Course description: Digital anthropology examines the relationship between digital technologies and human cultures. This course offers an introduction to the theory, methods, and applications of this growing field. As digital technologies increasingly influence all aspects of our sociality – from our sense of identity to our experience of community, from our labor practices to our political strategies – anthropologists are adapting the tools of ethnography to better understand the conditions they create and change. Drawing on theoretical texts, ethnographic research, and other kinds of media products, we will explore the multiple makings, meanings, and impacts of the digital across a range of cultural contexts.

This course is divided into two units. In the first, we will survey the field of digital anthropology, asking how the tools of cultural anthropology can help us understand emerging digital spaces, experiences, and communities. Unit I concludes with a midterm exam. In the second unit, we will take up the practical question of how to do digital anthropology: how do we use ethnography to explore digital spaces, and how can digital technology enhance other kinds of anthropological research? In Unit II, students will organize, conduct, and analyze their own research.

Learning outcomes:
To succeed in this course, students will demonstrate their ability to:

- Understand how anthropologists study digital technologies and practices
- Understand how digital technologies and practices are changing anthropological research
- Identify key theoretical frameworks and important debates in digital anthropology
- Analyze the ways that digital experiences can differ across social, cultural, and political contexts
- Employ the methods of digital anthropology to organize, conduct, and analyze research

Course materials:


Other readings will be made available as PDFs on the course eLearning site.

Graduate students should plan to read at least two of the following full ethnographies in addition to generally assigned readings (indicated “Grads” on the course schedule):


**Evaluation:**

**Assessment**

Your grade will be calculated based on the following components:

Participation (15%) - Ongoing
Discussion Questions (15%) – Every Tuesday
Midterm Exam (20%) - Oct 17
Ethnographic Explorations:
  - Observations (15%) - Nov 5
  - Interview (15%) - Nov 14
  - Analysis (20%) - Dec 3

*Participation* will be assessed on the basis of your in-class contributions, including discussions, group work, reading quizzes, and activities.

*Discussion Questions*, designed to demonstrate engagement with the readings and start productive conversation, are due every Thursday that we have class.

The *Midterm Exam* will cover Unit I, and will consist of multiple-choice and short-answer questions.

*Ethnographic Explorations* assignments ask you to practice some of the skills of ethnographic research, reflect on your experience, and link your findings to themes and texts from the course.

*Graduate students will complete a final paper in lieu of a midterm exam, due Dec. 12.*

**Grading scale**

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<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>100-93</td>
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<td>A-</td>
<td>92-90</td>
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<td>B+</td>
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Submissions, late policy, and “grace day”

Written assignments (Discussion Questions and Ethnographic Explorations) should be submitted online through the course eLearning site. All assignments are due by the start of class on the due date (with the exception of grad students’ final papers, due by midnight Dec 12).

I will grant extensions only in the case of exceptional circumstances, and only if you make arrangements with me in advance. In all other cases, your grade will be reduced by 5% for every day that your assignment is late.

That said, we all come up against the unexpected and unavoidable. For this reason, each student is granted one “grace day” that you may use to turn in one assignment one day (24 hours) after it is due. When invoking your grace day, simply write “Grace” in the comment box of your submission on eLearning (there is no need to alert me in advance).

Accessibility and accommodations

UF is committed to achieving full accessibility for people with disabilities, and I am committed to making this classroom accessible to you. If you are a student with a disability and think you may need accommodations, you are encouraged to register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/, or 001 Reid Hall) as soon as possible (but also know that it is never too late). Present your accommodation letter to the instructor promptly so I can make the necessary accommodations. Whether or not you are registered with the Disability Resource Center, I always welcome feedback about how to make this class more accessible – to you in particular, or overall.

Academic integrity

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code.” The Honor Code (http://www.dso.ufl.edu/scr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. In this course, cheating and plagiarized work will result in a grade of zero, and will be reported to the Dean of Students.

Course policies

Expectations:

Your full participation in this course requires reading, reflecting on, and coming prepared to discuss the required texts. Some of the readings in this course will be challenging - I do not expect you to understand everything, but I do expect you to make time for careful, close reading, and to come to class with any questions you have. Likewise, you are not required to agree with all the viewpoints raised in this classroom, but you are expected to engage with them respectfully and in good faith. Class discussions and activities are sites to practice learning collaboratively across and through our differences. To this end, debate and critique are encouraged, but personal attacks will not be tolerated.
Readings listed under a course date should be read by the start of class that day.

Lectures will not simply review or explain the reading, but will introduce context, case studies, and counter-examples (on which you will also be assessed).

Communication

Email should be used for brief or urgent matters only – please bring questions about course content and assignments to class or office hours. I will reply to all emails sent during the week within 48 hours, but will not respond to course email over the weekend. Please plan accordingly if you need a quick reply.

Technology

Laptops are permitted in class for the purpose of consulting readings, taking notes, and completing activities. Using them in other ways is disrespectful (and obvious!), and you will be asked to leave the classroom if you do so. Cell phones should be turned off or kept on silent. Please come to class each day with a notebook and writing utensil, even if you plan to take notes on your computer.

Evaluations

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at: https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/.

University Resources

Library / Research Support: http://cms.uflib.ufl.edu/ask

E-Learning / Technical Support: learningsupport@ufl.edu / 352-392-4357 (select option 2)

Counseling and Wellness Center: https://counseling.ufl.edu / 352-392-1575

U Matter, We Care (Resources for students in distress): umatter@ufl.edu / 352-294-2273

Sexual Assault Recovery Services (SARS): Student Health Care Center / 352-392-1161
UNIT I: ORIENTATIONS

T 8/20 | Introductions


Th 8/22 | What is Digital Anthropology?


T 8/27 | Thinking Technology


Th 8/29 | Digital Selves


T 9/3 | Digital Subjectivities


Th 9/5 | NO CLASS

T 9/10 | Digital Socialities


Watch in class: Even Asteroids Are Not Alone (2018)

Th 9/12 | Digital Intimacies


T 9/17 | Digital Workers


Watch in class: *The Cleaners* (2018)

Th 9/19 | Digital Work


T 9/24 | Digital Values


Th 9/26 | Digital Value


T 10/1 | Digital Polities


Th 10/3 | Digital Politics


T 10/8 | Digital Infrastructures


Th 10/10 | Digital Environments

T 10/15 | Digital Waste


Th 10/17 | MIDTERM EXAM

UNIT II: EXPLORATIONS

T 10/22 | The Digital Field


Th 10/24 | Digital Fieldwork


T 10/29 | Access


Th 10/31 | Ethics


T 11/5 | Interviews


Due: Observation

Th 11/7 | Images

T 11/12 | Archives


Th 11/14 | Analysis


Due: Interviews

T 11/19 | NO CLASS

Th 11/21 | NO CLASS

T 11/26 | Applications


Th 11/28 - NO CLASS (BREAK)

T 12/3 | Conclusions

Due: Analysis