

## Term Information

Effective Term Autumn 2015  
*Previous Value* *Spring 2015*

## Course Change Information

### What change is being proposed? (If more than one, what changes are being proposed?)

We are requesting GE status in the Culture and Ideas category.

### What is the rationale for the proposed change(s)?

This course meets the rationale and learning outcomes for the GE category or categories we are requesting, as outlined in the Curriculum and Assessment handbook.

### What are the programmatic implications of the proposed change(s)?

(e.g. program requirements to be added or removed, changes to be made in available resources, effect on other programs that use the course)?

N/A

Is approval of the request contingent upon the approval of other course or curricular program request? No

Is this a request to withdraw the course? No

## General Information

Course Bulletin Listing/Subject Area	Anthropology
Fiscal Unit/Academic Org	Anthropology - D0711
College/Academic Group	Arts and Sciences
Level/Career	Undergraduate
Course Number/Catalog	3334
Course Title	Zombies: The Anthropology of the Undead
Transcript Abbreviation	Anth of Undead
Course Description	Students will understand how culture and social organization help us define the living, the dead and the undead in the contemporary and archaeological record, and how we create social categories that organize our world and our place.
Semester Credit Hours/Units	Fixed: 3

## Offering Information

Length Of Course	14 Week
Flexibly Scheduled Course	Never
Does any section of this course have a distance education component?	No
Grading Basis	Letter Grade
Repeatable	No
Course Components	Lecture
Grade Roster Component	Lecture
Credit Available by Exam	No
Admission Condition Course	No
Off Campus	Never
Campus of Offering	Columbus, Mansfield

## Prerequisites and Exclusions

Prerequisites/Corequisites  
Exclusions

## Cross-Listings

Cross-Listings

## Subject/CIP Code

Subject/CIP Code	45.0201
Subsidy Level	Baccalaureate Course
Intended Rank	Sophomore, Junior, Senior

## Requirement/Elective Designation

General Education course:  
Culture and Ideas  
The course is an elective (for this or other units) or is a service course for other units

### [Previous Value](#)

*The course is an elective (for this or other units) or is a service course for other units*

## Course Details

### Course goals or learning objectives/outcomes

- Understand how and why anthropologists study the living, the dead and the undead.
- Be able to talk about research in anthropology and critically evaluate the role the undead play in world cultures and social organization

### Content Topic List

- Zombies
- Cannibalism
- Voodoo
- Death
- Culture
- Society

## Attachments

- Dr Larsen letter 10 07 14.doc: Chair's Letter  
*(Cover Letter. Owner: Freeman, Elizabeth A.)*
- 3334 GE Rationale.doc: 3334 GE Rational  
*(GEC Model Curriculum Compliance Stmt. Owner: Freeman, Elizabeth A.)*
- 3334 Syllabus.docx: 3334 Syllabus  
*(Syllabus. Owner: Freeman, Elizabeth A.)*
- 3334 GE ASSESSMENT.docx: GE Assessment Plan  
*(GEC Course Assessment Plan. Owner: Freeman, Elizabeth A.)*

**Comments**

**Workflow Information**

Status	User(s)	Date/Time	Step
Submitted	Freeman,Elizabeth A.	10/22/2014 03:26 PM	Submitted for Approval
Approved	McGraw,William Scott	10/23/2014 08:50 AM	Unit Approval
Approved	Haddad,Deborah Moore	10/23/2014 11:58 AM	College Approval
Pending Approval	Nolen,Dawn Vankeerbergen,Bernadette Chantal Hanlin,Deborah Kay Jenkins,Mary Ellen Bigler Hogle,Danielle Nicole	10/23/2014 11:58 AM	ASCCAO Approval



**Department of Anthropology**

4034 Smith Laboratory  
174 West 18th Avenue  
Columbus, OH 43210-1106

Phone (614) 292-4149  
Fax (614) 292-4155  
<http://anthropology.ohio-state.edu>

7 October 2014

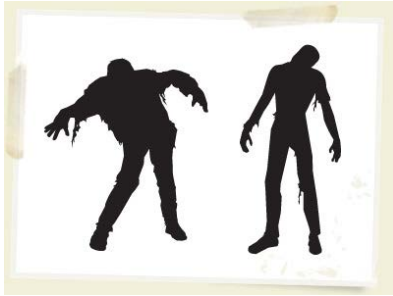
Dear Curriculum Panel Members,

I am pleased to submit this curricular bundle for your review. This bundle includes a number of new courses, courses for General Education consideration, and several course changes. These submissions reflect the evolving profile of our teaching mission and what we have to offer our students and the institution generally. The Department of Anthropology has taken on one of its biggest curriculum revisions, involving both undergraduate majors (Anthropological Sciences, Anthropology) and graduate program, in its recent history. I am excited to endorse all of these submissions, and look forward to implementing the revisions to the Anthropology curriculum.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Clark S. Larsen".

