

ANTH333 | The Culture(s) of Modern Greece

FALL 2024

INSTRUCTOR: DR. AIMEE PLACAS

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OFFICE HOURS: TUES, THURS 3:30PM OR BY APPOINTMENT

Course Description

So, why are you taking this class?

You're probably thinking: *Hey, I'm in Greece. I should probably learn something about Greek culture. If I want to have an authentic experience, if I want to really immerse myself in the society I'm studying in, I need to understand The Greeks.*

And that's a pretty good motivation. And this is the class for it: this class is set up to satisfy that motivation.

It's also, however, set up to frustrate that motivation.

Is there a thing called "Greek culture"? What does it mean to want to talk about "The Greeks"? What is cultural immersion anyway, is that even a thing? And what makes an experience "authentic"?

Yes, we're going to learn about Greek society, its current issues and its recent history. We're going to use our classroom to help us make sense of what we're experiencing in Athens and as we travel around the country.

But we're also going to think critically about what we're doing, to think about how anthropology's colonial past shapes our current actions and our interests in study abroad, and to think about what happens when a "people" are made an object of study.

Our readings focus on Modern Greece from the 1960s onward, drawing on authors from across the social sciences to help us identify key realms that make life in Greece distinct (and also not distinct). We will also train more specifically in the theories and methods of anthropology, identifying how the focuses of anthropologists writing ethnographies in Greece have changed over the past decades, learning thus both about social changes in Greece and about the history and scope of anthropology at the same time. Anthropology is a holistic discipline: it understands all realms of social life as interconnected. As such, we'll be talking about politics, religion, kinship, friendship, gender, sexuality, identity, migration, morality, power, bodies, health, inequality, violence, economics, neighborhood cats... the list goes on. We'll also try on different lenses that social scientists have created for us to look through, as we conduct qualitative ethnographic research, testing what new insights we can gather when we examine the world through theories of space, ritual, performance, gender, symbol, and more. We will become very aware of our own cultural conditionings and ethnocentrism.

Learning Goals

The primary goals of the course are as follows:

- **Content:** You will gain an understanding of the cultural changes, and continuities, that have unfolded in Greece over the past 50 years. You will become familiar with the aspects of cultural change most often discussed and debated in Greek society today, and with the major topics of importance covered in the ethnographic writings on Greece.
- **Disciplinary:** You will understand the theoretical perspectives of anthropology and their development over time, as well as see how approaches from disciplines across the social sciences can be combined to create a more holistic understanding of a society. You will be well-versed in the critique of the culture concept, and use this critique towards interpreting your own understanding of society in Greece and how it is presented to you.
- **Methodology:** You will become familiar with the participant-observation methodologies of ethnography and put them into practice. These research methodologies are relevant not just to anthropologists, but also in sociology, behavioral economics, communications, marketing, and more.
- **Experiential:** As part of the study abroad experience, you will engage with the challenges, possibilities, and problems of studying another culture while in the midst of it, as an interactive participant and researcher in the culture you are immersed in. You'll also become a critical thinker concerning the idea of a "study abroad experience."
- **Personal:** You will return home with a broader appreciation of the many ways it is possible to be a human being, allowing you an expanded world view and an increased sense of empathy towards others.

Course Requirements and Assessment

CYA Attendance Policy

CYA regards attendance in class and on-site (in Athens or during field study trips) as essential, so attendance at all scheduled meetings is required. All absences are recorded and have consequences that may affect your grade.

This course requires you to make up the material covered in class that was missed for all absences, excused or otherwise; it is your responsibility to be in communication with your professor as to how to make up that material.

Student assessment for this course

Participation: Students are expected to attend class having read the assignment for that day, to have a copy of that assignment with them in class (electronic version is fine), to participate in the discussion, and to complete any short assignments that we'll be making part of our class discussion, all as part of their participation grade.

Discussion and in-classroom work are the basis of a great deal of the learning done in this course, which can't easily be made up, and so being present and ready to participate is a big part of successfully learning what this class promises to teach you.

Research assignments: Students will complete three assignments over the course of the semester, all based on ethnographic research methodologies. A detailed description of all assignments (and additional handouts on methodology) will be available on the course's Moodle page. The work assesses the energy students put into doing ethnographic research and their ability to apply the theoretical tools acquired in the class towards analyzing their own research findings; a detailed grading rubric for the assignments is provided on Moodle. Students need to be in communication about late work before the due date.

Reading responses: This course has no cumulative final exam. Instead, students will complete reading responses to be submitted online before class or during class (which will be specified, depending on the response activity) relevant to the readings to be conducted that day.

