

Anthropology of culture

Educational subject description sheet

Basic information

Study programme Etnologia (Cultural Differences and Transnational Processes) Speciality - Organizational unit Faculty of Anthropology and Cultural Studies Study level Second-cycle programme Study form Full-time Education profile General academic		Didactic cycle 2024/25 Subject code 20ETES.2FN.14777.24 Lecture languages English Course type Elective Block Subjects not assigned	
Subject coordinator	Hannah Wadle		
Lecturer	Hannah Wadle		
Periods Semester 1, Semester 2, Semester 3, Semester 4	Activities and hours • Conversatory classes: 30, Graded credit		Number of ECTS points 5

Goals

Code	Goal
C1	Complex discussions of global inequalities and interconnections
C2	Help learners understand and empathise with the conditions for everyday risk practices and insecure life conditions in different parts of the world
C3	Support student to take a new, critical perspective on trending themes in global finance such as ESG, Risk management, security politics, health politics and others
C4	Challenge learner to critically review their own position in the world and unpacking theirs and their society's reasoning with risk and uncertainty
C5	Confident use of diverse resources to gain a new perspective on social protests and counter-movements
C6	Build creative and critical capacity to explore empathetic ideas and practices of living with global uncertainties

Subject learning outcomes

Code	Outcomes in terms of	Learning outcomes	Examination methods
Knowledge - Student:			
W1	Student is familiar with the large debates around risk and past and contemporary risk discourses; ability to voice opinions within these debates and its critical, analytical and constructive strands.	ETE_K2_W01, ETE_K2_W02, ETE_K2_W03, ETE_K2_W04, ETE_K2_W07, ETE_K2_W09	Essay, Oral statement
W2	Student knows the specificity of anthropological critiques and alternative approaches to risk in comparison to those of other social sciences and the humanities.	ETE_K2_W02, ETE_K2_W03, ETE_K2_W04, ETE_K2_W05, ETE_K2_W06	Essay, Oral statement
W3	Student has a knowledge of a range of ethnographic field studies on that reflect concerns around risk narratives, exposure and matters and is able to use them for making academic arguments.	ETE_K2_W03, ETE_K2_W07, ETE_K2_W08	Essay, Oral statement
Skills - Student:			
U1	Student is able to choose appropriate research methods to conduct anthropological studies on empirical phenomena connected to risk discourses.	ETE_K2_U01, ETE_K2_U02, ETE_K2_U05	Essay
U2	Student understands and values imaginaries of risk as a domain for generating anthropological knowledge about global power relationships, human ontologies and epistemologies.	ETE_K2_U04, ETE_K2_U05	Essay, Oral statement, Presentation of the art work
U3	Ability to read and synthesize academic literature on risk and uncertainty through regular readings and essay writing	ETE_K2_U06, ETE_K2_U08, ETE_K2_U09, ETE_K2_U10	Essay, Oral statement

Code	Outcomes in terms of	Learning outcomes	Examination methods
U4	Student gains ability to debate and critique complex ideas in speech and writing through weekly tasks and flipped classroom structure	ETE_K2_U04, ETE_K2_U05, ETE_K2_U06, ETE_K2_U07, ETE_K2_U08, ETE_K2_U09	Essay, Oral statement
U5	Ability to make use of intellectual creativity and use multi-media to express concerns around risk and uncertainty	ETE_K2_U01, ETE_K2_U03, ETE_K2_U05, ETE_K2_U07, ETE_K2_U10	Presentation of the art work
Social competences - Student:			
K1	Student gains ability to engage in self-reflexivity and trans-local empathy	ETE_K2_K04, ETE_K2_K06, ETE_K2_K08, ETE_K2_K10	Essay, Oral statement, Presentation of the art work
K2	Student gains ability to work in multinational (student) groups	ETE_K2_K02, ETE_K2_K06, ETE_K2_K09	Oral statement, Presentation of the art work
K3	Student learns to connect personal experience to contemporary, global concerns and act upon the knowledge in everyday life and as a citizen	ETE_K2_K03, ETE_K2_K04, ETE_K2_K05, ETE_K2_K07, ETE_K2_K08	Essay, Oral statement, Presentation of the art work

Study content

No.	Course content	Subject learning outcomes	Activities
1.	Anthropological perspectives on risk and uncertainty: Introduction In the first two sessions, we will gain an overview of the areas of risk and uncertainty as forms of knowledge creation for contemporary societies and look at some of their historical legacies. We will look at academic and non-academic fields that emerged as being specifically concerned with knowledge around risk and uncertainty. In the second part of the lecture we will focus on debates in the Social Sciences on risk and uncertainty and discuss works that have shaped our current thinking about these fields in Social Anthropology, notably Mary Douglas's and Ulrich Beck's works. We will draw attention to different ways of understanding the concepts of risk and uncertainty.	W1, W2, U2, U3, K1, K2, K3	Conversatory classes

