**AP/ANTH 3560 Anthropology of the Senses**

**Location:** 305 Accolade West  
**Days and Time:** Tuesdays and Thursdays 11:30pm - 2:30pm  
**Course Directors:** Zulfikar Hirji  
Natasha Myers  
**Web Sites:**  
http://www.yorku.ca/laps/anth/faculty/zhirji/  
http://www.yorku.ca/nmyers  
**Email:**  
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nmyers@yorku.ca  
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Myers: 2032 Vari Hall  
**Telephones:**  
Hirji: 416 736 2100 (extension 77783)  
Myers: 416 736 2100 (extension 22394)  
**Office Hours:** To be Announced  
**Course Website:** http://sensingsensoria.wordpress.com/

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course inquires into the relation between the perceptible and the imperceptible, as well as the role of the senses in what we know and what we believe. We draw on anthropological studies of vision, touch, smell, taste, hearing, and move beyond this five senses model to integrate other sensory modalities. We examine how the senses shape practice, culture, and politics with a particular focus on how the senses are mobilized to secure faith and fact in both the sciences and in religious experience.

The course is designed so that students gain an appreciation of the multidimensionality of the sensorium and learn to analyze sensory hierarchies. Experiential learning forms a crucial component of the courses' laboratory investigations, and students will be invited to develop their own sensory dexterities by conducting mini-ethnographies on and through the senses. Students will also enhance their own knowledge and experience of the senses through lectures, field-trips and working sessions with practitioners from different disciplines.
EVALUATION COMPONENTS & ASSIGNMENTS (detailed notes on all assignments will be provided)

1. **SENSORY STUDIES GROUP PROJECT (30%)**
   I. CONTRIBUTION TO FINAL PRESENTATION (10%)
   II. FINAL ESSAY (20%)

2. **SENSING SENSORIA BLOG (30%)**
   I. (FIVE) 5 Reflections on the readings and (FIVE) 5 Responses to your colleagues’ reflections. See below for requirements.

3. **SENSING THE CITY PROJECT (15%)**
   I. PARTICIPATION IN WORKSHOP (Mandatory)
   II. GROUP WORK (Submission of Collated Field notes) (5%)
   III. INDIVIDUAL REPORT FROM THE FIELD (10%)

4. **TAKE-HOME EXAM (15%)**

5. **ATTENDANCE & PARTICIPATION (10%)**
   I. ATTENDANCE (Attendance is mandatory. More than three unexcused absences will result in failing the course.)
   II. SEMINAR PARTICIPATION (Active participation in group work is required.)

ASSIGNMENT SUBMISSION
Essays and assignments can be submitted through Turnitin.com
Class Name: Anthropology of the Senses | Class ID: 4311850 | Password distributed in class.

READINGS & ELECTRONIC ACCESS
You will require a Passport York Account and Internet access to participate in this course. All readings will be available on MOODLE or through the University Library eResources. (See https://moodle11.yorku.ca/) Some recommended readings will be placed on reserve at the Scott Library.

SENSING SENSORIA
All students are required to create a blog using WORDPRESS.COM. Please visit https://en.wordpress.com/signup/
Create an account by generating a user name and a blog address. You must email the instructors the link to your blog (e.g. http://abcdefg.wordpress.com) so that we can add it to the course website and make it accessible. We will walk through the procedure in class. Blog setup must be complete by September 13.

