COURSE DESCRIPTION
This course introduces the cultures and societies of the Indian subcontinent. It will focus not only on the history and ethnography of South Asia, but also on the major concepts and debates in the anthropological study of the region. Topics will include caste, kinship, gender, religion, material culture, nationalism, ethnic conflict, globalization, and the South Asian diaspora. It is a reading, writing, and discussion oriented course that is run along a seminar format – that is we will engage closely with the texts assigned for the course.

PRE-REQUISITES: Either Human Society and Culture (ANTH-UA 1) or Cultures & Contexts: India (MAP-UA 516). If you have not taken either course, you need my permission to enroll in this course. Please inform me of other relevant coursework that makes you eligible to take this course.

REQUIREMENTS
- All assignments must be completed for a passing grade in the course. With the exception of the weekly discussion assignments and components of your project proposal, all other assignments are to be uploaded on to the course’s Blackboard Site by 5pm of the date that the assignment is due. The time and date are stamped very clearly in such a submission process.
- **Deadlines:** EXTENSIONS WILL NOT BE GIVEN [except for authorized medical reasons/emergencies] LATE WORK WILL BE NOT BE ACCEPTED, i.e., YOU WILL RECEIVE A ZERO INSTEAD.
- Attendance and doing the readings prior to class are mandatory. Your general demeanor in class – punctuality, level of alertness, paying attention, being respectful – and overall contribution – responding to questions, participating in discussion – significantly shape my perception and assessment of you as a student.
- I do not allow the use of laptops or smart phones in class.

Exams: 50%
1. **Midterm Exam** - 25%; OCT. 28 (5pm) This is a take-home essay exam. I will post the questions on Blackboard by Oct. 20.
2. **Final Exam** - 25% - DEC. 16 (5pm) This will be a cumulative, open-book, open-note exam comprised of a few essay questions; I will post the questions on Blackboard by December 8.

Assignments – 50% - More detailed instructions are available on the course’s Blackboard site
1. **Weekly Reading/Discussion Assignments** – 20%; Variable due dates; Comprised of two segments:
   a. Every student must post a question for discussion raised by the reading on the discussion board section of the course’s Blackboard site. While I’m looking for open-ended questions that will generate a good discussion, it is also okay to post
questions that are more clarificatory in nature; that is if you are confused or unsure about something, please post it as a question. These questions must be posted by 9pm the night prior to our meeting [by Sunday 9pm for Monday’s class and Tuesday 9 pm for Wednesday’s class]

b. Periodically, I will give you a question to reflect upon or research related to that week’s reading. This will help us to facilitate our discussion of the readings. You will hand this short (1-2 pages typed) response to me in class based on my stipulated deadline.

2. Literature/Data Base Survey – 5%; SEPT. 23 (5pm)
   • As a way to get acquainted with the anthropological literature about South Asia as well as to familiarize yourself with the various scholarly databases and indexes that you will need to consult for your project proposal, this assignment asks you to search for and survey broadly the anthropological literature about South Asia. More instructions are posted on the assignment sheet on Blackboard.

3. Ethnographic Project Proposal – 25%; DEC. 9 (5pm)
   • This is the kind of research proposal that one could submit to a funding agency for a grant – to conduct ethnographic research in South Asia connected to issues raised in the class and students’ individual interests. Students are encouraged to think creatively about their projects and the readings for the course can serve as a guideline.
   • You will hand in components of the proposal throughout the semester so that I can gauge your progress. Failure to submit the following components on time will affect your final grade. The schedule of assignments and due dates is as follows:
     • One paragraph description [typed] of your stated project: Oct. 3
     • Preliminary bibliography, minimum of 5 sources: Oct. 17
     • Statement of Research Question/Objective: Nov. 7
     • Methodology/Research Design: Nov. 21

RECAP OF DUE DATES
Sept. 23: Data Base Survey due by 5pm on Blackboard
Oct. 3: Paragraph description of project due in class
Oct. 17: Preliminary bibliography due in class
Oct. 28: Take-home Midterm Exam due by 5pm on Blackboard
Nov. 7: Statement of research question due in class
Nov. 21: Methodology/research design due in class
Dec. 9: Project Proposal due by 5pm on Blackboard
Dec. 16: Take-home Final Exam due by 5pm on Blackboard

COURSE MATERIALS
- Required Books [available at the campus bookstore as well as on reserve at Bobst Library]
  Ahearn, Laura
  Gardner, Andrew M.
  Patel, Reena
  2010 Working the Night Shift: Women in India’s Call Center Industry. Stanford University Press.
Ring, Laura A.

Trawick, Margaret

Tarlo, Emma
1996  *Clothing Matters: Dress and Identity in India*, Univ. of Chicago.

- There will also be a series of readings available for you to read/download/print from the course's Blackboard site, these will be marked with a B on the syllabus

Special Accommodations
If you have a disability, which may require classroom, test-taking, or other reasonable modifications, please see me as soon as possible and be sure to register with the Center for Students with Disabilities (212-998-4980).

