***ANT 102 Introduction to Cultural Anthropology*** Dr. Misha Quill

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| Truth and Lies: Anthropology, truth telling, fake news, and academic success.  Cornell College  Block 1 2018 |  | [mquill@cornellcollege.edu](mailto:mquill@cornellcollege.edu)  Office: 206 College  Office hours by appointment  Campus phone: x4841  **Student Content Tutor:** Caitlin Tobin |

Observers on all parts of the political spectrum have expressed concern over the proliferation of fake news, attacks on journalism and an increasing sense of polarization in the media and in our social world. All kinds of people have fallen for and even helped promote fake news stories on Facebook and other social media sites. Many observers point out that these fake and misleading news sites are increasingly sophisticated, generating web pages and stories that many find difficult to spot. Leaders of Facebook and other social media site have admitted that getting control over these malicious/ fake accounts seems nearly impossible.

For college students, discerning whether information is believable, evaluating the credibility of sources, understanding the trickiness of Photoshop (and other kinds of digital manipulation) and correctly identifying bias are essential tools for academic success. In this FYS course, we will learn about the history of journalism, the psychology and ethics of fakery, how anthropologists study communication and how cultures around the world approach the practices of truth telling and lying. Course materials will include comic and satirical "news" as well as intentionally distorted or biased reporting and ethnographic writing about dissembling in different social contexts.

**Learning Objectives & Skills:**

This course aims to:

* Familiarize students with the diverse nature of human societies and cultures around the world.
* Help students develop critical thinking skills in order to appreciate the social, economic and political roots of cultural diversity within a historical context.
* Enable students to recognize the value of anthropology in understanding complex social phenomena
* Demonstrate how to break down complex academic journal articles into thesis, main points, and supporting evidence
* Using ethnographies, help students identify the kinds of data anthropologists rely on and in what way they these data to make claims and build arguments.

*The course supports the Educational Priorities and Outcomes of Cornell College with emphasis on knowledge, inquiry, communication, ethical behavior and intercultural literacy.*

**Common Goals for First-year Seminars:**

1. Introduce an academic discipline and the concept of a discipline within the context of the liberal arts
2. Provide instruction for academic skills common to all disciplines:
   * Academic Honesty: knowing when to document sources; understanding ethical, legal and professional reasons for documenting sources
   * Critical Reading: restating central points; making inferences; identifying and questioning underlying assumptions; assessing evidence
   * Information Literacy: distinguishing between and evaluating primary and secondary sources; popular and scholarly sources
   * Writing: using write-to-learn assignments to investigate, analyze, and summarize course material
3. Address college-level academic expectations and practices
4. Introduce academic support services

**Required texts:**

* Blum, Susan. Making Sense of Language: Readings in Culture and Communication - 3rd ed.
* Ahearn, Laura. Living Language: An Introduction to Linguistic Anthropology
* A hard-copy planner (your choice - available at the Cornell bookstore or you can use the one that the Admissions office sent).
* Other articles as assigned (on Moodle).

| **Evaluation Criteria** | points |  | **Evaluation Criteria** | points |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Quizzes (5-10 pts ea) (possible) | 30 |  | Course Participation | 40 |
| Reading responses (5 points each) | 30 |  | Midterm Exam | 30 |
| Written responses to films/ speakers | 30 |  | Group Research and Annotated Bibliography | 40 |
| Lies and Fake News on-campus research | 20 |  | Group research Final presentation | 20 |
|  |  |  | Final Exam | 30 |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  | **Total points** |  |

**Grade Scale:**I use the following grading scale:

A = 93-99 A- = 90-92 B+ = 87-89 B = 83-86 B- = 80-82 C+ =77-79

C = 73-76 C- = 70-72 D+ = 67-69 D = 63-66 D- = 60-62 F 59 and below

**Student Success modules:**

* Time Management for Academic Success, Tuesday, Sept. 4 at 10 a.m. (Thomas Commons – Hedges)
* Well-being and Self-care, Wednesday, Sept. 5 at 10 a.m. (Thomas Commons – Berlin)

