Course Description
Anthropology of Tibet and the Himalayas provides an overview of the various peoples who inhabit one of the most remote and fascinating areas of the earth. This course explores Tibetan societies from anthropological and historical viewpoints, with an emphasis on the politics of ethnicity in a rapidly changing world.

The first part of the course provides contextual background via a survey of Tibetan history, religion, social organization, and gender issues. The second part of the course centers on the ethnography of Nubri, an ethnically Tibetan enclave in the highlands of Nepal. The main reading is Prof. Childs’ book Tibetan Diary which chronicles the lives of various people, from venerated lamas to humble householders. Each stage of the life course (e.g., birth, adolescence, marriage, old age, death) is explored through the eyes of Tibetans themselves, providing students with an “insider’s” perspective on what it is like to live in such a society. The final section of the course focuses on the politics of development and identity in modern Tibet. Readings from various perspectives are used to illustrate how depictions of an ethnic “other” are propelled by political concerns, moral prerogatives, and other subjective motives.

In this course students can expect to gain an appreciation for Tibetan culture as well as an understanding of how history, religion, and politics contribute toward the construction of contemporary Tibetan societies. Students who take this course will enhance their abilities to comprehend the root causes of ethnic conflicts throughout the world.

Readings
Although this is an anthropology course, not all of the assigned readings are written by anthropologists. We will read literature written by religious specialists, historians, travelers, and by Tibetan intellectuals from the past and present. I will provide background information on the scholars and the significance of their work prior to each assigned reading. The assignments provide contextual information for understanding the lectures, so reading in a timely manner is essential. The attached page titled “Schedule of Readings and Exams” let’s you know the date on which each reading should be completed.

The readings include two books (Kapstein 2006; Childs 2004) both of which are available at the campus bookstore. All other readings are available through ARES (Automating Reserves, http://ares.wustl.edu/ares/). The password for the course is tibet.

NOTE: Your professor and TAs do not have the ability to help students who experience problems accessing ARES. If you encounter difficulties, please contact ARES administrators. Furthermore, the ARES system is not free of glitches; it has shut down for short periods of time in the past. If you do not complete the ARES readings according to the course schedule you may find yourself unable to access them just prior to an exam.
Exams and Grading
Grades are based on three exams: the first two will be held during regular class hours, the third during the final exam week. Each exam is comprised of objective questions, short answers, and short essays. Course grades will be based on a modified curve, typically with 25-35% in the A/A- range, and 35-50% in the B+/B/B- range. A grade of C- is required for PASS credit. No extra credit options are available.

Permission to take a make-up exam is at the instructor’s discretion. Absences from exams will only be excused for debilitating health problems, family deaths, or varsity athletic obligations. Requests for special treatment to accommodate flight schedules etc. will not be granted except when associated with valid excuses. Any request to be excused from an exam must be in email (you should ideally discuss it with me in person as well, but it must be in email so I will have a “paper trail”), and must be properly documented. Make-up exams will be essay format.

Exam Schedule

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Exam</th>
<th>% of total grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday, Sept. 28th</td>
<td>Exam 1</td>
<td>32% of grade</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday, Nov. 9th</td>
<td>Exam 2</td>
<td>36% of grade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday, Dec. 21st</td>
<td>Exam 3</td>
<td>32% of grade</td>
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Disabilities  Students with disabilities should contact Disabilities Resources at Cornerstone to obtain letters certifying their special needs or disabilities. The center proctors exams for those with certified disabilities who need extra time.

Schedule of Readings and Exams
The schedule of readings and exams informs students what to read, and when. The schedule is subject to modifications and adjustments during the semester at the professor’s discretion. Readings should be completed before the class for which they are assigned.