

ANTH XXXX: INTRODUCTION TO MASCULINITIES
Spring 2026
Asynchronous Lectures. Discussion Section Fridays 1:00-1:50pm

Instructor: Kyle Bikowski

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Office Hours: On Zoom, TWTH from 11:00-12:00, or by appointment

Course Home:

College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

Department Office: 114 MH

Office Phone: 319-335-0522

Department DEO: Dr. Andrew Kitchen

DEO Email: Andrew-Kitchen@uiowa.edu

Course Description:

What does it mean to be a man? We all have an answer to this question based on our upbringings, exposure to media, and socialization with others. The most powerful and long lasting of these ideas combine to form a cultural ideal and certain expectations of masculine performance, known as hegemonic masculinity. As such, it can often be surprising to learn that most people will have slightly different answers to what it means to be a man, or that depending on context these ideals can shift. So how does hegemonic masculinity compare to lived realities?

In this course, we will critically examine popularly used terms such as hegemonic and toxic masculinity, using an ethnographic lens to explore the ways in which intersecting identities and cultural ideals impact the expectations and performances of masculinity in the United States and in global contexts.

Course Objectives:

By the end of the course students will:

- gain an understanding of how anthropologists critically view popularly used concepts such as toxic masculinity and hegemonic masculinity
- recognize how intersecting identities, such as age, race, sexuality, and class impact expectations and performance of masculinity
- be able to apply the anthropological concept of cultural relativity to understand masculinity as a gendered performance in cross-cultural contexts

Required Texts:

Pascoe, C. J., and Tristan Bridges. 2016. *Exploring Masculinities: Identity, Inequality, Continuity and Change*. Oxford University Press.

All other materials will be provided as links or PDFs on ICON.

Grading Policies and Procedures:

This course follows a standard grading scale, i.e. 100-97 = A+, 96-93 = A, 92-90=A-, 89-87 =B+, 86-83=B, 82-80=B-, and so on. The various components of your grade will be weighted as follows:

Quizzes	30%
First Exam	10%
Second Exam	10%
Final Exam	10%
Final Essay Components	20%
Final Essay	10%
Attendance/participation	10%

Quizzes:

You will be assigned 10 quizzes consisting of 10 questions, which will cover the material in the week they are assigned. The quizzes will open immediately following discussion on Friday and be available until 11:59pm the following Sunday. These quizzes are open note, open book, and you will have 10 minutes to complete them. You must use the Lockdown Browser.

If you do not do as well as you would like on a quiz, you may meet with the instructor during his office hours at any point **by the end of the following week**. If you can demonstrate that you now understand why an answer was incorrect OR that you have done the reading/attended lecture but still need to talk it through for more clarification, you will receive points back for the question(s). **This is the only extra credit opportunity in this course.**

Exams:

There will be three exams in this course, which are not cumulative. The exams will consist of 50 questions. These will be open notes and open book, but you will have a time limit of **50 minutes** to complete the exam, meaning looking up each answer will not be feasible. You may either schedule a time in the testing center to take the exam or you the HonorLock proctoring system.

Final Essay

Over the course of the semester, you will conduct your own mini ethnographic project, designed to help you begin thinking like an anthropologist. To do this you will select a site in which to observe performances of masculinity and then write an ethnographic essay. This assignment will be divided over several phases:

1. An initial site selection and observation (**Due March 1st by 11:59PM**)
2. One main research question and two supporting questions (**Due March 15th by 11:59PM**)
3. A summary with what you learned after conducting an interview (**Due April 5th by 11:59PM**)
4. A list of at least two course materials and two outside academic sources with a brief description of how they will be used in your essay (**Due April 19th by 11:59PM**)

You will then use the feedback received on these portions of the assignment to combine (essentially copy and paste with revisions) the parts into a cohesive 5-page essay detailing your findings, which will be due **May 10th by 11:59PM**. It is strongly recommended that you begin

writing the essay after step 3 and meet with the instructor before the due date to discuss drafts or get clarification.

Please note that you are being asked to do extremely specific tasks for this essay, as such AI tools are not allowed for the completion of this assignment and likely would not result in a passing grade for this assignment if used.

Late Assignments:

Assignments turned in late will receive a reduction of 5% off the final grade for each of the first four days past the due date until they are turned in. After five days, assignments will not be awarded credit but can be turned in to receive feedback. This is not meant as a penalty but is meant to assure fairness to your classmates and is in part due to the quick turnaround time needed to provide feedback in a timely manner to move to the next assignment.

Attendance and Participation:

You are expected to attend and actively participate in class discussions and activities. This means simply showing up is not enough. Each session you will be given a score of 0-2, **0=Absent, 1=Present, 2=Present and Participating.** Your two lowest scores will be dropped at the end of the course.

