

CORTNEY HUGHES RINKER

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Academic Positions

- Associate Professor, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, George Mason (2018-)
- Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, George Mason (2012-2018)
- Term Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, George Mason (2011-2012)
- Postdoctoral Fellow, Arlington Innovation Center for Health Research, Virginia Tech (2010-2011)
- Teaching Assistant, Department of Anthropology, University of California, Irvine (2004-2007 & 2009-2010)

Education

- Ph.D., Anthropology, University of California, Irvine, Emphasis in Medicine, Science, and Technology Studies and the Graduate Feminist Emphasis (2010)
- M.A., Anthropology, University of California, Irvine (2007)
- B.A., Anthropology with Honors, minor in Psychology, Iowa State University (2004)

Courses Taught at George Mason

- **ANTH 114: Introduction to Cultural Anthropology** (F2011, SP2012, F2012, F2014, SP2016; Online SU2017, SU2018, SU2019, SU2020, SU2021) – I have taught ANTH 114 in-person with between 115 and 217 students with a GTA. I have taught it online with 30-60 students. In Summer 2020, I taught ANTH 114 as part of the premier program where students accepted into Mason could complete a course prior to their official first semester. Cultural anthropology endeavors to promote learning about the world's diverse cultures in a contextual, comparative, and holistic perspective. This course is a survey of key topics in the field and provides a sense of the general approach that anthropologists take. We focus on how to ask intelligent questions and to “think like an anthropologist” as we reflect on other cultures as well as our own. *Summary Rating of my Teaching: F2011 = 4.88, SP2012 = 4.80, F2012 = 4.86, F2014 = 4.83, SP2016 = 4.71, SU2017 = 4.70, SU2018 = 5.0, SU2019 = 4.40, SU2020-A01 = 4.94, SU2020-B02 = 4.80, SU2021 = 5.00* * Mason Core Social and Behavioral Science
- **ANTH 308: Peoples and Cultures of the Middle East** (F2011, SP2013, SP2017) – This course examines key themes that have been at the center of much of the scholarship on the Middle East and North Africa. Drawing on anthropological theory and ethnographic accounts, it focuses on how individuals' experiences are connected with broader national and global processes and discourses. This course was full (50 students) the first time I taught it and nearly full the second time and third time. It attracts students from various academic and cultural backgrounds. Every time I teach, ANTH 308 I have only a few anthropology majors, as most are from Global Affairs and Government. *Summary Rating of my Teaching: F2011 = 4.69, SP2013 = 4.68, SP2017 = 4.78* * Mason Core Global Understanding and CHSS Non-Western
- **ANTH 313/599, GLOA 450/599: Myth, Magic, and Mind** (F2018; Online F2021) – Given that most agree that the presence of some kind of religion or spirituality is a cultural universal, this course asked the question: Why do humans have the need for it? We explore what is sociologically and psychologically necessary in the development of religion, questioning both its origins and what it does in terms of organizing society and the

human mind. We focus on the place myth, ritual, and religion have in human social life and explore the relationship between religion, magic, and science. This course draws from multiple disciplines and looks at religion both historically and in the present through anthropological accounts. I taught this as a large lecture with 198 students in Fall 2018. I majorly revised the course to be online asynchronous for Fall 2021 with 160 students; it is cross-listed with GLOA and has added graduate sections. This is my first time teaching a graduate section of the course. *Summary Rating of my Teaching: F2018 = 4.76* * Mason Core Global Understanding and CHSS Non-Western requirement

