Goals and Objectives:
The primary goal of this course is to expose you to the current discussions on theory and theoretical paradigms, genres of writing, comparative frameworks for data that derive from multiple theoretical frames, and the politics of “doing” anthropology that abound in the world of ethnology today. The course begins with a discussion of anthropological, and in general, social theory after the pause of the postmodern moment. From there, we will provoke the intent of theory and the notion of the field, a key concept in anthropology. I am having you read the full texts of some key theoretical manuscripts rather than articles or excerpts because the authors and their contributors allow for not only in depth understanding but also interpreting, describing and even anticipating how anthropologists are participating with their collaborators and colleagues in studies surrounding the movement of peoples, ideologies, objects, and thus their cultures through our current historic moment (and yes, this is up for discussion).

Objectives for this seminar include the development of your ability to: 1) use this data as a foundation for understanding ethnographic work; 2) construct paradigms of interpretation for the work of others as well as yourself; and 3) develop the ability to critically analyze the appropriate genres and discourses of scholarly interpretation and description.

Grading:
We will cover ten books in fifteen weeks. Each week you will produce a descriptive and analytic overview of the assigned readings that includes three points you would like to discuss in class. These summaries are worth ten points each. Each person will also select one set of readings as their own and will produce a more exhaustive analytical summary and at least five key points from which to lead the class in discussion. Depending on the class size, you may be presenting with one or more of your colleagues in class and you will need to get together with them to decide how you will present (jointly, separately, in debate form, etc.). The week you present you will not have to do a weekly overview. As you write your five key points, keep in mind that each person has written three points themselves so you and your co-presenters will want to leave at least half the class time for discussion. An analytical summary includes (1) a brief summation of the book in its
entirety even though you may be presenting on only half the book, (2) a review of the theoretical paradigm and the paradigms the author(s) is attempting to expand on, argue against, or move in another direction (this requires that you know your history of theory), (3) the effectiveness of the argument and your reaction to the work, and (4) the methodological framework that would result from this theoretical paradigm. In the case of an edited volume, you will need to compare and contrast the theoretical paradigms that are invoked in each thematic section for which you are responsible. Many edited volumes allow contributors to contest each other’s work—others do not and all use the same paradigm; it is up to you to figure this out. The analytical summary, five key points, and your facility in leading the class that week will be worth 100 points. This is due the week after your facilitation ends to allow you to take into consideration the debates and discussions we have in seminar.

The final project will be to select a contemporary ethnography (published within the last five years) and write an analytical summary of the work. Focus on finding one that will tie directly to your thesis research in some form (I recognize that not all of you will use ethnography in your thesis but certainly cultural forms have dipped into your arena somewhere, somehow). The ethnography should also be a reflection of the theoretical treatises we have read in class; that is, the theoretical essays, and thus the ethnography you choose, should provide you insight into how theories become interpretation. In reality, this is the true test of your learning. An “analytical summary” of your ethnography should include a synopsis of the ethnographic work (who, what, where, when and why), a review of the theoretical paradigm, methods and genre, and your critique of its contribution to the discipline, the people under study, and it’s inter or cross-disciplinary attributes and possibilities. This is worth 150 points and is due Thursday, May 14th by noon in my office.

Course grading is as follows:

**Weekly Reading Analysis:** 10pts each (130pts total)
**Analytical Summary/Class Facilitation:** 100pts
**Final Ethnography Analysis:** 150pts total
**Total Points:** 380

90-100% = A range  
80-89% = B range  
70-79% = C range  
60-69% = D Range  
Below 60% is failing

*Plus and minus grades will be given.*
**Required Texts:**


*Additional readings to be posted on Blackboard as PDF’s*

**Recommended Readings:**


**Recommended Reference Book:**

Course Outline:
Week One, Jan 27:
Introductions

Week Two, Feb 3:
Barnard – Full Text

Week Three, Feb 10:
Bhabha, pp. ix-xxv; pp.1-174

Week Four, Feb 17:
Bhabha, pp. 175-367

Week Five, Feb 24:
Das & Poole, pp. ix-164

Week Six, Mar 3:
Das & Poole, pp. 165-288

Week Seven, Mar 10:
Biel, pp. 1-233

Week Eight, Mar 17:
Biel, pp. 235-445

Week Nine, Mar 24:
Marx-Engels, Selected Chapters

Week Ten, Mar 26:
Appadurai, pp. Full Text (Possible article to be added)

Week Eleven, Mar 31:
Spring Break

Week Twelve, Apr 7:
Webster, Selected Chapters

Week Thirteen, Apr 14:
Mohanty, pp. 1-214

Week Fourteen, Apr 21:
Mohanty, pp. 215-327 (Possible article to be added)

Week Fifteen, Apr 28:
Manalansan, Full Text

Week Sixteen, May 5:
Vargas, Full text

Final Project Due: Thursday, May 14th by noon.