

ANTHROPOLOGY 703: WRITING THE FIELD

Winter 2021

Instructor: Dr. Andy Roddick

Office Hours: via zoom (Calendly appt.)

Email: roddick@mcmaster.ca

Lecture: Fridays 9:30 AM - 12:20 PM

Contents

Course Description	3
Required Materials and Texts	3
Class Format.....	4
Course Evaluation – Overview	5
Course Evaluation – Details.....	5
Introductory Writing Assignment (5%), due January 22.....	5
Blogs Posts (55%, various due dates through term).....	5
Final Paper 40 %, due April 16	6
Weekly Course Schedule and Required Readings	7
Week 1 (January 15)	7
Week 2 (January 22)	7
Week 3 (January 29)	7
Week 4 (February 5).....	7
Week 6 (February 12).....	7
Week 5 (February 19).....	8
Week 7 (February 26).....	8
Week 8 (March 5)	8
Week 9 (March 12)	8
Week 10 (March 19)	8
Week 11 (March 26)	9
Week 12 (April 2)	9
Week 13 (April 9).....	9
Course Policies	9
Submission of Assignments.....	9
Grades.....	9
Late Assignments	9

Absences, Missed Work, Illness	10
Avenue to Learn	10
Turnitin.com.....	10
University Policies	10
Academic Integrity Statement.....	10
Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities.....	11
Religious, Indigenous and Spiritual Observances (RISO)	11
Faculty of Social Sciences E-mail Communication Policy	11
Privacy Protection	11
Course Modification.....	12
ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES.....	13
REQUESTS FOR RELIEF FOR MISSED ACADEMIC TERM WORK.....	13
ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION FOR RELIGIOUS, INDIGENOUS OR SPIRITUAL OBSERVANCES (RISO).....	13
COPYRIGHT AND RECORDING.....	13
EXTREME CIRCUMSTANCES	13

Course Description

What makes good anthropological writing? What defines a good conference paper, thesis chapter or academic article? How do scholars become stronger academics through critical reflection on tough feedback and peer review? What is a good scholarly workflow in the age of new media and "info glut"? This course will investigate these questions through case studies, writing exercises and work on a larger writing project relevant to the larger academic goals of the Anthropology graduate students. The class will consist of seminar discussion and group work. This course permits students from the various sub-disciplines to work on projects relevant to their development as scholars, while engaging with a wider literature on academic writing, research and critical thinking.

Required Materials and Texts

We will be using a variety of articles, chapters and website posts in this class. You will also be providing some of your own readings as we move forward. There is only one book that is required:

- Becker, Howard
1986 "Writing for Social Scientists: How to Start and Finish your Thesis, Book, or Article". University of Chicago Press, Chicago.

We will be reading the entirety of this, therefore it is highly recommended that you order a copy. Most of the other articles are available on-line through the library website system, or will be chosen based on your own research projects. I will lend out other readings mentioned on the syllabus for you to share.

**** NOTE:** If there are readings that you feel I have missed, or that would make a critical contribution to our in-class discussions, please do let me know! I'm happy for this class to shift per your needs, interests, or simply as I may not be aware of useful resources.

Other books (many of which we will discuss) include:

- Boice, R. (1990). Professors as Writers: A Self-Help Guide to Productive Writing. New Forums Press Inc.
- Eco, U. (1977). How to Write a Thesis. Feltrinelli.

- Goldberg, N. and Cameron, J. (2005). Writing Down the Bones: Freeing the Writer Within. Shambhala Publications, Inc.
- Gray, T. (2005). Publish and Flourish. The Teaching Academy, New Mexico State University
- King, S. (2000). On Writing: 10th Anniversary Edition. Simon & Schuster, Inc.
- Luker K. (2010) Salsa Dancing into the Social Sciences: Research in an Age of Info-Glut. Harvard University Press, Cambridge.
- Narayan, K. (2012) Alive in the Writing: Crafting Ethnography in the Company of Chekhov. University of Chicago Press,
- Newport, D. (2016). Deep Work: Rules for Focused Success in a Distracted World. Grand Central.
- Silva, P. (2007). How to Write a Lot: A Practical Guide to Productive Academic Writing. American Psychological Association.
- Stein, A. and Daniels, J. (2017). Going Public: A Guide for Social Scientists. The University of Chicago Press.
- Sword H. (2017). Air & Light & Time & Space. Harvard University Press, Cambridge.
- Wulff H. (2017). The Anthropologist as Writer. Genres and Context. Berghahn, New York.
- Zerubavel, E. (1999) The Clockwork Muse: A Practical Guide to Writing Theses, Dissertations, and Books. Harvard University Press.
- Zinsser, W. (2006). On Writing Well: The Classic Guide to Writing Nonfiction (30th Anniversary Edition). Harper Collins Publishers.

