**ANT 4025:**

**The Anthropology of Death**

**3 Credit Hours at Florida Atlantic University**

**CRN 4223**



**Spring 2019**

**T/TH 9:30-10:50**

**SO 170**

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Office: SO 185

Office Hours: Tues/Thurs 1-2:30 pm or by appointment

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**Course Description**

This course will take an anthropological perspective on how humans understand death. The course will explore examples from various time periods and locations through ethnography, archaeology, bioarchaeology, and social theory perspectives.

Students should be prepared in this course to read, think, and write on complicated issues. Some of these topics will be intellectually challenging, and some may be emotionally challenging as well. Students should be prepared to engaging with complex and mature themes about mortality.

**Required Texts**

Rakita, Gordon, Jane Buikstra, Lane Beck, and Sloan Williams. *Interacting with the Dead: Perspectives on Mortuary Archaeology for the New Millennium*. University Press of Florida 2005. ISBN 978-0-8130-3317-4. (**I**D)

Robben, Antonius. *Death, Mourning, and Burial: A Cross-Cultural Reader*. Second Edition. Blackwell Publishing 2018. ISBN 978-1-119-15174-6 (**DMB**)

Verdery, Katherine. *The Political Lives of Dead Bodies: Reburial and Postsocialist Change*. Columbia University Press 1999. ISBN 0-231-11230-0 (**Verdery**)

*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*Additional readings will be posted to Canvas during the semester\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\**

**Course Objectives**

1. Students will be able to describe human responses to death in cross-cultural settings.

2. Students will be able to explain examples of cultural patterns of mortuary treatment of the dead in the past

3. Students will examine how the dead influence the living

4. Students will investigate a local mortuary culture and identify patterns of behavior.

**Course Requirements and Expectations**

In order for you to be successful in this course, you will need to read all assignments and **come to class prepared to engage in a discussion of the readings and topics** for the day. Additionally, there will be daily homework assignments (the QQC—please see the last page of the syllabus) that go along with your reading as well as in-class work related to guest lectures, films, hands-on opportunities, lab exercises, and discussions. These assignments will be given in class or via Canvas and email.

Dear Students,  
I know when you're  
texting in class.  
Seriously, no one just looks down  
at their lap & smiles.  
***Sincerely, Your Teacher.***

I expect you to treat each other and me with respect. This means coming to class prepared for discussions and respecting differences of opinion as well as completing your own work. **All electronic devices, including phones, tablets, and computers, must be turned off during lectures. Have you seen this meme?**  It is true! We can all tell. And use of technology in class distracts you, me, and the people sitting around you. Any use of technology without permission will deduct from your final grade.

**Attendance Policy**

As this class meets twice a week, **two absences** will be allowed without penalty. After that, each absence will lower your final grade. You are responsible for all material that is covered in this course even when you are absent. The official University policy is as follows:

*Students are expected to attend all of their scheduled University classes and to satisfy all academic objectives for this course. University reserves the right to deal at any time with individual cases of non-attendance. Students are responsible for arranging to make up work missed because of legitimate class absence, such as illness, family emergencies, military obligation, court-imposed legal obligations or participation in University-approved activities. Examples of University-approved reasons for absences include participating on an athletic or scholastic team, musical and theatrical performances and debate activities****. It is the student’s responsibility to give the instructor notice prior to any anticipated absences and within a reasonable amount of time after an unanticipated absence, ordinarily by the next scheduled class meeting.***

**Disability Policy**

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), students who require special accommodation due to a disability to properly execute coursework must register with Student Accessibility Services (SAS) and follow all SAS procedures. SAS has offices across three of FAU’s campuses – Boca Raton, Davie and Jupiter – however disability services are available for students on all campuses.

**Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) Center**

Life as a university student can be challenging physically, mentally and emotionally. Students who find stress negatively affecting their ability to achieve academic or personal goals may wish to consider utilizing FAU’s Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) Center. CAPS provides FAU students a range of services – individual counseling, support meetings, and psychiatric services, to name a few – offered to help improve and maintain emotional well-being. For more information, go to http://www.fau.edu/counseling/

**Code of Academic Integrity Policy Statement**

Students at Florida Atlantic University are expected to maintain the highest ethical standards. Academic dishonesty is considered a serious breach of these ethical standards, because it interferes with the university mission to provide a high quality education in which no student enjoys an unfair advantage over any other. Academic dishonesty is also destructive of the university community, which is grounded in a system of mutual trust and places high value on personal integrity and individual responsibility. Harsh penalties are associated with academic dishonesty. For more information, see [University Regulation 4.001](http://wise.fau.edu/regulations/chapter4/Reg_4.001_5-26-10_FINAL.pdf).

**Course Participation and Homework**

Participation in this course includes your thoughtful attention and participation in lectures and discussion; completion of in-class work (including movie sheets, quizzes, lab assignments, and writing assignments); and completion of homework assignments, including daily QQCs. Additional homework may be assigned via Canvas during the semester. Quizzes may be given unannounced at any time. In class activities will occur throughout the semester. Disruption of the class, use of technology without permission, and absences will negatively affect your participation grade. **PLEASE NOTE: LATE WORK IS NOT ACCEPTED.** Plan accordingly.

**Mid-Semester Exams**

Twice during the semester you will be assigned a brief take-home writing exercise over a weekend. These will replace traditional in-class exams. In these assignments, you will be given a case study that we have not read and be asked to analyze it using the ideas of our authors and theorists. Each exam will be short, but will require careful thought and planning. As these are take-home exercises, they will be open-book. However, given the challenging nature of them as well as the necessity of turning in clearly written and edited work, please plan accordingly on those weekends.

**Final Project**

Your final project for this class is a brief research paper and a brief in-class presentation on a local mortuary practice. There are three approaches you can take to this project, depending on your interests:

Cemetery study: Pick a cemetery near you and investigate an aspect of the burial patterns. This may include studying headstones, burial patterns, historical graves, cemetery care, grave decorations, etc.

Cultural practices: Pick a modern group, organization, or faith tradition that is present in Florida and examine their rules, regulations, and beliefs around death and burial.

Historical practices: Pick a region of Florida, and learn about how the prehistoric native peoples buried their dead in that area. Examine how the environment and cultural beliefs influenced this behavior, and include details of how archaeologists and bioarchaeologists have learned about this.

More details about the paper specifics and presentation will be forthcoming mid-semester.

**Extra Credit**

Twice during the semester you may present to the class a current event news article related to our course topic. Current events must date to the past year, and must be from a credible source (i.e. not a Facebook post). Articles are to be printed out and a 2-3 paragraph write-up for each article turned in at the beginning of class explaining how the issues are related to our course. You will be asked to explain the article and your analysis of it to the class before handing it in. Each article, and accompanying write up and presentation, will be worth up to 3 points of extra credit on one of our unit exams.

**Evaluation**

Mid-term 1: 25%

Mid-term 2: 25%

Course work and homework: 15%

Attendance 5%

Final Paper and Presentation: 30%

A 94-100

A- 90-93

B+ 87-89

B 84-86

B- 80-83

C+ 77-79

C 74-76

C- 70-73

D 65-69

F 0-64

**Communication**

Please feel free to contact me ANY time you need help. This includes coming to office hours, scheduling an appointment to see me, or emailing me questions. Please note, however, that while I regularly check my email during the day, I do not check into the evening hours or nighttime regularly. So, if you have last minute paper questions, I encourage you to write to me or come see me well in advance; emails sent at midnight the night before an assignment is due will not be answered until the next morning!

**A FINAL NOTE**

The topic of this class is sensitive. All of us have been affected by death at some point in our lives. Many of us hold views about death, the treatment of bodies, and religion that influence how we approach these topics. In this class, we will be engaging in difficult conversations about these topics. However, I expect that all of us are going to do our best to be respectful and open-minded. I ask that when you raise an issue, you do so by connecting to our readings rather than your personal experiences. If you find yourself overcome at any point during a class session, please feel free to step outside the room and take a moment for yourself. We will all understand.

