ANTH 300: Study of Contemporary Problems – Gypsies and Roma in Europe

Fall 2017

ANTH 300: Study of Contemporary Problems
Gypsies and Roma in Europe (E, W)

Meets: TBA
Instructor: Prof. Eirik Saethre
Email: saethre@hawaii.edu
Office Hours: after class or individually by arrangement.

1 - Description
In this course, students will gain an understanding of Romani history and society. Present in Europe since the 14th century, Roma (or Gypsies as they are pejoratively known) are often stereotyped as thieves and beggars. Debunking these stereotypes, we will begin by examining Romani identity and their migration from India to Europe. As the course progresses, we will discuss life in Romani settlements, Romani livelihoods, struggles for equal rights and social inclusion, and the role of nation states and the EU in governing the lives of Roma. Special attention will be paid to Italy’s Romani population.

2 – Objectives, Goals, and Outcomes
By successfully completing this course, you will:
- Gain a deeper understanding of the diverse communities of Roma, their histories, and everyday lives in contemporary Europe.
- Use appropriate research tools to formulate a scholarly argument within the context of anthropology and Romani Studies.
- Demonstrate an increased capacity to analyze issues with appreciation for disparate viewpoints.
- Draw from academic readings and anthropological perspectives to develop and improve writing skills.
- Participate in critical, informed, and compassionate conversations with your peers, Italians, and Roma, about the issues facing Roma in Europe.
- Engage in ethical discussions of historic and contemporary Romani persecution, exclusion, and marginalization.
- Develop the skills necessary to work in an international research location with a diverse population.
- Build social and academic relationships with students, instructors, Roma, and the residents of Florence.

3 – Prerequisites
This course is held in English and all class discussions and written assignments will be in English as well; no knowledge of Italian is necessary. Students must have already taken at least one course in the social sciences.

4 – Method
This course will combine classroom learning with ‘in the world’ experiences that illustrate the daily lives of Roma living in Italy. Activities include lectures, class discussions, fieldtrips, independent research, and peer feedback. Lectures will review the main issues facing Roma in Italy today. Building upon these discussions, students must write a research paper which can have an ethnographic component. This class relies on student discussion and feedback. Share your experiences and perspectives with the class.

5 – Assessments

Social Media Exercise (15%) – Due Weeks 4, 8, and 12
While you are in Florence, I’m sure you will be updating your friends and family about your experiences via Facebook or other social media. In an effort to dispel popular stereotypes, students will write three social media posts about Roma. Drawing from topics we have discussed in class and your own experiences in Florence, compose a paragraph (200-300 words) that reflects upon the place of Roma in Italian society. Tell people what they might not know but should about Roma. Challenge them to think critically about their own conceptions of Roma.

Ethnographic Conversations (15%) – Due Week 6
To examine stereotypes of Roma and gauge the opinions of your fellow residents in Florence, students will conduct a series of informal interviews. During the first few weeks of class, strike up a casual conversation with five other students (not in the class) and five Italians (not teaching at LdM). Each interview should be relatively brief, lasting around ten minutes. You should not have a set list of questions but rather just chat about Roma. After introducing yourself, generally ask what the individual thinks about Roma. Encourage your informant to talk as much as possible. When appropriate and if necessary, ask for more details. Once your interviews are completed, write a four page paper summarizing what you learned. You should address the following questions: What stereotypes of Roma were expressed? Do the views of your informants reflect what we have learned in class? Did you expect people to have these views? What do these interviews tell us about ethnic relations in Florence? How have your views of Roma changed as a result of this exercise?

Assessment Criteria for Ethnographic Conversations:

Style
- Word choice is specific, descriptive, concrete and varied
- A formal scholarly writing style is used throughout the paper
- All interviewees are given pseudonyms

Content
- Students reflect on their own perceptions of ethnic difference and marginalization
- Interview content is used to illustrate views of others toward Roma
- Based on the data, an anthropological approach to understanding popular portrayals of Roma is developed
ANTH 300: Study of Contemporary Problems – Gypsies and Roma in Europe

Structure
- There is an identifiable and effective introduction, body and conclusion
- The introduction clearly outlines the argument and structure of the paper
- The author effectively constructs his or her own argument

Abstract and Preliminary Bibliography (10%) – Due Week 7
In 200-300 words, concisely summarize your forthcoming research paper (see below). Your abstract should (1) give a brief background to the topic of your paper, (2) the anthropological approach you are going to use, and (3) the data that will be marshaled to support your conclusions. Do not ask questions, give answers. Students must also submit a preliminary bibliography containing at least six citations. At least three of these must be anthropological (from anthropology journals or written by anthropologists). Please bold the anthropological citations.

