ANTHRO 755
ANTHROPOLOGY OF PUBLIC POLICY
SECOND SEMESTER, 2017

CLASS TIMES
Wednesdays from 1:00 – 3:00 pm (Arts 1, Room 408)

CONVENOR:
Professor Cris Shore Department of Anthropology
Room 854, Human Sciences Building
Tel: (09) 923 4652
Email: c.shore@auckland.ac.nz

Office Hours:
Wednesday 3:00–5:00 pm; Friday 4:15–5:15 p.m. (You can also see me at other times. Please email me to make an appointment.)

COURSE CONTENT

Welcome to ‘Anthropology and Policy’! This course has two main aims. The first is to interrogate the concept of ‘policy’ and examine how it works - as a socio-cultural category, a political technology and an instrument of governance. The second is to look at particular policies: how they are framed, how they represent the problem to be solved, their history and genealogies. A smaller but related aim is to open up the field of Policy Studies to more
critical scrutiny in order probe the ideological assumptions and ethnocentric biases that continue to shape the world of policy making.

The anthropology of policy is a relatively recent development emerging as a sub-discipline only in the late-1990s, yet it draws on traditional anthropological and social science concerns with power, governance and social norms. Policy has become a fundamental organizing principle of contemporary society, perhaps even on a par with kinship and class, yet far less visible or studied than either of these areas. Whether they originate in governments, nongovernmental organizations, or the private sector, policies play an increasingly pervasive role in shaping our worlds: from the structure of our working environments and the way we conduct ourselves as individuals and members of society, to the manner in which laws are framed and enacted, and the organization of government and the state. There are few areas of human life today that are not shaped or regulated by government policies of one kind or another. But what exactly are ‘policies’ and how can we study them ethnographically?

One starting point is to examine policies in terms of their effects (i.e. what policies ‘do’; their consequences and implications). Policies provide taxonomies and instruments for classifying the past, intervening in the present, and directing the future. The study of policy therefore opens up issues at the heart of social anthropology, including debates about power and statecraft; institutions and agency; authority and hegemony; ethnicity and identity; language and discourse; symbolism and meaning, and relationships between the global and the local.

The course is structured around four main themes and sets of questions:

1. What is ‘policy’ and how should we conceptualise it and study it anthropologically?

2. What insights can the anthropology of policy provide for understanding questions of power, hegemony, the modern state, and the development of new forms of governance?

3. How do policies shape social boundaries and forms of subjectivity? What role do they play in defining the people to be governed, regulated and monitored? And how do those definitions function to create new relationships of power?

4. How does the language of policy shape the way ‘problems’ are conceptualized and addressed? What kinds of discourses and metaphors are mobilized to legitimize policy initiatives?

More specifically, we will explore how policies operate and achieve their effects – and why they often fail.
LEARNING OUTCOMES

- To become familiar with core debates in political anthropology;
- To grasp some of the key theoretical, conceptual and methodological issues arising from the study of this new field of anthropological study;
- To understand how policies ‘work’ as tools of government, ‘political technologies’ and instruments for shaping subjectivity;
- To acquire skills in reading material and in relating it to the study of issues of wider contemporary public debate;
- To acquire reading, writing and debating skills at an appropriate level;
- To gain competence in applying social science concepts and methods to analyse particular policies and areas of policy.

EXPECTATIONS

You are expected to spend approximately 10 hours per week on the various components of this course. If you find that you are spending significantly more time than that, please see me.

READING

Readings for the course are listed in the Seminar Topics below. You will have to do additional reading to prepare for your research essay.

Before to each seminar, you should read the required readings and think about them so that you can participate in seminar discussions.

ASSESSMENT - 100% Coursework

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<tr>
<td>Précis of Readings x 8</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>150-200 words each</td>
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<tr>
<td>Essay 1</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>1,500 words - Friday 25 August</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research Essay</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>2,500 words - Wednesday 1st November</td>
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Essay based on a review of the literature. 1,500 words. This is worth 30% of the mark. Choose any of the topics covered during the course – but preferably a different week’s topic to the one you have chosen for your Seminar Presentation assignment. The aim of this essay is to provide a critical analysis of the literature, showing how the different articles and chapters speak to each other (or not, as the case may be). You are also expected to have your own views on the topics.

