



AARHUS UNIVERSITY



Medical Anthropology & Glocal Ethnography




Master's degree
programme in
Anthropology

The Master's degree is a track under the MSc Programme in Anthropology at Aarhus University

Master's degree in Medical Anthropology & Glocal Ethnography

1 SEMESTER

Introduction to Medical Anthropology (10 ECTS)

 This introductory course gives a state-of-the-art introduction to medical anthropology and discusses some of the cutting-edge developments in the critical interface between anthropology, biology and medicine. The course covers topics such as 'technologies and bodies', 'the biomedical production of standards', 'colonial medicine', 'organ donation', 'health and kinship', 'genes and epigenetics', and 'the pharmaceutical nexus'.



Central debates in Anthropology (20 ECTS)

Central Debates within anthropology is an advanced social theory course with a special emphasis on contemporary anthropological theories and debates. The course provides an overview of a series of themes and theoretical debates within anthropology that are central to an understanding of the theoretical history and development of the discipline. It aims to place these debates and themes within the broader context of both social science and contemporary politics by applying them to concrete examples of current relevance. Topics and questions covered are for instance: the rationality debate; phenomenology; modernity as a theoretical concept; and the relationship between subjectivity and power.

2 SEMESTER

Global Health and Actor-Network Theory (10 ECTS)

Within the last couple of decades, ethnography has gained prominence as a key method in actor-network theories (ANT) - exploring diverse phenomena such as laboratories and the scientific production of facts or treatment of diseases, e.g. diabetes and drug and alcohol treatment. Cross-disciplinary intersections and cut-points can enlighten our understanding of empirical phenomena, but they can also be futile for discussing pros and cons of different analytical perspectives: Do we see social or cultural patterns more clearly by taking up inspiration for ANT? Can ANT provide new tools for the analysis of global challenges such as human migration and global epidemics? This course discusses these issues.



Anthropological method and epistemology (10 ECTS)


This discipline consists of individual in-depth work with a methodological and/or epistemological problem in anthropology, and the preparation of a paper discussing the problem.

Field Preparation (10 ECTS)

Preparation of fieldwork is carried out in collaboration with a supervisor. Following a thorough discussion of the academic and practical issues of the chosen project, the student prepares a draft for the project description, including the background of the project, its theoretical perspective, and the use of ethnographic and other required methods. Before final submission, the project description is further discussed in relation to access, feasibility and time constraints.

3 SEMESTER

Fieldwork (30 ECTS)

 The aim of the fieldwork module is for students to achieve an in-depth understanding of a specific medical anthropological problem in a global context and to demonstrate the ability to independently collect and process ethnographic material. A minimum of three months must be spent working in the field. Fieldwork can be conducted as an independent field study or in association with a larger research project or centre at AU, or in collaboration with other relevant organizations such as hospitals or NGOs.



4 SEMESTER

Thesis (30 ECTS)

The purpose of the thesis is to provide students with the opportunity to conduct a detailed analysis and reflection on a medical-anthropological subject. Students are expected to use their own materials from fieldwork as the basis of the thesis.



Medical Anthropology and Glocal Ethnography

Grounded in anthropological theory, this Master's degree programme presents you with global medical problem complexes. It investigates the role of biomedicine at all levels of society – from the individual to the global. With the concept glocal we point our attention towards the unfolding of biomedicine (including biotech sciences) in dynamic global-local inter-linkages: How are medical thinking and practice shaped in different contexts? How do biomedicine and other medical systems contribute to shaping societal development and cultural practice? What new needs are created by biomedical inventions and interventions, and how do perceptions of e.g. sociality, identity and kinship change along with these perceived needs?

You will learn

how to analyze medical knowledge and practice as part of cultural landscapes that influence the very meaning of what it is to be human, and the conditions people live under in a globalized world. Through multidisciplinary discussions of the social and biological life of illness and disease you will be trained to challenge implicit assumptions about universalism and determinism and groomed to engage in collaboration with epidemiologists, geneticists and other scientists in the broad fields of health and medicine.

Themes explored during the course programme

are e.g. the social creation of unstable diagnoses (e.g. ADHD, anorexia, fibromyalgia); local adaptation to large public health disorders (e.g. AIDS, cancer, diabetes); the role of the pharmaceutical industry in the creation of diseases (e.g. restless legs); and current changes in the understanding of inheritance and environment, represented by epigenetics and neurobiology. The course programme allows you to take part in an exploration of the ways in which these globalised forms of knowledge influence humans' perception of disease and experience with illness in local contexts.



STUDY START

1 September

DURATION

2 years/120 ECTS

APPLICATION DEADLINE

- 15 March for applicants with a foreign entrance examination
- 1 April for applicants with a Danish entrance examination

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS & FURTHER INFORMATION

www.kandidat.au.dk/en/anthropology



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