

SCHOOL OF ANTHROPOLOGY & MUSEUM ETHNOGRAPHY

Course Handbook 2021-2022

Institute of Social & Cultural Anthropology

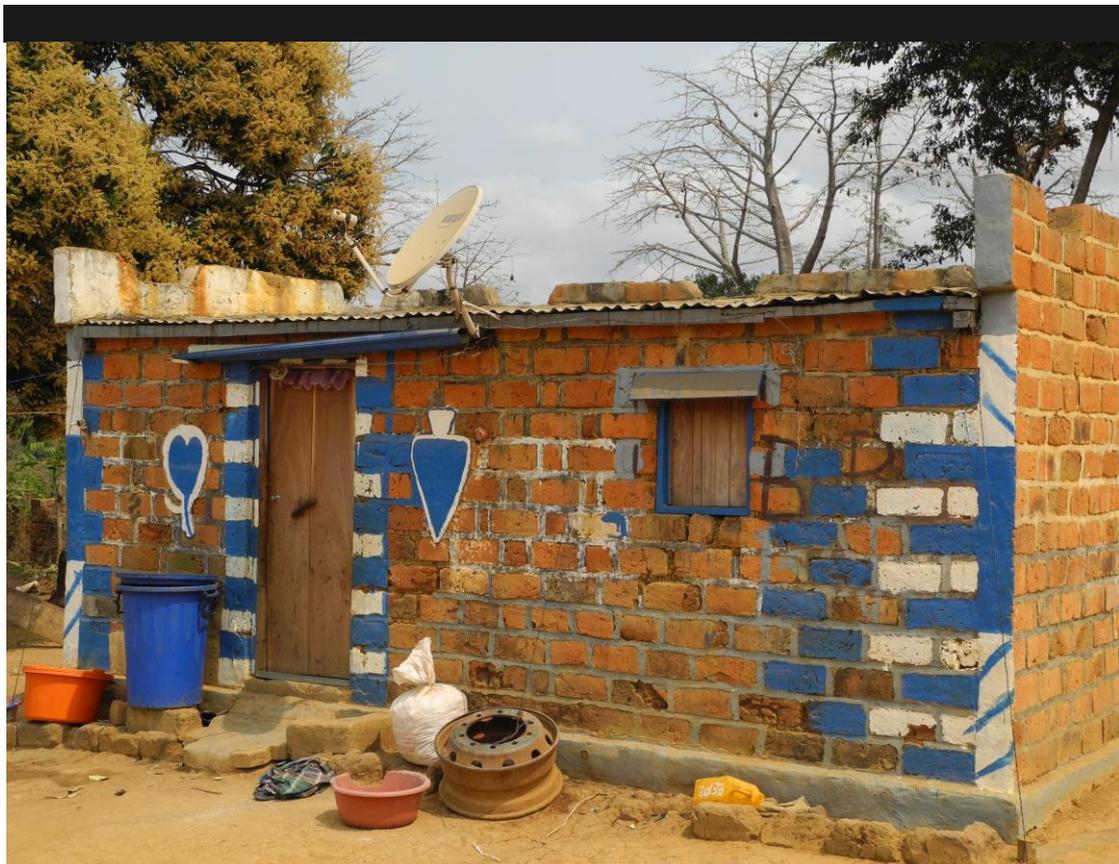
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MPhil Social Anthropology

MSc Social Anthropology



This handbook applies to students starting the MSc and MPhil in Social Anthropology in Michaelmas Term 2021. The information in this handbook may be different for students starting in other years. If you need to refer to information found in this handbook, please specify the version you read. This is version 6.0 (1st October 2021).

Disclaimer

The Examination Regulations relating to these courses are available:

[MSc Social Anthropology](#)

[MPhil Social Anthropology](#)

If there is a conflict between information in this handbook and the Examination Regulations then you should follow the Examination Regulations. If you have any concerns please contact the Course Director.

The information in this handbook is accurate as at 1st October 2021 however it may be necessary for changes to be made in certain circumstances, as explained [here](#). If such changes are made the department will publish a new version of this handbook together with a list of the changes and students will be informed.

1. WELCOME

Dear incoming students in Social Anthropology,

A very warm welcome to you!

We are delighted that you have chosen to join the Institute of Social & Cultural Anthropology (ISCA), within the School of Anthropology & Museum Ethnography (SAME), and we look forward to working with you.

Social anthropology considers people, through and through, as social beings. Everything that all of us do, in whatever society or culture at whatever period of history, rests on assumptions, which usually are not stated but which are largely shared with our particular neighbours, kin, friends, or colleagues. Everything social is open to question, including solidly held beliefs and attitudes and ideas about causality, the self in society, and nature and culture. Learning to relate different versions of the world to each other is learning to be a Social Anthropologist and is what we hope you will learn over the course of your degree.

ISCA (and SAME) is located in a number of buildings along the Banbury Road (see map), a few minutes' walk north of Oxford city centre. Some staff also work from the Pitt Rivers Museum's main building on South Parks Road, behind the University Museum of Natural History. ISCA is the largest graduate anthropology department in the UK, with around 80 to 100 students registered for taught course graduate degrees at any one time, and more than 90 doctoral projects currently underway. [Staff research interests](#) are wide ranging and ISCA is also home to a large group of postdoctoral researchers and research affiliates. Do take the time to browse their [research profiles](#) (and seek contact with researchers whose work interests you).