- **ANTH 332: Cross-Cultural Perspectives on Globalization** (F2017, F2019) – How does globalization play out in cross-cultural contexts? How do we even define globalization? We used ethnographic accounts from different parts of the world to analyze the concept of globalization and its real-world implications. Some of the topics we covered included: health, tourism, technology, music, communication, policy, trade, and economics. The final project was a small-group Object Research Project in which students chose one everyday object and traced its materials, origins, manufacturing, consumption, and disposal in order to critically analyze how globalization impacts their own lives as well as the lives of others. *Summary Rating of my Teaching: F2017 = 4.83* * Mason Core Global Understanding and CHSS Non-Western requirement
- **ANTH 381/687: Medical Anthropology** (SP2017, SP2019) – This course is an introduction to medical anthropology: the study of health, illness, the body, and healing in a cross-cultural perspective. The course draws on various theoretical approaches to understand the interaction of biology, culture, medicine, and the social. We explored how health and illness are culturally constructed and mediated through readings, films, and discussions. We covered key scholars and theories in medical anthropology as well as research methods before moving into case studies. The final project was an Illness Narrative in which students interviewed a person about their ailment and situated it within the broader social, economic, cultural, and political context. In Spring 2019, I taught it as a stacked class with a graduate section. *Summary Rating of my Teaching: SP2017 = 4.83, SP2019 = 5.00*
- **ANTH 395: Work, Technology, and Society—An IT Perspective** (F2017) – This course was an introduction to anthropological approaches to studying work, technology, and society with a specific focus on information technology (IT). We looked at the development of new technologies and the varied uses of these in daily life. Throughout the semester, I asked students to consider different ethical issues regarding the structure and use of information technology. This course was very hands-on. We combined lectures, ethnographic exercises, research assignments, practical skill-based work with computer and software programs, and analysis of qualitative and quantitative research data. The course was nearly at enrollment capacity and had a mix of majors from across colleges. *Summary Rating of my Teaching: F2017 = 4.89* * Mason Core course for IT including Ethics
- **ANTH 396/ANTH 555: Policy and Culture** (SP2018, F2019) – This course examined the integral nature of cultural processes to policy making and implementation. Early on, we focused on the development of anthropology of policy and some of the prominent theoretical orientations. We then moved into more specific policies from around the world in part to examine the roles of values in policy and research, constitution of knowledge, construction of identity, nationalism and transnationalism, and understandings of risk. I combined class-based discussions with lecture, readings, writing assignments, and films and also had anthropologists working in the realm of policy in D.C. come into the class. The course drew students from a wide array of majors—the top two being anthropology and Global Affairs. It was run as a floating elective at the undergraduate level and in Fall 2019, I taught it as a stacked class with a graduate section. *Summary Rating of my Teaching: SP2018 = 4.93, F2019 = 5.00* * Mason Core Social and Behavioral Sciences and CHSS NonWestern requirement
- **ANTH 399: Aging, Death, and Dying** (F2013) – This is a course that I developed at Mason. We examined aging, death, and dying from a variety of interdisciplinary and interactive perspectives in order to further our understanding of what it means to be human and the body's limitations. This course encouraged students to broaden their understandings of the human cultural experience. We considered how aging, death, and dying are both biological and culturally constructed simultaneously. The course was small with only 19 students all of whom were anthropology majors. *Summary Rating of my Teaching: F2013 = 5.0*

- **ANTH 399/440/ANTH 640: Applied Anthropology** (F2011, SP2012, F2013): Applied anthropology uses anthropological methods and theories to help solve practical problems. This course helped prepare students to conduct research, teach, and practice anthropology in academic and nonacademic settings. We discussed the development of applied anthropology and the ethical challenges, and then moved into specific areas in which anthropologists work (e.g., healthcare, development). We also prepared documents (e.g., grant proposals, resumes, and memos) that would be useful when working for organizations outside of academia. I invited anthropologists to guest lecture about their work and how they use anthropology and also Career Services to help students become familiar with job and internship search engines. *Summary Rating of my Teaching: F2011 = 5.0, SP2012 = 4.93, F2013 = 4.94* * Course ran as elective ANTH 399 until we had it put into the catalog as ANTH 440.
- **ANTH 490: Theories, Methods, and Issues – Part II** (SP2018) – This is Writing Intensive. It focuses on major theoretical strands of anthropology from the mid-20th century to the present. In the course we considered how anthropological theory and methods intersect with each other and with other disciplines. We discussed how anthropologists have situated their work within theoretical orientations by reading a more theoretical text alongside an ethnography. Moreover, we talked about the ethics of research and writing and devoted time to discussing reading and writing techniques and practices, writing conventions, and the discipline’s reference style. There were a smaller number of students in the course and so was more of a seminar with students facilitating one class meeting in pairs and uploading weekly posts on the Discussion Board. *Summary Rating of my Teaching: SP2018 = 4.92*
- **ANTH 535: Anthropology and the Human Condition – Part I** (F2014): This is the first semester of a twosemester pro-seminar sequence required for MA students in anthropology. Students explore the history of anthropological theory and ethnographic practice. This course is organized around an in-depth discussion of the formation of anthropology as an academic discipline and mode of inquiry with particular attention to the concepts of culture and society. Students are required to do weekly responses to the readings, which they post on Blackboard, in addition to three short essays and a final paper. The course is somewhat writing and reading intensive to help students learn how to read critically and write concisely. There were 13 students enrolled in the course with a mix of anthropology MA students, anthropology undergraduate students, and students from MAIS. *Summary of Rating of my Teaching: F2014 = 4.83* * Required course for MA students in anthropology.
- **ANTH 536: Anthropology and the Human Condition – Part II** (SP2019) This course is the second half of the required pro-seminar for M.A. students in anthropology. We focus on the major trends in anthropological thought from the latter half of the 20th century to today. We read theoretical texts alongside ethnographic studies, all while discussing the author’s research methods, findings and arguments, and writing. Students are to be able to place theories in their historical contexts and understand their development by the end of the course. *Summary of Rating of my Teaching: SP2019 = 4.92* * Required course for MA students in anthropology.
- **ANTH 635: Regional Ethnography – The Middle East and North Africa** (SP2015) – The course explored the complexities of everyday life in the Middle East and North Africa through the use of ethnography. I encouraged students to be critical of the popular images of the region that we often see on television and in news accounts, which usually focus on conflict and negative stereotypes, and rather understand how these images have come into being. I also taught students how to distinguish between fact-based evidence and personal opinion. This was a revision of ANTH 308 for the graduate level. *Summary of Rating of my Teaching: SP2015 = 4.94*
- **ANTH 650: Ethnographic Methods and Research Design** (SP2012, SP2013, SP2014) – This is a required course for anthropology MA students and helps them identify and practice research methods as well as develop a research proposal. Through this course, students become familiar with how to conduct ethnographic research by discussing ethics, human subjects’ protection, representation, rapport, the use of technology in data collection and analysis, and visual and textual analyses. Students apply the methods we discuss in hands-on assignments both inside and outside of the classroom. I asked students to use these exercises as ways to collect preliminary data for their MA project. They can use the data to narrow their research topics for their MA. *Summary Rating of my Teaching: SP2012 = 4.33, SP2013 = 5.0, SP2014 = 5.0* * Required course for MA students in Anthropology

