Spring 2023 Course Preview

Introductions

- ANT 104: Anthropological Inquires – Families
- ANT 104: Anthropological Inquires – Human Migration
- ANT 104: Anthropological Inquires – Migrations
- ANT 104: Anthropological Inquires – Empire and Class-ifications

Electives

- ANT 195: Living Well Cross-Culturally
- ANT 231: Disasters, Society and Culture
- ANT 265: Ethnography of Communication: Methods and Theory
- ANT 280: Theories of Culture
- ANT 291: Methods Empirical Investigation
- ANT 295: Politics of the Past: Archaeology and Museums
- ANT 295: Graphic Medicine
- ANT 295: Human Osteology
- ANT 295: Anthropology and Semiotics of Fun

Two-Credit Electives

- ANT 295: Evolution and Running
- ANT 295: Evolution and Reproduction

Seminars

- ANT 355: Collective Memory Anthropological Perspectives
- ANT 395: Body/Religion Middles Ages
Faculty News

Professor Jane Holmstrom Joins the Department

Professor Jane Holmstrom is a bioarchaeologist with a specialization in the medieval period. She is currently a Visiting Assistant Professor here at Grinnell for the 2022-2023 academic year.

When asked what drew her to anthropology in the first place, Holmstrom recalls being hooked after taking an Introduction to Physical Anthropology class. From there, she completed a B.A. in Anthropology and realized she wanted to combine her fascination with trace element analysis and skeletons. She then went on to pursue both her M.A. and Ph.D. in Anthropology.

Holmstrom’s specialization in medieval period bioarchaeology has guided her research. In the past, she has worked on bioarchaeology projects in Italy (9th-2nd centuries BCE) and the United States (18th-19th centuries), and a GIS project in Armenia (8th-6th centuries BCE). In her research, she uses stable isotope analysis to investigate questions surrounding diet and mobility along with skeletal analysis to understand health in the past. Recently, Holmstrom joined a bioarchaeology project in Egypt (1st-5th centuries).

Holmstrom comments on the goals of her research, stating: “History was written by certain groups of people for certain groups of people and not everyone is represented in the historical record. My goal is to provide voices to those who have been left out of history. By researching the impacts of the different Christian orders in the medieval period on the people themselves, they regain a voice about how the rules impacted their lives individually and as a greater population.”

When asked how her work in the lab has informed her anthropological thinking, Holmstrom notes how she is able to see the lab samples as “real people who were once alive and were cared about. I often find myself wondering what their daily life might have looked like, especially if they experienced debilitating trauma or disease. The isotopes tell me what they ate and where they came from, which makes me wonder how they may have been perceived in their community and what traditions they brought with them.”

This fall semester at Grinnell, Holmstrom taught two sections of Anthropological Inquiries with a focus on Migration. Next semester, she will teach ANT-104: Anthropological Inquiries on Migration, ANT-295 Special Topic: Human Osteology, and ANT-395 Special Topic: Body and Religion in the Middle Ages.

After her time at Grinnell this year, Holmstrom will work on her next project with the medieval Cistercian nun’s convent of Saint-Pierre d’Almanarre on the Mediterranean coast. She will be traveling to Marseille, France in January 2023 to conduct osteological analysis of some of the skeletons from the site.
Faculty News

Professor Own Kohl Joins the Department

Professor Owen Kohl has recently joined the Anthropology department as an assistant professor specializing in linguistic anthropology. His interests stem from an early exposure to Anthropology through his father’s involvement in the academe. Building upon his curiosity about ethnography and anthropological methodology, Professor Kohl situates his work in the context of former Yugoslavia, more specifically, Croatia and Bosnia. In looking at the artists like Edo Maajka and Vojko V, his work examines transnational connections through the amplification of capitalism in the region. The specifics of language register within the region allow for certain linguistic manifestations and idioms. Working within this context, the primary themes of his research include social differentiation and its semiotic forms. His upcoming project includes writing on the politics of hip-hop archives in post-Yugoslav spaces through the lens of scale and temporality.