**Student Success Instructors:**

* Hannah Ganzel and Olivia Lennon

**Student Success PA:** AJ Granados

**Course Schedule – (Subject to Change)**

|  |  | **Class time** | **Topic** | **Readings** | **Assignments due** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Mon | 8/27/18 | 9-10:30; 12:30-3 | What is Anthropology and why study language? | Ahearn Ch 1 - The Socially Charged Life of Language; Pick 2 readings from Moodle |  |
| Tue | 8/28/18 | 9:30-11; 1-3 | How are our language choices different? Why does it matter? | Blum Ch 27. "Language Evolution or Dying Traditions?" Wolfram and Schilling-Estes, Blum Ch 24 "To Give Up on Words" (Basso); | Pick group research topic (in class) |
| Wed | 8/29/18 | 12:30-3 | How do we study language? | Ahearn Ch2 The Research Process; Blum Ch 36 "Dude" (Kiesling) Blum Ch 28 "Social Stratification of ( r)" (Labov) |  |
| Thu | 8/30/18 | 9:30-11; 1-3 | Language, race and priviledge | Ahearn Ch 3 Language Acquisition; Blum Ch 8 "What No Bedtime Story Means" (Brice Heath); Blum Ch 10 "Deja-vu: the continuing misrecognition…" (Miller and Sperry) |  |
| Fri | 8/31/18 | 9:30-11:30 | Language and Gender | Ahearn Ch 9 Language and Gender; Blum 35.  Just Don't Do It (Cameron); Blum 38. Uptalk, Vocal Fry and, Like (Lewandowski); Blum 39 Move over Shakespeare | Submit 4 sources for annotated bibliography(5PM) |
| Mon | 9/3/18 | 12:30-3 | The Power of Language | Ahearn CH 8 Performance, Performativity, Communities; Blum Ch 17.  “How to Do Things with Words” (Austin); Blum Ch 19.  “Naming Practices and the Power of Words” (Blum); | First Film Response due (5PM) |
| Tue | 9/4/18 | Time Management:10-11  Class: 1-3 | Does language influence how we think? | Ahearn Ch 4 Language thought and culture |  |
| Wed | 9/5/18 | Well Being: 10-11  Class: 12:30-3 | What happens when languages die? | Ahearn CH 11 Language Death; Blum 45. "Language Endangerment" (Harrison) | Annotated bib draft due (5PM) |
| Thu | 9/6/18 | 9:30-11; 1-3 | African American Vernacular English and language discrimination | Ahearn Ch 10 Language Race and Ethnicity; Blum 30. "Nah, We Straight" (Alim and Smitherman); Blum 32. Linguistic Profiling | Workshop (in-class) |
| Fri | 9/7/18 | 9-11 midterm; 12:30-3 | American Sign Language, and the politics of deafness |  |  |
|  |  | **Class time** | **Topic** | **Readings** | **Assignments due** |

| Mon | 9/10/18 | No class time - work on group interviews |  |  | #2 Film/ speaker response due (5PM) |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Tue | 9/11/18 | 9:30-11; 1-3 | Lying and religious traditions | Reading on Moodle: religions and lying - assigned by groups |  |
| Wed | 9/12/18 | 1-3 | What do anthropologists have to say about lying? | Reading on Moodle: anthropology of lies | Hand in written report on campus attitudes about lying and truth |
| Thu | 9/13/18 | 9:30-11; 12:30-3 | Historical perspectives | Reading on Moodle: histories of journalism, humbug and political lies | In class report-back: what did groups learn about attitudes about news on campus? |
| Fri | 9/14/18 | 9:30-11 or go to lunch together; 1-3pm | Journalism and ethics  \*Visit KCRG at 1pm | Reading on Moodle: Fake News, journalistic ethics | Annotated bib final due (6pm) |
| Mon | 9/17/18 | 9:30-11 | AM: Final Exam |  | Final Exam (AM) |
| Tue | 9/18/18 | 12:30-1 | Wrapping things up: Do Truth and Lies matter? | Ahearn CH 12 Conclusion, Language Power and agency; and Readings on Moodle |  |
| Wed | 9/19/18 | 9-12 Student presentations |  | No Reading - student presentations | Student presentations |