Class Format

This class will take place on zoom and through student blogs. We will also occasionally make use of the whiteboard app “miro” (<https://miro.com/>), which I will discuss further in a class handout.

Course Evaluation – Overview

1. Introductory Writing Assignment 5%, due January 22
2. Blogs 55%
 - Blog 1 (5%), due January 29
 - Blog 2 (5%), due February 5
 - Blog 3 (5%), due February 26
 - Blog 4 (5%), due March 5
 - Blog 5 (5%), due March 12
 - Blog 6 (5%), due March 19
 - Blog 7 (15%), due March 26
 - Commenting on others' blogs 10% (throughout term)
3. Final paper 40%, due April 16

Course Evaluation – Details

Introductory Writing Assignment (5%), due January 22

For our first meeting, prepare a 1-page (single spaced) overview of who you are (personally and professionally). The first part will discuss your background, and experiences that have shaped your academic interests, the second the issues around writing you struggle with.

Blogs Posts (55%, various due dates through term)

A central component of this class is a series of 7 blog posts. You are writing these blogs to reflect on your writing process, to investigate elements of good anthropological writing, to generate in class discussion, but more than anything, to keep you writing! A handout will be passed out in our first or second meeting with issue relating to academic blogging, and instructions in setting up a blog. I am asking you to set up a WordPress blog either through the library 2.0 website, or independently through the WordPress.org system beyond the University's walls. (There are big advantages for creating your own professional presence on the web for your research.) You may use your real names or just a pseudonym known only to those of us in the class. You may also keep your blog private, so long as all of us in the class have access to it. The blogging assignments are briefly outlined below, but I will offer my expectations for each of these blogs within the first couple of weeks of January. The due dates are listed in the course schedule. You should come to class ready to discuss issues that came up in your own blog posts, and those of your colleagues.

Blog 1: Your writing workflow, 5%, due January 29

Your writing workflow: A blog post on your writing process and a reflection of what slows you down, or where writer's block emerges.

Blog 2: An Outline, 5%, due February 5

A basic outline of the writing you wish to complete this semester. This blog should include your writing deadlines. I will be keeping you to your deadlines as much as possible.

Blog 3: Review of a "Reviews in Anthropology" article, 5%, due February 26

Find an article pertinent to your work and analyze the strengths of the literature review.

Blog 4: Knowing your audience, 5%, due March 5

Annotations of 3 articles in 3 Anthropological journals, teasing out the "skeleton" of the written work.

Blog 5: The Good and the Bad, 5%, due March 12

Discussion of what makes articles fail and succeed by looking at an excellent article and a weak one.

Blog 6: Review of a good presentation, 5%, due March 19

A good presentation...either from within the department, at a conference, or from a *YouTube* link. (Start thinking about this early in the semester so that you can take advantage of speaking events in the department or elsewhere in your own field!)

Blog 7: Collaborative Writing, 15%, due March 26

This blog you will pair up with a colleague in a different sub- discipline and produce a short (~8 paragraph) blog on a current issue in the field that cross-cuts the discipline as a whole. I encourage you to start this blog early (note the heavier grade component here!)

Commenting on Blogs

I expect you to follow each blog assignment by commenting on a minimum of 2 other blog postings each week.

Final Paper 40 %, due April 16

This course is all about your research; I have no interest in having you focus on something not directly in line with your own scholarship. Throughout this course you will be working on one major project, whether it is a conference paper or an article, or simply a paper that is somehow connected to your research. I do, however, expect you to be open to other ways of writing, and broadly engaged with all facets of Anthropology. As such, you should expect to participate in reading drafts from colleagues who may be coming from various modes of anthropological knowledge. We will set up reasonable deadlines in your blog 2. In the final week, those presenting a conference paper will present a very polished version of the presentation for feedback.

Weekly Course Schedule and Required Readings

Week 1 (January 15)

Introduction, blogging, and the important of writing, writing and writing...

Readings: Becker Preface; Carrigan chapter 1 and 2; Luker ch. 1 and 3.

