

# Political Anthropology

**Lecturer**

Alexander NEWELL (Coordinator)

**Course mnemonic**

SOCA-D309

**ECTS credits**

5 credits

**Language(s) of instruction**

French

**Course period**

Second term

**Campus**

Solbosch

## Course content

This course examines the concept of politics within anthropology, both theoretically and ethnographically, selecting key moments throughout the history of the discipline. We are interested in the early days of British social theory, where the key question was how stateless societies function, moving progressively through questions of crowds and social conflict to contemporary concerns with affective politics, virtual warfare and "fake news". Drawing on classical and state of the art social theorists, we will study the intersection between power, social organization and cultural hierarchies across space and time. The first two modules focus on classical and contemporary perspectives in politics. The third module will employ what we have learned for a focused exploration of the anthropology of witchcraft, the power dynamics of terror(ism), and the overlap between these two social fields.

## Objectives (and/or specific learning outcomes)

The transcultural study of the political field. We learn to use the diversity of cultural perspectives to interpret issues in contemporary world politics from new angles, as well as to identify key political concerns in regions outside of our own experience.

## Pre-requisites and co-requisites

### Co-requisites courses

SOCA-D208 | Histoire de la pensée anthropologique | 5 crédits  
and SOCA-D473 | Anthropologie de la religion | 5 crédits

## Course having this one as co-requisit

SOCA-D473 | Anthropologie de la religion | 5 crédits

## Required knowledge and skills

Prerequisites can be waived at the discretion of the professeur, if the student holds genuine interest in the course and has some experience in anthropology or sociology, and especially for international exchange students.

## Teaching method and learning activities

This course is ex-cathedra but I encourage participation, debate, and discussion. Depending on the size of the class, I may organize group discussions and other teaching exercises, and if possible I will ask for students to offer short presentations to the class on readings and/or contemporary issues using course perspectives. A final writing assignment drawing upon readings and lectures will be a central aspect of course evaluation.

## References, bibliography and recommended reading

All required readings will be available on Université Virtuelle or TEAMS. If you are not registered for the course yet but are taking the class, please write to me as soon as possible for access to course plan and other teaching materials.

## Course notes

Université virtuelle

## Other information

### Place(s) of teaching

Solbosch

### Contact(s)

alexander.newell@ulb.be

## Evaluation method(s)

Personal work and Oral presentation

### Main language(s) of evaluation

French and English

## Programmes

### Programmes proposing this course at the faculty of Philosophy and Social Sciences

MA-ANTR | **Master in Anthropology** | finalité Professional/unit 1, MA-COOP | **Master in Population and development**

studies | finalité Professional/unit 1 and finalité Professional/unit 2, MA-PPHIL | **Master in Philosophy** | finalité Research/unit 1 and finalité Research/unit 2 and MA-SOCO | **Master in Sociology** | finalité Professional/unit 1 and finalité Professional/unit 2