Course Expectations:

**Come to Class Prepared:** Each day you will be expected to show up on time, having done the reading and/ or other assignments. It also means that you will bring with you the syllabus, as well as paper and pen for taking notes. College-level reading also implies that you will take notes on the reading, look up words or ideas with which you are unfamiliar and highlight ideas that seem particularly compelling. You are also encouraged to think critically about each text, ask questions and contribute to our discussions.

**Academic Honesty:** Cornell College expects all members of the Cornell community to act with academic integrity. An important aspect of academic integrity is respecting the work of others. A student is expected to explicitly acknowledge ideas, claims, observations, or data of others, unless generally known. When a piece of work is submitted for credit, a student is asserting that the submission is his or her work unless there is a citation of a specific source. If there is no appropriate acknowledgement of sources, whether intended or not, this may constitute a violation of the College’s requirement for honesty in academic work and may be treated as a case of academic dishonesty. The procedures regarding how the College deals with cases of academic dishonesty appear in The Compass, our student handbook, under the heading, “Academic Policies-Honesty in Academic Work.”

**Additional Resources:** I encourage you to utilize the services of Meghan Yamanishi, Social Sciences Librarian, Jennifer Ferrell in the Writing Center, and Rich Berg in the Academic Media Studio. These professionals and their departments can provide additional perspectives and guidance to help polish your research, writing, & presentation skills.

**Attendance and Participation:** It is essential that you keep up with the readings and attend class regularly. Excessive absences will result in points deducted from your grade. Further, there will be in-class quizzes and writing assignments, some of which cannot be made up (unless you have discussed the matter with me beforehand).

**Classroom Behavior:** Throughout the semester, we will be covering topics that may be controversial and inspire heated debates. It’s important to remember that everyone in this class has a right to be heard, even if you disagree with what they’re saying. Treat your classmates with the same respect and courtesy that you expect from them, and together we can explore these important and difficult issues.

**Course Accommodations:** Cornell College is committed to providing equal educational opportunities to all students. College Policy regarding students with disabilities: Students who need accommodations for learning disabilities must provide documentation from a professional qualified to diagnose learning disabilities. For more information see: <http://www.cornellcollege.edu/academic-support-andadvising/disabilities/documentation/index.shtml>

-Students requesting services may schedule a meeting with the disabilities service coordinator as early as possible to discuss their needs and develop an individualized accommodation plan. Ideally, this meeting would take place well before the start of classes.

-At the beginning of each course, the student must notify the instructor within the first three days of the term of any accommodations needed for the duration of the course.

**Course communication:** The main communication tools for the class are the Moodle site and email. Please make a point of checking these regularly for updates and/or changes to assignments. The best way to reach me is after class, via email or by making an appointment.

**Electronics**: All electronic devices need to be used in a way that is not disturbing or distracting. This means that all devices should be turned off or silenced during class, including cell phones. While I am willing to allow the use of laptops and tablets to take notes during class, I reserve the right to ask you to put them away if they seem to be an excessive distraction to you or anyone else. (Remember that students sitting beside or behind you can likely see your screen.) Common distractions include texting and checking Facebook or other social media; be sure to avoid doing these during class.

**Formatting for Assignments:** Please type your papers, which should be double-spaced, with standard margins (1 in.) and fonts (12 point Times New Roman). Most take-home written work must be uploaded to Moodle, however there may be additional you will need to submit in hard copy. In an effort to reduce the amount of paper we generate for the course, I will be providing some feedback electronically. Do not send me work via email unless I have specifically given permission. (Emails with attachments too often end up in my spam folder.) If you send files in formats I can’t easily open, I will send them back to you for reformatting.