- **GLOA 600: Global Competencies** (Online SP2021) – Scholars, politicians, activists, and others have debated the nature and consequences of globalization. Students become acquainted with both theoretical and practitioners’ debates on globalization through examining particular accounts from around the world. I designed this section of GLOA 600 (offer 2 per semester) specifically for the MPH students who are required to take it. Our empirical material related to health, disease, the body, and well-being. One idea this course stresses is that globalization is not unidirectional, but multidirectional and takes on many meanings. *Summary Rating of my Teaching: SP2021 = 5.00*
- **Writing Group:** Eight students enrolled in ANTH 684 (directed reading), ANTH 798 (proposal), and ANTH 799/96 (thesis or project) participated in a writing group in Spring 2015 that I facilitated (not an official course since these are independent studies).

Guest Lectures and Participation in Student Events at Mason

- Guest Lecture – MEIS 500: Critical Issues and Debates in Middle East and Islamic Studies, Anthropology of the Middle East and North Africa (Fall 2014, 2015, 2018, 2021)
- Guest Commentator for Student Presentations in ANTH 363: Humans, Death, and Disease with Dr. Bethany Usher (Fall 2019, will do this again in December 2021)
- Anthropology Club Lecture Series – “From the Beginning of Life to the End of Life: My Career Trajectory as a Medical Anthropologist” (October 2019)
- Workshop Facilitator with Dr. Ahmet Tekelioglu – “Exploring Cultural Competence and the Meaning of the Global: Working with Muslim Students and Communities in the United States,” INTO Mason (April 18, 2019)
- Guest Lecture – Mason Summer Program in Partnership with Ibn Haldun University in Istanbul, Turkey, Anthropology of the Middle East and North Africa (August 13, 2018 and February 22, 2019)
- Admission Spotlight Day – Presentation on CHSS and the importance of a liberal arts education (January 30, 2015)
- Faculty Advisor for the Anthropology Club (2014-15, 2017-18)
- Guest Lecture – ELI Theater Course, Lecture on ethnographic methods (Fall 2014)
- Guest Lecture – SOCI 620: Methods and Logic of Social Inquiry, Lecture on my ethnographic project in Morocco
- Guest Lecture – ANTH 536, Lecture on medical anthropology (Spring 2014)
- Guest Lecture – ANTH 490, Lecture on medical anthropology and my research in Morocco (Spring 2013)
- NAACP Student Event, “Women’s Health in the 2012 Election” (2012)
- Flash Lecture, WGST, “The Relationship between Reproductive Health and Islamic Beliefs in Morocco” (2012)
- Dialogue and Difference, S-CAR, “Debate on Reproductive Rights” (2012)