Clark Spencer Larsen  
Distinguished Professor of Social and Behavioral Sciences and Chair



ANTH3334 ZOMBIES: the anthropology of the undead

Jeffrey H. Cohen  
Cohen.319@osu.edu  
TBA

Office hours: TBA

## **GE LEARNING OUTCOMES WILL BE ADDED IF APPROVED**

Life is divided between the living and the dead, but for many cultures there are individuals who exist between the living and dead--the undead. In North America we call these individuals "zombies". In this class, we explore how different groups in different times think about, deal with and classify the undead. The course begins with a discussion of anthropology, zombies and their current popularity. Looking at past societies, we note how the zombie has developed. We also explore the parallels and connections that link cannibalism, disease and witchcraft to the undead as well as social rules and rituals. Finally, we explore the place of zombies in contemporary life.

### **Goals:**

After completing this class students will understand how and why anthropologists study the living, the dead and the undead; how culture and social organization help us to define the living, the dead and the undead and how we create social categories that organize our world and our place They will be able to talk about research in anthropology and critically evaluate the role the undead play in world cultures and social organization.

### **Requirements:**

The course includes three exams. Students will complete three home written exercises and short commentaries on films shown during the semester.

**Exams:** There are three multiple choice exams (25 points each)

Exam #1-TBA

Exam #2-TBA

Exam #3-TBA

**Assignments:** The three assignments ask students to respond to class materials (5 points each)

#1: The role and meaning of Zombies

#2 Zombies and the social and cultural systems of the past

#3 Zombies in contemporary society

**Responses:** We will watch excerpts from several films during class time and students will complete response pieces (2 points each). You have a choice to skip one response.

#1 *White Zombies*

- #2 *Night of the living Dead*
- #3 *I am Legend*
- #4 *Dracula*
- #5 *28 days Later*
- #6 *Shaun of the Dead*

**READINGS:** There are no textbooks for class. Reading materials are available on Carmen and listed on the syllabus.

**Academic honesty** is fundamental to the activities and principles of a university. All members of the academic community must be confident that each person's work has been responsibly and honorably acquired, developed, and presented. Any effort to gain an advantage not given to all students is dishonest whether or not the effort is successful. The academic community regards academic dishonesty as an extremely serious matter, with serious consequences that range from probation to expulsion. When in doubt about plagiarism, paraphrasing, quoting, or collaboration, consult with the course instructor.

If you need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability, you should contact me to privately discuss your specific needs. At the appointment we can discuss the course format, anticipate your needs and explore options for your accommodation. You should also contact the Office for Disability Services at 614-292-3307 in room 150 Pomerene Hall to coordinate reasonable accommodations.

**Tentative Schedule:**

Week	Topic	Readings and films	Assignments
1	Anthropology the study of living, the dead and the undead	Dernbach, <i>Spirits of the Hereafter</i>	
2	Zombie past and Haiti	Littlewood, <i>Functionalists and Zombis</i> Film: <i>White Zombies</i>	Response #1
3	What is a Zombie?	Ackermann and Gauthier, <i>The ways and nature of the Zombi</i> Film: <i>Night of the living dead</i>	Response # 2
4	Biology of the undead	Zombie biology, parts 1 & 2	Exam 1
5	Zombies and sociology	Sara Cohen, <i>Plans are Pointless</i>	Assignment #1
6	Zombies and infectious diseases	Philip Munz, <i>When Zombies attack</i> Film: <i>I am Legend</i>	Response #3
7	Archaeology of death		Assignment #2
8	Vampires	Keyworth, <i>Was the vampire of the 18<sup>th</sup> century a unique type of undead</i> Film: <i>Dracula</i>	Response #4
9	Zombies, archaeology and the past		Exam 2
10	Spring Break		
11	Cannibalism and feast of the flesh (Anthropofage and Kuru)		
12	Cannibalism	Lindenbaum- <i>Understanding Kuru</i> Film: <i>28 Days Later</i>	Response # 5