To Do: Brainstorm possible writing projects and do initial readings. See handout on setting up blogs

Week 2 (January 22)

Writing in Anthropology & Finding your Voice Pt. 1

Readings: Becker Ch. 2; Boyer "The Necessity of Being a Writer in Anthropology Today", Savage Minds "What is Good Anthropological Writing?" (website), Savage Minds "Decentering Writing" (website), Footnotesblog "Decanonizing Anthropology" (website)/ Missie Landau "Human Evolution as Narrative"; Jonathan Marks "My ancestors, myself" (website)

Due: Writing Biography Due

Week 3 (January 29)

Writing in Anthropology & Finding your Voice pt. 2

Readings: Gottlieb "The Anthropologist as Storyteller"; Joyce excerpt from The Languages of Archaeology; Thomas "The Archaeologist as Writer"

Due: Blog 1

Week 4 (February 5)

Writing in Anthropology Pt. 3 & Finding your Voice pt. 3

Readings: Geertz "Being There: Anthropology and the Scene of Writing"; Abu-Lughod "Writing against Culture"; Kirin Narayan "Preface and Chapter one from Alive in the Writing"

Due: Blog 2

Week 6 (February 12)

Getting started, getting finished: Research in the age of info glut

Readings: Becker Ch. 6; Luker Ch. 7; Extracts from Sönke's "How to Take Smart Notes"

** Free writing exercises in class.

** There is no blog due for this week. Work on Blog 7 with your partner!

Week 5 (February 19)

Date – Reading Week

Week 7 (February 26)

Literature Reviews & Comprehensive Exams

Readings: Becker Ch. 8; Luker ch. 5 (Other readings to be posted)

Due: Blog 3

Week 8 (March 5)

From evidence to argument, from field (lab) to paper

Readings: Becker Chapter 3 (Other readings to be posted in Dropbox)

Due: Blog 4

Week 9 (March 12)

What makes good Anthropological writing: From sub-discipline to the wider public

Readings: Calcagno "Keeping Biological Anthropology in Anthropology, and Anthropology in Biology", Nyqvist "On Some Nice Benefits and One Big Challenge of the Second File", Scheper-Hughes "Making Anthropology PUBLIC", Savage Minds on "Can we Still Write Big Question Sorts of Books?", "Using archaeology to understand the past, present, future of climate change"

Due: Blog 5

Week 10 (March 19)

What makes good Anthropological Writing: The Conference paper

Readings: Becker Chapter 5; Savage Minds "How to Write AAA Papers"

Due: Blog 6.

** Bring in 1st draft of the paper you are working on.

Week 11 (March 26)

What makes a good Anth. journal article – Style

Readings: Allen & Joyce "Communicating Archaeology in the 21st Century"

Due: Blog 7

Week 12 (April 2)

Editing drafts Pt. 1: Phases of Self-Editing

Readings: Becker Chapter 4; Moeran "The Craft of Editing: Anthropology's Prose and Qualms"

** Bring in 2nd draft of the paper you are working on.

Week 13 (April 9)

Editing Drafts Pt. 2: Dealing with Critiques

Readings: Becker Chapter 7; Herrington & Cadman "Peer Review and Revising in an Anthropology Course: Lessons for Learning".

Course Policies

Submission of Assignments

[Insert policy on format of assignments and how to be submitted]

Grades

Grades will be based on the McMaster University grading scale:

MARK	GRADE
90-100	A+
85-90	A
80-84	A-
77-79	B+
73-76	B
70-72	B-
67-69	C+
63-66	C
60-62	C-
57-59	D+
53-56	D
50-52	D-
0-49	F

Late Assignments

[Insert policy on late assignments]

Absences, Missed Work, Illness

[Insert policy on absences, missed work and illness]

Avenue to Learn

In this course we will be using Avenue to Learn. Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of this course, private information such as first and last names, user names for the McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in this course will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure please discuss this with the course instructor.

Turnitin.com

In this course we will be using a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal plagiarism. Students will be expected to submit their work electronically to Turnitin.com and in hard copy so that it can be checked for academic dishonesty. Students who do not wish to submit their work to Turnitin.com must still submit a copy to the instructor. No penalty will be assigned to a student who does not submit work to Turnitin.com. All submitted work is subject to normal verification that standards of academic integrity have been upheld (e.g., on-line search, etc.). To see the Turnitin.com Policy, please to go www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity.

University Policies

Academic Integrity Statement

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behavior in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity.

Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behavior can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: "Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty"), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university.

