Department of Anthropology

AN397 Special Essay (Dissertation) grade criteria

The following scheme for grading of marks applies only to the dissertation. Attributes listed for each class are assumed to include the best attributes from the class below.

Class	Marks (%)	Attributes
Brilliant First (1)	**80 – 100**	Work of exceptional quality, based on comprehensive conceptual knowledge of the topic, and developing a cogent and original argument. For a mark of 90 or more, analysis is of such brilliance and originality that it potentially changes some aspect of conventional understanding about the topic and anthropological debates discussed. Referencing is accurate and precise. If fieldwork is an element of the project, the research methods employed, evidence used, and interpretations offered are truly innovative and/or produce theoretical interventions of general value.
First (1)	**70 – 79**	Excellent work, well-presented and argued with sophistication, maturity, and incisiveness, which draws on a wide range of sources, demonstrates a wide familiarity with the subject matter and anthropological debates, displays independent judgement, originality and some brilliance. Theoretically and/ or ethnographically sophisticated. Referencing is accurate and precise. If fieldwork is an element of the project, the research methods employed, evidence used, and interpretations offered bring new and insightful perspectives to bear on the topic.

Upper Second (2:1)	**60 – 69**	Competent work showing a good grasp of the subject matter and critical thinking. Evidence of familiarity with an appropriate range of reading and anthropological debates. Clear presentation and organisation of materials to pursue a clearly enunciated line of argument. Shows a critical understanding of and familiarity with terms and concepts. Involves close, granular engagement with the details of texts being cited. Factually correct and comprehensive in coverage, and with precise and accurate referencing. Minor slips and omissions may result in lower upper second mark (60-64). For a higher upper second grade (65-69), analysis should be attentive to nuance and show signs of originality. If fieldwork is an element of the project, the research methods employed, evidence used, and interpretations offered are generally sound and well-integrated into the consideration of the topic.
Lower Second (2:2)	**50 – 59**	Demonstrates some understanding of the subject matter and a grasp of a basic set of readings, but is marred by poor presentation or by lack of sophisticated argument or knowledge. Frequently narrative in style and lacking in clear argument or focus. Often includes unsupported generalisations, occasional inaccuracies, omissions, contradictions, weak definitions, poor application of concepts. May present issues in a superficial manner. Referencing is incomplete and inaccurate. May lack anthropological insights or be too programmatic or prescriptive. If fieldwork is an element of the project, the research methods employed, evidence used, and interpretations offered are underdeveloped and only loosely connected to the consideration of the topic.
Third (3)	**40 – 49**	Basic, below-average dissertation which nevertheless shows evidence of some familiarity with the subject. Weak, narrative/descriptive account, which displays only a partial grasp of the topic addressed and the different aspects of debates. Argument is fleeting, frequently simplistic, or flawed. Concepts are disordered. Several inaccuracies and omissions. Referencing has numerous mistakes and is incomplete, and there may be unattributed or unreferenced quotes. Almost no anthropological engagement. If fieldwork is an element of the project, the research methods employed are poorly conceived/executed, evidence used does not adequately support the analysis, and interpretations are not as convincing as they could be.

Fail	**0 – 39**	Very weak dissertation which lacks relevance, direction, accuracy, and substance. Referencing is completely inadequate, has numerous mistakes and is incomplete, and there may be unattributed or unreferenced quotes. If fieldwork is an element of the project, the research methods employed are inappropriate, evidence used does not support the analysis, and interpretations are unconvincing.