Grading for the assessments

Reading responses: 20%

Three assignments: 70%, divided as follows:

Assignment 1 15%

Assignment 2 15%

Assignment 3 (which is broken into multiple stages) 40%

Participation: 10%

Policy on Assignments and Make-up Work

Details about assignments and due dates are on the class schedule. Late assignments must be discussed with me in advance. This course requires you to make up the material covered in class that was missed for all absences, excused or otherwise; it is your responsibility to be in communication with your professor as to how to make up that material.

CYA Policies and Regulations

Academic Accommodations

Students are required to submit an official letter from the office at their school that handles academic accommodations (generally the Office of Disability Services), or to have that office send a letter. Students who have submitted such a letter to CYA should also talk to their professors individually to discuss how these accommodations will work in each specific course.

Class activities and Accessibility

This course contains occasional walks on neighborhood streets and sidewalks that can last for 1.5 hours, with limited access to a restroom.

Much of the work in the classroom will be based in group discussion (small and large groups both). Class slides and class outlines used by the professor will be available before the start of class through a link on our schedule, with the caveat that we will often diverge from the class outline once our conversation gets going.

We will use a great deal of group note taking, but we won't be doing that for all classes.

ePolicy on Original Work

Plagiarism is literary theft. As such, it is a serious offense which will not be tolerated either at your home institution or at CYA. Plagiarism on a paper will result in an F for the course. You must cite the author of any and all ideas that you use that is neither common knowledge nor your own idea. If you are in doubt, it is safest to cite the source. Your work should be original and reflect your own ideas and thoughts. If you are unsure about what counts as original work, please consult your professor and check the Student Handbook.

Use of Laptops

In-class or onsite use of laptops and other devices is permitted if this facilitates course-related activities such as note-taking, looking up references, etc. Laptop or other device privileges will be suspended if devices are not used for class-related work. Research shows that multi-tasking with non-related work on a laptop is distracting to the other students sitting around you, and so there will be a zero-tolerance policy on this issue.

Upgrade to 400-level course

For advanced students taking the course at the 400 level, the three research assignments will be replaced by one semester-long ethnographic research project. There will also be additional ethnographic readings and methodology readings specific to that project, assigned on an individual basis.

Fall 2024 Tentative Schedule

The full schedule for the course including all sessions and field trips with exact dates, topic of each session, short description (if desired) and readings/assignments for that day should be included here. We recommend that you use the following table and format:

Day #	Date/Day	Topic / Readings / Assignments Due / Place (if applicable)
	Sep 5-7	Field Study Delphi and Ancient Olympia
1	Sep 10	Introduction to the course.
2	Sep 12	Overview of relevant Modern history
3	Sep 17	The Tourist Gaze concept (Urry & Larsen 2011; Kalantzis 2016)
	Sep 18-21	Field Study Crete
4	Sep 24	Let's explore our neighborhood (walk today) (Friedl 1962; Du Boulay 1974)
5	Sep 26	What do we mean when we say "culture"? (Khazan 2017; Zinovieff 2020; Hirschon 2008)
6	Oct 1	Understanding the family (i.e. kinship) (Georgas 1989; Giannarou 2020)
7	Oct 3	How can we ask good ethnographic questions?
8	Oct 8	Exploring Religion in Greece (walk today) (Dubisch 1995; Sakellariou 2017)
9	Oct 10	A little more on religion, and spiritual belief (Roussou 2013)
10	Oct 15	What was this economic crisis that everybody mentions all the time? (walk today) (Bakelaki 2015; Knight 2019; Cabot 2016)
11	Oct 17	What do migration issues look like in Greece?
12	Oct 22	Let's look at the answers we got from our good ethnographic questions!
13	Oct 24	Guest lecture
	Oct 25-Nov 3	Fall Break
14	Nov 5	Let's start working on our research projects, together.
15	Nov 7	Guest lecture
	Nov 12-15	Field Study Peloponnese
16	Nov 19	Let's explore some graffiti together (walk today) (Kaitatzi-Whitlock 2011)
17	Nov 21	Gender and sexuality. (Kirtsoglou 2004; Yannakopoulos 2010; Kantsa & Chalkidou 2014; Papanikolaou 2014)
18	Nov 22	(Make-up T TH class) Issues in the Greek university
19	Nov 26	Continuing talking about sexuality in Greece. (Halkias 2004)
	Nov 28-Dec 1	Thanksgiving Break
20	Dec 3	Research progress - workshopping our findings.
21	Dec 5	Guest lecture
22	Dec 6	(Make-up T TH class) Class choice of topic
23	Dec 10	Class choice of topic
24	Dec 12	Wrap up.
	Dec 17	Final Exam Week
	Dec 19	Final Exam Week

[The Detailed Schedule for this course can be found at this link.](#)

[The Course Bibliography \(Required and Supplementary Readings\) can be found at this link.](#)