**COURSE SCHEDULE**

1: FOUNDATIONS

9/7 (Wed)  Introduction

**WEEK 2: SOUTH ASIA AS AN OBJECT OF STUDY**

9/12 (Mon)  South Asia in the Western Imagination
Readings [B]:
Cohn, Bernard S.
Singer, Milton

9/14 (Wed)  The Study of Caste
Readings [B]:
Cohn, Bernard S.
Dirks, Nicholas B.
Mines, Diane & Sarah Lamb
2010  “Seven Prevalent Misconceptions about India’s Caste System”  *In Everyday Life in South Asia*, pp. 153-4

II: SOCIAL ORGANIZATION VIA MATERIAL & EXPRESSIVE CULTURE

**WEEK 3: CLOTHING & HISTORY IN INDIA**

9/19 (Mon)  South Asia Resources at Bobst, orientation with Aruna Magier, South Asia Librarian

9/21 (Wed)  Clothing & Colonialism
Readings:
Tarlo, *Clothing Matters*, preface, chs. 1 & 2

*9/23* Database Survey due on Blackboard*

**WEEK 4: THE POLITICS OF CLOTHING**
9/26 (Mon) Nationalism and the Politics of Dress
Readings:
Tarlo, *Clothing Matters*, chs. 3 & 4

9/28 (Wed) Caste, Class, Gender & Region
Readings:
Tarlo, *Clothing Matters*, chs. 5 & 6

**WEEK 5: THE SOCIAL LIFE OF CLOTHING**
10/3 (Mon) Clothing and Social Change
Readings:
Tarlo, *Clothing Matters*, chs. 7 & 8
*Preliminary project description due in class!*

10/5 (Wed) Clothing and Modernity
Readings:
Tarlo, *Clothing Matters*, chs. 9, 10 & postscript

**WEEK 6: LITERACY, LOVE & SOCIAL CHANGE IN NEPAL**
10/10 (Mon) *Columbus Day Holiday – No Class*

10/12 (Wed) Theoretical Frameworks
Readings:
Ahearn, *Invitations to Love*, chs. 1-3

**WEEK 7: LITERACY, LOVE & SOCIAL CHANGE (Cont.)**
10/17 (Mon) Transformations in Gender & Marriage
Readings:
Ahearn, *Invitations to Love*, chs. 4-6
*Preliminary bibliography due in class*

10/19 (Wed) Love, Literacy & Development
Readings:
Ahearn, *Invitations to Love*, chs. 7 & 8

**WEEK 8: GENDERED FORMS OF AGENCY**
10/24 (Mon) Love, Literacy, and Agency
Readings:
Ahearn, *Invitations to Love*, chs. 9 & 10

10/26 (Wed) Peace as Gendered Labor
Readings:
Ring, *Zenana*, chs. 1 & 2

*10/28  Midterm Due by 5pm on Blackboard*

**III: NATIONALISM AND ETHNIC CONFLICT**

**Week 9: PEACE, CONFLICT & EVERYDAY LIFE IN PAKISTAN**

10/31 (Mon)  Exchange and Emotion  
**Readings:**  
Ring, *Zenana*, chs. 3 & 4

11/2 (Wed)  Gender and Personhood  
**Readings:**  
Ring, *Zenana*, chs. 5 & 6

**WEEK 10: CHILDHOOD & CIVIL WAR IN SRI LANKA**

11/7 (Mon)  Narratives and Discourses of Conflict  
**Readings:**  
Trawick, *Enemy Lines*, chs. 1-3  
*Statement of research question due in class*

11/9 (Wed)  War as Everyday Life  
**Readings:**  
Trawick, *Enemy Lines*, chs. 4 & 5

**WEEK 11: CHILDHOOD & CIVIL WAR (Cont.)**

11/14 (Mon)  The Gender of War  
**Readings:**  
Trawick, *Enemy Lines*, chs. 6 & 7

11/16 (Wed)  AAA Meetings - NO CLASS

**WEEK 12:**

11/21 (Mon)  Rituals and Spectacles of War  
**Readings:**  
Trawick, *Enemy Lines*, chs. 8-10  
*Research Design/Methodology due in class*

**IV. GLOBALIZATION AND DIASPORA**

11/23 (Wed)  Indian Migrant Workers in Bahrain  
**Readings:**  
Gardner, *City of Strangers*, chs. 1 & 2

**WEEK 13: GENDER, CLASS, & TRANSNATIONAL MIGRATION**

11/28 (Mon)  Subalterns & Elites  
**Readings:**  
Gardner, *City of Strangers*, chs. 3-5
11/30 (Wed)  Citizens & Publics
Readings:
Gardner, *City of Strangers*, chs. 6-8

**WEEK 14: GENDER IN THE NEW GLOBAL ECONOMY**
12/5 (Mon)  The Political and Moral Economies of Call Centers
Readings:
Patel, *Working the Night Shift*, chs. 1-3

12/7 (Wed)  The Morality of Mobility
Readings:
Patel, *Working the Night Shift*, chs. 4 & 5
*12/9  Project Proposal due by 5pm on Blackboard*

**WEEK 15: GENDER/GLOBAL ECONOMY (cont.)**
12/12 (Mon)  Reconfiguring Kinship and Domesticity
Readings:
Patel, *Working the Night Shift*, chs. 6-8, postscript

12/14 (Wed)  Wrap-Up/Lessons Learned

*12/16  FINAL EXAM DUE BY 5PM on Blackboard*