At the time of updating this handbook, it is anticipated that course delivery will entail a flexible blend of online and face-to-face teaching. We will keep you updated on course-specific guidance as we go along. As a School we have measures in place to keep you and our staff safe. Please follow guidance regarding Covid-safety measures. For more general information, advice and updates please check the Oxford Students webpage of the University [website](#) and the [Corona Virus page](#).

This handbook provides information on the content and organisation of your course, and on matters relating to exams and assessment. The information provided here is meant to supplement the [SAME Graduate Handbook](#), and the [Examination Conventions](#) for the Social Anthropology degrees. Please do take the time to familiarise yourself with these documents. You can also refer to them at any time during the year.

We hope you find this handbook useful; suggestions for improvements may be sent to the Course Director, Elizabeth Ewart (elizabeth.ewart@anthro.ox.ac.uk) during Michaelmas Term, and to David Gellner (david.gellner@anthro.ox.ac.uk) for the remainder of the academic year.

2. INFORMATION FOR ALL STUDENTS ON SOCIAL ANTHROPOLOGY DEGREES

ISCA is spread over a number of buildings along the Banbury Road. 51 Banbury Road is the administrative hub where you can find the General Office staffed by friendly people who will be able to answer most of your queries. The office is normally staffed from 9am to 5pm (4 pm on Fridays). Lunch break is 1-2 pm and we ask that you respect this and refrain from making queries during the lunch hour.

Please consider whether you need to visit the office in person or whether your query can be resolved by email, phone, or via MS Teams. While we welcome your presence we are also mindful of the need to avoid any crowding in our corridors due to Covid safety concerns. Please note that you are expected to wear a mask while moving around shared areas of our buildings such as corridors and stairs.

Key Contacts

Social Anthropology Course Director for MT21:

Dr Elizabeth Ewart elizabeth.ewart@anthro.ox.ac.uk 01865 274685
Office Hour: Tuesdays 1-2pm; at 43 Banbury Road or via Teams

Social Anthropology Course Director from HT22:

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Graduate Courses Administrator:

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Tylor Library Assistant and receptionist:

Mr Martin Pevsner martin.pevsner@anthro.ox.ac.uk 01865 274671

Archaeology and Tylor Anthropology Librarian:

Ms Helen Worrell helen.worrell@bodleian.ox.ac.uk

Director of Graduate Studies:

Dr Ramon Sarró ramon.sarro@anthro.ox.ac.uk 01865 274676
You may also direct your email to: dgs@anthro.ox.ac.uk

Head of the School of Anthropology & Museum Ethnography:

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Core Teaching Staff

Dr Thomas Cousins

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Dr Morgan Clarke

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Dr Inge Daniels (research leave MT21)

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Dr Elizabeth Ewart (sab. HT22-MT22)

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ina.zharkevich@anthro.ox.ac.uk

If you need to see your tutor or any other member of staff for whatever reason, just email them.

3. COURSE OVERVIEWS

MSc overview

The MSc in Social Anthropology is a 12-month course. You take three examined papers: the Core Paper and two option papers and you complete a 10,000 word dissertation over the summer.

The course is examined by four papers, two of which are based on core courses and two on options, plus the dissertation submitted in late August.

The core paper (Paper 1) is examined by an essay (Paper 1a) submitted at the start of Hilary Term (with the mark released in the course of HT) and by a one week timed essay (Paper 1b) taken mid-Trinity Term. The option papers (Papers 2 and 3) are each examined by either an essay submitted early in Trinity Term or by a one week timed-essay at the end of Trinity Term.

The dissertation is submitted for examination at the end of August.

MPhil overview

First year (MPQ)

The MPhil in Social Anthropology is a 2-year course. In the first year, known as the MPhil Qualifying (or MPQ) year, you take four examined papers: the Core Paper (made up of Paper 1a and Paper 1b) and two option papers. These must be passed with an average mark of 60 or more in order to proceed to the second year of your degree. The marks achieved at the end of your first year do not count towards your final MPhil degree result.

The MPQ year is identical to the MSc year with the exception that MPQ students do not complete a 10,000-word dissertation over the summer, instead carrying out preparatory work for their second year thesis.

The core paper (Paper 1) is examined by an essay (Paper 1a) submitted at the start of Hilary Term (with the mark released in the course of HT) and by a one week timed essay (Paper 1b) taken mid-Trinity Term. The option papers (Papers 2 and 3) are each examined by either an essay submitted early in Trinity Term or by a one week timed-essay at the end of Trinity Term.

Second year (MPhil)

In the second year, you will spend most of the year researching and writing your 30,000 word MPhil thesis, which is submitted in Trinity Term. You will also take one more assessed option paper and towards the middle of Trinity Term you will submit an assessed essay on a topic from within the field of social anthropology. A list of essay topics will be produced by the examiners for you to choose from.

4. STRUCTURE OF TEACHING FOR SOCIAL ANTHROPOLOGY

The academic year in Oxford is divided into three 8-week terms, Michaelmas Term (MT), Hilary Term (HT) and Trinity Term (TT). Teaching is delivered primarily through lectures, classes and tutorials. At the start of each term, a [lecture list](#) is published with details of times and venues of lectures.

Canvas – Virtual Learning Environment

In line with UK government and University guidance we plan to deliver most teaching in-person, supported by virtual learning resources and online teaching via MS Teams where necessary.

Canvas is our virtual learning environment where you will find course materials including recordings of lectures, course outlines, reading lists, and slides from lectures. You will be receiving an email notification, indicating that you have been added to the relevant Canvas site for your programme.

[Canvas site for the MSc/MPhil in Social Anthropology](#)

If you are new to using Canvas, you may find the [Canvas Guide for Students](#) useful.