No.	Course content	Subject learning outcomes	Activities
2.	<p>Module I: Navigations of everyday risk-scapes and uncertainty</p> <p>In weeks three to five we will be looking at everyday navigations and experiences of uncertainty and risk, as well as at the blurring of knowledges and categories that intertwine as individuals and communities are making sense of the anticipated, unknown, uncertain, feared. We will look at ethnographies in selected places and with different communities, in which ethnographers discuss life with uncertainties or employ the concepts of risk and uncertainty. Questions that we are asking in this module: Drawing on Tim Ingold's concept of task-scape, we ask, what risk-scapes do people in different part of the world inhabit and how are they performed? What skills and knowledge are necessary to navigate them, and who possesses those? What global connections are these skill-scapes composed of?</p>	W2, W3, U1, U2, U3, U4, U5, K1, K2, K3	Conversatory classes
3.	<p>Module II: Empires of Risk and their subjects and "others": Hegemonies of Risk-reasoning /</p> <p>In the second module, we discuss risk and uncertainty, both in the literal and in the more indirect sense, as ruling discourses and as technologies of governance and subjugation. The suggestion of this course is to think of such discourses figuratively as "Empires of Risk" and hegemonic forms of reasoning with risk and uncertainty. We look at environments that put global populations in the service of their specific risk discourse, as well as understanding mechanisms, that employ different forms of risk reasoning to often systematically exclude, stigmatise, racialize, colonise and govern groups and individuals.</p> <p>We will bring debates from economic anthropology about value and debt into conversation with anthropology of the state about citizenship, and post-colonial theory, recognizing mechanisms and principles, by which risk and risk-reasoning becomes infused with power, hegemonic knowledge and different forms of exclusion and exploitation.</p> <p>Questions we will ask: Can we speak of existing Empires of Risk, and if so - what are they and how do they dominate discourses, govern and impose rules? How do "Empires of Risk" reproduce themselves, how do they expand or manage the "other", How do they overlap and change shape? What are the cosmopolitical impacts and trajectories of them, what kinds of gains for some, what kinds of suffering and stigma for others come with them?</p>	W2, W3, U1, U2, U3, U4, U5, K1, K2, K3	Conversatory classes

No.	Course content	Subject learning outcomes	Activities
4.	<p>Module III: Risking change with uncertain outcomes: existential protest</p> <p>This module continues our thinking about risk and uncertainty from the perspective of resistance and existential protest. We are interested in resistance and revolt against regimes and empires of risk reasoning, in alternative discourses of uncertainty and risk, as well as in the risk that lies in revolting and protesting itself - in the decision to stand up with uncertain outcomes. Inspired by Michael Jackson's Existential Anthropology and by the voices of protesters, key notions that we will trace and explore throughout this module are the notions of existential risk, rage, and resistance. We are particularly interested in existential protest as a reaction to existential risk or uncertainty and at the question what is at stake, for individuals and groups, in present and future, who find themselves excluded from risk-reasoning, targeted by it, or who are trapped in stifling certainties, and to whom risk and other uncertainties emerge as existentially pressing alternatives. This leads us to questions like: How do acts of resistance address (un)certainly, what are the narratives and plains of risk-reasoning that are mobilized in momentums of small or bigger acts of resistance?</p> <p>As a preparation for the following module, we are sharpening our interest also to another domain - questions that concern the kinds of imagination (reasoning, hoping, feeling, narratives, sensory bearings) that comes with existential acts of rebellion. What role does the imagination play in these counter-moves, how are alternative discourses of certainty and uncertainty, and of futures brought forward, expressed and, very often, endured? And with what consequences?</p>	W3, U1, U2, U3, U4, U5, K1, K2, K3	Conversatory classes
5.	<p>Module IV: Pedagogies of uncertainty</p> <p>In the final block we revisit the potential of thinking risk and uncertainty anthropologically. We discuss its possible contributions to existing conversations and practices in the academy and beyond. What are the horizons and perspectives to be learnt and taught from anthropological observation, critique and engagement around global discourses and experiences of risk and uncertainty? What themes and methods do we have to our disposition to enter global academic and non-academic discourses around risk and uncertainty with competency and confidence? And we consider the engaged and applied anthropological perspective:</p> <p>Which imaginations, practices, relationalities and knowledge are necessary to position oneself towards risk discourses and towards local and translocal uncertainties? How can we stay and act in conversation with each other - empathetically and consciously - in face of contemporary empires of risk and existential struggles through which we are connected, legally, bodily, economically? What can responsibility, solidarity, education and activism mean in different contexts of uncertainty?</p>	W3, U1, U2, U3, U4, U5, K1, K2, K3	Conversatory classes

