ANTH 366-A01
ANTHROPOLOGY OF REPRODUCTION

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Lisa M. Mitchell

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES
This course provides you with a critical and cross-cultural perspective on human reproduction. You will be encouraged to examine how reproduction is deeply invested with personal and cultural meaning at the same time that it is shaped by local, national and trans-national politics. We examine men’s and women’s perspectives on reproduction and give particular emphasis to the ways in which infertility, fertility, pregnancy, and birth intersect with social hierarchies of gender, wealth, ethnicity, sexuality, and ableness. Among the topics addressed through a range of cross-cultural examples are state intervention in fertility and reproduction, family size as a marker of “development,” the cultural production of “natural” childbirth, the politics of fetal personhood, interpretations of infertility and of pregnancy loss, experiences of surrogacy, and cultural variation in ideas about procreation, prenatal diagnosis, and abortion. The prerequisite to this course is ANTH 200

SKILLS DEVELOPMENT
• Knowledge and application of key concepts and theories in the cultural anthropological analysis of reproduction
• Develop skills in critical thinking and writing and in questioning common assumptions and understandings about reproduction
• Understand reproduction as a biosocial-biocultural process
• Identify the ways in which reproductive lives are shaped by social hierarchies and cultural interpretations
• Understand the connections between global reproductive health issues and histories of colonialism and neocolonialism