For online seminars, classes or tutorials we will be using **Microsoft Teams**. Where possible, we will aim to provide hybrid, in-person and online teaching for the benefit of students who are not able to attend in person for Covid-related reasons. Lectures may be recorded for the benefit of students unable to attend the live event. Where a lecture is being recorded this will be clearly indicated during the Teams session and a copy of the recording will be deposited on Canvas.

You are strongly advised to download the desktop version of Microsoft Teams by the start of term.

Please note, that where in-person teaching is being offered, you are expected to attend in person unless you are required to self-isolate due to Covid concerns or you have been exempted from residency requirements.

Face to Face Teaching

As long as it remains safe to do so and following University guidance, we will be delivering classes, tutorials and lectures face-to-face. Your tutor will arrange dates and times of your tutorials with you.

To ensure Covid-safety, you will be expected to wait outside the departmental building at the designated time for your class or lecture. You will be met by your lecturer and taken to the room where your class/lecture is scheduled to take place. At the end of your session you are asked to leave the building immediately. Please

do not linger in the corridors. Please note, these arrangements apply to lectures and classes taking place in School of Anthropology buildings. If your lectures are taking place elsewhere (eg Examination Schools), please proceed directly to the lecture room and follow any site specific guidance in relation to Covid safety.

Please use hand sanitiser or wash your hands upon entering and before leaving the building, and maintain a 1m+ distance from others. Unless you are exempt, we also strongly recommend wearing a face covering while inside university buildings. Please note that face coverings are required to be worn in common areas of our departmental buildings such as in corridors and on stairs.

Courses (Lecture Series)

Every year several courses (each composed of a series of lectures) on a variety of topics are available for students. Some of these courses are exclusively designed for MSc and MPhil students, while others are open to both undergraduates and postgraduate students. Options (of which you have to choose 2) take place in Hilary. Lecture attendance is not compulsory, but very strongly recommended. Some courses consist not only of lectures, but of a combination of lectures and discussion classes, and students are expected to actively participate in the latter.

Classes

Classes are discussion groups usually associated with lectures in which students critically discuss, in small groups, the key texts relevant to the understanding of the lecture or of the general theme of the course. Attendance at these classes is expected of all MSc and MPhil students. Absentees must notify the class convenor in advance if they cannot attend.

We plan to hold our classes face-to-face with suitable safety measures in place. Times and venues for Michaelmas Term classes will be confirmed during Induction. If face-to-face classes become unviable, we will move classes online and run these through Teams.

If you cannot attend your class in person, please notify your class convenor so that suitable arrangements can be made for remote participation via Teams.

Tutorials

Tutorials are an important feature of the way we teach Social Anthropology at ISCA. They are usually taught to students in groups of around two to four with individually allocated tutors. For most, if not all, of your tutorials you will be working with the same tutor (sometimes also referred to as supervisor).

As long as conditions permit, following University guidelines and mindful of the health and safety of our students and staff, tutorials will be scheduled to take place face-to-face.

For most, but not all tutorials, you will be given an essay question, a reading list, and be expected to write an essay, which you will submit in advance to your tutor.

You should come to your tutorial prepared to discuss the topic and your essay. Please be aware that tutorial topics, essay questions and reading lists may vary depending on your tutor. Therefore do not be alarmed if your friends with other tutors are covering different material to you. All the tutors are teaching within the syllabus and one of the strengths of the 'Oxford system' is that tutors can design tutorials to reflect their research interests and the needs of specific student groups.

You will be expected to submit your tutorial essay¹ before the tutorial and individual tutors will let you know the deadline for your essay.

At the tutorial you should, among other things, expect to discuss the general topic, explore readings in greater depth, get feedback on your essay, clear up misunderstandings, examine possible critiques, and link the topic to wider knowledge and/or to topics covered during lectures. Importantly tutorials are opportunities for you to discuss your own understandings of the specific topic with your fellow student(s) and with the tutor.

In this way, tutorials are opportunities to learn collaboratively with your peers and tutors. Whilst lectures are learning events during which you are expected to absorb and take notes, keeping questions to the very end, tutorials are designed to be highly interactive. Their success depends in large measure on your ability to contribute, listen and engage with your peers. This may be a little daunting at first, but it is very important that you remember that tutorials are not formally assessed and you are not in competition with your peers.

At the tutorial, your tutor will return your essay to you, normally accompanied by some written feedback to complement the verbal feedback during the tutorial. Note that attendance of and submission of the required work for tutorials is a compulsory part of the degree. If you have difficulty attending or submitting work for a tutorial contact your tutor in good time in advance.

Departmental Seminar (Friday Seminar)

Departmental seminars, where a researcher (either from this University or from another one) is invited to present their current research, are a quintessential part of most university systems of learning. In most universities today, each Department has its own "Departmental Seminar", and we are not different, though in our case we have nicknamed ours the "Friday seminar". Attending Friday seminars and being curious about the research done by our colleagues, nationally and internationally is expected from anybody joining our School.

In our seminar our guest talks for 50-55 minutes, followed by some 30 minutes of general discussion, when members of the audience ask questions. Graduate students are warmly encouraged to join in the conversation and collaborate in making it a lively discussion. Participating in our Friday seminar is an essential part of your training as a social scientist. Seminars will offer you the unique opportunity to see how anthropology is applied today by the leading figures in the

¹ You can find further guidance on essay writing in Section 8 of this Handbook.

field, and they may even offer you very fresh data to invoke in your tutorial or class discussion, or even to back your point in an essay (perhaps even in an exam!).

