
ANTHROPOLOGY 4300/7300

COMPARATIVE SOCIAL ORGANIZATION



About this course

This course explores the variance in social organization as studied by anthropologists. As part of this course, students will explore topics including kinship, marriage, family, decent and residence patterns, social networks, inequality, and the evolutionary approaches to understanding these topics. In the first part of the course, we will explore major important concepts of kinship, decent, and residence, and marriage. The second part of the course will survey major patterns of social organization from both regional, developmental, and topical perspectives. As part of this course students will read and analyze ethnographic descriptions of various populations, watch documentaries, and engage in discussions of course topics. By the end of the course students will have an understanding of how gender and kinship shape social structures and institutions cross-culturally.

Details

Fall Semester 2019, Mon Wed Fri 12:00 PM - 12:50 PM in Swallow Hall 111

Instructor is Dr. Sean Prall. My office is in Swallow Hall 224, and my office hours are MW from 10:00AM to 12:00 PM. You may contact me via email at sprall@missouri.edu



Textbooks and readings

The following texts are required as part of this course:

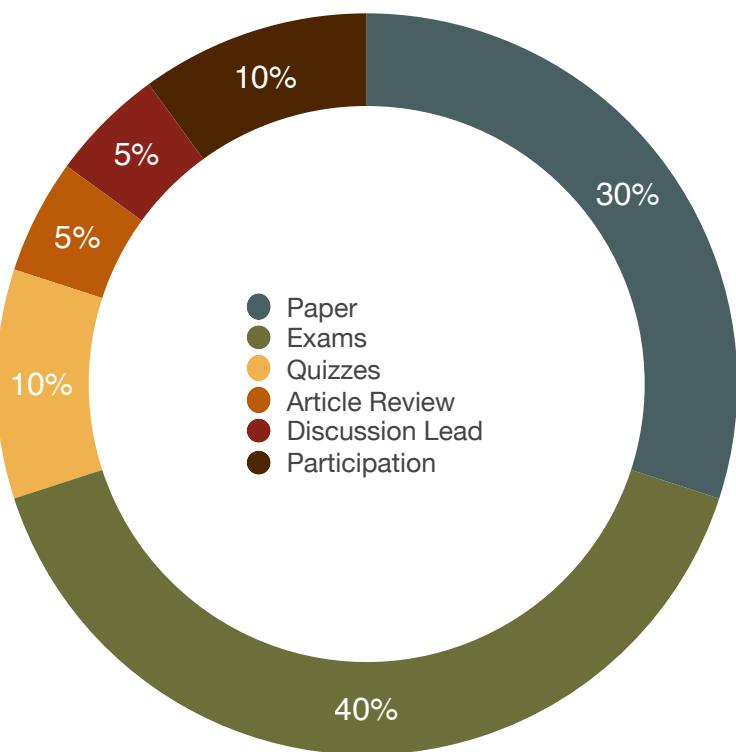
•Stone L and King DE. 2019. *Kinship and Gender: An Introduction* (6th Edition). Routledge Press: New York. ISBN: 978-0-8133-5094-3.

•Stockard JE. 2002. *Marriage in Culture: Practice and meaning across diverse societies*. Wadsworth: Belmont. ISBN: 978-0-15-506368-0.

Other readings will be posted online. Since this course is new and in development, most readings are TBA, and will be shared on a weekly basis

Assignments and grading

Grading for this class will be broken down into the following requirements and assignments as represented in the graph.



Class Participation - Students will be expected to be present in class, to come prepared having read the assigned readings for that day, and participate in thoughtful discussion.