Additional information

Activities	Teaching and learning methods and activities
Conversatory classes	Lecture with a multimedia presentation of selected issues, Conversation lecture, Discussion, Work with text, Problem-based learning, Workshop method

Activities	Credit conditions
Conversatory classes	<p>This course is made of 10 lecture & drop-in hours, 10 reading discussion hours, and 8 workshop hours. In the lecture & drop-in hours the lecturer gives an overview over the submodule of the course on which we focus over 3 weeks. The drop-in gives participants of the course the opportunity to clarify immediate questions that arise during the lecture. The preparation for the lecture is an observational exercise. In the following week the focus lies on diving deeper into the topic and discussing selected readings from the course and debating controversies that surround the module theme. To prepare for the discussion, students will write a practice essay based on the readings. In the last week of the block module, the "workshop", we will engage in activities that allow us some form of experiential learning around the module: this can include trying out different methodologies, emotional learning through role play, organizing encounters with individuals. This part of the module can be co-directed by the group.</p> <p>The course will be assessed through 1) class preparation, participation and assignments 2) postprocessing of the themed blocks and individual course modules via four practice essays, 3) four workshop projects as group or individuals. The student can revise and resubmit the previously submitted essays to improve the overall grade at the end of the course. Attendance to the course is obligatory.</p>

Literature

Obligatory

1. Douglas, Mary (1992): Risk and Blame, pp. 3-21.
2. Beck, Ulrich (2008) World Risk Society (Ch. 11) Critical Theory of World Risk Society pp. 187-211.
3. B. Świtek, A. Abramson, H. Sween: Extraordinary Risks, Ordinary Lives (2022): Introduction, pp. 1-35 .
4. Bubandt, Nils (2014). The empty seashell : witchcraft and doubt on an Indonesian island. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
5. Calkins, Sandra (2019). Who Knows Tomorrow? Uncertainty in North-Eastern Sudan, Berghahn Books.
6. Ingold, Tim (1993). "The Temporality of Landscape." World Archeology 25(2): 152-174.
7. Zonabend, Françoise (1993). The Nuclear Peninsula. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.
8. Stoler, Ann Laura (2016). Duress imperial durabilities in our times. Durham: Duke University Press. Ch. 10: Imperial Debris and ruination, pp. 336-381.
9. Orta, Andrew. Making Global MBAs : the Culture of Business and the Business of Culture. Oakland, California: University of California Press, 2019. Ch. 5: Managing the Margins, pp. 127-160.
10. Feldman, Gregory. The Migration Apparatus : Security, Labor, and Policymaking in the European Union. Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press, 2012. Ch. 3: Making things simple, pp. 56-77.
11. Tsing, Anna (2014). Ordinary Catastrophe: Outsourcing Risk in Supply-Chain Capitalism. In Futures of Modernity. Bielefeld: transcript Verlag, pp. 51-64.
12. Billaud, Jean (2012). Suicidal Performances: Voicing Discontent in a Girls' Dormitory in Kabul. Culture, medicine and psychiatry 36(2): 264-285.
13. Echchaibi, Nabil (2022). In praise of Arab 'Defeat': another reading of Arab struggle. Cultural Studies 36(1): 1-20.
14. Stierl, Maurice (2019). Migrant Resistance in Contemporary Europe. Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge. (Chapter Migrant Excess)
15. Irving, Andrew (2017). New York Stories. Ethnos 82, no. 3 (2017): 437-.
16. Ingold, Tim (2010). Footprints through the Weather-World: Walking, Breathing, Knowing. Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute 16, no. s1, pp.121-139.
17. Pink, Sarah (2015). Doing Sensory Ethnography. 2nd edition. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.

Optional

1. Petryna, A. (2013). Life exposed biological citizens after Chernobyl (New ed. / with a new introduction by the author. ed.). Princeton, N.J. :: Princeton University Press.
2. Povinelli, Elizabeth A. (2016). Geontologies a requiem to late liberalism. Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press.
3. Voyles, Traci B. (2015). Wastelanding : legacies of uranium mining in Navajo country. University of Minnesota Press.