Professor Kohl has previously taught classes involving the themes of colonization, global studies, anthropological methodologies, and race and ethnicity studies. His current class selection at Grinnell College includes: ANT104 - Empire and Classification, ANT265 - Ethnography of Communication, ANT295-Anthropology and Semiotics of Fun, and ANT395 - Anthropological Approaches Global Hip-hop.
Professor Laura Ng: Tenure-Track Position and New Publication

Professor Laura Ng is in a new tenure-track position as Assistant Professor of Anthropology at Grinnell College. She is a historical archaeologist with a focus on Asian diasporic communities.

Professor Ng recalls initially appreciating the curiosity and excitement that came with digging up the past as an archaeologist. But, it was the realization that she could contribute to the collective understanding of Asian-American history through the field that convinced her to stay. Additionally, Ng saw the need for development within the field and dedicated her research to studying the archaeology of transpacific migration. Since then, she has worked at a wide array of archaeological sites and has used material culture as a way to investigate the Chinese diaspora of the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Her archaeological work extends into the realm of restorative justice. She centers her work around the sentiment that “archaeology is not only about the past, but also about the future,” an idea shared among fellow archaeologists. Ng believes that anthropology cannot exist as an apolitical area of study as there will always be social and political implications for research, teaching, and site digs.

Ng’s newest publication, Race and Racism in Archaeologies of Chinese American Communities, critically explores how archaeological research addresses race and racism in Chinese American communities. Through the intersection of ethnic studies and archaeology, the research explores six different interventions needed for charting antiracist directions in archaeology. Within the discussion, matters of linguistics, community analysis, gender and sexuality studies, and transpacific connections are highlighted. While the paper outlines specific pathways studying Chinese American history, its findings can be applied to discussions across the entire discipline on how to build an antiracist field. Additionally, the majority of the paper’s co-authors are Chinese American, which is a historic first within the discipline. Race and Racism in Archaeologies of Chinese American Communities can be found here.

At Grinnell this semester, Professor Ng taught ANT-295 Special Topic: Historical Archaeology and ANT-395 Special Topic: Landscapes of Social Inequality at Grinnell. Next semester, she will teach ANT-104: Anthropological Inquiries on Human Migrations and ANT-295 Special Topic: Politics of the Past: Archaeology and Museums.
Faculty News

Professor Monty Roper Directing Build a Better Grinnell 2030 Project

Monty Roper was one of the authors of a grant proposal to the United States Department of Agriculture’s Rural Placemaking Innovation Challenge that was awarded $197,000 for the Build a Better Grinnell 2030 Community Visioning Project (www.buildabettergrinnell.org). Roper will now serve as research director on the project through the fall of 2023.

The BABG project is a comprehensive community-based needs assessment that will last 18 months. It combines a more “classic” assessment of community needs with a strengths-based approach of identifying community values and mapping assets. The goals of BABG include helping to organize the community around a set of priorities and providing information that will help residents and community changemakers make informed decisions for the future. Following three phases of research over twelve months, the project will organize working groups around the prioritized needs to develop and begin implementing action plans. The project is overseen by a non-partisan steering committee made up of community members representing diverse backgrounds along with 21 public and private organizations representing a broad cross-section from the town of Grinnell and a range of resource categories.

Professor Roper is responsible for advising the steering committee, developing and implementing the methodology, analyzing the data, and presenting the findings. In the fall of 2022, he made the project the central focus of his Research for Community Development Course (see class activities below). He will be hiring two student research assistants for the spring and three for the summer. He will also oversee staff hired with grant funds, including project coordinator Bel Kugel ’20 and over 50 community researchers, who will help gather information from diverse demographic and affinity groups throughout Grinnell.

For Roper, this work represents a natural extension of his interest in applied anthropology and community development. Over the years, his Research for Community Development course has conducted needs assessments and program evaluations with over twenty different organizations in the community while teaching students anthropological methods. More recently, he has been overseeing the SPARK Community-based Social Innovation Challenge, through which the College’s Wilson Center funds one or more projects for up to $10,000 to implement a solution to a problem in the community. “I recently finished a six-year stint directing the Wilson Center and then had some time over my sabbatical to think about what’s next” Roper notes. “The opportunity to get involved in this project came as I was reaching the conclusion that this is the kind of work that really drives me, and where I would like to focus my energies over the coming years.”
Faculty News

Professor Kathy Kamp’s & Professor Whittaker’s Research

Kathy Kamp and John Whittaker presented a paper at the conference of the Society for the Study of Childhood in the Past, in Alcala, Spain, November 10. "Caring for and About the Young: Ancient Southwestern Childhoods in Context."

