend registered lessons and web-conferences, knowledge of the Italian language is recommended. In order to make the best of the study material loaded on the learning management system, the B2 level of the European framework is highly desirable.</p> <p>Notwithstanding this, the instructor is fluent in English and a fairly decent French speaker. Upon request, alternative study materials will be made available, as well as customised lectures and interactive meetings.</p>
<b>Expected learning outcomes</b>	<p><i>Successful candidates are expected to display their newly acquired knowledge and skills by transferring concepts, interpretations, and practices to previously unseen issues. When doing so, scientific fundamentals, validity criteria, and academic honesty shall be upheld. Top candidates are usually able to undertake brief to long-term research in the field, together with coherent and effective data analysis, as well as the ability to properly convey investigative results to an educated or a wider public. Finally, successful candidates will demonstrate the ability to conceive of creative solutions to issues related to everyday anthropological practice in the field.</i></p>
<b>Subject structure</b>	<p>Teaching will occur through e-learning opportunities offered by Università Niccolò Cusano Telematica Roma. Moreover, live delivery is guaranteed to all course parts. Here follows a list of materials and delivery methods available to students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Introductory materials, FAQs, additional materials</li> <li>▪ Lecture Notes (1 Module = 1 ECTS = 1 file)</li> <li>▪ Recorded lectures (audio/video, supplemented with self- evaluation tests)</li> <li>▪ Lecture Slides</li> <li>▪ 1 E-tivity per teaching term, whose evaluation will contribute to the calculus of the final grade (up to 3 points)</li> <li>▪ Meetings with the teacher (seminars on request, on-line rooms, etc.)</li> <li>▪ Assistance, orientation, and tutoring</li> <li>▪ Live lectures (both at the University’s Rome headquarters and through webinars)</li> <li>▪ Tailor-made solutions (essays <i>in lieu</i> of the written exams, etc.)</li> </ul> <p>Teaching takes place via <b>on-line forums</b> (virtual classrooms), <b>chatrooms</b>, <b>live conference rooms</b>, <b>messages</b> – all implemented through SOPHIA, that is, Cusano’s learning management system (LMS).</p> <p><b>E-tivity forums:</b> Participation is <u>not compulsory</u>. However, it is warmly recommended. When successfully completed, the e-tivity will provide students with a bonus, which will count towards the final grade. <u>It is still possible to achieve maximum grades without undertaking the e-tivity</u>. Unless they elect to submit a research essay in order to meet exam requirements, students will not be required to write lengthy papers. However, it is recommended students keep in mind the basics of academic honesty every time they submit some work, which has to be their own original production (i.e. without plagiarism). It also has to be properly referenced (when in doubt, please refer to the most widespread Manuals of Style. E.g.: <a href="#">AAA Style Guide</a>).</p>
<b>Contents</b>	<p><b><u>Subject Contents (9 ECTS)</u></b></p> <p>Should the student require a shortened or expanded version of the subject (e.g. owing to Erasmus conditions of attendance), she shall contact the instructor in order to agree on a customized subject outline.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Summary</b></p> <p><b><u>FIRST THEME: EPISTEMOLOGY OF ANTHROPOLOGY</u></b></p> <p><b>Module 1: <i>Anthropology today</i></b>  <b>Main question:</b> Is anthropology a science?  <b>Heuristic approach:</b> Discourse Analysis  <b>Region:</b> United States of America  <b>Content:</b> Three anthropologists address a debate on the epistemological status of anthropology. They are following-up a so-called “scandal” that occurred within the <i>American Anthropological Association</i>. After due comparison of their individual answers, discourse analysis will highlight at which level we may locate the issue of the scientific constitution of anthropology.</p> <p><b>Module 2: <i>Mending the tear</i></b>  <b>Main question:</b> To what extent has the split between humanities and natural sciences affect the birth of social sciences?  <b>Heuristic approach:</b> Historical-Dialectic  <b>Region:</b> Europe  <b>Content:</b> After a brief history of social studies since the birth of modern science, a system of coordinates will be set up, in order to illustrate the epistemological placement of anthropological practices. Anthropology will be examined in relation to dimensions whose conceptual extent is delimited by opposing couplets:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Geisteswissenschaften</i> vs <i>Naturwissenschaften</i></li> <li>▪ Social Science vs Naïve Positivism</li> <li>▪ Departments of Humanities vs Departments of Science</li> <li>▪ Postmodernism vs Science</li> <li>▪ Qualitative Methods vs Quantitative Methods</li> <li>▪ Culturalism vs Cognitivism</li> </ul>