In MT21 our Friday seminar will be mainly run online using MS Teams. A link for joining the seminar will be included on the programme that is circulated and available on our website.

Our Friday seminar is not the only research seminar around Oxford. There are hundreds of research seminars every week all over the University, which constitutes a true embarrassment of riches.

[Oxford Talks](#) is a good source of information regarding events in the University. You are also advised to browse the events pages of individual departments.

Very often in our University the logic of time management forces members of the community to miss very interesting research seminars. Part of your training is time management too. Do not attempt to follow everything that this unique University tantalizes you with. If you think that any particular week you would be learning more by attending a seminar different than our Friday seminar (at our School or, why not, beyond it), please discuss it with your supervisor before trying to spread yourself too thin.

Attending Other Lectures

The core lecture courses listed below are designed to provide a solid foundation in social anthropology for MSc and MPQ students, whatever their background might be. In addition all students are strongly encouraged to attend the *Cultural Representations* lecture series (8 lectures in MT and 8 lectures in HT). Beyond that, lectures listed as such on our lecture list are in principle open to any member of the University and you are free to attend any lectures of your choice. As before though, please make sure you allocate sufficient time each week for independent study, reading and writing for your degree course.

Please note that due to Covid restrictions, it may not be possible to audit lectures from another programme in person. However, most lectures will be recorded so if you would like to hear a lecture from another programme, you should request access to their Canvas site. You can do this by contacting the relevant course director.

Expectation of Study

Students are responsible for their own academic progress. During term time, the programme requires a substantial amount of reading and writing, which may sometimes be difficult to combine with other activities or duties. Try to concentrate on the essentials and follow the guidance of your supervisor.

The School, like the University as a whole, takes the view that full-time courses require full-time study and that studying at Oxford does not allow sufficient time to earn one's living from paid employment simultaneously. The School's Teaching Committee has therefore drawn up guidelines for students wishing to take paid

employment during term time (see [Section 6.14 of the Graduate Handbook](#) and [Paid Work Guidelines for Oxford Graduate Students](#)) Note that it is not possible to study for any Master's degree within the School on a part-time basis in order to facilitate working while studying.

Oxford workloads can be demanding. If you encounter difficulties keeping the pace, please discuss them with your supervisor or College adviser, or both. Please reach out as soon as you start to feel you are struggling. The sooner you raise such concerns the more likely it is that we can support you in managing your workload!

A common reason leading students to feel they cannot cope is because they make the mistake of trying to read too much and/or too quickly. Please note that most of the time students are NOT expected to read all the readings on a reading list. In a typical course outline, the lecturer gives a very substantial reading list for each lecture or for the general course. This is because the outline will hopefully give you orientations for further and future reading, should you want to pursue the topic on your own at a later stage. But if the lecture is accompanied by a class discussion, do not try to read everything superficially and quickly to prepare for the class. Just pick up a few readings and make sure you try to make the connection between them and the lecture, or make sure you prepare some questions or raise some points to be discussed in the class. You are expected to arrive at a class having read with intelligence rather than with speed.

For tutorial reading, please make sure that you ask your supervisor how many of the readings in the reading list they think you ought to read in order to answer the question of the essay (as an average, they will be in the region of 7 or 8 articles or chapters). Supervisors normally make this very clear in their individual instructions. In some of the classes (for instance in the classes for “Theory and Approaches” in Michaelmas Term) the convenor leading the class will give very specific orientation on what and when to read (approximately four articles or book chapters per session).

Any further queries on expectations should be addressed to your supervisor or to the course director.

Reading Lists – ORLO

We will be using Oxford Reading Lists Online which you will find on the Canvas site. For each lecture course you will find a reading list with clickable links to any material available online.

5. THE STRUCTURE OF THE COURSES

In the following you will find information on lectures and classes that you are expected to follow, term by term.

Lectures, Classes, Tutorials

Core Paper - Theories, Approaches and Themes in Social Anthropology

This is the core paper for the MSc and 1st year MPhil (MPQ) in Social Anthropology. It focuses on a wide range of topics in social anthropology addressing both the history and development of the discipline as well as key theoretical and thematic issues.

Teaching is delivered primarily through lecture series, classes and tutorials and it is examined by a 5,000-word essay submitted at the start of Hilary Term (on topics covered in Michaelmas Term in 'Theories and Approaches in Social Anthropology') and by a one-week timed-essay at the end of Trinity Term (on topics covered in 'Comparing Cultures' and 'Anthropology in the World').

MICHAELMAS TERM

Lectures

Theories and Approaches in Social Anthropology

Lecturers: Prof. Morgan Clarke (convenor) and Dr David Pratten

1. Evolutionism (MC)
2. Functionalism (MC)
3. Structuralism (MC)
4. Paradigms' End (MC)
5. Practice (DP)
6. History (DP)
7. Power (DP)
8. Theory (DP)

Classes

The Michaelmas Term classes accompany the **Theories and Approaches** lectures. These take place every week (from week 1 through week 8) and last for one hour and a half. These classes build on the lecture series and provide students with the opportunity to read, present, and discuss themes covered in the lectures. You will be allocated to a group for this class and will be given details of the time and venue.

Classes will be led by Dr Neil Armstrong, Dr Konstantina Isidoros, Dr Olly Owen, and Dr Ina Zharkevich.