They also co-authored an article on the problematic evidence for female hunter/warriors in archaeology:


Professor Jon Andelson’s Research

Jon Andelson has an article coming out this fall titled “The Community” and “The World”: Place-Making and Re-Making in Amana. *Communal Societies* Volume 41 (Fall 2022). The article traces the search by members of the Community of True Inspiration for a place where they could live out their religious beliefs in peace and in partial separation from the wider society. The thirty-year search took them from small congregations scattered around Germany to five estates in the liberal German principality of Hessen to western New York State and finally to Iowa, where they established the seven villages of the Amana Society. The article is framed by what anthropologist Keith Basso calls “place-making” as a process of self-identification and later historical imagination. At first, the people of Amana viewed their location in Iowa as a refuge from a hostile world. A century later, after abandoning a communal system in favor of a joint-stock corporate organization, they came to view their Iowa home as a place of heritage to be preserved and shared with the world through the medium of tourism.

Student News

Mallory Graham’s MAP with Professor Jon Andelson

In a summer Mentored Advance Project directed by Jon Andelson, anthropology senior Mallory Graham investigated environment attitudes, as seen especially in farming practices.

Mallory recalls the methods of this MAP: “I did ethnographic field research into 4 Iowa communities to study how their belief systems impacted their environmental and agricultural practices. I got to visit the Amana Colonies, Scattergood Friends School, Fairfield and Maharishi International University, and the Meskwaki Settlement, where I interviewed a variety of individuals involved in each of their food systems.”

Sakura Ishizaki’s MAP with Professor Tess Kulstad

Sakura studied triage decision-making processes in a Japanese Intensive Care Unit during the COVID-19 pandemic. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the need to triage COVID-19 patients in ICUs emerged globally. Triage guidelines exist in many regions; however, the actual triage decision-making processes and decisions themselves made by frontline-medical providers may not exactly reflect those guidelines. Despite the need to understand triage decisions and processes in practice to identify areas of improvement, research on the actual triage decision-making processes and decisions themselves are limited. This qualitative study was conducted to identify the triage decision-making processes regarding COVID-19 patient ICU admissions and ventilator allocations, and issues associated with the processes in a Japanese ICU during the COVID-19 pandemic. Semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted with ICU nurses and physicians working at the frontline in an urban tertiary referral hospital in Japan between February to April 2022. Patient characteristics that influenced triage decisions made by physicians, and the interaction between physicians, nurses, and hospital managers upon making such decisions are discussed in this article. Issues that emerged include the lack of legal support for Japanese physicians to practice withdrawal of life-sustaining treatments even during emergencies. Another issue was the impact of non-clinical forces on physicians’ ventilator allocation decisions, which imposed a significant mental burden on the medical providers. We consider public policy and legal implications for future pandemics.

Sakura reflects on the process: “I appreciate gaining the experience of receiving feedback on my article from people from different countries, disciplines, and specialties. I don't know how many drafts I have already written, but I now understand how much effort it takes to submit an article to an international medicine-related journal. Every challenge I have faced has been a valuable experience. I really hope my article will be accepted before I graduate!”
Meet the SEPC

The Student Educational Policy Committee, or SEPC, aims to platform the voice of fellow anthropology students within the department. Additionally, the committee is dedicated to harboring authentic community for students within the anthropology major. Below are the students currently serving on the Anthropology SEPC.

Rachel Woock | Hey, I’m Rachel! I’m a 4th year(ish) Anthropology/General Science Major with a Biology concentration and am excited to continue growing the community within the Anthropology Department this year. I have grown an appreciation for all subfields of anthropology; however, specifically, I have a passion for medical anthropology and the anthropology of death and dying.

Lexi Mueldener | Hello! My name is Lexi, and I’m a fourth-year Anthropology and Spanish double major. When I graduate in the spring, I plan to continue my education with a graduate program focusing on museum or heritage anthropology. I joined the Anthropology SEPC at the beginning of the fall semester, and I look forward to continuing to work with everyone in the spring!