	<p><b>Module 3: Anthropology qua Science</b>  <b>Main question:</b> How is it possible to undertake anthropology in a scientific way?  <b>Heuristic approach:</b> Epistemology (Philosophy of Science)  <b>Region:</b> World  <b>Content:</b> This module examines the subsequent changes in anthropology’s paradigm. Finally, it focuses on the post-interpretive movement (the current paradigm) in order to outline which are the phases of anthropological practices – in other words, at the end of the module, each step of the anthropological work will be analyzed, in order to understand how it does contribute to knowledge.</p> <p><b><u>SECOND THEME: ANTHROPOLOGY OF VIOLENCE</u></b>  <i>Trigger warning: during lectures and in the course materials, there <u>will not</u> be graphic displays of violence. However, ethnographies of violence will be examined – that is, documents dealing with genocide, rape, racism, etc. Should you experience discomfort or feel stressed by the topics at hand, please privately contact the instructor, so that we might work together on a tailor-made solution for your situation.</i></p> <p><b>Module 4: Violence as the research object</b>  <b>Main question:</b> How is it possible to study violence?  <b>Heuristic approach:</b> Compare and contrast  <b>Region:</b> South-East Asia (most examples are found in the <i>appendixes</i> to the course)  <b>Contents:</b> Through the comparison of different ethnographic approaches, this module will show what worked best when studying the cultural relevance of violence, <i>qua</i> recurring element of the human condition.</p> <p><b>Module 5: Emergencies</b>  <b>Main question:</b> What type of ethnographic knowledge relates to humanitarian crises?  <b>Heuristic approach:</b> Anthropology of Emergency, Anthropology of Language  <b>Region:</b> Papua New Guinea  <b>Contents:</b> Fields in Papua New Guinea will be examined, as well as the case of <i>Doctors Without Borders</i>. This Module will illustrate how the sociocultural study of domestic violence and gender violence resulted in linguistic typologies that enable activists and healthcare personnel to act according to well-established criteria.</p> <p><b>Module 6: Field-related risks</b>  <b>Main question:</b> Which dangers are anthropologists exposed to?  <b>Heuristic approach:</b> Professional case studies, reflections  <b>Region:</b> Sub-saharian Africa  <b>Contents:</b> This Module examines two cases in which anthropologists had to face challenges of a violent or repressive nature. Such events affected their ability to undertake anthropological research, and eventually influenced the final outcomes. The first case involves conflict resolution strategies in a war zone (Central African Republic, 2012). The second case deals with authoritarian surveillance (and the perception thereof) in Rwanda, which results on a widespread code of silence.</p> <p><b>Module 7: Staying Safe</b>  <b>Main question:</b> How is it possible to work <i>in absentia</i>?  <b>Heuristic approach:</b> Professional case studies, reflections  <b>Contents:</b> Another case is examined, that is, that of two anthropologists who had to deal with an inaccessible field of studies. The reason for that was the escalation of objective risks to their personal safety, which eventually prevented them from taking the flight to their final destination. Therefore, they faced the challenge of working indirectly and devised two ways of doing so. The Module ends with guidelines for the personal safety of the investigating team.</p> <p><b><u>THIRD THEME:</u></b></p> <p><b>Module 8: Conviviality</b>  <b>Main question:</b> How are ethnographic studies undertaken in a rural context?  <b>Heuristic approach:</b> local ethnography, micro-history, kinship studies, comparative method  <b>Region:</b> Central America  <b>Contents:</b> This module follows the fieldwork of an Italian anthropologist in Mexico, where she surveyed alcohol consumption in a huave community (Oaxaca). In order to assess her work and results, comparisons will be drawn with other works undertaken in the same region, but at a different time.</p> <p><b>Module 9: Carousing</b>  <b>Main question:</b> What are the limits of interviews?  <b>Heuristic approach:</b> Compare and contrast, semi-structured interviews  <b>Region:</b> Central America and Southern United States  <b>Contents:</b> This module draws on the case presented in the <i>Module 8</i> in order to illustrate how different research outcomes follow the application of different methods of data collection.</p>