Course Schedule:

Below you will find a schedule for the course. It is your responsibility to complete the reading/viewing/listening of materials **BEFORE** coming to discussion in the assigned week.

Date	Recorded Lectures	Materials for Class	Assignments Due
Unit 1- Defining Terms			
Week 1 1/19-1/25	Course Introduction Introduction to Anthropology	Read: Perspectives Chapter 1	
Week 2 1/26-2/1	The Culture Concept Ethnographic Methods	Read: Perspectives Chapter 2 Read: Perspectives Chapter 3	Quiz 1
Week 3 2/2-2/8	Introduction to Gender Introduction to Masculinity	Read: “Exploring Masculinities”	Quiz 2
Week 4 2/9-2/15	Hegemonic Masculinity	Read: “What is Hegemonic Masculinity?” Read: “Can Bordieu Help Us...”	Quiz 3

Week 5 2/16-2/22	Toxic Masculinity	Read: “Is Masculinity Toxic?” Read: “What is Toxic Masculinity...”	Exam 1
Unit 2- Intersections			
Week 6 2/23-3/1	Intersectionality Class	Watch: TED Intersectionality Read: “Class and Masculinity”	Quiz 4 Initial Site Selection
Week 7 3/2-3/8	Religion Gray Space	Read: “Masculinity Dilemmas” Read: “Dude Sex”	Quiz 5
Week 8 3/9-3/15	Sexuality Transmasculinity	Read: “Gay, Mexican, and Immigrant” Read: “Negotiating Vulnerability and Fear”	Quiz 6 Research Questions
3/16-3/22	Spring Break No Classes		
Week 9 3/23-3/29	Race	Read: “Latino Boys..” Read: “Drake, heartbreak, and the romantic communication of Black male vulnerability”	Quiz 7
Week 10 3/30-4/5	Life Stages	Read: “Why College Men Drink” Read: “Masculinity, ageing bodies, and leisure”	Quiz 8 Interview
Week 11 4/6-4/12	Sport	Read: “Alternative Masculinity...Skateboarding”	Exam 2
Unit 3- Global Perspectives			
Week 12 4/13-4/19	Latin America	Read: “Mariachis Macho and Charros Gay” Read: “Fishermen”	Annotated Bibliography
Week 13 4/20-4/26	Asia	Read: “That’s My Man!” Read: “A Real Man Cries”	Quiz 9
Week 14 4/27-5/3	Europe	Read: “Later-Life Masculinities” Read: “Of Tractors and Men	Quiz 10

Week 15 5/4-5/10	Africa	Read: “Masculinity and Nigerian Youths”	Final Paper
			Final Exam

Campus Policies at the University of Iowa: College of Liberal Arts & Sciences

Attendance and Classroom Expectations

Students are responsible for attending class and for knowing an instructor’s attendance policies, which vary by course and content area. All students are expected to attend class and to contribute to its learning environment. Students are also expected to comply with University policies and directives regarding appropriate classroom behavior or other matters. Students also have the right to be evaluated solely on their academic achievement and the fulfillment of related requirements.

Absences

Students are responsible for communicating with instructors as soon they know that an absence might occur or as soon as possible in the case of an illness. Students may use the CLAS absence form (<https://clas.uiowa.edu/sites/default/files/ABSENCE%20EXPLANATION%20FORM.pdf>) to aid in communication with instructors who will decide if the absence is excused or unexcused; the form is located on ICON within the top banner under "Student Tools." Delays in communication could result in a forfeit of what otherwise might be an excused absence.

Absences: Illness, Unavoidable Circumstances, and University Sponsored Activities

Students who are ill, in an unavoidable circumstance affecting academic work, or who miss class because of a University sponsored activity are allowed by UI policy to make up a missed exam. Documentation is required by the instructor except in the case of a brief illness. Students are responsible for communicating with instructors as soon as the absence is known.

Absences: Holy Days

Reasonable accommodations are allowed for students whose religious holy days coincide with their classroom assignments, tests, and attendance if the student notifies the instructor in writing of any such religious Holy Day conflicts within the first days of the semester and no later than the third week. (See the University Operations Manual: <https://opsmanual.uiowa.edu/students/absences-class#8.2>).

Absences: Military Service Obligations

Students absent from class due to U.S. veteran or U.S. military service obligations (including military service-related medical appointments, military orders, and National Guard Service obligations) must be excused without penalty. Instructors must make reasonable accommodations to allow students to make-up exams or other work. Students must communicate with their instructors about the expected possibility of missing class as soon as possible. (For more information, see <https://opsmanual.uiowa.edu/iv-8-absencesclass%C2%A0-0>).

