ANTH/WMGS 326 Issues in the Anthropology of Kinship  This course explores current themes and debates about the constitution of families cross culturally. It will present different perspectives of the significance of kinship, such as structural functionalism, symbolic anthropology, and materialist approaches. The content will include diverse descent systems, the impact of colonialism, changing marriage patterns, the impact of the new reproductive technologies on how people understand relatedness, adoption, how the state regulates kinship, intra-familial conflict and the role of kinship in society. Beliefs about gender, age, generation and biology will be examined as they are central to how people understand kinship. Course material will include ethnographic examples from around the world.

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Susan Vincent [Office: JBB 335E; tel: 867- 5281; email: svincent@stfx.ca]

READINGS: All required readings are available through the library’s electronic database or as open access on the internet.

EVALUATION:
Group work/small assignments (throughout course): 10%
Midterm test (Feb. 5): 20%
Paper outline (due Mar. 5): 5%
Paper (due Mar. 28): 35%
Final Exam (see official schedule): 30%

STUDENTS WILL DEVELOP THE FOLLOWING SKILLS IN THIS COURSE:
- develop the critical ability to apply anthropological theory to relevant material
- identify material that is relevant as evidence in the context of the course and the discipline
- build an understanding of anthropological methods such that students can evaluate the appropriateness of different standard methods for solving problems;
- students should be able to justify the use of specific methods
- an ability to critique published research on the basis of its methodology and its analysis
- an ability to review, present and critically evaluate a range of anthropological and other information to:
  a) frame an appropriate question for the purpose of solving a problem;
  b) develop a clear hypothesis in response to the question;
  c) articulate a sound and advanced theoretical framework to analyse the information in support of the argument;
  d) conduct research to generate or locate relevant information;
  e) critically review and analyse information from multiple qualitative or quantitative data sets;
  f) present the argument in a clear written format
- an ability to communicate information, arguments, and analyses accurately and reliably, orally and in writing to a range of audiences.
RE TESTS, ASSIGNMENTS AND CLASS CONDUCT: the following rules have been designed to ensure fairness to all students, to facilitate your academic success, and to allow me to fulfill my responsibilities.

1. Assignment dates are fixed and cannot be changed.
2. Assignments must be submitted in HARD COPY (that is, paper). Electronic submissions will NOT be accepted without specific arrangement.
3. Written assignments are due at the beginning of class on the day specified. I WILL NOT ACCEPT LATE PAPERS. If you have a legitimate reason for missing an assignment or test, inform me AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, preferably ahead of time. I do not accept papers after I have returned those already submitted; in this situation you will be given an alternate assignment. Similarly, if you miss the test, you will be given an alternate assignment. Papers handed in after the last day of the term in which they are due will receive a mark of zero.
4. You are required to keep a copy of assignments when you hand them in. Keep the returned marked assignment until the end of the course.
5. PLAGIARISM AND CHEATING WILL NOT BE TOLERATED: Suspected cases of plagiarism will be reported to the appropriate authorities and proven cases will result in a mark of zero for the assignment. See the University’s policy on plagiarism and cheating (see http://sites.stfx.ca/registrars_office/academic_integrity.html). Not intending to plagiarise is not a legitimate excuse. Know what is included in the definition and ensure that the paper you submit meets acceptable academic standards according to the policy. When in doubt, consult with me.
6. You are expected to attend all classes and are responsible for all in-class discussion and assigned material. IF YOU MISS THREE CLASSES OR MORE, WHETHER FOR ILLNESS OR FOR ANY OTHER REASON, YOUR ABILITY TO PASS WILL BE SEVERELY COMPROMISED.
7. You are expected to refrain from using electronic devices (i.e. computers, mobile phones, etc.) in class, unless you have been given permission by the instructor to use a device to assist you.
8. My responsibility is to maintain the academic standards of St Francis Xavier University as well as of my discipline as I transmit knowledge about the course subject to the students and foster the development of critical academic reading, researching, analytical and writing skills. I will endeavour to do this in a way that recognizes that students have other demands on their time, and within the constraints presented by my other teaching, administrative and research duties. I will return marked assignments as quickly as I can and am happy to meet with students to discuss the course.

NOTE: Be aware that anthropological research includes observations from societies with very different patterns of life, some of which you may find shocking or objectionable. The anthropological principle of critical cultural relativity demands that we observe such patterns in their own cultural context to understand them, although this does not mean that we then have to accept they are morally right. In this class, we will respect academic freedom to discuss.
controversial subjects, while also creating an equitable learning environment.

EQUITABLE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT
Everyone learns more effectively in a respectful, safe and equitable learning environment, free from discrimination and harassment. I invite you to work with me to create a classroom space—both real and virtual—that fosters and promotes values of human dignity, equity, non-discrimination and respect for diversity. These values and practices are in accord with the StFX Discrimination and Harassment Policy which can be found at http://sites.stfx.ca/equity/.

Please feel free to talk to me about your questions or concerns about equity in our classroom or in the StFX community in general. If I cannot answer your questions or help you address your concerns, I encourage you to talk to the Chair of the Department of Anthropology (Dr. L.J. McMillan, ljmcmill@stfx.ca), or the Human Rights and Equity Advisor (Megan Fogarty, mfogarty@stfx.ca).

TENTATIVE READING SCHEDULE:
Jan. 3, 8, 10, 15: INTRODUCTION: What is kinship? Is it process (culturally constructed, practice, flexible, etc.) or is it a normative structure (i.e. based on relatively fixed cultural ideas of “blood” or other substance, related to social expectations of kin roles, inheritance rules, etc.)? ALSO basics of kinship terminology.