<b>Study Materials</b>	<p>The course is delivered on the bases of the materials provided on the university’s own learning management system.  <b><u>International students who struggle with the Italian language may contact the instructor in order to receive study materials in English on the same topics outlined above. The instructor has several PDFs and books available from the library that will suit the need.</u></b></p>

<p><b>Evaluation</b></p>	<p>Students may choose to test their knowledge against a <b>Type A, Type B, or Type C</b> exam.</p> <p><b># Type A – Written Exam #</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Three open questions, which require the candidate to apply their knowledge to novel anthropological cases</li> <li>▪ Three multiple-choice questions, which will test familiarity with course contents</li> </ul> <p>Evaluation criteria for open questions are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <u>Focus</u>: the candidate understands the question and answers accordingly <b>0-1 marks</b></li> <li>▪ <u>Organisation</u>: the answer is organised and made of coherent units of meaning (paragraphs, conclusion, etc.) <b>0-1 marks</b></li> <li>▪ <u>Critical skills</u>: the candidate takes different perspectives into account <b>0-1 marks</b></li> <li>▪ <u>Argument</u>: the candidate’s reasoning is coherent, cogent, and displays her ability to apply knowledge in a mindful way <b>0-2 marks</b></li> <li>▪ <u>Knowledge</u>: the candidate is aware and displays satisfactory knowledge of the methods and contents examined in the course <b>0-2 marks</b></li> <li>▪ <u>Examples / Contents</u>: the candidate is not vague and is able to draw on her course-related personal knowledge in order to explain her points <b>0-2 marks</b></li> </ul> <p><b>Totals:</b></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;"><b>9 marks per open question = 27 marks</b></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;"><b>2 marks per multiple-choice question = 6 marks</b></p> <p><i>(Yes, the total you can score is 33 out of 30. My main rationale for this is that cultural anthropology is highly interpretive, so that we ought to leave some room for debate. Moreover, when strictly applied, evaluation criteria hardly result in a top mark; therefore, the extra marks help adjusting the grade. Finally, no test is ever perfect, but this does not mean you cannot aspire to obtain the highest grade for your graduating class).</i></p> <p><b># Type B – Essay + Interview #</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The student contacts the instructor and agrees on a short research proposal</li> <li>▪ The submission of a successful investigative essay will be followed by an interview meant to ascertain the student’s knowledge in relation to the essay itself and the course contents</li> </ul> <p>Evaluation criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Identification of a research topic and focus: <b>0-2 marks</b></li> <li>▪ Identification of an appropriate research question, with epistemic validity: <b>0-2 marks</b></li> <li>▪ Concise literature review: <b>0-6 marks</b></li> <li>▪ Identification of appropriate methods and materials and reflection about their usage and limits: <b>0-3 marks</b></li> <li>▪ Quality of the investigation <b>0-9 marks</b></li> <li>▪ Demonstrate the investigation is sustainable and takes care of the research subjects’ wellbeing: <b>0-2 marks</b></li> <li>▪ Oral interview: <b>0-6 marks</b></li> </ul> <p><b>Total: 30 marks</b></p> <p><b># Type C – Oral Interview #</b></p> <p>Oral interviews assess a candidate’s knowledge of the subject’s topics, as well as her ability to transfer knowledge to novel contexts. The evaluation criteria are roughly the same as those of the open questions in the written exam. At least three (3) questions will be asked. Interviews last between 15 and 30 minutes.</p> <p><b>NOTE:</b> <i>e-tivity</i> outcomes will provide a bonus of up to 3 marks.</p>
<p><b>Thesis supervision: Candidate Requirements</b></p>	<p>Requirements for the obtainment of <b>supervision</b> for the purpose of submitting a <b>dissertation</b> that counts towards the completion of a Masters’ Degree:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Successful completion of <i>Cultural Anthropology (advanced)</i>. Special arrangements are possible (e.g. exempted students, international students, etc.)</li> <li>● Submission of a research proposal draft, which meets the evaluation criteria for the final defence;</li> <li>● Meetings with the supervising lecturer, in which the students will outline her proposal and obtain advices from the lecturer;</li> <li>● Drafting of a reasonable timeline for the completion of the investigation</li> </ul> <p>There are no grade requirements. It is important candidates tackle something that matters to them, in order for them to make the best of their affordances and benefit from a motivational boost. On average, Masters’ theses (Social Studies) have a length of ~35,000 words. Please refer to the Faculty guidelines for further clarifications.</p>