Research Paper (30%) – First Draft due Week 11
Final Draft due Week 13
Students will write an original research paper that focuses on a topic relevant to the lives and experiences of Roma. While you can use the topics we cover in class as a guide, this is your chance to find out more about an issue that interests you. I do not want a literature review but rather an original contribution. Make your own argument using evidence that you have collected either through archival research (reading books, journals, and newspapers) and/or ethnographic fieldwork (conducting participant observation, interviews, or surveys). Papers must be between eleven to thirteen pages long (not including the bibliography) and cite at least twelve academic sources. At least eight of these must be anthropological (from anthropology journals or written by anthropologists). Please bold the anthropological citations in your bibliography.

Grading Rubric for Research Paper Assignment (adapted from MCVTS):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CATEGORY</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Acceptable</th>
<th>Unacceptable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction/Thesis</td>
<td>*exceptional introduction that grabs interest of reader and states topic. **thesis is exceptionally clear, arguable, well-developed, and a definitive statement.</td>
<td>*proficient introduction that is interesting and states topic. **thesis is clear and arguable statement of position.</td>
<td>*basic introduction that states topic but lacks interest. **thesis is somewhat clear and arguable.</td>
<td>*weak or no introduction of topic. **paper’s purpose is unclear/thesis is weak or missing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of Information/Evidence</td>
<td>*paper is exceptionally researched, extremely detailed, and historically accurate. **information clearly relates to the thesis.</td>
<td>*information relates to the main topic. **paper is well-researched in detail and from a variety of sources.</td>
<td>*information relates to the main topic, few details and/or examples are given. **shows a limited variety of sources.</td>
<td>*information has little or nothing to do with the thesis. **information has weak or no connection to the thesis.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Class Participation and Peer Review (10%)
Throughout the class, discussion is encouraged. Students that talk in class and answer questions will receive higher participation scores. In Week 12, students will be divided into groups to formally critique first drafts. Each student will be required to read the papers of other group members and provide written feedback.
ANTH 300: Study of Contemporary Problems – Gypsies and Roma in Europe

6 - Exams

Final Exam (20%) – Week 14
The final exam will consist of essay questions and cover all material in the course, including readings and lectures.

7 – Evaluation and Grading System
15% Ethnographic Conversations
15% Social Media Exercise
10% Abstract and Preliminary Bibliography
30% Research Paper
10% Class Participation and Peer Review
20% Final Exam

Grading Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>99-97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>96-93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>92-90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>89-87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>86-83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>82-80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>79-77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>76-73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>72-70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>69-67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>66-63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D-</td>
<td>62-60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>59-0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8 – Attendance and Behavior
Mandatory attendance is a primary requirement for a responsible learning experience at LdM. Please note that:

- if the student misses THREE classes, the final grade will be lowered by one full letter grade.
- if more than THREE classes are missed, the final grade will be “F” and NO credits will be given for this course.

Punctuality is mandatory. Students must arrive in class on time. Sny lateness, leaving class during the lesson without notice, not showing up on time after the break, or leaving earlier, will impact the participation grade and the final grade.

In addition:

- Three late arrivals or equivalent (10 to 20 minutes) will result in one absence on the attendance count.
- Missing more than 20 minutes will be considered as one full absence.

It is the responsibility of the student to catch up on any missed work and to keep track of his or her absences and cases of tardiness. Make-up classes are always mandatory since part of the course program. If on occasion a class creates a conflict with the another class (different or extended time etc.), the student is required to inform both instructors in advance, allowing the two instructors to share a written excuse for the class to be missed.

Correct, active and responsible participation is insisted on. Students are required to behave properly within the school premises and during class. Classrooms are to be left in order and clean. Students must take care of available equipment and materials and promptly report any damage and loss.
Electronic devices (cell phones, Blackberry, iPod, laptop computers, etc.) must be switched off during class, unless otherwise instructed. Drinking/eating during class is not allowed.

Note: Instructors who find a student’s behavior is inappropriate will seek to talk with him/her promptly; if the issue continues, the instructor is required to contact the pertinent LdM authority.