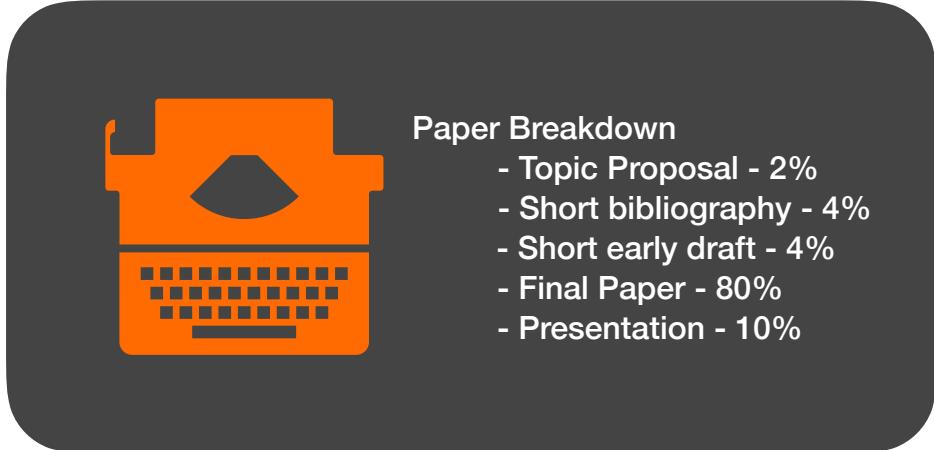
Quizzes - At the discretion of the instructor, students will complete a series of short and unannounced quizzes at the beginning of class sessions. Quizzes may be in any format, but will concentrate on assigned reading materials, and subject matter covered since the previous quiz.

Leading Discussion - During one class session, each student will act as discussion lead (undergraduates 1x, graduate students 2x), and come prepared to ask questions and lead the class through the assigned readings and topics for that day.

Article Review – During one class session (undergraduates 1x, graduate students 2x) students will present a peer-reviewed journal article relevant to the course topics for that day. Journal articles must be approved by the instructor in advance, and

be published within the last 10 years. Students will present informal summaries of the articles to the class, and turn in a short (minimum 2 pg) summary and review of the paper within one week of presentation.

Exams - Students will complete two exams during the semester, a midterm and a final. Exams will be composed of a mix of multiple choice, short answer, and essay questions.



Paper Breakdown

- Topic Proposal - 2%
- Short bibliography - 4%
- Short early draft - 4%
- Final Paper - 80%
- Presentation - 10%

Paper - Students will complete a final

paper on a topic of their choice. Paper topics will be chosen in advance with help from the instructor, and students will be asked to submit several item as described above in order to provide accountability and ensure progress on the papers throughout the semester. Students will present papers in the form of a powerpoint to the class at the end of the semester, and this presentation will be calculated into the paper grade as described here. Undergraduate papers should be 10-12 pages, while graduate papers should be 15-20 pages (double-spaced, 12 pt font). A rubric will be provided to the students prior to handing in papers.



Course Policies and Expectations

Academic integrity is fundamental to the activities and principles of a university. All members of the academic community must be confident that each person's work has been responsibly and honorably acquired, developed, and presented. Any effort to gain an advantage not given to all students is dishonest whether or not the effort is successful. The academic community regards breaches of the academic integrity rules as extremely serious matters. Sanctions for such a breach may include academic sanctions from the instructor, including failing the course for any violation, to disciplinary sanctions ranging from probation to expulsion. When in doubt about plagiarism, paraphrasing, quoting, collaboration, or any other form of cheating, consult the course instructor.

If you anticipate barriers related to the format or requirements of this course, if you have emergency medical information to share with me, or if you need to make arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please let me know as soon as possible.

"Kinship and marriage are about the basic facts of life. They are about 'birth, and copulation, and death,' the eternal round that seemed to depress the poet but which excites, amongst others, the anthropologist."

-ROBIN FOX

If **disability related accommodations** are necessary (for example, a note taker, extended time on exams, captioning), please establish an accommodation plan with the MU Disability Center, S5 Memorial Union, 573-882-4696, and then notify me of your eligibility for reasonable accommodations. For other MU resources for persons with disabilities, click on “Disability Resources” on the MU homepage.

The University community welcomes **intellectual diversity and respects student rights**. Students who have questions or concerns regarding the atmosphere in this class (including respect for diverse opinions) may contact the departmental chair or divisional director; the director of the Office of Students Rights and Responsibilities; the MU Equity Office, or equity@missouri.edu.