**Late or Missing Work:** I will not accept late papers. If you know you will be absent when something is due, you must speak to me or email me in advance. If you miss a scheduled presentation or are absent when an assignment is due, do not just assume that you will be able to make it up or turn it in late for full credit. Keep in mind that we all have unforeseen circumstances in our lives, so do not wait until the last minute to complete your assignments.

**Workload:** Each student is expected to invest approximately 150 hours into the course (spread over 3-1/2 weeks). In practice, this means we will spend approximately 2-1/2 or 3 hours per day in class and you will be expected to spend about 4 hours per day (including weekends) on your schoolwork.

**15-Day Drop Policy:** Per the academic catalog, a 15-day drop may be available to those students who have made, in the opinion of the instructor, a determined effort to learn the material, complete the work, comply with the attendance policy, and participate in the class. Students may relinquish their right to a 15-day drop if they fail to turn in any assignments, come unprepared to class or have excessive absences.

**Educational priorities & outcomes**  
The Mission and Core Values guide learning at Cornell College. The College recognizes that meaningful education occurs in multiple formats and venues, and encompasses a wide variety of disciplines and learning objectives. As an intentional learning community, the college has chosen to emphasize the following Educational Priorities and Outcomes for all students.  
  
In order to achieve these Outcomes, the Educational Priorities are embedded in curricular, co-curricular, independent, and collaborative contexts across the campus. Faculty and staff provide opportunities for learning in a supportive environment where students ultimately take responsibility for their own education.   
  
**Knowledge**Students will integrate and apply knowledge from a focused area of study as well as a broad general education, which includes disciplinary and interdisciplinary perspectives in the arts, humanities, sciences, and social sciences.  
  
**Inquiry**Students will respond to the complexities of contemporary and enduring problems using information literacy tools, research skills, creative thinking, and analysis.  
  
**Reasoning**Students will evaluate evidence; interpret data; and use logical, mathematical, and statistical problem-solving tools.  
  
**Communication**Students will speak and write clearly, listen and read actively, and engage with others in productive dialogue.  
  
**Intercultural literacy**Students will connect with diverse ideas and with people whose experiences differ from their own and that may be separated from them by time, space, or culture.  
  
**Ethical behavior**Students will recognize personal, academic, and professional standards and act with integrity.  
  
**Citizenship**Students will collaborate with others and contribute in their communities and the larger world.  
  
**Vocation**Students will discover and prepare for the range of opportunities and challenges that await them beyond their college experience.  
  
**﻿Well-being**Students will ﻿respect the ways physical, emotional, spiritual, and intellectual well-being may contribute to a balanced life.

**Mission**  
Cornell College offers an innovative and rigorous learning community where faculty and staff collaborate with students to develop the intellectual curiosity, creativity, and moral courage necessary for a lifetime of learning and engaged citizenship.  
  
**Diversity and Inclusion Statement**  
Cornell College values diversity and strives to create a welcoming community in which all individuals are respected and included. We support respectful and meaningful inquiry across actual or perceived differences. These differences include ability, age, appearance, athletics and student organization involvement, ethnicity, family/marital status, gender, gender expression, immigration status, language, military/veteran status, nationality, political ideology, race, religion/spirituality, sex, sexuality, socio-economic status, and other personal identities and experiences.  
  
We live in an increasingly interconnected world. The ability to include, communicate, cooperate, and collaborate with diverse individuals is important. To that end, we engage in dialogue around issues of difference, identity, and ideology in the classroom, residence halls, and throughout campus. We embrace diversity, and as a result our viewpoints are enriched and our community strengthened.  
  