**Academic dishonesty:** should issues of academic dishonesty arise the instructor will refer to the relevant LdM policy. According to the LdM Rules of Conduct, "Violations include cheating on tests, plagiarism, recycled work, unauthorized assistance, or similar actions not explicitly mentioned in this sentence."

**Scheduled class visits** are considered regular classes: absence or lateness rules will be applied as for lessons that meet in class, without excuses. All students are requested to be **5 to 10 minutes early** at the meeting point, so class can promptly enter at the specified entry time. If a student is late, the **class cannot wait** for him/her and the student will be responsible for paying for his/her entry. Please be aware of any **change** of visit location/time/day; get to know the meeting point and any relevant details before the class. Proper behavior and **dress code** must be observed during visits.

Respectful discourse is essential in this class. Ideas, not people, are open to challenge. Here are some suggestions for class participation:

- Show respect for others’ feelings and points of view.
- Try to understand points of view that are different from your own.
- Demonstrate that you understand a point of view before challenging it.
- Be supportive of others when they are trying out new ideas.
- Listen and provide space for others to participate.

9 – **Readings and Sources**
All materials for this course are posted as pdf documents online.

10 – **Additional Costs** – Transportation costs.

11 – **Visits and Trips** – During the course of the semester we will take three fieldtrips to allow students to gain a firsthand knowledge of Roma, their everyday lives, and the associations dedicated to helping them. To gain an understanding Romani scavenging and the difficulties associated with this task, we will search for recyclable materials in Florence. Our next trip will be to a Romani settlement where we will visit a family in their home. Students will be able to see the daily life of a Romani community. Finally, we will visit the AssociazioneAmalipe Romano, a Florence-based NGO that works with Roma across the city.

12 – **Materials** – not applicable

13A – **Class Schedule**
Please bear in mind that the contents of individual classes may be changed throughout the course according to the class's progress.

**Week 1 – Who Are Roma?**
Day 1: Introduction to the Class

**Week 2 – Origins**
- Chapter 1: Origins
- Chapter 2: Early Migrations
- Chapter 3: Into the Byzantine Empire and the Balkans
- Chapter 4: The Great Trick

**Week 3 – Identity and Race**
- Chapter 1: The Different Faces of the Gypsy
- Chapter 2: Gypsy Studies and Socially Constructed Identities
- Chapter 4: Race
- Chapter 5: Constructing the True Romany

**Week 4 – The Holocaust, Identity, and Ethnicity**
- Chapter 15: Responses to the Porrajmos (Romani Holocaust)
- Chapter 7: Gypsy Ethnicity
- Chapter 8: Constructing the Ethnic Gypsy

**First Social Media Exercise Due**

**Week 5 – Boundaries**
ANTH 300: Study of Contemporary Problems – Gypsies and Roma in Europe


Week 6 – Romani Settlements
- Chapter 3: A Place of Their Own
- Chapter 4: ‘We Are All Brothers Here’

- Chapter 7: Gazos, Peasants, Communists, and Gypsies
- Chapter 8: Staying Gypsy in a World of Gazos
- Chapter 12: The Shame of the Body

Ethnographic Conversations Due

Week 7 – Romani Economies in Italy


Abstract and Preliminary Bibliography Due
Day 2: Fieldtrip: Today we will go scavenging in Florence to learn about the items that Roma are seeking and the techniques that they use to collect recyclables.

Week 8 – Poverty and Wealth


Second Social Media Exercise Due

**Week 9 – Roma in Italy and Migrant Camps**


**Week 10 – Roma in the Italian Legal System**

Day 1: Fieldtrip: Today we will visit a Romani settlement. Please dress appropriately and refrain from taking photos. We are guests in the settlement and must act respectfully.


**Week 11 – NGOs**


Day 2: Fieldtrip: Today we will visit an NGO, AssociazioneAmalipe Romano, where you will learn about its role in Romani advocacy and aid.

**First Draft of Research Paper Due**

**Week 12 – The Italian State**

Day 1: Peer Review: Today students will be giving feedback on the papers of their classmates.


**Third Social Media Exercise Due**
Week 13 – The EU and the Rise of Populism


Final Draft of Research Paper Due

Week 14 – Final exam

13B – Alternative Lesson

Should the instructor be indisposed or otherwise unable to attend, a substitute teacher (whenever available) will conduct the scheduled or a pre-prepared alternative lesson.