The course requires that you post FIVE “Sensing Sensoria” reflections on this blog site over the course of the semester. Each reflection must be a minimum of 400 words. Each is a reflection on the readings AND an exploration of a particular dimension of the sensorium. In addition you must post FIVE Responses to your colleagues’ Reflections. These must be minimum 150 words and offer a thoughtful response to further discussion. Examples will be provided in class. Reflections must be posted by 7p.m. the evening before class.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>LECTURES &amp; EVENTS</th>
<th>KEY THEMES/QUESTIONS/LEARNING OBJECTIVES</th>
<th>REQUIRED READINGS &amp; MATERIALS</th>
<th>SENSORY SALON</th>
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| Thurs. Sept. 8 | Overview of the Course | • Understand the schedule and the differences between lectures and labs  
• Understand how to access to course materials and Moodle site  
• Begin to gain an insight into the aims of the course and its requirements | Course Syllabus and Calendar  
Moodle Site  
Course Website  
Sensing Sensoria Blogs |               |
| Tues. Sept 13 | Lecture  
Beyond the 5 Senses I | • What is anthropology?  
• Identify (in general terms) key concepts used in social anthropology  
• Identify (in general terms) some of the topics that anthropologists examine.  
• Begin to outline the manner in which the senses are expressed in religion, science and in Western and non-Western contexts  
| Thurs. Sept 15 | Lecture  
Beyond the 5 Senses II | • Gain an appreciation for multiple ways of sensing the world.  
“Reworking the space between the perceptible and the imperceptible” | Dorion Sagan, writer and sleight of hand |
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<tr>
<th>Tues. Sept 20</th>
<th>Lecture</th>
<th>Senses in Science</th>
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|              |         | • What is the anthropology of science?  
|              |         | • How are the senses involved in making facts?  
|              |         | • Introduce the concepts of epistemology and ontology  
|              |         | • What is the relationship between feeling and knowing?  
|              |         | • What is embodied knowledge?  
|              |         | • How do we train our senses to register difference?  
|              |         | “Sensational Diagnosis: case notes on embodying and employing touch in the alternative health care practice of Craniosacral Therapy”  
|              |         | Melissa Atkinson-Graham  
|              |         | PhD Student in Social Anthropology  
| Thurs. Sept 22 | Workshop | Slicing, Dicing and Peeling: Kitchen Arts at the Laboratory Bench  
|              |         | Note: Set up the groups for term projects  
|              |         | • Hands on exploration of sound, touch, sight, smell and taste in science  
|              |         | • Gaining an appreciation for the senses in both scientific practice and ethnographic observation  

**AP/ANTH 3560 ANTHROPOLOGY OF THE SENSES**
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<th>Date</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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| Tues. Sept 27 | Lecture               | Technologies of Sensation Part I: Sensing Angels                      | • Debate the extent to which technological change has been accompanied by a change in the use of the senses. Has this led to a fragmentation of the sensorium?  
• Begin to explore the possibilities offered by ethnographies which are alert to the sensorium |
| Thurs. Sept 29 | Field Trip and Curatorial Lecture | Senses in Material Culture at the Textile Museum of Canada | • Examine the role of public institutions in shaping our sensory experiences  
| Tues. Oct 4    | Lecture               | Technologies of Sensation Part II                                   | • Gain an appreciation for the reconfiguration of the sensorium through technology.  
• Exploration of technologies as prosthetic extensions of bodies.  
• Recognize the kinesthetic and haptic dimensions of digital media in the arts and sciences.  
• Gain an appreciation for the  
“Engineering the vibe: Audio engineers and technologies of attunement”  
Jessica Caporusso, PhD Student in Social Anthropology |
### Workshop and Guest Presentation
**Date:** Thurs. Oct 6  
**Title:** Workshop and Guest Presentation  
**Speaker:** Acoustic Ecologies  
**Description:** What roles do empathy, embodiment, intuition and imagination have to play in exploring the limits of knowledge? Author **Jeff Warren** will take the class on a journey to dive deep into a whale’s sensory world.  

### Lecture
**Date:** Tues. Oct. 18  
**Title:** Alternate Embodiments, (Dis)abilities, and Dexterity  
**Description:**  
- Gaining an appreciation for other modes of embodiment through the experiences of those who sense the world differently.  
- Stefan H. and M. Friedner (manuscript) “Sound Studies Meets Deaf Studies.”  

### Lecture and Guest Presentation
**Date:** Thurs. Oct 21  
**Title:** Lecture and Guest Presentation  
**Speaker:** Sensing the Body/Bodily Sensation  
**Description:**  
- Reimagining bodies through sensory practice  
- Building sensory worlds through architectural practice  
- Irene Healy is a visual artist and medical practitioner who creates various types of realistic custom-made facial and body prostheses. This has led her to research  

**Reference:**  
- “Into the Whale”  
- Jeff Warren, author and explorer of consciousness.  
- “Ethnography in the dark: Dining at O.Noir”  
- Julia Gruson-Wood, PhD Student in Science & Technology Studies  
- Please visit the O.Noir website before class http://www.onoir.com

**Reference:**  
- “Re-touching the body”  
- Irene Healey, Founding Director, New Attitude Custom Made Breast Prostheses  
materials and develop methodologies that are unique to her practice. She is currently preparing a body of sculptural work for exhibition that incorporates her interests in the body with insights gained through her clinical practice. 