Maddie Healy | I’m a third-year Anthropology major and this is my first semester as a member of the Anthro SEPC. While I enjoy all subfields, I’ve found that many of my anthropological interests involve digital anthropology and material culture studies. When I graduate this spring, I plan to study either Library & Information Science for graduate school. I am excited to carry my anthropological perspectives to these fields!
Alumni Updates

Interview with Evelyn Berryhill ’20 | Anthropology major, recipient of Fulbright Fellowship, and currently works for Grinnell College

What work did you do during your Fulbright Fellowship?
I was an English teaching assistant at a public secondary school in Bratislava, Slovakia. On an average school day, I led four conversation classes with 11-19 year-olds. I planned my own lessons, so we played games like Taboo and Apples to Apples, talked about US holiday traditions, and had mini-debates about topics like homelessness and volunteering.

How does your work as a Fulbright scholar inform your interests/work at the College?
It helped me continue to understand that I enjoy working with learners and want to work in education. I’m grateful for the experience of working with middle and high schoolers through Fulbright, but those experiences also helped me see that I might like working with college students more just from a learning development perspective and because of the increased freedom to discuss complex issues in depth when working with older students outside of the K-12 school system.

What is it like returning to Grinnell and working as a Post-Baccalaureate Partners in Education Academic Coach?
It’s given me a lot of room to reflect on my own experiences and grow as a learner and educator. As a student, I felt a lot of stress trying to manage the workload along with jobs, socializing, and extracurriculars. In my experience, student life at Grinnell is significantly busier and more intense than my early professional life. I often wonder how I managed, and I’m in awe of the students I work with when they share their schedules or to-do lists. I also sat in on a short course this semester, Scholars’ Seminar, that helped me better understand how learning works. During class discussions, I was reminded that many Grinnellians (including myself) experience academic struggles, even though few students will acknowledge it on campus. Plus, I learned new evidence-based study strategies that will be very useful if I go on to get a graduate degree.
**How has your education and experience as an Anthropology major helped you navigate the professional world?**

My jobs post-Grinnell have involved working with multicultural learners, and anthropological thinking has helped me a lot in those spaces. While living and working abroad, I used a lot of casual participant observation to help me more deeply understand the communities I was in. It helped me become more culturally competent so I could blend in with my surroundings and interact positively with people I met. Being mindful of cultural relativism has also helped me teach US culture better. When I taught a lesson to my Slovak students about winter holidays celebrated in the US, it was important to me that they get a basic understanding of holidays besides Christmas, like Hanukkah and Kwanzaa. Most of my students and teachers hadn’t heard of Hanukkah or Kwanzaa, and since these holidays aren’t ones I have personal ties to, cultural relativism guided me through how to present these holidays and their importance within their own traditions in a way that would be respectful and received openly by the students.
Alumni Updates

Interview with Sophie Neems ’16 | Anthropology major, recipient of Fulbright Fellowship, and currently works for Grinnell College

What work did you do during your Fulbright Fellowship?

My Fulbright research grant explored farmers’ connection to place. Weather has always caused heartache for farmers, but in recent years farmers around the world face unprecedented environmental challenges. How do farmers’ connections to land affect their land and business management decisions in the face of climate change? Presiding over 37 percent of earth’s landmass, farmers have the power and incentive to employ practices that maintain the health of their land. The long-term sustainability of both their livelihoods and their place-based identities – those derived from a life on this land – depend upon it. I immersed myself in Andalusian agriculture, spending time at roadside cafes and in rural town squares talking to farmers about their connections to place and their perceptions of climate change. I performed background research, developed research questions, built a network of informants, visited farms, and interviewed 36 people. My initial findings indicate that Andalusian farmers feel a stronger connection to their *pueblo* (small town), than they do to the parcel of land they farm. Farmers told me repeatedly how they were willing to alter their practices, plant different crops and farm different land parcels if it meant continuing to farm in their region and maintaining their regional identities.

How does your work as a Fulbright scholar inform your interests/work at the College?