Comparing Cultures (8 lectures in MT; 8 lectures in HT)

Lecturers: Dr Elizabeth Ewart (convenor), Prof Morgan Clarke, Dr Thomas Cousins, Dr Zuzanna Olszewska, Dr David Pratten, Dr Ramon Sarró and Dr Ina Zharkevich

This is a two-term core course running across 16 weeks in Michaelmas and Hilary Terms. In Michaelmas term, we provide introductions to a number of key themes and issues in social anthropology. In Hilary term the lectures expand on some of the issues covered during MT, building and advancing students’ understandings of key areas within social anthropology.

1. Comparing Cultures (EE)
2. Kinship (MC)
3. Gender & Personhood (ZO)
4. Cultural Constructions of Space and time (RS)
5. Colonialism & Post-colonialism (DP)
6. Exchange (IZ)
7. Fieldwork and Religious Experience (RS)
8. Anthropological Approaches to the Anthropocene (TC)

Tutorials

The Michaelmas Term tutorials develop topics covered in particular in the **Comparing Cultures** lecture series, and you will draw upon your increasing knowledge of **Theories and Approaches** too. Your tutor will supply you with details of essay questions and reading lists for tutorials. You will receive four tutorials in Michaelmas Term, covering the following topics:

Weeks 1-2	Reading ethnography / What is anthropology?
Weeks 3-4	Kinship/Gender OR Kinship/Personhood;
Weeks 5-6	Talking with the ancestors – decanonising the classics
Weeks 7-8	Exchange

Cultural Representations (8 lectures)

Lecturers: Clare Harris (CH)(Convenor), Elizabeth Hallam (EH), Chihab El Khachab (CEK), Charlotte Linton (CL)

Attendance at these lectures is highly recommended to students in Social Anthropology, since they engage with a number of key issues in the discipline.

1. Anthropology, museums, and material culture (CH)
2. Colonialism, Collecting and Contemporary Debates (CH)
3. Social Lives of Things (EH)
4. Consumption (CL) Pre-recorded lecture on Canvas.
5. Art, Aesthetics and Agency (CH)
6. Photography and Anthropology (CEK)
7. Rethinking Museums and Collections in the Digital Era (CH)
8. Digital Anthropology (CEK).

HILARY TERM

Option Courses

In Michaelmas Term you will be asked to select two option papers which will be taught in Hilary term. The form of teaching for the option courses varies according to the preferences of the Course Convenor, but typically takes the form of a combination of lectures and discussion classes that span Hilary Term.

In order to help you decide what options to take, there will be an Options Fair in week 2 of Michaelmas Term, (the exact date and time to be confirmed), at which option coordinators introduce their options and are available to answer any questions you might have. You may also wish to discuss your option choices with your supervisor.

You will find details of available options on Canvas and information will also be circulated by email in the first part of Michaelmas Term.

Lectures

Comparing Cultures (cont.)

Convenor: Dr Elizabeth Ewart

Lecturers: Prof Morgan Clarke, Prof. David Gellner, Dr Ramon Sarró, Prof. Harvey Whitehouse, Dr Ina Zharkevich

During Hilary Term, Comparing Cultures lectures will build on material covered at a more introductory level during Michaelmas term:

Anthropology of Religion

1. Fieldwork and Religious Experience (RS)
2. Cognitive approaches to ritual (HW)

Kinship and Social Reproduction

3. New Kinship and the New Reproductive Technologies (MC)
4. Kinship, Globalisation and the Nation State (MC)

Ethnicity and Identity

5. Nationalism and Identity (DG)
6. 'Race', Indigeneity, Transnationalism, Cosmopolitanism (DG)

Economic Anthropology

7. Money, Markets and Finance (IZ)
8. Ethical Consumption (IZ)

Cultural Representations (8 Lectures in HT – *strongly recommended*)

Lecturers: Dr Elizabeth Hallam, Prof. Clare Harris, Dr Chihab El Khachab, Dr Lola Martinez, Prof. David Zeitlyn

1. Text and Materiality (LH)
2. Bodies in Anthropology (LH)
3. Materials: Anthropological Debates (LH)
4. Transnational Artworlds (CH)
5. Anthropology and Archives (DZ)
6. Anthropology, Film and Cinema (CEK)
7. The Anthropology of the Gaze (LM)
8. Authenticity (LM)

Anthropology in the World (8 lectures)

Convenor: Dr David Pratten

Lecturers: Dr Morgan Clarke, Dr Thomas D. Cousins, Prof. David Gellner, Dr Nayanika Mathur, Dr David Pratten, Dr Ramon Sarro, Dr Ina Zharkevich

This lecture series explores recent themes and debates in social anthropology. The aim will be to raise questions, explore the merit of divergent explanations, and examine the ethnographic basis on which current debates rest. This is an advanced graduate course of research-led teaching based on topics in which ISCA faculty are currently engaged.

1. Uncertainty (David Pratten)
2. Ethics and Morality (Morgan Clarke)
3. Emotion and Affect (Zuzanna Olszewska)
4. Imagination (Ramon Sarro)
5. Anthropology of Epidemiology & Epidemics (Thomas Cousins)
6. Social Suffering and Dark Anthropology (Ina Zharkevich)
7. Modernity (David Gellner)
8. Anthropology of the Anthropocene (Nayanika Mathur)

General readings

MacClancy, J. (2019) *Exotic No More, Second Edition: Anthropology for the Contemporary World*. University of Chicago Press.

Society for Cultural Anthropology - <https://culanth.org>

Footnotes Blog: multimodal anticolonial iconoclastic - <https://footnotesblog.com>

Tutorials

The Hilary term tutorials focus on selected topics from the Comparing Cultures series, as well as starting to lay the ground for your dissertations.