Honors at George Mason

- Thank-a-Teacher Program Recognition from the Stearns Center (2021)
- Nominated for a 2019 George Mason University Teaching Excellence Award
- 2015 Teacher of Distinction, Center for Teaching and Faculty Excellence
- Nominated for the Career Connection Faculty Award from Career Services (2016)
- Identified as Potential Candidate from George Mason for the (SCHEV) Rising Star Faculty Award (2016)
- Beacon Survey, “Person on campus who has helped them the most in their college success,” (2012 & 2013)
- Recognition for Teaching Effectiveness in a General Education Course from the Provost (2012, 2017, 2018)

Peer Reviewed Publications with Mason Students as Co-Authors

- 2020. “COVID-19 and the Kin Contract: Navigating the Family and the State During the Pandemic.” *Anthropology & Aging* 41(2): 141-146. **Cortney Hughes Rinker**, M. Aspen Bataille, and Loumarie Figueroa Ortiz [Bataille was an undergraduate student and Ortiz was a graduate student in anthropology]
- 2017. Islamic Moral Values and End-of-Life Care: The Intersection of Religious Beliefs and the U.S. Health Care System, *Southern Anthropologist*, 37(1)-2017: 26-58. **Cortney Hughes Rinker**, Oliver Pelland, and Serena Abdallah. [Pelland and Abdallah were former undergraduate research assistants]

- 2016. Religious Apps for Smartphones and Tablets: Reconstructing Authority, Community, and the Nature of Religion, **Cortney Hughes Rinker**, Jesse Roof, Emily Harvey, Elyse Bailey, and Hannah Embler, *Interdisciplinary Journal of Research on Religion*, 12:1-14. [Co-authors were undergraduate research assistants]

Graduate and Undergraduate Student Mentoring at George Mason * ANTH students unless otherwise noted

MA COMMITTEE CHAIR, COMPLETED [17]

Summer 2021: Kirstyn Thurman, Olha Lysa
 Summer 2020: Mary Kay Murphy
 Fall 2019: Katie Clements (MEIS), Darryl Byram
 Spring 2018: Jackie Smelser
 Fall 2017: Cogan Culver
 Fall 2016: Emily Harvey, Elizabeth Ehrreic
 Summer 2016: Tiffany Hrbacek
 Summer 2015: Kelly Flyte, Nevia Pavletic
 Spring 2015: Fabienne Valmond, Serena Abdallah, Jumana Kamal (MEIS)
 Fall 2015: Ashley Pratt
 Fall 2013: Darius Salimi

MA COMMITTEE CHAIR, IN PROGRESS [1 total] - Janis Woodward

MA COMMITTEE MEMBER, COMPLETED [17 total]

Summer 2019: Kira Stalker
 Spring 2019: Michelle Yockey
 Spring 2018: Christopher Oshinski (SOC), Tyler Crump, Mariah Trumball, Kristen Powell, Lisa

Struckmeyer Summer 2017: Rachel Blase

Spring 2016: Erin Shaw
 Spring 2015: Anne Marie Munson, Caitlyn Carr
 Summer 2014: Michelle Roth
 Spring 2014: Eric Josephson, Kallie Sims
 Fall 2013: Chelsey Dyer
 Spring 2013: Abdullah Al-Nassar (SOC), Kim Lufkin (WGST)

MA COMMITTEE MEMBER, IN PROGRESS [2 total]

Alyssa Blake (SOC), Bethany Moales

PHD COMMITTEE MEMBER, COMPLETED [2 total]

Fall 2018: Jennifer Osetek (BIOD) Spring
 2017: Vicki Hoverman (SOC)

PHD COMMITTEE MEMBER, IN PROGRESS [3 total]

Esma Celebioglu (CULT), Abdullah Al-Nasser (SOC), Aleezay Khaliq (SOC)

URSP AND UNDERGRADUATE INDEPENDENT RESEARCH [3 total]

