GHENT UNIVERSITY

Course Specifications

Valid as from the academic year 2026-2027

Anthropology of Love and Intimate Connections (A005644)

Course size *(nominal values; actual values may depend on programme)*

Credits 5.0 **Study time 150 h**

Course offerings in academic year 2027-2028

A (semester 2)	English	Gent

Lecturers in academic year 2027-2028

Kreil, Aymon	LW21	lecturer-in-charge
Dhondt, Carmen	LW21	staff member

Offered in the following programmes in 2027-2028	**crdts**	**offering**
Master of Arts in Oriental Languages and Cultures(main subject China)	5	A
Master of Arts in Oriental Languages and Cultures(main subject India)	5	A
Master of Arts in Oriental Languages and Cultures(main subject Japan)	5	A
Master of Arts in Oriental Languages and Cultures(main subject Middle East Studies)	5	A
Master of Arts in Gender and Diversity	5	A

Teaching languages

English

Keywords

Gender – Love – Affects – Sexuality –- Intimacy – Kinship – Cultural Diversity – Anthropology

Position of the course

Love and intimate connections more generally have long remained in the shadow of kinship studies in social anthropology. The renewed focus on subjective processes since the mid-1980s has brought these issues back to the fore. This raises the question of relevant categories for the observation and analysis of love, desire, and intimacy. For example, can romantic love be considered a universal category, or is it a European construct? How do discourses on love and other intimate connections circulate? This specialised course aims at broadening the understanding of these topics through perspectives from different cultural and social spaces while underlining the relation between transnational and local processes. In this way, an approach will be developed that allows us to understand the diversity of love practices and other intimate connections across societies.

Contents

This specialised course gives an oversight of anthropological research on love, with side steps in the neighbouring disciplines of history, geography and sociology. It offers (1) a sketch of the history of the European and North American gaze on love habits outside the West. It will show how love has slowly emerged as a topic of interest in anthropology at the crossroad of gender studies, transnational studies and a renewed interest into individual emotions. Thereby, we will (2) explore core theories, concepts, and methodologies employed to study love and other intimate connections and (3) interrogate the meaning of common categories used to approach love such as for instance intimacy, desire and kinship.

Initial competences

Prior knowledge and skills, acquired at undergraduate level, of the following are required to start this course: qualitative research in social human sciences (gender studies, anthropology, history, etc.)

Final competences

1 Understand and assess key concepts, research methodologies and theories in anthropology and social and human sciences in relation to love and intimate connections.
2 To be able to understand and critically explore arguments and positions in theoretical and societal debates on love and intimate connections.
3 Develop and apply critical thinking skills in the analysis of gender, love, kinship and desire from an historical, cross-cultural and intersectional perspective.
4 Apply a social-cultural analysis to contemporary challenges and debates on gender, love, kinship and desire.

Conditions for credit contract

Access to this course unit via a credit contract is unrestricted: the student takes into consideration the conditions mentioned in 'Starting Competences'

Conditions for exam contract

This course unit cannot be taken via an exam contract

Teaching methods

Lecture, Independent work

Extra information on the teaching methods

The lessons are recorded and made available on Ufora for a week after each session.

Study material

Type: Syllabus

Name: Syllabus AnthroLove
Indicative price: Free or paid by faculty
Optional: no

References

Course content-related study coaching

Assessment moments

end-of-term and continuous assessment

Examination methods in case of periodic assessment during the first examination period

Written assessment with open-ended questions

Examination methods in case of periodic assessment during the second examination period

Written assessment with open-ended questions

Examination methods in case of permanent assessment

Assignment

Possibilities of retake in case of permanent assessment

examination during the second examination period is possible in modified form

Calculation of the examination mark

Written exam: 50%
Paper: 50%
Students who withdraw from one or more components of the evaluation may not be allowed to pass the course. If the final score would exceed 7/20 without having effectively participated in all components, the final score will be reduced to the highest non-deliberative grade (7/20).
If the student scores less than 10/20 for at least one of the components, he/she can no longer pass the entire course unit. If the total score is a grade of ten or more out of twenty, it will be reduced to the highest failing grade (9/20). Partial results of 10/20 or more may be carried over to the second examination period.