

ANTH 465 (SEM 001)
Borders, Boundaries, and Crossings
Fall 2019

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Prerequisite: ANTH 202 (please email the instructor to discuss the possibilities for enrollment without the prerequisite)

Course Description

Anthropologists have always been eager to cross cultural boundaries and have devoted much work to depicting the boundary crossings of others. This course offers an ethnographically grounded insight into the ways in which socio-cultural boundaries mediate the construction, perception and presentation of identities of oneself and others. We will examine how borders as external territorial frontiers and boundaries as internal social categorizations are tightly related in a process that involves differentiation, tension, and conflict as well as connection, relationality, and hospitality. The course will begin by discussing the classical conceptualizations of boundaries in early anthropological work. Although we will study boundaries of various kinds (communal, temporal, symbolic, territorial, gendered, religious, ethnic), our focus will be on state borders as a particular site of boundary-making and boundary-crossing. We will question the territoriality, temporality, national significance, and the material, corporeal and affective qualities of borders. We will read sections from the ethnographies of borderlands to capture the particularities of different national borders and the specificity of their relations to the state, capital, colonialism, and transnational flows. We will also reflect on the social relationships between border dwellers and border crossers such as migrants, refugees, indigenous nations, and nomads.

Course Goals and Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

- Identify and understand key anthropological terms related to borders and boundaries
- Demonstrate an understanding of how anthropology can contribute methodologically and theoretically to border and migration studies
- Develop ethnographically-oriented reading, research, and thinking skills on the topic of borders and boundaries
- Critically engage with global news media on matters of migration, refugees, and border security
- Better understand the ethical connections between our own lives and those of others separated through communal, temporal, symbolic, territorial, and racial boundaries.

Required Texts

- Jason de León 2015. *The Land of Open Graves: Living and Dying on the Migrant Trail*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Shahram Khosravi. 2010. *Illegal Traveler: An Auto-Ethnography of Borders*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan
- Audra Simpson 2014. *Mohawk Interruptus: Political Life across the Borders of Settler States*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Additional articles and chapters are available in e-format through Course Reserves