Research Essay. The major assignment for this course is the 2,500-word Research Essay. You should start planning this as soon as possible. You should produce an essay proposal
(which will include a provisional thesis statement, a statement of your proposed argument, an outline, and brief summaries of the five main sources on which you will base your essay). One-on-one consultations will be arranged to assist you with preparing the essay. The final version of this essay, which is due on **Wednesday 1st November**, is worth 46% of your course grade. We will negotiate a topic for your essay so that you are writing about something that is both of interest to you and of relevance to the themes covered in this course.

You must hand in assignments by the dates and times given above. If you are going to be late, contact me. **Extensions must be requested before the due date.** I will accept late essays without penalty provided they are accompanied by an adequate and documented explanation. Essays not accompanied by such explanations will be penalized at the rate of one point (i.e. 1% of your final grade) per day.

**Précis of Requir3d Readings x 8 (24%)**

You are required to hand in a précis of the week’s readings for **at least 8 of the 12 weeks.** Three of these should be for Weeks 1-6 and three should be from weeks 7-12. If these are received by 9:00am on the Tuesday before the seminar, you will receive **3 marks** for each précis, to a maximum of 20 marks. These are to be good faith efforts, demonstrating legitimate grappling with the material. The objective is to demonstrate that you have seriously undertaken the readings and tried to understand them. It is not necessary to critique them or demonstrate their flaws or merits (although you are welcome to do this); rather, the point of the exercise is to capture and summarize as succinctly as possible the author's argument. Each précis should be between 150 and 200 words in length.

**A General Guide to Essay Writing** can be obtained from the Department of Anthropology website. Your essay must conform to the conventions outlined in that guide for citations, references and other matters.

Please note that all assessments in this course are compulsory. You cannot pass the course if you do not turn in all the coursework.

**PLAGIARISM**

The University of Auckland will not tolerate cheating, or assisting others to cheat, and views cheating in coursework as a serious academic offence. The work that a student submits for grading must be the student’s own work, reflecting his or her learning. Where work from other sources is used, it must be properly acknowledged and referenced. This requirement also applies to sources on the world-wide web. A student’s assessed work may be reviewed against electronic source material using computerised detection mechanisms. Upon
reasonable request, students may be required to provide an electronic version of their work for computerised review.

In this course, both coursework assessments must be submitted to Turnitin.com, an electronic plagiarism detection service. Instructions on how to use Turnitin.com will be provided with the assignments.

Your attention is also drawn to the University of Auckland’s position on Academic Honesty and Plagiarism and to specific guidelines for the Conduct of Coursework and Conduct of Research. This information can be found on the University’s web site at:

http://www.auckland.ac.nz/ua/about/teaching/plagiarism/plagiarism_home.cfm

ACADEMIC PROBLEMS

Please see me if you are having problems with any aspect of this course. I am happy to see you and help you get the most out of this course. I can be most helpful if you see me when you first have a problem, before the problem gets too big. I am also happy to see you if you are not having a problem.

Help can also be obtained from the Student Learning Centre which facilitates the development of effective learning and performance skills in students and helps those who encounter difficulties in their studies. The Student Learning Centre offers support to students in a wide range of areas through workshops, one-on-one consultation and drop-in hours with qualified and experienced tutors. There are also special programmes within the Centre such as Te Puni Wananga (for Māori students), Fale Pasifika, Language Exchange (language exchange and English conversation groups), and Computer Skills Development. International students whose first language is not English can also find help there. In order to use Student Learning Centre services, you must register with the Centre for the current academic year.
The Student Learning Centre is located in Room 320 of the Kate Edger Information Commons, and their hours are 9 am to 5 pm, Monday through Friday. Their website is

http://www.slc.auckland.ac.nz/ug/

FEEDBACK

This is only the second time that this course has been offered, and I look forward to working with you to improve it. I would be very grateful for your feedback about what works and what does not work. If you have suggestions about how this course could be improved, please let me know. Come to see me or send me an email. A student representative will be elected during the second seminar and suggestions and comments can also be relayed to me through her or him.
# Anthology Department Marking Guidelines