I concluded my Fulbright wondering how U.S. farmers would respond to the questions I had posed in Spain; I continue to think about farmers’ connection to place and how that affects their decisions to adapt (or not adapt) to climate change and hope to pursue these questions in an Anthropology PhD program in the future. My time in Spain also gave me new perspectives on what it means to be a language and cultural minority, as I lived and worked in my second language. I approach my job at the College with a renewed empathy for alumni who found Grinnell to be very different from their home culture(s).
What is it like returning to Grinnell and working at the development and alumni relations office?

After graduating from Grinnell in 2016, I moved to Washington, D.C. where I worked in agriculture policy and communications. While I enjoyed my time in D.C. and learned a great deal, I longed for the ease of small-town life, as well as the intellectual and social justice qualities of the Grinnell community. I have had a blast returning to Grinnell and joining the Development and Alumni Relations (DAR) team. DAR is a wonderfully welcoming group of people and I’ve enjoyed having the opportunity to organize events for my fellow young alumni across the country.

How has your education and experience as an Anthropology major helped you navigate the professional world?

As an anthropology major at Grinnell, I learned how to have conversations with and learn from people whose life experiences differ from my own. I used these skills in Spain when building relationships with farmers. I continue to use these skills in my work at Grinnell, as I learn from my peers about their experiences as Grinnell students and later as Grinnell alumni. The writing skills I gained as an anthropology major have also been extremely helpful in every job I’ve had since graduation.

Mark Pilder ’91 reports that he’s “rolling around the 700 acre campus of U Wisconsin delivering mail on a giant cargo bike. Holding an all-access pass to the gritty underbelly of a large state university... [and doing] urban archaeology focusing on discarded dental picks and KN95 masks.”
Events

Constanza Ocampo-Raeder’s Lecture on “How to Cook a Cat”

Grinnell alumna, Constanza Ocampo-Raeder ’95, returned to campus as a speaker to discuss her anthropological work: “How to Cook a Cat: Culinary Privileging and the Appropriation of Afro-Peruvian Cuisine by the Food Movement in Peru.” This research focused on food, race, and nationalism in Afro-Peruvian Culture. The event was filled with students, faculty, and staff.

Christa Craven’s Lecture on “LGBTQ+ Family-Making and Reproductive Losses: From the Personal to the Political”

Christa Craven is Professor of Anthropology and Women’s, Gender & Sexuality Studies and former Dean for Faculty Development at The College of Wooster. Her research interests center on reproductive health & reproductive justice, lesbian/gay/bi/trans/queer reproduction, midwifery activism, feminist ethnography & activist scholarship, and feminist pedagogy. She is the author of Reproductive Losses: Challenges to LGBTQ Family-Making (Routledge, 2019), Pushing for Midwives: Homebirth Mothers and the Reproductive Rights Movement (Temple University Press, 2010), and a textbook with DánaAin Davis, Feminist Ethnography: Thinking Through Methodologies, Challenges & Possibilities (Rowman & Littlefield, 2016 & 2022). She is a past co-chair of the Society of Lesbian and Gay Anthropologists (now the Association for Queer Anthropology) and cofounder of the newly-approved Global Queer Studies minor at The College of Wooster.
Events

**Ice Cream Social** | The department opened the semester with an Ice Cream Social event. Students and faculty gathered to enjoy some treats to celebrate the beginning of the Fall semester.

**Welcome Session** | The department hosted a formal welcome session for prospective Anthropology majors to learn more about the major requirements, opportunities, faculty, and classes involved.

**Spring Course Review** | The Anthropology SEPC hosted a Spring Course Review for students to learn about upcoming classes directly from their professors.
Events

HSSC Dedication
This semester, the HSSC Dedication Ceremony officially took place. Below are some images of the anthropology classrooms and labs that the department gained after relocating from Goodnow Hall to the HSSC approximately two and a half years ago.
Class Activities

Professor Jon Andelson’s Class: Nature & Culture on the American Prairie

My ANT 295 Nature & Culture on the American Prairie class made a memorable visit to the Meskwaki Settlement in early November. In the last twenty years the Settlement has been showing increasing signs of prosperity due largely to money brought in by the Meskwaki Casino. A new K-12 school, a new tribal health clinic, a new recreation center, and Red Earth Gardens have all appeared in the last ten years, built by the Meskwaki. Numerous economic development projects have also been undertaken, and the tribe has constructed new houses for any family who wanted one.