13	Zombies, Witchcraft and voodoo in ritual life and popular culture	Comaroff & Comaroff, Alien-nation	
14	Popular culture	Boelderl & Mayr, The Undead and the Living Dead Film: <i>Shaun of the dead</i>	Response #6
15	Where to go with Zombies?		Assignment #3
16			Exam 3

### Readings on Carmen:

1. Katherine B. Dernbach, 2005, Spirits of the Hereafter: Death, Funerary Possession, and the Afterlife in Chuuk, Micronesia, *Ethnology*, vol. 44, no. 2, p. 99-123
2. H. Ackermann and J. Gauthier, 1991. The Ways and Nature of the Zombi. *The Journal of American Folklore*, 104 (4), 466-494.
3. Roland Littlewood, 2009. Functionalists and Zombis: Sorcery as Spandrel and Social Rescue. *Anthropology and Medicine*, 16(3):241-252
4. Culturing Science – biology as relevant to us earthly beings Zombie biology, parts 1 & 2  
<http://culturingscience.wordpress.com/2011/05/16/zombie-biology-pt-1-richard-mathesons-bacterial-symbiosis/>  
<http://culturingscience.wordpress.com/2011/05/17/zombie-biology-pt-2-zombie-neuroscience/>
5. Sara Sutler-Cohen, 2011. Plans are Pointless; Staying Alive is as Good as it Gets: Zombie Sociology and the Politics of Survival. In, *Zombies are us: Essays on the Humanity of the Walking Dead*. Edited by CM Moreman and CJ Rushton. Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland & Company, Inc., Publishers.
6. Munz, Philip et. al., 2009. When Zombies Attack! Mathematical Modelling of an Outbreak of Zombie Infection. *Infectious Disease Modelling Research Progress*. JM Tchuente and C Chiyaka, eds. Nova Science Publishers: pp 133-150.
7. Lindenbaum, Shirley, 2008. Understanding Kuru: the Contribution of Anthropology and Medicine. *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society B*, 363: 3715-3720.  
<http://www.archaeology.org/online/features/hierakonpolis/zombies.html>
8. Keyworth, G. David, 2006. Was the Vampire of the Eighteenth Century a Unique Type of Undead-corpse. *Folklore*, 117:241-260
9. J. Comaroff and J. Comaroff, 2002, Alien-nation: zombies, immigrants, and millennial capitalism. *The South Atlantic quarterly*, 101(4): 779-805
10. A.R. Boelderl and D.F. Mayr ,1995 The Undead and the Living Dead: Images of Vampires and Zombies in Contemporary Culture *The Journal of psychohistory*. 23, no. 1, 51-65

**Rationale for ZOMBIES: the anthropology of the undead (ANTHROP 3334) as a Culture and Ideas GE course.**

**Why does this course qualify for GE status in Cultures and Ideas?**

ANTH3334 is a comprehensive introduction to the study of Zombies. The course is based in anthropology and explores how the idea of the zombie challenges human beliefs, perceptions of reality as well as the norms that guide social and cultural behavior. The class uses examples of Zombies in contemporary culture as well as creatures and monsters from history (including the vampire) to explore the cultural role and meaning of the undead. Ethnographic examples of cannibalism and mortuary practices around the world further illustrate the ways in which human social groups organize cultural norms, beliefs and behaviors. The structure of the course challenges students to develop critical tools and use their skills to explore the cultural value of the zombie through assignments and exams. Students from across the university likely have an idea of what a zombie is. This class uses that background as a foundation to examine how the idea of the zombie challenges human beliefs, perceptions of reality and the norms that guide behavior.

The class is organized around examples of Zombies throughout history and around the world, creatures similar to zombies and the cannibalistic/mortuary practices of various contemporary culture groups.

Specific topics include:

- The anthropology, the study of the dead and the undead.
- Zombies in Haiti
- What is a zombie?
- Infectious diseases and Zombie biology
- Vampires and other monsters
- Cannibalism and mortuary rituals
- Popular culture
- Zombies, voodoo and witchcraft

The topics covered allow students to develop a critical framework to understand the cultural importance of zombies. Through the class students will meet the goals of the Cultures and Ideas GE course as they systematically analyze and interpret the role and meaning of the zombie in culture, human through and express; and study how the Zombie challenges human beliefs, perceptions of reality and the norms that guide behavior.

**Learning outcomes:**

ANTH3334 introduces students to the zombie and the rituals that surround death and mortuary practices. Each week begins with a discussion an aspect of the Zombie and then uses resources from anthropology and allied fields to explore specific issues, opportunities and challenges to cultural practices.