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<tr>
<th>Tues. Oct 25</th>
<th>Lecture</th>
<th>The Sensory Self/Other</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Spirituality and religious practice in modernity</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Architectures of houses of worship</td>
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<td>• An exploration of the interiority of the senses and experience through life histories</td>
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‘Architectures and atmospherics: Sensual spaces and the politics of ritual configurations’

Laurie Baker, PhD Student in Social Anthropology

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<th>Thurs. Oct 28</th>
<th>Workshop</th>
<th>Re-awakening the Senses</th>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Tim Whiten</strong> is an artist whose practice has long been rooted in the exploration of the transcendental—spiritually, physically &amp; mentally, often incorporating a variety of non-traditional materials from his daily experience, including glass, gum, hair, mud, blood, coffee grinds, juice containers, mirror, etc., in his quest to ‘conceal’ and/or ‘reveal’ our place in the physical world.</td>
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“Sensing Inner Worlds”

Tim Whiten, Artist, Shiatsu Practitioner Professor Emeritus, York University

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<tr>
<th>Tues. Nov 1</th>
<th>SENSING THE CITY PROJECT (PHASE 1: ETHNOGRAPHIC METHODS WORKSHOP)</th>
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<td>This experiential learning activity involves groups meeting and developing methods and language to engage with different dimensions of the sensorium.</td>
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Readings to be announced.
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| Thurs. Nov 3 | **SENSING THE CITY PROJECT** (PHASE 2: FIELDWORK) | • Groups conduct fieldwork in their chosen fieldsites.  
• Groups collaborate to discuss findings and to write fieldnotes. |
| Tues. Nov 8  | **SENSING THE CITY PROJECT** (PHASE 3: WRITING-UP) | • Students write-up individual field reports based on their collective fieldnotes. |
| Thurs Nov 10 | **Lecture** | The Politics of Sensation and the Sensorium I: The case of sight  
| Tues Nov 15  | **Lecture** | The Politics of Sensation and the  
• Examination of the reconfiguration of the senses around capital production and commodification, including  
“Robot Noses and Frog's Eggs: Life in the anthropocene”|
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| Thurs. Nov. 18 | Sensorium II: Aesthetics, Anesthesia, Advertising | through advertising.  
- Further analysis of the politics of the senses through regimes that control sensation, desire, aesthetics, and memory.  
- Sensation and anesthesia  
Kelly Ladd, PhD Student in Science and Technology Studies |
| Thurs. Nov. 18 | Sensory Studies Project – Presentation Prep | Students will convene in groups and develop their presentations |
| Tues. Nov. 22       | Review Session                                                   | Final submission of papers: Wednesday Nov. 23 on Turnitin |
| Thurs. Nov. 24       | Presentations of Groups 1-4                                   | | |
| Tues. Nov. 29       | Presentations of Groups 5-7                                    | | |
| Thurs. Dec. 1       | Presentations of Groups 8-10                                    | | |
| Tues. Dec. 6      | Wrap Up And discussion of take home exam.                       | | |
POLICY ON MANDATORY ATTENDANCE AND SUBMISSION OF ASSIGNMENTS
All assignments should be submitted through Turnitin. Late assignments will be penalized. Five (5) percentage points of their total value for the course will be deducted for every day an assignment is late (including weekends), up to a period of four days. After four days, the assignment will not be accepted and you will receive a grade of zero (0).

If you have a valid medical or other reason for turning in an assignment late, please contact the course directors immediately.

Note that the Course Schedule lists the due dates for assignments and submission of the take-home exam. Please keep these dates in mind when planning your term study schedule and other activities.

POLICY ON EXTENSIONS
Extensions will be granted only when you have a valid medical or personal reason or in the case of an emergency. You should discuss your request for extension with the course directors well in advance. You will be asked to provide a doctor’s note from the doctor (MD) who is treating you (i.e., not from a family member or friend). Please note that all notes are verified.

POLICY ON PLAGIARISM AND ACADEMIC HONESTY AND INTEGRITY:
All student work must reflect the principles of academic integrity. Students are expected to adhere to York’s standards of academic integrity. Acts of plagiarism will be penalized. Please review the York Academic Honesty policy at:
http://www.yorku.ca/secretariat/legislation/senate/acadhone.htm

We encourage you to review the interactive on-line Tutorial for students on ‘academic integrity’ at:
http://www.yorku.ca/academicintegrity/tutorial.htm

Please contact the course directors if you have any questions about plagiarism.