

Faculty of Economic, Social and Political Sciences



HUMA3830 Anthropology of humanitarian aid

[30h] 5 credits

This course is taught in the 1st semester

Teacher(s): Anne-Marie Vuillemenot
Language: French
Level: Third cycle

Aims

This course aims to demonstrate the importance of anthropology in emergency humanitarian situations. There is an emphasis on the complexity of the emergency situations and on the importance of relocating the issue in a setting of "global social fact". Elements that are all too often neglected in studies of a humanitarian crisis, or when drawing up assistance plans, include the destructuring effects of humanitarian catastrophes on the social fabric, situations of forced cultural contacts, and the motor effect of social change that an emergency situation can represent.

Main themes

The course is divided into three parts:

- an anthropological approach to crises, conflicts and brutal change: a new conceptualisation of brutal change and catastrophes is suggested in the theoretical perspective of the anthropology of the present period; the cultural conception of the notion of emergency and specific anthropological features of humanitarian interventions are also addressed;
- responses to crises and strategies: the various strategies of prevention, adaptation and confrontation are tackled in this section, and exile is the issue that serves as a framework for reasoning. A significant amount of space will be devoted to changes in the perception of identity and of space-time, and to various social relations and power games, while the issue of "gender", and particularly the different responses and adaptive strategies of men and women, will also be addressed;
- the logic of intervention: this section will stress the socio-cultural setting of interventions, and time will also be given over to an introduction to intercultural communication, ethnic questions, and the cultural limitations of those given humanitarian assistance.

Content and teaching methods

Content See "Course specifications".

Methodology

The work will be in two parts. Firstly, basic notions will be addressed through case studies (the issue of refugees (Afghanistan and Cambodia) and a conflict situation (Israel-Palestine)), and students will be expected to participate actively. Secondly, students will be called upon to use these concepts, and to carry out personal reflection in work based, if possible, on personal experience (preferably experience in the field of humanitarian assistance or a stay abroad).

Other information (prerequisite, evaluation (assessment methods), course materials recommended readings, ...)

Written work and defence of work.

Portfolio of recommended reading.

Programmes in which this activity is taught

ANTR3DS Diplôme d'études spécialisées en anthropologie
HUMA3DS Diplôme d'études spécialisées en actions humanitaires internationales

Other credits in programs

ANTR3DS	Diplôme d'études spécialisées en anthropologie	(5 credits)	
HUMA3DS	Diplôme d'études spécialisées en actions humanitaires internationales	(4 credits)	Mandatory