Weeks 1-2	Research Ethics
Weeks 3-4	Religion & Ritual
Weeks 5-6	Dissertation literature search & review; proposal drafting
Weeks 7-8	Ethnicity and Nationalism

TRINITY TERM

Fieldwork - Theories & Methods

Convenors: Dr Thomas Cousins & Dr Zuzanna Olszewska

The aim of this course is to examine the relationship between anthropological theory and anthropological practice, with specific reference to field ethnography. It is aimed at all new graduate students in ISCA.

Each session will include a lecture on a key aspect of ethnographic fieldwork, and may include a practical activity. Readings and instructions will be finalised before the end of HT.

Lecture/Class

Lecturers: Dr Thomas D. Cousins, Dr Zuzanna Olszewska, Dr David Pratten, Prof. David Zeitlyn, Dr Ina Zharkevich, Social Science Division Safety Officer, Tylor librarian

Week 1: Introduction: Participant observation and a history of ethnographic methods (ZO) + Dissertation research skills for SCA & VMMA (Tylor Library)

Week 2: Ethics in the field (TBC) + Safety in the field (Social Science Division)

Week 3: Multi-sited fieldwork (IZ)

Week 4: Digital anthropology (DZ)

Week 5: Interviewing (DP)

Week 6: Fieldnotes and writing (TDC)

Research Design Dialogues

These are 2-hourly seminars held in week 1- 4 that combine input from a guest lecturer and student presentations on their dissertation projects. The sessions assist students in developing their own research design and in refining their methodologies for their chosen topics of research, be this field research or library-based research.

-Guest lecturer, 20 mins: to talk about their own experiences, research methods, practical examples, and possible approaches to research design, sources, methodology and ethics.

-Student presentations: 15 minutes each, 4-5 students per week. To include ~5 minutes on overall project and ~5 minutes on methods, with time for Q&A. Feedback on the proposed research will help students shape their research design and literature reviews, which will be further developed in the dissertation tutorials also taking place in TT.

Tutorials

The Trinity Term tutorials focus on supporting dissertation projects as well as providing an opportunity to prepare for the Trinity term examination (Paper 1b)

Weeks 1-2	Dissertation tutorial
Weeks 3-4	Dissertation tutorial
Weeks 5-6	Revision Tutorial

Dissertation (MSc) and Thesis (MPQ/MPhil)

Your dissertation and thesis ideas, preparation and writing will be developed over the course of the academic year. In the case of MPQ students, you may undertake fieldwork or other research over the summer of your MPQ year, in which case you will need to retain regular contact with your supervisor; in your MPhil year (2nd year) your supervisor will provide ongoing supervision as you progress your thesis. In the case of MSc students, your supervisor will be able to provide feedback on your work to date each term up to the end of June. Thereafter completion of the dissertation is as a piece of independent research with no further input from your supervisor.

MPHIL SOCIAL ANTHROPOLOGY SECOND YEAR

In the 2nd year of the MPhil degree you will be expected to devote the bulk of your time to researching and writing a 30,000 word MPhil thesis. There will be fewer lectures and classes to attend, but you will select one assessed option paper to be taken in Hilary term. After submitting your thesis you will be expected to write one assessed essay on a topic in the field of social anthropology, chosen from a list of questions issued by the examiners. You will have two weeks in which to write this essay.

MICHAELMAS TERM

Critical Readings MPhil Class – 8 sessions

Convenors: Dr Zuzanna Olszewska & Dr Ramon Sarro

In this class students critically engage with ethnographic theory and writing, with presentations and debates around selected texts.

Departmental Seminar – 8 seminars

Convenors: Prof Elisabeth Hsu & Dr Zuzanna Olszewska

HILARY TERM

MPhil Thesis writing Class – 8 sessions

Convenors: Dr Morgan Clarke & Dr Ina Zharkevich

In this class students take it in turns to present excerpts from their MPhil thesis to the rest of the class who offer comments and constructive feedback. Two members of teaching staff normally chair the sessions.

Departmental Seminar – 8 seminars

Convenors: Dr Gwen Burnyeat & Prof. David Gellner

Option Paper – 8 sessions

In week 2 of Michaelmas Term you will be asked to select one option paper, which must be different to the two options you followed in your 1st year. The option will be taught in Hilary term. The form of teaching for the option courses varies according to the preferences of the Course Convenor, but typically takes the form of a combination of lectures and discussion classes that span Hilary Term.

In order to help you decide what options to take, there will be an Options Fair in week 2 of Michaelmas Term, at which option coordinators introduce their options and are available to answer any questions you might have. You may also wish to discuss your option choices with your supervisor.

You will find details of available options through the following link:

<https://www.anthro.ox.ac.uk/options>

TRINITY TERM

Departmental Seminar – 5 sessions

Note that one of the departmental seminars of Trinity term is replaced by the Marett Lecture hosted by Exeter College.

Methods Modules and Practical Training provided by SAME in 2021-22 for 2nd year MPhil students

2nd year MPhil students are required to attend Weeks 1-5 of the PRS (Probationer Research Student – first year DPhil) dissertation classes in MT.

In addition, each student is required to attend a minimum of two methods modules, totalling no less than 12 classes. The majority of modules are held in MT and HT, though some may also be offered in TT. Most methods modules classes are 90 mins long and held throughout six weeks.

The PRS class

Convenors: Dr Ramon Sarró, Prof. David Zeitlyn

The PRS class is convened weekly across the academic year. During Michaelmas Term the first five weeks feature essential introductions to a range of procedural and skill acquisition matters that will form a foundation for engagement with fieldwork and/or other forms of data collection. Sessions include topics such as: doctoral training approaches and resources; fieldwork and data collection; library and research resources; ethical research practice in the field; and fieldwork health

and safety.

