Course Instructor: Stephen Campbell
Contact email: stephen.campbell@utoronto.ca
Class time: Wednesdays, 12:00 pm – 2:00 pm
Class location: SS 2106 (Sidney Smith building, 2nd floor)
Office location: AP 424 (anthropology building, 4th floor)
Office hours: Wednesdays after class (or by appointment)
Prerequisites: ANT 204H1 or ANT 207H1

COURSE DESCRIPTION

What shapes human economic behaviour? How do relations of exchange shape social formations? What alternatives to our current economic system are possible? This course will address these and other related questions in the field of economic anthropology through an examination of the dialogue between anthropology and other disciplines—specifically, in regards to the economies and cultures of gift and money transactions in human society. Studying the history of gift and money economies from agricultural societies to recent developments in finance market culture through a variety of perspectives (ethnographic, sociological, politico-economic, and historical), this course aims to train students in a critical understanding of capitalism.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. Familiarising students with key concepts in economic anthropology, such as substantivism, reciprocity, value, debt, and moral economy.

2. Engaging students with a range of case studies on which to draw for critical thinking about the diversity of human economic relations and their various anthropological implications. Course readings and lecture examples will cover a diversity of global contexts.

3. Providing students with the capacity to hone core critical skills that are not only key to the anthropological discipline but to a good university education—and ultimately the practice of critical-constructive democratic citizenship—more generally:
   • positional thinking, i.e. that in order to understand other people, other societies, and other ways of life we must be able to imagine and understand points of view that come from being in positions different than our own.
   • self-reflection and comparison, i.e. that learning about ways of life, practices, and societies different from our own forces us to ask questions about why we do things the way we do.
   • critical reasoning and critical analysis. Through engagement with different anthropological texts, students will learn to identify their authors’ arguments, analyze the strategies they mobilize to make these arguments persuasive (or not), and discuss the merits and stakes of qualitative research.

IMPORTANT DATES

8 March Last day to drop the course from academic record and GPA
11 March Essay abstract and bibliography due
1 April Final essay due
The grades for this class will be based upon evaluations of a range of student work. These assignments aim to give students a chance to think through course concepts, apply these concepts to particular case studies, and critically analyse the merits of different theoretical frameworks.

**Four short response papers (400 – 450 words each)**  
10% each (40%)

Students will be required to write four short response papers based on the readings for four different weeks, beginning in week 2. These response papers are to be submitted on paper at the start of the relevant class. The response papers will be evaluated on the following three criteria: 1) originality or thoughtfulness, 2) preciseness of articulation, and 3) comprehension of the text(s). The purpose of this assignment is to give students an opportunity to develop their analytical ability and understanding of course material in preparation for the final essay. At least two of the four responses must be submitted by Week 7 (February 25th).

**Weekly in-class writing exercises (10 weeks)**  
1% each (10%)

Students will be asked to write for five minutes during each week’s class on that week’s subject matter. Students will be provided with either a question related to the assigned readings or a quotation from one of the assigned texts. Students are therefore requested to have a pen and paper with them at each lecture. These in-class writing exercises are graded as pass/fail based on whether the student demonstrates knowledge of the assigned texts for that week.

**Essay abstract (250 – 300 words) and bibliography**  
(10%)

In preparation for the final essay, students are to submit an essay abstract of 200 – 300 words outlining their chosen topic, the analytical framework they plan to apply or engage with, and (if relevant) their chosen case study. The abstract is to be followed by an initial bibliography of at least 7 sources. Students will receive feedback on these abstracts, which aims to assist them in developing their final essay. [Due: March 11th]

**One final essay (8 pages)**  
(40%)

The goal of this assignment is for students to carry out a critical engagement with select theoretical concepts presented in this course. Students should select a topic from one of the course weeks and either 1) develop a critical analytical engagement with a given theoretical framework, or 2) apply one theoretical framework to a case study of the student’s choosing. Essays must make a clear argument as to the student’s position on the subject matter. Further details on the essay will be provided in class. [Due: April 1st]
CLASS SCHEDULE AND READINGS

Most readings are available online publicly or as e-journals via the University of Toronto library system. Other readings will be made available to students during the course. Students therefore do not need to purchase any additional texts for this course.

WEEK 1 / JANUARY 7 (INTRODUCTION)

• Film: In Debt We Trust: America Before the Bubble Bursts. 2006.