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<tr>
<th>GRADE</th>
<th>% VALUE</th>
<th>Department of Anthropology: Coursework Descriptors</th>
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<tr>
<td>A +</td>
<td>90 – 100</td>
<td>Work of high to exceptionally high quality in the following measures will distinguish an A+.</td>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>85 – 89</td>
<td>Work in the ‘A’ grade range will show most of the following:</td>
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<td>A -</td>
<td>80 – 84</td>
<td>- Grasp of the core theoretical and substantive literature relating to the topic.</td>
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<td>- Ability to integrate that literature with the argument.</td>
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<td>- Strong evidence of creative, critical or original thought</td>
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<td>- Excellent knowledge and understanding of subject matter and appreciation of issues.</td>
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<td>- Well-formulated arguments based on strong relevant evidence.</td>
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<td>- Well-structured writing and coherent prose.</td>
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<td>- Acknowledgement of secondary sources in the approved house style.</td>
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<td>Work that demonstrates nearly all of the above, but to a lesser degree, will distinguish an A-.</td>
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<td>B +</td>
<td>75 – 79</td>
<td>A B+ should be a very competent piece of work with several of the features that distinguish an ‘A’.</td>
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<td>B</td>
<td>70 – 74</td>
<td>Work in the B grade range will show most of the following:</td>
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<td>B -</td>
<td>65 – 69</td>
<td>- Good to strong grasp of subject matter and understanding of major issues though not necessarily of the finer points;</td>
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<td>- Arguments clearly developed and based on convincing evidence;</td>
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<td>- Literature and arguments relevant to the topic;</td>
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<td>- Some evidence of creative, critical or original thought;</td>
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<td>- Structured argument and coherent prose.</td>
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<td>- Acknowledgement of secondary sources in the approved house style.</td>
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<td>Work that demonstrates nearly all of the above, but to a lesser degree, will distinguish a B-.</td>
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<tr>
<td>C +</td>
<td>60 – 64</td>
<td>A C+ should be a satisfactory piece of work with some of the features that distinguish a ‘B’.</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>55 – 59</td>
<td>Work in the C grade range will show most of the following:</td>
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<tr>
<td>C -</td>
<td>50 – 54</td>
<td>- Some grasp of the subject matter, but limited understanding or use of the literature;</td>
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<td>- Some grasp of theory and methods, but not necessarily well-integrated.</td>
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<td>- Arguments not always coherent and well-structured or relevant to the topic.</td>
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<td>- C grade work may be too descriptive, or draw on a limited range of evidence in responding to the issue. It indicates some grasp of factual matter but does not always apply this coherently or thoughtfully to the questions addressed.</td>
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<td>A C- is a bare pass.</td>
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<td>D +</td>
<td>45 – 49</td>
<td>A ‘D’ grade is an unsatisfactory piece of work. This may be as a result of:</td>
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<td>D</td>
<td>40 – 44</td>
<td>- Lack of breadth and depth.</td>
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<td>D-</td>
<td>0 - 39</td>
<td>- Gaps in the argument or literature.</td>
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<td>- Simplistic, incoherent or absent argument. Lack of evidence to substantiate claims.</td>
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<td>- Poor prose. Patchy referencing.</td>
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<td>- May contain material irrelevant to the topic and/or be too short.</td>
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SEMINAR TOPICS AND READING LIST

The following is a week-by-week programme of lectures and readings. This programme may change depending on the particular interests of students enrolled in the course, the need to make time for student presentations, and other factors. All changes will be announced in class.

ANTHRO 755 - SCHEDULE OF TOPICS & READINGS

NB This course and its content may be subject to change in the course of the year, either due to unanticipated circumstances, or because we can see ways to improve it. Thank you for your understanding.

1: Introduction: What is ‘Policy’ as an object/subject of Study?

2: Policies as Cultural Artefacts: Alternative Perspectives

3: Policy Subjects: How Policies Construct Individuals and Shape Society

4: Policy as Language, Discourse and Power: Questions of Method

5: Welfare Policy: Policing, Prisons and Discipline

6: Austerity and its Effects: Neoliberalism, Economics and the new world order

BREAK

7: Security Policy: Counter-Insurgency and the War on Terror

8: Policing the Borders: Australia, Immigration and Aboriginal Policies

9: Studying Up: Policy Makers and the Ethnography and Elites

10: Policy, Agency and Resistance: How actors speak back to power

11: Tertiary Education Policy: Anthropology, reflexivity and university reform

12: Tbc (Conclusions)
Course Readings: One text that will be referred to frequently is:


Week 1
26 July: Introduction to the Course. Critical Perspectives on Policy

- Aims, objectives and organisation of the course;
- Discussion of research interests;
- Introduction to the Anthropology of Policy (discussion of Shore and Wright 2011 Introduction)

Required reading:


- Bacchi, Carol 2009. ‘Introduction’ to Analysing Policy: What’s the problem represented to be? Frenchs Forest NSW: Pearson Australia: ix-xxii

Week 2
2 August: Opening Ideas: Policy as an Object/Subject of Anthropological Study

- What is this thing called ‘policy’ and how should (or can) anthropologists study policies?
- What is cultural (or ‘anthropological’) about policy making?
- How does policy fit within an anthropological view of politics?

