

Periodic evaluation, ANTH4010, autumn semester 2019

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Course description: See

<https://www.uio.no/studier/emner/sv/sai/ANTH4010/index.html#course-content>

Statistics: 30 students were enrolled; 24 took the exam.

Previously conducted reports: None, this is the first offering.

Student evaluations: Attached.

Points of Evaluation

General

- This was the first time the course was offered. Overall, I feel it was a success, although of course I plan to make changes for next year.
- Of the 29 students who were invited to submit evaluations (24 of whom took the exam), 15 gave comments in Nettskjema. The evaluations were positive overall, with 11 (73.3%) saying they were «very satisfied» with the course and 4 (26.7%) saying they were «somewhat satisfied».
- The lectures were well received, with all respondents saying they were «very satisfied».
- A wider range of responses was seen in the categories of «amount and intellectual content of the readings» and «Are you satisfied that this course has helped prepare you for your research project,» suggesting that these are the main areas for improvement in 2020. Nonetheless, in both categories, 12 of the 15 students (80%) were either «very» or «somewhat satisfied».
- Based on student feedback, and my own sense of the semester's progress, the two main changes that should be made for 2020 are (1) some revision of the reading list; (2) restructuring the class slightly, with two shorter pause breaks (rather than one long one) and a brief section at the end of each class telling students about things to look for and think about in the next week's readings.

Curriculum changes for the future

- Students indicated that there is some overlap in readings for this course and readings they have had as Anthropology BA candidates at UiO. I will discuss the reading list with the teaching committee to see which readings are duplicates, and replace them.
- I made a conscious choice to include a large number of historical (older) readings so students have a solid platform on which to build confidence that they understand the history of theory in Anthropology. For me, the purpose of the course is to teach students what every anthropology student should know, and then encourage them to read further in

their area of special interest as they develop their thesis topics. However, some students indicated they wanted a higher proportion of cutting-edge theory. I can include more of this, especially in areas of technology, interspecies anthropology, the political economy of the Anthropocene, and intersectionality, although this will require dropping some of the less crucial older pieces, especially ones that will have been read previously by UiO students. (I do not want to increase the overall amount of reading by much.). I will discuss all planned changes for 2020 with the teaching committee.

Teaching administration

- A centerpiece of the course was that small groups of students gave presentations on a reading each week. I believe that making students explain readings to fellow students can be an especially effective way to get them to learn the material, as well as give them practice in making academic presentations. In the written comments on nettskjema, four students commented positively on these presentations. However, two students commented that the quality of the student presentations varied considerably, and suggested they receive more advice in advance on how to lead a successful presentation. I will do this.
- Although students did not explicitly comment (on nettskjema) about the guest lectures, the course had two guest lectures which went very well on the days, and received many engaged questions from the students: one from Marit Melhuus in week 4 and one from Cathrine Thorleifsson in week 8. I plan to invite two guest lecturers again next year.