**Meeting Cultures and Ideas GE Learning Outcomes:**

Lectures in weeks 3-9 that are focused on the historical significance and cultural value of the zombie in societies past and present will help students analyze and interpret the role of the zombie in human thought, culture, and expression through time and cross-culturally (outcome 1).

The discussion of topics including cannibalism; zombies and popular culture, and witchcraft (weeks 11-15) students will gain evaluative skills they can apply as they learn how culture and ideas influence the



character of human beliefs, the perception of reality, and the norms which guide human behavior (outcome 2).

Readings and lectures facilitate learning and for students to better understand the cultural role and meaning of zombies. Discussions are an opportunity for students to develop their skills as independent, critical thinkers. Debates around the cultural meaning of the zombie as well as the role of the zombie in the expression of human thought are a setting where students begin to build their knowledge base and understanding.

## ANTH 3334 GE ASSESSMENT:

This course will use 3 examinations. Questions on the three exams include those that are specifically focused on GE related themes. Exam #1 includes the following multiple choice question that address the historical and cultural roots of the zombie (outcome 1)

Haitian zombies are associated with traditional belief systems that are rooted in

- a. East African, chiefly Congolese, religious systems.
- b. East African political hierarchies.
- c. Catholic beliefs.
- d. Caribbean native belief systems.

Exam #2 includes a question that compares cannibalism and mortuary rituals in different cultures.

What happens when we describe the Wari as Zombies because of mortuary cannibalism?

- a. If the Wari are Zombies we represent their practices as supernatural.
- b. We do not think of the Wari as human.
- c. We consider the Wari dangerous and unpredictable.
- d. All of the above.

Exam #3 a question asks students to consider the place of the zombie in popular culture.

1. According to lecture, which of these themes is NOT associated with zombies in popular culture?
  - a. They confront our mortality.
  - b. They celebrate our dedication to consumerism.
  - c. They represent our fear of everyday work life.
  - d. They celebrate the strength of the earth.

The instructor uses the responses of students to these questions as well as the assignments to evaluate whether students have gained mastery and meet the learning outcomes for the GE in cultures and ideas. The instructor will revisit the themes and use in-class discussion to further develop student skills. The instructor can also meet with students during office hours and use the time to review, train students in a one-on-one setting and build toward mastery.

Success (mastery) is indicated by the ability of the student to effectively define and describe the central themes of the class including the cultural meaning of the zombie as well as the role of the zombie in the expression of human thought (outcomes 1 and 2).

The instructor assesses students in ANTHROP 3334 through written assignments as well as questions on the course's three exams. Three assignments ask students to respond to cultural themes defined in readings. In these assignments, students analyze and interpret the zombie in human thought, culture and expression (outcome #1).

**Assignment 1:** Denbach argues that the recently deceased fill an important role for the living and the dead for the Chuuk of Micronesia. What is the important cultural role the deceased fill for the living?

**Assignment 2:** Keyworth argues that vampires in the 18<sup>th</sup> were culturally much like Zombies in the contemporary world. Why can Keyworth make this statement about cultural similarities? Do you agree (explain)?

**Assignment 3:** Thinking about Boelderl and Mayr's essay, what is one reason that contemporary society is obsessed with the undead? How does this obsession contrast with assumptions of the undead in the past and as discussed in lecture?

There are six film responses that ask students to apply their knowledge of zombies to popular cinema and evaluate how ideas influence human beliefs, perceptions of reality and the norms that guide behavior (outcome 2).

Response 1: In "White Zombies" how are the zombies created and how are they like slaves?

Response 2: How does the African American protagonist in "Night of the Living Dead" comment on racial beliefs in the United States?

Response 3: In "I am Legend" a medical intervention that should help our species becomes an infection that drives an epidemic and leads to the potential destruction of humanity. What does this say about the dangers of playing with nature?

Response 4: Selecting one of the three Dracula/Vampire films listed, how is vampire like a Zombie? How does the fact that vampires have culture contrast with zombies?

Response 5: In "28 Days Later" is there any hope for human society? And what does the "rage" virus suggest about our collective future as humans?

Response 6: In "Shaun of the Dead" Shaun doesn't notice the zombies around him throughout the first part of the film, why?

The assignments and responses are uploaded to CARMEN and allow the instructor to evaluate learning and comprehension throughout the semester.