Spring 2018: Misty Bowen
 Fall 2014: Emily Harvey

Funding for Curriculum Development and Student Engagement

- Curriculum Impact Grant, Office of Undergraduate Education, George Mason University. Co-PI. (2020-21) “Enhancing Cross-Cultural Engagement and Collaboration at Mason through Explorations of Global Health Challenges” (\$14,200, Co-PI: Michael Smith, INTO Mason, with Steven Harris-Scott, INTO Mason/Department of History and Art History; Andrew Lee, University Libraries; and Megumi Inoue and Laura Poms, CHHS)
- Curriculum Impact Grant, Office of Undergraduate Education, George Mason University. Co-PI. (2020-21) “STEM in Society Minor” (\$18,500, Co-PIs: Larrie Ferreiro, Kamaljeet Sanghera, VSE; Brian Platt, Department of History and Art History; Laura Poms, CHHS; and Padmanabhan Seshaiyer, COS)
- Summer Tea, Impact Grant, Office of the Provost, George Mason University. Co-PI. (May-August 2020,

\$49,000) “Dying Alone: Social Isolation among Older People in the United States and Japan, PIs: Dr. Megumi Inoue and Dr. Emily Ihara, Department of Social Work; Co-PI: Dr. Naoru Koizumi, Schar School)

- The Virtual Library of Virginia Course Redesign Grant, *Cultural Anthropology for 21st Century Learners*. PI. Grant to support creation of open-access online textbook for Introduction to Cultural Anthropology courses (\$18,120, 2020-22, with Andrew Lee and Andrew Kierig, George Mason University Libraries; Sarah Raskin, VCU; Sheena Nahm McKinlay, Health Leads of California)

Curriculum Development and Teaching Related Service at George Mason

- Director of the Global Affairs Program and Director of the Graduate Program in Global Affairs (2020-)
- Undergraduate Council, CHSS Representative (2018-20)
- Invited to attend the AACU Institute at Emory University to work on aspects of the Mason IMPACT with Dr. Jesse Guessford, Associate Director of Undergraduate Education, and two other faculty members (Summer 2019)
- Faculty and Curricular Affairs Committee, Office of Undergraduate Education (2017-)
- Participated in the Scholarship and Development Grant (SDG) Workshop (Spring 2015)
- Anthropology Curriculum Committee (2015-18) – Served on committee that submitted a successful SDG proposal to Students as Scholars in 2015 to revise anthropology BA, helped facilitate the revision thereafter
- Director of the Undergraduate Program in Anthropology (2014-15)
- Director of Graduate Studies in Anthropology (2013-15)
- Program Assessment Committee for Anthropology (2016-18)
- Search Committee Member, advisor for SOAN, Religious Studies, and Philosophy (2014 and 2017)

Workshops and Events

- Teaching Artifact Presenter, Innovations in Teaching and Learning Conference, Stearns Center (2021)
- “Making a Difference: Careers in Global Affairs” (September 30, 2021): A virtual panel facilitated by Dr. Chris Taylor (Ali Vural Ak Center for Global Islamic Studies) with three practitioners with careers relevant to GLOA
- Coffee with a Professor in Global Affairs (Fall 2021): Arranged for three GLOA faculty members and myself to have coffee or tea with small groups of GLOA students at Starbucks Northern Neck, costs covered by GLOA
- Writing in Anthropology (February 5, 2015): Based on *Writing Down the Bones: Freeing the Writer Within* by Natalie Goldberg, discussed strategies for analyzing and organizing data for writing a master’s thesis
- Going on for Your PhD (November 13, 2014): Talked about what to consider when deciding to go on for a PhD or JD, introduced students to campus resources, and alums and faculty offered their PhD experiences
- Preparing for Your Project or Thesis (Spring 2014): Discussed differences between MA project and MA thesis and explained some of the more administrative aspects of preparing to do MA research
- Preparing for Your Literature Review (Fall 2013): Talked about reading techniques, provided advice on how to construct a literature review that is engaging and yet concise, and read examples from MA theses
- Faculty/Student Lunch (April 25, 2018): Organized catered lunch for anthropology faculty and students so they could have time outside of the classroom to talk about research, academic, and professional interests
- Anthropology Alumni Panel (February 25, 2015): Arranged for five alums from our BA and MA programs at Mason to discuss going on the job market and how they use anthropology in their current careers
- Finding an Internship in Anthropology (November 19, 2014): Paired with Career Services to discuss how to search for an internship in anthropology and some of the organizations that could be places to intern
- Becoming an Applied Anthropologist (November 4, 2014): Along with archaeologist Dr. Justin Lowry discussed job options and some strategies for job hunting, offered strategies for students to make themselves “marketable”
- Going on to Graduate School in Anthropology (September 16, 2014): Discussed how to decide if graduate school is the way to go and offered students advice when looking at programs based on my experience as a graduate student and someone who reviews applications, Mason alums offered their experiences as well