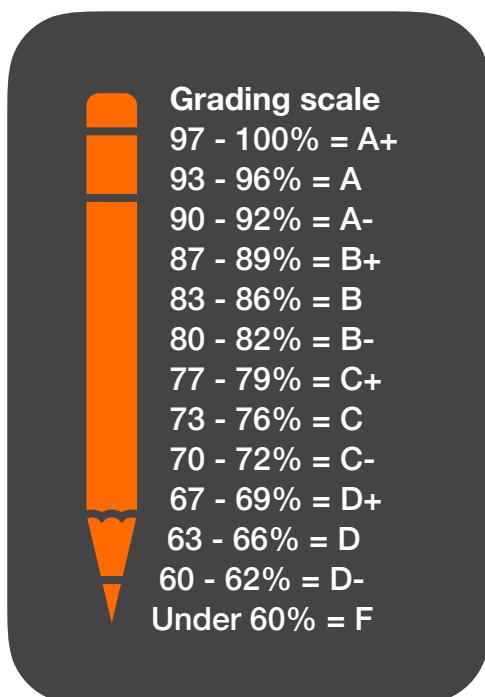
All students will have the opportunity to submit an anonymous evaluation of the instructor(s) at the end of the course.

University of Missouri System Executive Order No. 38 lays out principles regarding the sanctity of classroom discussions at the university. The policy is described fully in section 200.015 of the Collected Rules and Regulations. In this class, students may not make audio or video recordings of course activity, except students permitted to record as an accommodation under section 240.040 of the Collected Rules. All other students who record and/or distribute audio or video recordings of class activity are subject to discipline in accordance with provisions of section 200.020 of the Collected Rules and Regulations of the University of Missouri pertaining to student conduct matters.

Those students who are permitted to record are not permitted to redistribute audio or video recordings of statements or comments from the course to individuals who are not students in the course without the express permission of the faculty member and of any students who are recorded. Students found to have violated this policy are subject to discipline in accordance with provisions of section 200.020 of the Collected Rules and Regulations of the University of Missouri pertaining to student conduct matters.

Course Schedule

Week	Date	Topic	Due
Week 1	8/19	Introduction to the course	
	8/21	The Kinship code	
	8/23	The Kinship code	Quiz 1
Week 2	8/26	Discussion of select papers on course topics	
	8/28	Evolution of Kinship - Kin recognition	
	8/30	Evolution of Kinship - Pair bonds	
Week 3	9/2	Labor day – No Class	
	9/4	Marriage: types and implications	
	9/6	Kung and traditional Chinese marriage	



Week 4	9/9	Thinking about polygamy	
	9/11	Divorce	
	9/13	Historical Iroquois and Nyinba marriage	
Week 5	9/16	Descent and Lineage: Patrilines I - Nuer	
	9/18	Descent and Lineage: Patrilines II - Brahmans and lineal masculinity	
	9/20	Descent and Lineage: Matrilines I - Matrilineal puzzle, Navajo	Topic Proposal
Week 6	9/23	Descent and Lineage: Matrilines II - Biased investment, Mosuo, Nayar	
	9/25	Descent and Lineage: Other types - Beng and Huli	
	9/27	Individual meetings to discuss paper topics	
Week 7	9/30	Family - how many children?	
	10/2	Family – parenting and alloparenting	
	10/4	Family – multiple/partible paternity	
Week 8	10/7	Midterm	
	10/9	Family - Gender and social roles	
	10/11	Family - Paternal Investment	
Week 9	10/14	Band-level societies: Background	
	10/16	Band-level societies: case studies	
	10/18	Band-level societies: cooperation	Paper Bibliography
Week 10	10/21	Local group level organization	
	10/23	African social organization	
	10/25	Local level groups: Ethnographies in pastoralism	
Week 11	10/28	Warfare	
	10/30	Evolution of Social Inequality	
	11/1	“Big man” groups and social hierarchy	
Week 12	11/4	A focus on oceanic social organization	
	11/6	Regional polity level social structures	
	11/8	Chiefdoms: Ethnographic examples	Early paper draft
Week 13	11/11	Euro-American Kinship	
	11/13	Euro-American Kinship cont	

	11/15	Modern Family Processes	
Week 14	11/18	“Harmful” cultural practices	
	11/20	Contemporary issues in family and sexuality	
	11/22	Final	
		AAAs – No class, work on papers	
Week 15	12/2	AAAs – No class, work on papers	
	12/4	Student Presentations and wrap up	
	12/6	No class	
		Finals Week – Final papers due	Final Paper

Please note that course schedule and any deadlines listed are subject to change. Instructor may change course content, assignments, grading, and reading at his discretion. Students will be notified of updates to this syllabus as they occur.