Academic Misconduct

All undergraduates enrolled in courses offered by CLAS have in essence agreed to the College's Code of Academic Honesty. Academic misconduct affects a student's grade and is reported to the

College which applies an additional sanction, such as suspension. Outcomes about misconduct are communicated through UI email (<https://clas.uiowa.edu/students/handbook/academic-fraud-honor-code>).

Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

UI is committed to providing an educational experience that is accessible to all students. A student may request academic accommodations for a disability (such as a mental health, attention, learning, vision, and a physical or health-related condition) through the Student Disability Services (SDS) office. The student is responsible for discussing specific accommodations with the instructor. Note that accommodations are not granted retroactively but from the time of the student's request to the instructor onward; additionally, accommodations must be requested at least two weeks in advance of the related assignment or exam (<https://sds.studentlife.uiowa.edu/>).

Class Recordings: Privacy and Sharing

Course lectures and discussions are sometimes recorded or live-streamed. These are only available to students registered for the course and the intellectual property of the faculty member. These materials may not be shared or reproduced without the explicit written consent of the instructors. Students may not share these recordings with those who are not enrolled in the course; likewise, students may not upload recordings to any other online environment. Doing so is a breach of the Code of Student Conduct and could be a violation of the Federal Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA); also see <https://dos.uiowa.edu/policies/code-of-student-life/>.

Communication: UI Email

Students are responsible for all official correspondences sent to their UI email address (uiowa.edu) and must use this address for any communication with instructors or staff in the UI community (Operations Manual, III.15.2). Emails should be respectful and brief, with complex matters addressed during the instructor's drop-in hours, for example. Faculty are not expected to answer email after business hours or during the weekends.

Communication: Free Expression

The University of Iowa supports and upholds the First Amendment protection of freedom of speech and the principle of academic freedom to foster a learning environment where open inquiry and the vigorous debate of a diversity of ideas are encouraged. Students will not be penalized for the content or viewpoints of their speech if student expression in a class context is germane to the subject matter of the class and is conveyed in an appropriate manner. To learn more, visit <https://freespeech.uiowa.edu/>.

Complaints about Academic Matters

Students with a complaint about a grade or a related academic matter should first visit with the instructor and then with the course supervisor if one is assigned, and finally with the Chair of the department or program offering the course. Students may next bring the issue if not resolved to the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. See <https://clas.uiowa.edu/students/handbook/student-rights-responsibilities>.

Final Examination Policies

The final exam schedule is published during the fifth week of the fall and spring semesters or on the first day of summer classes; students are responsible for knowing the date, time, and place of their final exams. Students should not make travel plans until knowing this information. A student with exams scheduled on the same day and time or who have more than two final exams on the same day should visit this page for how to resolve these problems by the given deadline: <https://registrar.uiowa.edu/makeup-final-examination-policies>. No exams are allowed the week before finals, but with some exceptions made for labs, language courses, and off-cycle courses (<https://registrar.uiowa.edu/final-examination-scheduling-policies>).

Home of the Course

The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS) is the home of this course, and CLAS governs the courses add and drop deadlines, the “second-grade only” option (SG0), and other undergraduate policies and procedures. Different UI colleges may have other policies or deadlines. See <https://clas.uiowa.edu/students/handbook>. Questions? Contact CLAS at clasps@uiowa.edu or 319-3352633.

Mental Health

Students are encouraged to seek help as a preventive measure or if feeling stressed or overwhelmed. Students should talk to their instructors for guidance with specific class-related concerns and are encouraged to contact University Counseling Service (UCS) at 319-335-7294 during regular business hours to schedule an appointment. USC offers group and individual therapy as well as counseling for couples about relationships while making referrals to other resources (<https://counseling.uiowa.edu/>). Student Health can also address related concerns (<https://studenthealth.uiowa.edu/>). These visits are free to students. After hours, students are encouraged to call the Johnson County Community Crisis Line at (319) 351-0140 or dial 911 in an emergency.

Nondiscrimination in the Classroom

The University of Iowa is committed to making the classroom a respectful and inclusive space for people of all gender, sexual, racial, religious, and other identities. Toward this goal, students are invited in MyUI to optionally share the names and pronouns they would like their instructors and advisors to use to address them. The University of Iowa prohibits discrimination and harassment against individuals based on race, class, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, and other identity categories indicated by the University’s Human Rights policy. For more information, contact the Office of Equal Opportunity and Diversity at <https://diversity.uiowa.edu/division/office-equal-opportunity-and-diversity-eod>.

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment subverts the mission of the University and threatens the well-being of students, faculty, and staff; all members of the UI community are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that maintains an environment free from sexual harassment and sexual misconduct. Those experiencing sexual harassment are strongly encouraged to report the incidents and to seek help (<https://osmrc.uiowa.edu/>).

UI's Writing Center is a key resource for students at any level who want to improve their writing skills:

<https://writingcenter.uiowa.edu/>.