Additional readings:

IMPACTS OF COLONIALISM ON KINSHIP
Jan. 17, 22


Additional reading:
Stojanowski, Christopher (2005) “Spanish colonial effects on Native American mating structure and genetic variability in Northern and Central Florida: Evidence from Apalachee and Western

**CHILDREN AND DESCENT**
Jan. 24: Genealogy and our interest in our past

Jan. 29, 31: The impact of new reproductive technologies
**Required readings:**

Additional reading:

**FEB. 5: MIDTERM TEST**
Feb. 7, 12, 14: The state, fertility, population control
**Required readings:**

Additional reading:
Partridge, Damani James (2008) “We were dancing in the club, not on the Berlin Wall: Black bodies, street bureaucrats, and exclusionary incorporation into the New Europe.” Cultural Anthropology. 23(4): 660-687.


Study break: Feb. 19-23

Feb. 26: Incest


Additional readings:

Feb. 28: Adoption


Additional reading:
**Ethnologist.** 22(4): 685-704.

**Mar. 5: PAPER OUTLINE DUE**

Mar. 5: Parenthood: Are non-traditional parents more traditional?


**MARRIAGE AND PARTNERING**

Mar. 7, 12: Finding a partner


Additional readings:

Mar. 14, 19: Arranging marriages, not marrying


Mar. 21: The gender of marriage partners

Additional readings:

Mar. 26: The number of partners

Additional readings:
MARCH 28 PAPER DUE

Mar. 28: Violence, Divorce:

Additional readings:

OTHER WAYS OF FORMING KINSHIP

Additional readings:

Apr. 4: Course conclusion.

DESCRIPTION OF TESTS AND ASSIGNMENTS:
Group work/small assignments: There will be several small assignments, carried out either in groups or individually, throughout the course. These will be explained in class. The purpose of these is to give you an opportunity to practice with the material and to provide you with feedback on your performance in the class.
Paper: The paper should be 8 to 12 pages in length (2400 to 3750 words – please give the word count on your paper). See the style guide on the Department of Anthropology web site for proper style.

Choose one of the following topics:

1. How has colonialism affected kinship in a particular case? Have any changes been positive or negative? Look for material that examines a particular case involving kinship in historical perspective as well as sources that discuss kinship in the contemporary world.

2. Your own topic, approved by me before 25 January. For example, you could do an in-depth book review of an ethnography on kinship, or explore one of the topics of the course in further depth.

Some rules:
1) Use the style described outlined on the Anthropology “Writing and Citing” tab of the library’s web site (http://stfx.libguides.com/id.php?content_id=3538355).
2) Abide by the StFX Academic Integrity Policy: available from http://sites.stfx.ca/registrarsoffice/academic_integrity.html.
3) You are permitted no more than THREE direct quotations from your sources, and none of these three quotations may be more than 30 words in length. For all other references to content from your sources you must paraphrase. Note that proper referencing is essential: improperly referenced papers are unlikely to receive a passing grade.

You will be marked on:
1) the quality, strength and clarity of your argument;
2) the quality and clarity of your evidence, including the quality of the sources you use;
3) the appropriateness of the theoretical framework and the quality of the analysis (that is, how well you use the theoretical framework to analyse the evidence);
4) the style and structure of the paper, including proper and complete referencing, grammar, spelling, word use, sentence structure, essay structure, etc. Note that proper referencing is essential: improperly referenced papers are unlikely to receive a passing grade.

Term paper proposal: This is the first stage of the term essay. The outline MUST include:

a) a title (one that lets the reader know what the paper is about);
b) an introduction to the topic and why it is important to study;
c) a thesis statement (one sentence of no more than 35 words stating what you will argue in your paper);
d) an outline of the sections of your paper that makes it clear how you will structure your argument;
e) a list of the major sources that you plan to use in your essay. Note that you must use the proper bibliographic form for your list of sources. You MUST use at least one required reading from the course. You should have between 4 and 6 appropriate ethnographic or ethnohistorical sources to provide the data you will analyse. To identify ethnographic sources, look for work that has
evidence from specific people the author(s) have met and dealt with. For ethnohistoric sources, look for work that uses first-hand accounts on the people in question.

To facilitate my checking that these are appropriate sources, cut and paste (with appropriate in-text citation and quotation marks) the author’s explanation of the methodology or description of the evidence used. I WILL NOT MARK THE ASSIGNMENT IF YOU DO NOT INCLUDE THIS.

The whole assignment should be about 5 pages long. The major purpose of this assignment is to encourage you to articulate the topic; develop a strategy for answering a question about it; and locate appropriate sources to assist you in the analysis.

NOTE: you will submit your returned, marked proposal with your essay.

Midterm and Exam: The midterm test and the exam will be composed of short written answer and essay questions.

Question for final exam. You must provide a preliminary answer to this at the beginning of the course, submitting your answer to me electronically, and keeping a record of your initial answer so you can reflect on it throughout the course.

Answer this question with a sentence or two: “What is the basis of kinship?”

On the final exam, you will reflect on your initial answer, in the form of an essay in which the argument is whether you still agree with your initial position, and why or why not. The essay will be supported by discussion of at least three of the required readings of the course as evidence for your position. You will not be permitted to take materials into the exam with you, but you are encouraged to plan your answer throughout the course. Be careful that you do not simply summarize the material; you should use it to explain your new answer to the question,