Methods Modules

Convenor: Dr Zuzanna Olszewska

As noted, PRS and 2nd year MPhil students choose two of the methods modules on offer in the School this year. All methods modules will be presented in the dissertation class in Michaelmas Term, week 1, by Dr Zuzanna Olszewska, who convenes the methods modules in 2021-2022. Some methods modules convenors may have to cap the numbers of participants they can accept, hence students are requested to sign up for and rank three modules they wish to attend in the order of their preference.

At the end of each methods module, each participant is asked to write up a practical task (minimum length: one A4 page) and/or submit a 2,500 word long essay, following the instructions of the methods module convenor. This writing will be assessed but not marked.

Research Ethics

Please note that if, as part of your methods module, you intend to interview or observe any human participants outside the School, you will need to obtain ethical clearance, via our departmental research ethics committee. Details of procedures can be found on our website [here](#). For any questions in relations to ethical clearance procedures, please contact Kate Atherton kate.atherton@anthro.ox.ac.uk

Anyone wishing to take, as one of their two methods courses, another course from within the university that is appropriate to their needs, in place of one offered in SAME, should first seek endorsement from their supervisor and then approach the Research Methods Training Convenor, Dr Zuzanna Olszewska, to seek approval.

MSc/MPQ teaching table

TERM	LECTURES	CLASSES	TUTORIALS
Michaelmas Term	Theories & Approaches to Social Anthropology	Theories & Approaches to Social Anthropology	
	Comparing Cultures		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is anthropology • Kinship/Gender/Personhood • Decanonising the classics • Exchange
	Cultural Representations		
Hilary Term	Comparing Cultures		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research Ethics • Religion & Ritual • Dissertation literature search & review; proposal drafting • Ethnicity and Nationalism
	Anthropology in the World		
	Cultural Representations		
		Option 1 & Option 2	
Trinity Term	Fieldwork Theories & Methods	Research Design Dialogues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dissertation I • Dissertation II • Revision Session

6. IMPORTANT DATES

All important dates and deadlines are also listed on the [SAME](#) website

MSc & MPQ Social Anthropology important dates

MICHAELMAS TERM

- Week 2: Options Fair
Friday wk 3: Submit option choices via the online form (details circulated in advance)
Friday wk 7: Essay titles released for Paper 1a (Theories and Approaches in Social Anthropology)

HILARY TERM

- Thurs wk 1: Submit Paper 1a essay electronically via Inspera.
Start of wk 7: Receive mark and brief feedback on Paper 1a essay.

TRINITY TERM

- Thurs wk 2: Depending on your option choices you may have an assessed essay to submit
Thurs wk 5: Return dissertation title form and synopsis to Mel Goodchild
Early TT: The exact timetable for timed written exams will be issued in early TT. This applies to Paper 1b and to option courses assessed by timed written exam.

Results for Part I are normally available by the last week of June, via Student Self-Service Gateway

MSc Social Anthropology only: Last Wednesday in August, noon: submit **Dissertation** electronically via Inspera.

Results for the **MSc Social Anthropology** are normally available through the Student Self-Service Gateway by the very end of September.

MPhil 2nd Year important dates

MICHAELMAS TERM

Monday wk 2: Submit *final* thesis title and synopsis to Mel Goodchild.
Friday wk 3: Submit option choices via the online form (details circulated in advance)

TRINITY TERM

Thursday wk 2: Depending on your option choices you may have an assessed essay to submit
Thursday wk 2: Submit **Thesis** electronically via Inspira
Thursday wk 5: Submit **Assessed Essay** electronically via Inspira
Week 9: In exceptional cases, you may be called for a *viva voce* examination. For example if your final mark is a borderline mark between two degree classifications. If held, *vivas* take place early in 9th week.

7. ASSESSMENT

Information on Oxford University assessment and examination process can be found [here](#). Full details of the structure of assessment of the MSc and MPhil in Social Anthropology, including marking criteria for each assessed component, are detailed in the [Examination Conventions](#) for the degrees.

Examination Conventions

The *Examination Conventions* for MSc and MPhil in Social Anthropology are an essential complement for this handbook, and should be read in detail.

Examination Conventions are the formal record of the specific assessment standards for the course or courses to which they apply. They set out how your examined work will be marked and how the resulting marks will be used to arrive at a final result and classification of your award. They include information on: submission requirements, marking scales, marking and classification criteria, scaling of marks, progression, resits, use of *viva voce* examinations, penalties for late submission, and penalties for over-length work.

Marking criteria: Details of the marking criteria used by examiners in assessing coursework and examinations can be found as the Appendices of the [Examination Conventions](#). These guidelines are definitive, however in the event that any alterations become necessary, details of these changes will be circulated to all students well in advance of the examinations.

Problems completing your assessment: There are a number of University processes in place to help you if you find that illness or other personal circumstances are affecting your exams or other assessments. Click [here](#) for details about the different processes available.

Past papers: Information on past examination papers can be found by searching for 'OXAM' in the Bodleian catalogue, [SOLO](#) and then selecting the relevant programme and paper.

Any candidate who anticipates problems with meeting submission deadlines should contact their college at the earliest opportunity, not the examiners or anyone else in the School.

Feedback and Learning

You will receive feedback continuously throughout your degree, in the form of verbal and written feedback from your tutors and supervisor.