**Course Schedule**

T 1/15 Introduction to Anthropology

Th 1/17 Conceptualizations of Death

**DMB** Robben Introduction

**DMB** Hertz Ch 1

T 1/22 Death, Dying, and Care

**DMB** Malinowski Ch 6

**DMB** Evans-Pritchard Ch7

Th 1/24 Death, Dying, and Care

**DMB** Lock Ch 8

**DMB** Hamdy Ch 9

T 1/29 Grief and Mourning

**DMB** Radcliff –Brown Ch 12

**DMB** Rosaldo Ch 13

Th 1/31 Grief and Mourning

**DMB** Scheper-Hughes Ch 14

**DMB** King Ch 16

T 2/5 Burying and Unburying

**DMB** Conkin Ch 17

**DMB** O’Rouke Ch 19

Th 2/7 Burying and Unburying

**DMB** Robben Ch 18

**DMB** Ferrandiz Ch 24

T 2/12 Archaeology of Death as Anthropology

**ID** Introduction

**ID** Ch 2 Charles

Th 2/14 Mortuary Space

**ID** Ch 4 Cannon

**ID** Ch 6 Ashmore and Geller

T 2/19 **MID-TERM 1 DUE**

**Cemetery Trip**

Th 2/21 Bodies and Souls

**ID** Ch 7 Rakita and Buikstra

**ID** Ch 9 Byers

T 2/26 Body Parts

**ID** Ch 10 Guilen

**ID** Ch 12 Weiss-Krejci

Th 2/28 Body Parts

**ID** Ch 13 Naji

**ID** Ch 14 Malville

T 3/5 Spring Break

Th 3/7 Spring Break

T 3/12 Body Parts

Tarlow 2008

Crossland 2009

Harrison 2010

(**all available on Canvas**)

Th 3/14 Veneration and Violation

**ID** Ch 15 Duncan

**ID** Ch 17 Forgey and Williams

T 3/19 Corpses on the Move

**Verdery** Introduction

Th 3/21 Dead Bodies and Politics

**Verdery** Ch 1

T 3/26 Restless Bones

**Verdery** Ch 2

Th 3/28 Space and Time

**Verdery** Ch 3

T 4/2 **MID-TERM 2 DUE**

Contemporary Politics and Dead Leaders

Th 4/4 Selling Bodies

Halling et al “They Sell Skulls Online?!?”

(Linked on Canvas)

T 4/9 Selling Bodies

Reuter’s special series “The Body Trade” Parts 1-4

(Linked on Canvas)

Th 4/11 Selling Bodies

Reuter’s special series “The Body Trade” Parts 5- Q&A

T 4/16 Final project presentations

Th 4/18 Final project presentations

**FINAL PAPERS DUE APRIL 25th by 10:15 AM**

***\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*Syllabus subject to change at any point during the semester\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\****

**QQC Assignment**

When you come to class you should have done the reading for that day as described in the syllabus; you should have thought about the arguments the authors are making; you should have summarized them in your notes; and you should be prepared to discuss them. To facilitate our discussions, each student will be expected to complete a brief written assignment ***prior to every class for which readings are assigned***. For each class’s assigned readings, you will write a **QQC** (**i.e., one per day, not one per reading**): a Quotation, a Question, and a Comment.

* A **Quotation** from that day’s assigned reading(s) that surprised you, puzzled you, provoked you, or interested you;
* A **Question** that occurred to you based on your reading for that day;
* A **Comment** (no more than 3-5 sentences) responding to the reading(s) by affirming, qualifying, or challenging an important claim.

These should be typed and printed out before coming to class (hand written QQCs will not be accepted). I will collect a hard copy of your QQC at the end of each class, and we will base our discussions on your QQCs (I may call on you and ask you to share your QQC aloud). Please be sure that your QQC has your name and the date of the class typed at the top of the page. Your QQC must reflect your own academic work, and should not be borrowed from another student. I will not regularly hand back your QQCs, but I will read them and count them towards your homework and participation grade. If you are diligent and thoughtful about your QQCs, and participate regularly in class discussions, you may expect to be rewarded in this part of your class grade.

Occasionally I may replace the QQC with another assignment. If that is the case, you will be notified by email and it will be posted on Canvas.

Your first QQC is due Thursday.