Required reading:


• Bacchi, Carol 2009. ‘Chapter 1: Introducing a ‘what the problem represented to be?’ approach to policy analysis’, in C. Bacchi Analysing Policy. Frenchs Forest NSW: Pearson Australia: 1-24

Further reading:


Week 3
9 August, How Policy Constructs People: Biopower and Neoliberal Subjects

How does neoliberalisation impact on identity-formation?


Further Reading


**Week 4**

**16 August: Policy as Language: Critical Discourse Analysis and Studying Through**

- *How is language implicated in the policy process?*
- *What is the relationship between language and ideology?*
- *How can discourse and language provide a lens for studying power?*
- *How does language ‘work’ to construct political meanings?*

*Required reading:*


*Further Reading:*


• Bacchi, Carol 2009. ‘preface’ to *Analysing Policy: What’s the problem represented to be?* Frenchs Forest NSW: Pearson Australia: ix-xii

**Week 5**

**23 August: Welfare, and Corrections Policy: Making Responsible Citizens**

• *Why are family life and children so contentious areas for policy makers?*
• *How are questions of national identity tied up in debates over policy?*
• *What are the key factors that are driving family policies in New Zealand?*

**Required reading:**


Suggested Reading:


Week 6
30 August: Austerity and its Effects: Neoliberalism, Economics & the new world order

- What is ‘austerity’?
- Is austerity the inevitable fruit of neoliberal policies?
- Why is austerity a ‘dangerous idea’?
- Austerity as instrument for disciplining of the poor

Required Reading


**Further Reading**


**MID – SEMESTER BREAK**

**Week 7:**

20 September: Security Policy, War and Terrorism: Metaphor, Oratory, Discourse

• Metaphors of war
• Homeland security
• Discursive construction of political reality and the art of interpellation

**Required reading:**

• Lakoff, George 1990. ‘Metaphor and War: The Metaphor System Used to Justify War in the Gulf’


*Suggested Reading:*


• Mamdani, Mahmood. 2002. ‘Good Muslim, bad Muslim: A political perspective on culture and terrorism. *American anthropologist* 104(3): 766-775


• See also ‘Living Anthropologically’ blog, 2011. ‘Anthropology, Barack Obama, Osama bin Laden’, Available at: [http://www.livinganthropologically.com/2011/05/03/anthropology-barack-obama-osama-bin-laden/](http://www.livinganthropologically.com/2011/05/03/anthropology-barack-obama-osama-bin-laden/)


**Week 8: Policing the Borders: Australia, Immigration and Aboriginal Policies

27 September**

• *Illegal immigrants, detention camps and border controls*

• *Treatment of refugees*

• *Australia’s policies towards Aboriginal peoples*


• Lea, Tess, and Paul Pholeros. 2010. ‘This is not a pipe: the treacheries of Indigenous housing.' *Public Culture* 22 (1): 187-209.

**Further Reading**


9: **Studying Up: Policy Makers and the Ethnography and Elites**

4 October

*What are the challenges and rewards of studying up?*

*How does a focus on policy help us understand changing power relations?*

*What have anthropologists contributed to the study of global financial institutions?*

**Required reading:**


**Suggested Reading:**


• Wedel, Janine R. 2011. ‘Shadow Governing: What the Neocon Core Reveals about Power and Influence in America’, in Shore & Wright (eds) Anthropology of Policy (Chapter 8)


Week 10
11th October: Policy, Agency and Resistance: How actors speak back to power

• How do the subjects of policy respond, adapt to, or resist policies that they may oppose?
• What happens when the subjects of policy speak back to policy-makers and policy regimes?

Required reading


Suggested Reading:


**Week 11:**
**19 October: Tertiary Education Policy: Anthropology, reflexivity and university reform**

*Tertiary education reform in New Zealand and beyond*
*Commercialising intellectual property*
*Changing the mission and meaning of the university*
*Leadership and management strategies for disciplining academic behaviour*

**Required Reading**


**Further Reading**


• Oxlund, Bjarke. 2010. ‘Responding to university reform in South Africa: student activism at the University of Limpopo.’ *Social Anthropology* 18 (1): 30-42.

**Week 12: Conclusions and Student Presentations**
**26 October**