Learning is not downloading information from a book or from a wise person's brain to your own head or to typing hands. It is rather a dialogic experience. You read, you listen to someone (a lecturer, a tutor, a seminar speaker, a class mate

etc.) and then you speak or write something. This is an essential part, but if you are then not told whether what you said or wrote was interesting or innovating, whether it made sense or a good point, etc., you will not be moving ahead in the improvement of your reasoning skills. Therefore, providing you with “feedback” is a fundamental part of our way of training and of our tutorial system. During a tutorial, a supervisor discusses what you have written and provides oral and written feedback to help you move on in your writing and thinking. However, please note that, precisely because we want to stress the effect of feedback on your ability to improve your reasoning strategies, the supervisor does not provide a mark for the essay, but rather engaging comments, either on why they think the essay is not well argued, or on why they think it is a brilliant piece of work (or somewhere in the middle). In Hilary Term, when you write essays for your option courses, you will get feedback and, in some cases, a mark as well so that you know in which marking zone a lecturer is placing your writing.

All students will also receive written feedback on any dissertation or thesis of 5,000 words or over, submitted in the final term of the course, normally by email after completion of marking. See also [Appendix 1](#) of the Graduate Handbook.

Entering for the University examinations

Details of how to enter for the exam as well as other useful exam-related advice and information can be found on the [University Examinations and Assessments](#) site.

Results are normally available by the last week of June, via Student Self-Service Gateway. Final MSc Social Anthropology results normally become available in the last week of September, via Student Self-Service Gateway.

8. ADVICE ON TUTORIAL ESSAY WRITING

Tutorial assignments usually consist of answering a question on the basis of some suggested readings, given to you by your supervisor at least one week in advance. If possible, consult every text that is suggested, but be selective in choosing the most appropriate material with which to answer the question. Do not be afraid to bring in additional material, whether something you have learned from a lecture or seminar, something you have read in a different context (perhaps for a previous essay, or by independent study), or information from an ethnographic film.

Your supervisor will advise you on the expected length of your tutorial essays. Every essay should be accompanied by a bibliography listing all the works cited in your essay. Advice on formatting your bibliography can be found in the *SAME Graduate Handbook*, [Appendix 3](#).

Tutorial essays are above all teaching tools, they allow you to try out arguments, juxtapose different authors, explore ethnographic case studies and explore specific topics in some detail. Remember that tutorial essays are not formally assessed, though you will receive feedback, normally both written as well as verbal during the tutorial which should allow you to understand what aspects of your essay were successful and where you may need to work on improving.

You will be expected to submit your essays to a clear deadline, and you will need to manage your time carefully, dividing it up into reading time, thinking time and writing time.

Like most skills, tutorial essay writing requires practice and you should treat essays as opportunities to learn, rather than expecting your essay to be a work of perfection. Your supervisor will be happy to discuss your progress and any specific issues arising from your essays.

Do not worry if your friends working with other supervisors are working on different topics or are asked to read different material. All supervisors are teaching to the syllabus for the core paper, but they may vary their readings in line with their own areas of expertise and research interests as well as those of the cohort of students they happen to be working with.

The University offers a range of [study skills training](#) including guidance on academic good practice, definitions of plagiarism, as well as skills such as time management, note-taking, referencing, research and library skills, and information literacy. You are strongly encouraged to make use of these resources.

9. GOOD ACADEMIC PRACTICE

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is presenting someone else's work or ideas as your own, with or without their consent, by incorporating it into your work without full acknowledgement. All published and unpublished material, whether in manuscript, printed or electronic form, is covered under this definition. Plagiarism may be intentional or reckless, or unintentional.

Under the regulations for examinations, intentional or reckless plagiarism is a disciplinary offence. For guidance on correct citation formatting please see ISCA Graduate Studies Handbook, [Appendix 3](#).

The best way of avoiding plagiarism is to learn and employ the principles of good academic practice from the beginning of your university career. Avoiding plagiarism is not simply a matter of making sure your references are all correct, or changing enough words so the examiner will not notice your paraphrase; it is about deploying your academic skills to make your work as good as it can be.

There is clear information and advice on [how to avoid plagiarism](#) in the Study Skills section of the University website.

The University offers two [online self-study courses](#) that will help you in understanding what constitutes plagiarism and how to avoid it.

You are *strongly advised* to take these courses early in your time here.

The Bodleian library also subscribes to an online resource that gives guidance on citation and referencing.

[Cite Them Right](#) online shows how to reference a variety of different sources, including many less common ones, using different styles including Harvard, Vancouver & MLA amongst others. It can either be browsed by categories listed in the toolbars at the top of the Cite Them Right webpage or searched by keyword e.g. "EU Directive". It then provide examples of the in text and full citations and a box with the reference format which then can be overtyped and copied and pasted into a document. It also has a Basics section that provides information and tutorials about why to reference, avoiding plagiarism, setting out citations and creating bibliographies.

Use of Third Party Proof-Readers

Students have authorial responsibility for the written work they produce. Proof-reading represents the final stage of producing a piece of academic writing. Students are strongly encouraged to proof-read their own work, as this is an

essential skill in the academic writing process. However, for longer pieces of work it is considered acceptable for students to seek the help of a third party for proof-reading. Such third parties can be professional proof-readers, fellow students, friends or family members.

Note: The use of third party proof-readers is not permitted for work where the word limit is fewer than 10,000 words.

The University has produced [detailed guidance on the use of third party proof-readers](#) and you are strongly advised to consult this.

Cover Photo: House in northern Angola. Photo: Ramon Sarró, August 2015.