WEEK 2 / JANUARY 14 (THE FORMALIST-SUBSTANTIVIST DEBATE)


WEEK 3 / JANUARY 21 (RECIPROCITY)


WEEK 4 / JANUARY 28 (VALUE)


WEEK 5 / FEBRUARY 4 (DEBT)


WEEK 6 / FEBRUARY 11 (MORAL ECONOMY)


READING WEEK / FEBRUARY 18 (NO CLASS)

WEEK 7 / FEBRUARY 25 (“PRIMITIVE COMMUNISM”)


WEEK 8 / MARCH 4 (FINANCE)


WEEK 9 / MARCH 11 (PRECARITY) [ESSAY ABSTRACT AND BIBLIOGRAPHY DUE]


WEEK 10 / MARCH 18 (CRISIS)

**Week 11 / March 25 [No Lecture]**

**Week 12 / April 1 (Aspirational Economies) [Final Essay Due]**


**Additional Recommended Books**


**Some Recommended Journals**

- American Ethnologist
- Cultural Anthropology
- American Anthropologist
- Critique of Anthropology
- Anthropological Quarterly

**Student Writing and Academic Support Resources**

- University of Toronto Writing Resources: [www.writing.utoronto.ca](http://www.writing.utoronto.ca)
- University of Toronto Accessibility Services: [www.accessibility.utoronto.ca](http://www.accessibility.utoronto.ca)

**Policies**

**Academic Integrity**

Academic integrity is essential to the pursuit of learning and scholarship in a university, and to ensuring that a degree from the University of Toronto is a strong signal of each student’s individual academic achievement. As a result, the University treats cases of cheating and plagiarism very seriously. The University of Toronto’s Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters ([http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm](http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm)) outlines the behaviours that constitute academic dishonesty and the processes for addressing academic offences. Potential offences include, but are not limited to (in papers and assignments):

- Using someone else’s ideas or words without appropriate acknowledgement.
- Submitting your own work in more than one course without the permission of the instructor.
• Making up sources or facts.
• Obtaining or providing unauthorized assistance on any assignment.

All suspected cases of academic dishonesty will be investigated following procedures outlined in the Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters. If you have questions or concerns about what constitutes appropriate academic behaviour or appropriate research and citation methods, you are expected to seek out additional information on academic integrity from your instructor or from other institutional resources (see http://www.utoronto.ca/academicintegrity/).

TURNITIN

Normally, students will be required to submit their course essays to Turnitin.com for review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing so, students will allow their essays to be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University’s use of the Turnitin.com service are described on the Turnitin.com web site.

EMAIL

Emailing should be reserved for urgent matters only. Substantive issues concerning course materials should be raised during office hours or in class with the instructor. You should always use your utoronto email address and sign with your full name. If you do ask questions over email, you can expect an answer within 24 hours, though it might take longer on weekends.

LAPTOPS AND CELL PHONES

In class lectures and discussion sections, laptops may only be used for taking notes or reading notes during discussion. Students using laptops for other purposes will be asked to turn their laptops off for the remainder of the course. Students using laptops are asked to sit in the first five rows of seats. Students are required to silence and refrain from using cell phones and other PDAs during class meetings and discussion sections. This includes sending and receiving text messages. Students who violate this rule will be asked to leave the classroom.

LATE WORK

For every day that class assignments are handed in late, 2.5% / day will be subtracted. Extensions for medical illness or accessibility issues may be granted with documentation.

What is culture? (a point of reference)

“Once we locate the reality of society in historically changing, imperfectly bounded, multiple and branching social alignments... the concept of a fixed, unitary, and bounded culture must give way to a sense of the fluidity and permeability of cultural sets. In the rough-and-tumble of social interaction, groups are known to exploit the ambiguities of inherited [cultural] forms, to impart new evaluations or valences to them, to borrow forms more expressive of their interests, or to create wholly new forms to answer to changed circumstances. Furthermore, if we think of such interaction not as causative in its own terms but as responsive to larger economic and political forces, the explanation of cultural forms must take account of that larger context, that wider field of force. ‘A culture’ is thus better seen as a series of processes that construct, reconstruct, and dismantle cultural materials, in response to identifiable determinants” (Eric Wolf, Europe and the People without History, 1982: 387).