It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, located at www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity.

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

1. Plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one's own or for which credit has been obtained.
2. Improper collaboration in group work.

3. Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities

Students who require academic accommodation must contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. Academic accommodations must be arranged for each term of study. Student Accessibility Services can be contacted by phone 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or e-mail sas@mcmaster.ca. For further information, consult McMaster University's Policy for [Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities](#).

Religious, Indigenous and Spiritual Observances (RISO)

The University recognizes that, on occasion, the timing of a student's religious, Indigenous, or spiritual observances and that of their academic obligations may conflict. In such cases, the University will provide reasonable academic accommodation for students that is consistent with the Ontario Human Rights Code.

Please review the [RISO information for students in the Faculty of Social Sciences](#) about how to request accommodation.

Faculty of Social Sciences E-mail Communication Policy

Effective September 1, 2010, it is the policy of the Faculty of Social Sciences that all e-mail communication sent from students to instructors (including TAs), and from students to staff, must originate from the student's own McMaster University e-mail account. This policy protects confidentiality and confirms the identity of the student. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that communication is sent to the university from a McMaster account. If an instructor becomes aware that a communication has come from an alternate address, the instructor may not reply at his or her discretion.

Privacy Protection

In accordance with regulations set out by the Freedom of Information and Privacy Protection Act, the University will not allow return of graded materials by placing them in boxes in departmental offices or classrooms so that students may retrieve their papers themselves; tests and assignments must be returned directly to the student. Similarly, grades for assignments for courses may only be posted using the last 5 digits of the student number as the identifying data. The following possibilities exist for return of graded materials:

1. Direct return of materials to students in class;
2. Return of materials to students during office hours;
3. Students attach a stamped, self-addressed envelope with assignments for return by mail;
4. Submit/grade/return papers electronically.

Arrangements for the return of assignments from the options above will be finalized during the first class.

Course Modification

The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check his/her McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.

CONDUCT EXPECTATIONS

As a McMaster student, you have the right to experience, and the responsibility to demonstrate, respectful and dignified interactions within all of our living, learning and working communities. These expectations are described in the [Code of Student Rights & Responsibilities](#) (the “Code”). All students share the responsibility of maintaining a positive environment for the academic and personal growth of all McMaster community members, **whether in person or online**.

It is essential that students be mindful of their interactions online, as the Code remains in effect in virtual learning environments. The Code applies to any interactions that adversely affect, disrupt, or interfere with reasonable participation in University activities. Student disruptions or behaviours that interfere with university functions on online platforms (e.g. use of Avenue 2 Learn, WebEx or Zoom for delivery), will be taken very seriously and will be investigated. Outcomes may include restriction or removal of the involved students’ access to these platforms.

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students with disabilities who require academic accommodation must contact [Student Accessibility Services](#) (SAS) at 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or sas@mcmaster.ca to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. For further information, consult McMaster University’s [Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities](#) policy.

REQUESTS FOR RELIEF FOR MISSED ACADEMIC TERM WORK

McMaster Student Absence Form (MSAF): In the event of an absence for medical or other reasons, students should review and follow the Academic Regulation in the Undergraduate Calendar “Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work”.

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION FOR RELIGIOUS, INDIGENOUS OR SPIRITUAL OBSERVANCES (RISO)

Students requiring academic accommodation based on religious, indigenous or spiritual observances should follow the procedures set out in the [RISO](#) policy. Students should submit their request to their Faculty Office **normally within 10 working days** of the beginning of term in which they anticipate a need for accommodation or to the Registrar’s Office prior to their examinations. Students should also contact their instructors as soon as possible to make alternative arrangements for classes, assignments, and tests.

COPYRIGHT AND RECORDING

Students are advised that lectures, demonstrations, performances, and any other course material provided by an instructor include copyright protected works. The Copyright Act and copyright law protect every original literary, dramatic, musical and artistic work, **including lectures** by University instructors.

The recording of lectures, tutorials, or other methods of instruction may occur during a course. Recording may be done by either the instructor for the purpose of authorized distribution, or by a student for the purpose of personal study. Students should be aware that their voice and/or image may be recorded by others during the class. Please speak with the instructor if this is a concern for you.

EXTREME CIRCUMSTANCES

The University reserves the right to change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances (e.g., severe weather, labour disruptions, etc.). Changes will be communicated through regular McMaster communication channels, such as McMaster Daily News, A2L and/or McMaster email.