The entire campus community is called upon to play a role in Cornell College’s commitment to diversity and inclusion. Cornell will continue to evolve into a more inclusive and equitable campus that is committed to civic and social responsibility through the collaboration of the President, Diversity Committee, students, faculty, and staff.

**Freedom of Expression and Civil Discourse Statement**Cornell College is an institution of higher education that aspires to develop lifelong learners and engaged citizens. Consistent with that mission, we strongly endorse freedom of speech, as articulated in the First Amendment, as an inherent right of individuals to express themselves. Expression and personal identity are inextricably intertwined. Further, while freedom of speech and expression are accorded constitutional protection in our civic life, the value of free expression must be given even more rigorous affirmation in an intellectual community that prizes liberal education, academic freedom, and critical thinking.  
  
As a small, residential community of persons with diverse identities and backgrounds, Cornell is committed to maintaining an inclusive campus climate and emphasizes the importance of communication and cooperation between individuals who hold different perspectives, opinions, and identities. Civil discourse refers to the inherent responsibility of individuals to engage respectfully with the intent to foster understanding. In a community like ours, civil discourse is highly valued, as it guides the approach all individuals should take in order to achieve an inclusive campus.  
  
Therefore, we expect that community members, when engaging in civil discourse, will approach each other with:

1. The intention to understand—The process of civil discourse places responsibility on both the speaker and the listener to be willing to learn, acknowledging that neither one has all of the answers. It can be messy, involves risk, and is ultimately rewarding. Active listening and asking thoughtful questions are key components.
2. Respect for the inherent dignity and worth of every person—Civil discourse means that we recognize that all persons, regardless of differences and disagreements, have inherent dignity, worth, and their own unalienable right to freely express themselves.
3. Commitment to learning and appreciation of critical thinking—Freedom of speech is fundamental for learning, critical inquiry, and growth as an individual and as a community. Civil discourse involves thinking critically about all ideas, opinions, and identities one encounters. The invitation to think critically is meaningless unless diversity of opinion and perspective is not only respected but actively sought out.
4. Empathy—A critical component of civil discourse is empathy. In practicing empathy, each individual involved attempts to understand the feelings, experiences, and perspectives of another. [This statement supersedes the 2006 Faculty Resolution on Free Speech and Expression.]

**Core values**

* A liberal education that celebrates discovery and embraces the integration and application of knowledge
* Intellectual, moral, and personal growth
* Civic and social responsibility
* The dignity and worth of each individual in a diverse community

**Details for Graded Assignments**

**Reading responses**

Two due per week (Weeks 1, 2, 3) These should follow the template provided on Moodle (click on the assignment link). You select the reading for that week that you would like to respond to. Please submit your responses on Moodle. Each should be submitted before that day’s reading. Please answer each question as thoroughly as you can. If you have difficulty answering one of the questions, do not leave it blank. Instead, use the space to explain why you are having trouble with this question. These will be evaluated on a ✔,✔+, ✔- basis. You may not get credit for more than two responses per week (so you can’t skip this the first few weeks and hand them all in at the end).

**Written responses to films/ speakers (2x) (1st- due 9/3 at 5pm; 2nd due 9/10 at 5pm)**

Throughout the Block, we will watch a number of films, attend at least one outside lecture and have at least one off-campus day. You will need to select two of these events and write a short (two page/ 400-600 words) response to each. Your responses will need to be typed and submitted via Moodle.

Your analysis should do the following:

* Describe what “conversation” would you characterize the film or lecture as being a part of. (Can you summarize the points being made and perhaps consider who or what the author is in conversation with?)
* Connect the film or lecture to at least two readings or course discussions we have had this block.
  + Does the film or reading support or challenge what you have learned (in reading or class)? In what ways?
* What does the film or lecture reveal about language and communication?
* Does the film or lecture help you think differently about the practices of truth telling or lying? In what way?
* Does the film or lecture reveal anything about how people communicate in different settings or with different people?
* Does the film or lecture reveal anything about how power is connected to communication?

