The domains of family life, kinship, and intimacy represent central sites for the construction and contestation of social and political belonging. This course introduces students to classic and contemporary theories of society, kinship, and citizenship by way of understanding how economic production, sovereignty, and everyday life emerge, in part, through the regulation of relatedness. Anthropologists of the late nineteenth century and of the first half of the twentieth century turned kinship into a key domain for understanding social cohesion and political organization. In the past three decades—following feminist, Marxist, and queer critiques—anthropologists explored how discourses about kinship and the family anchored the ideologies and practices of modernity, colonialism, nationalism, and globalization. In this course, we ask: What can various forms of kinship teach us about the politics of social reproduction and the making of citizenship—its modes of belonging and exclusion—in the contemporary world? Why do national and transnational institutions care about how we relate to each other, how we build families, and whether we reproduce? Why do we desire that our intimate lives be recognized by the state and by the agents of the global market? And, can our ways of crafting relatedness in everyday life transform how we come to belong to larger political institutions?

Course Requirements

Grades will reflect the student’s level of engagement with the readings, lectures, and other assignments of the course as well as the extent to which the student acquired critical knowledge and analytical skills throughout the semester.

- **Attendance and participation.** Attendance is mandatory. Please note that more than two absences will result in the loss of 5% from the final grade, more than four absences in the loss of 10%, etc. You are expected to participate in class discussions by formulating questions, responses, and critiques relevant to the assigned readings. To make your time in class a productive and pleasant experience for everyone, please do not use phones, laptops, or tablets.

- **Review Questions (20%).** To help you participate actively in class discussions, I would like you to write as you read. For each class, please type a 100 to 150-word review question. Questions should be well-formulated, clear, and should add a critical component to the class discussion. A good review question should very briefly sum up a selected argument of the reading(s). Then, it should unpack the argument critically, either by treating it on its own terms or by comparing it to issues emerging in discussions, lectures, and other readings covered for this
class. Print your question and bring it to class. Every class, I will call on two students to read their questions, by way of opening discussion. I will collect questions at the end of class.

- **Mid-term (30%) and Final (30%) Take-Home Exams.** For each exam, you are required to respond to one out of a choice of two essay questions. The essay must draw on the readings, discussions, lectures, and films of the course exclusively. It must have a clear thesis statement, a well-constructed line of argumentation, and sufficient evidence to support the author’s position. Essays must be 5 pages long. The mid-term take-home exam is due October 29 and the final take-home exam is due December 10. (In exceptional circumstances, when students have well-formulated ideas and questions that they wish to research throughout the semester they may opt to write an extensive research paper instead of the exams. Research papers must be based on original, in-depth ethnographic or library research that pertains directly to the subject of kinship and citizenship. Papers must be 15 pages long. Students interested in writing a research paper must submit a 150-word proposal with a potential bibliography by September 24. Research papers are due December 10.)

- **Response Paper (20%).** From the first week of classes, you should begin reading Joseph Cassara’s novel, *The House of Impossible Beauties*, in addition to the assigned weekly readings. You are expected to finish reading the novel by week 8. In no more than 2-3 double-spaced pages, reflect on how kinship and belonging figure in the novel in light of discussions and readings in this course. Response papers are due November 9 at our film viewing session.

Please drop off all written assignments in class or in the professor’s mailing box in Tozzer 205. Note that late submissions will result in the loss of 5% per day from the final grade for the course.

**Required Texts**

The following texts are available for purchase at the Coop Bookstore and for consultation on a three-hour reserve at the Tozzer Library.


All other readings will be available on the course website on Canvas.

To familiarize yourself with kinship charts and terminology in anthropology, please consult the following link: [http://umanitoba.ca/faculties/arts/anthropology/kintitle.html](http://umanitoba.ca/faculties/arts/anthropology/kintitle.html)
Weekly Schedule

WEEK 1  INTRODUCTION TO THE COURSE
September 10
No readings.

WEEK 2  WHAT IS KINSHIP? WHAT IS CITIZENSHIP?
September 17

PART I  CLASSIC DEBATES IN THE ANTHROPOLOGY OF KINSHIP

WEEK 3  FORGET KINSHIP? – an anthropological dilemma
September 24

WEEK 4  DESCENT, DOMESTICITY, & POLITICAL SYSTEMS – the British School
October 1
WEEK 5  
October 15  
INCEST, ALLIANCE, & AFFINITY — the French School


PART II  
POLITICIZING KINSHIP: CRITIQUES OF RELATEDNESS

WEEK 6  
October 22  
MARXIST CRITIQUES — capital, reproduction, ideology


WEEK 7  
October 29  
FEMINIST CRITIQUES — gender, exchange, domination


Mid-term take-home exam is due in class.
WEEK 8
November 5
QUEER CRITIQUES – sexuality, desire, normativity


November 9
FILM VIEWING & DISCUSSION
“Paris Is Burning” (1990); directed by Jennie Livingston (1h20)

Response paper is due in class.

PART III
BELONGING, POWER, AND GLOBAL CAPITALISM

WEEK 9
November 12
RACE & THE INTIMATE POLITICS OF COLONIALISM


WEEK 10
November 19
LAW & THE POETICS OF STATE RECOGNITION


Nov. 21-25
Thanksgiving Recess

WEEK 11
November 26
BELONGING, CITIZENSHIP & AUTOCHTHONY


WEEK 12
December 3
TRANSNATIONAL KINSHIP & GLOBAL RACIALIZATION


December 10
Final take-home exam or research paper due.