Calculation of ECTS points

Activities	Activity hours*
Conversatory classes	30
Reading the indicated literature	40
Paper preparation	40
Preparation of a project	40
Student workload	Hours 150
Number of ECTS points	ECTS 5

* academic hour = 45 minutes

Efekty uczenia się dla kierunku

Kod	Treść
ETE_K2_K02	The graduate is ready to organize and coordinate their own and others' activities for the social good
ETE_K2_K03	The graduate is ready to properly determine priorities for achieving a specific research goal/task, considering the ethics and prestige of the profession of an ethnologist/cultural anthropologist
ETE_K2_K04	The graduate is ready to accurately identify and address contemporary civilizational problems related to the profession of an ethnologist/cultural anthropologist
ETE_K2_K05	The graduate is ready to professionally protect cultural heritage and educate in this field
ETE_K2_K06	The graduate is ready to actively and responsibly participate in cultural and social life
ETE_K2_K07	The graduate is ready to creatively and consciously use knowledge about the complexity of cultural phenomena, the organization and functioning of culture, the significance of its individual elements, and the historical variability of forms as well as the ethnocultural diversity of the world
ETE_K2_K08	The graduate is ready to engage responsibly, tolerantly, and understandingly in favor of other cultures
ETE_K2_K09	The graduate is ready to effectively establish interpersonal contacts with representatives of various social, ethnic, and religious groups as an advocate of intercultural dialogue
ETE_K2_K10	The graduate is ready to thoroughly observe and identify the most important moral, political, social, and economic problems of the contemporary world
ETE_K2_U01	The graduate can search, analyze, evaluate, select, and integrate new information using various sources and interpretation methods, and formulate critical judgments based on this
ETE_K2_U02	The graduate can independently carry out complex research tasks, including analyzing other authors' works, synthesizing various ideas and viewpoints, selecting methods and constructing research tools, and preparing and presenting results in the field of ethnology/cultural anthropology
ETE_K2_U03	The graduate can independently and in a team, including leading its work, acquire knowledge and enhance research skills, as well as undertake independent actions aimed at lifelong development of their abilities and interests in a critical, creative, entrepreneurial, and ethical manner
ETE_K2_U04	The graduate can integrate knowledge from various disciplines in the field of humanities and social sciences and apply it in situations related to the profession of an ethnologist/cultural anthropologist
ETE_K2_U05	The graduate can conduct in-depth and critical analysis and interpretation of various types of cultural products and fields, using original approaches that consider the latest trends in ethnology/cultural anthropology and new achievements in the humanities and social sciences
ETE_K2_U06	The graduate can substantiate arguments, formulate conclusions, and create synthetic summaries of selected problems using their own views and the views of other authors
ETE_K2_U07	The graduate can utilize various communication channels and techniques in interactions with specialists in ethnology/cultural anthropology and related sciences, as well as popularize knowledge about ethnology/cultural anthropology, cultural heritage, cultural products, and its institutions
ETE_K2_U08	The graduate can competently prepare complex written works in the field of ethnology/cultural anthropology
ETE_K2_U09	The graduate can competently prepare complex presentations on issues of interest in ethnology/cultural anthropology or in areas at the intersection of various scientific disciplines
ETE_K2_U10	The graduate can use a modern foreign language in accordance with the requirements specified for level B2+ of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages
ETE_K2_W01	The graduate knows and understands in-depth subject matter and methodology of ethnology/cultural anthropology and its creative applications in professional activities
ETE_K2_W02	The graduate knows and understands in depth the specialized terminology of ethnology/cultural anthropology as well as the terminology appropriate for disciplines related to ethnology/cultural anthropology

Kod	Treść
ETE_K2_W03	The graduate knows and understands in-depth theoretical and methodological knowledge in the field of ethnology/cultural anthropology
ETE_K2_W04	The graduate knows and understands the principles of anthropological interpretation of cultural phenomena in a systematic and in-depth manner
ETE_K2_W05	The graduate knows and understands in-depth connections between ethnology/cultural anthropology and various disciplines of humanities and social sciences as well as related sciences, enabling interdisciplinary integration of research perspectives
ETE_K2_W06	The graduate knows and understands in-depth contemporary achievements, centers, and research schools covering selected areas of ethnology/cultural anthropology and related sciences
ETE_K2_W07	The graduate knows and understands specialized methods of analysis, interpretation, evaluation, and problematization characteristic of selected traditions, theories, and research schools in the field of ethnology/cultural anthropology and related sciences
ETE_K2_W08	The graduate knows and understands the significance of subject knowledge, knowledge of copyright law, professional ethics, and entrepreneurship to solve complex social and cultural problems, oriented towards practical applications in various areas of professional activity of an ethnologist and cultural anthropologist (e.g., in research teams, administration, local governments, non-governmental organizations, aid agencies, media)
ETE_K2_W09	The graduate knows and understands in-depth complexity of nature, the complexity of conditions, and the historical variability of language, culture, and society