SOSANT 2270 - Spring 2025: Contemporary Studies in Kinship and Gender

Lecturers: Maka Suarez & Nefissa Naguib

For this course, our aim is to engage with notions of gender, sexuality, family, and relatedness in anthropology through lectures, in-class discussions, assignments, and readings.

Discussions focus on how practices surrounding gender, sexuality, family, and relatedness intersect with broader societal forces, including new reproductive technologies, policies, economic conditions, and issues of class and race. The course also explores caregiving experiences and the complex entanglements of human and non-human actors within kinship and gender practices. Central to our inquiry are questions about who provides care, in what forms, and with what consequences, particularly concerning the gendered dimensions of caregiving.

Through engagement with course readings and the instructors' own research, students are introduced to how concepts such as 'kinship,' 'marriage,' 'gender,' 'sexualities,' and 'personhood,' are influenced by various cultural, social, political, and economic contexts.

As for the final exam, we replaced the four-day, 4,000-word take-home exam with an essay format that allows students to choose a theme agreed upon with the course convenors and write a 2,500-3,000 word essay (including references). With this exam format, we want students to engage more deeply with their chosen topics. While there should be a degree of freedom in exploring topics of choice, it is expected that clear connections are made to the course material by critically discussing and analyzing relevant theories and concepts from the reading list. Students may also incorporate additional literature beyond the course readings.