**Lies and Fake News – Cornell Campus research**

For this project, you will use anthropological research methods to learn what members of the Cornell and Mt Vernon communities think about lying, media consumption and fake news. In groups, you will be asked to narrow down your focus and begin interviewing members of the Cornell Community. Each group should talk to students, staff and faculty. You might also conduct observations on campus, particularly if people are consuming media and you have opportunities to observe and/or ask questions (see below).

To conduct this research, you will need to visit various parts of campus in groups of two or three and ask people if they would be willing to share their thoughts with you for a group project. You should take turns asking questions and observing/ taking notes, then share what you learned/ heard after each mini-interview.

In your small groups, after doing at least five interviews, meet to review your notes, discuss what you learned, and look for any patterns, similarities or surprises.

You will get your group assignments on 9/7 and share what you learned in class on 9/13. Written reports are due 9/12.

Big picture questions you will tackle:

Group 1 – Ethics of lying

* Is lying ok? In what situations?
* Do facts matter? How come?
* Is lying in-person different than lying online?

Group 2 – Social media

* Is it ok to spread rumors on social media?
* Do people you know do it? Do you? (often, sometimes/never?)
* Does it bother you when advertisers photoshop models or products to make them look perfect?

Group 3 – Staying informed

* Do people on campus stay informed of what is happening in the world? How? Where do they get their news?
* Do you think you are a savvy media consumer? (ie Are you good at spotting bullshit?)
* What are your most important bs detection tools/ methods?
* Is fake news the new normal? What about accusations targeted at the mainstream press? Do we need a strong press?

Group 4 – Fake news, politics, and the state of the world

* How should the United States, as a country, or Cornell College, as a community, deal with the proliferation of bs, fake news and accusations of fake news?
* What is worse,
  1. actually (empirically false) fake news that a person or people are trying to pass off as true or
  2. accusing legitimate news sources or journalists of generating “fake news”?

Grading for research portion:

* Quality of your research (especially field notes and documentation)
* Willingness to try new things
* Ability to work together as a group

Deadlines:

* 9/12 Research reports due – this should include field notes, interview notes and/or transcripts, a two-page summary of what you learned from your fieldwork.
* 9/13 You will be asked to report on what you learned in class.

**Group research and Annotated Bibliography**

An annotated bibliography is a kind of research report that highlights the main points of articles, book chapters, books, websites or other kinds of sources, in which each source is summarized, often with a critical or explanatory remark. It can be a stand-alone document or part of a larger research project.

For this assignment, you will have six pieces to accomplish:

1. 8/28 at 5PM submit topic to Moodle- In your group, select a communication-related research topic. See below for some relevant topics. See Professor Quill if you plan to select a topic that is not on the list.
2. 8/31 at 5PM – each person in your groups should submit to Moodle the bibliographic information for four different sources each. This should be in the form of a short bibliography generated using Chicago Author-Date style.

Two should be from the peer-review academic literature, and you will need to upload pdf copies of each of these. The other two could be newspaper articles, web sites, book chapters, podcasts or blogs. No need to upload these, but be sure that your bibliography includes a url (link).

1. 9/6 at 5PM – submit your annotated bibliography first draft to Moodle.
2. 9/10 In class, workshop your annotated bibliography
3. 9/14 at 6pm – submit your annotated bibliography final draft to Moodle.
4. 9/19 As a group, give a 15-minute presentation on your topic. You may use a PowerPoint or Prezi. If you use video clips or other media, these may not take up more than 20% of your presentation time.

* Topics for research:
  + English-only movement
  + Standard and non-standard English
  + Offensive language and free speech
  + Journalistic integrity and freedom of the press
  + Politically correct language/ polite language
  + Politicians (and other powerful people) and the history of public lying, exaggeration and evading the truth
  + Euphemisms, slang and jargon
  + Aggressive speech online (flaming)
  + Language extinction and indigenous knowledge
  + Bilingualism
  + Code-switching