After driving through the Settlement, we stopped at the Meskwaki Museum and Cultural Center to look at the exhibits and talk with Johnathan Buffalo, the tribal historian and repatriation officer. We took note of not one but two photographs of J.B. Grinnell on display in the museum because of the assistance he gave the Meskwaki on two occasions. In the late 1850s, Grinnell as a State Senator played a role making it possible for the Meskwaki to purchase land in Iowa (after government treaties had forced them to cede their Iowa land and move to Kansas), the first tribe in the United States to do so. Later, in 1867, U.S. Representative Grinnell sponsored an amendment to the Indian Appropriations Bill calling for the Meskwaki to be paid their government annuities, something that had not happened since the Meskwaki bought land.

Johnathan Buffalo talked to us about the Meskwakis’ slow migration to Iowa from their original home in the St. Lawrence River Valley, their wars with the French, the establishment of their Settlement in Tama County, their relations with Whites in neighboring Tama, the impact of the casino on Meskwaki life, Meskwaki corn, and the tribe’s food sovereignty initiative in relation to climate change. He painted a picture of a proud and persistent people who have adapted to modern ways but held on to important traditions. I think we all wished we could have stayed longer and learned more about the Meskwaki, the Red Earth People.
Class Activities

Professor Jane Holmstrom’s Class: Anthropological Inquiries, Migration Topic

As part of our biological anthropology unit in Anthropological Inquiries, we learned about some of the hominin ancestors and then the advent and progression of stone tool technology. In order for the students to gain a better appreciation for making and using the different stone tools on foods that might have been similar to what the hominins would have eaten in the past, we held a hominin dinner party. Prof. Whittaker provided a short demonstration of knapping, then each student was assigned a tool technology to process its associated foods. Using oldowan, acheulean, and mousterian tools, students soon realized that using stones to process different foods was more challenging than they initially thought it would be. This activity provided a deeper understanding of the connection and evolution of skeletal morphology, diet, and tool technology over time.
Class Activities

Professor John Whittaker and Professor Kathryn Kamp’s Class: Prehistoric Technologies

Working with prehistoric technologies, such as stone tools, pottery, and fire, students gained perspective through hands-on experimentation. The top two images depict students processing, cooking, and tasting acorns. The two bottom images show students testing and displaying the tools they created during this class.
Class Activities

Professor Roper’s Class: Research for Community Development

This year, I integrated my Research for Community Development class into the Build a Better Grinnell 2030 Community Visioning Project (BABG), for which I am the research director. The class was divided into four teams, each taking on different components of the ongoing research. Two teams served as community researchers for Grinnell College students to identify felt and expressed needs, perceived strengths, and assets. Two teams worked with leaders and managers of key assets in the broader community to begin examining expressed needs, map assets, and explore perceptions of community strengths by those persons and institutions. The final poster presentation was open to the public and included many members of the BABG steering committee, Grinnell College President Anne Harris, and U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development State Director in Iowa Teresa Greenfield. The project is funded through a grant from the US Department of Agriculture’s Rural Placemaking Innovation Challenge.

Top left: Lucia Cheng, Alyssa Argent, Da Hye Oh, and Nazma Noray present to members of the steering committee, including Grinnell College Board Trustee Julie Gosselink. Top Right: Jay Kratz, Delaney Owens and Reese Hill present to GC president Anne Harris, USDA Rural Development director for Iowa Theresa Greenfield, and GC Chief of Staff and VP of Administration Myrna Hernández. Bottom Left: Sophia Ford, Lilli Morrish and Alex Sun present. Bottom Right: Ekta Shaikh and Megan LeBlanc present to project coordinator Bel Kugel ‘20.
Donors

- Ms. Serna Sessa-Teixeira
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- Sallee Garst Haerr (The James M. Garst ’79 Memorial Endowed Fund for Anthropology)

Thanks so much to all our donors! Your support helps to enhance the experience for our students both in and out of the classroom.

A big thanks to this fall’s newsletter student staff!
Ekta Shaikh and Maddie Healy