

**Semester 1 report from the School President of Social Anthropology:**

*This report is intended to explain what the Social Anthropology Class Representatives and I have been working on for the duration of our first semester together. It’s a joy to be your School President and to work with the Class Representatives – they have done really great things this past semester! I truly look forward to the next semester also and welcome any feedback you may have for the work my Class Representatives and I do.*

*Yours Sincerely,*

*Rikke Nedergaard*

*School President of Social Anthropology 2017/18*

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## Orientation event

This year’s orientation event was held on the 14<sup>th</sup> of September in collaboration with the Anthropology Society (AnthroSoc). For the first part of the event I had arranged for a number of student speakers to introduce various aspects of the study of Social Anthropology (one introduced sub-honours, another introduced honours and a third speaker spoke of undergraduate fieldwork opportunities and the Burn Weekend). We also had the vice-president of AnthroSoc introduce their society. We used School V, which was more than filled with new students. After this half of the event was over (took approx. half an hour) we moved from School V to the Social Anthropology Coffee Room across the hallway. Here AnthroSoc had prepared a brunch which was so well attended that the room was full and an equal number of people were waiting outside in the hallway (I brought food out to them and people here actually did stay around and talked to each other). All in all, the event was very well attended and had quite a nice atmosphere.

Learning point: Whilst I recommend duplicating this format for the orientation event in future years, it would be advantageous to get a former MRes student to speak also (a former MRes student could be found amongst current PhD students).

## Welcome Pack

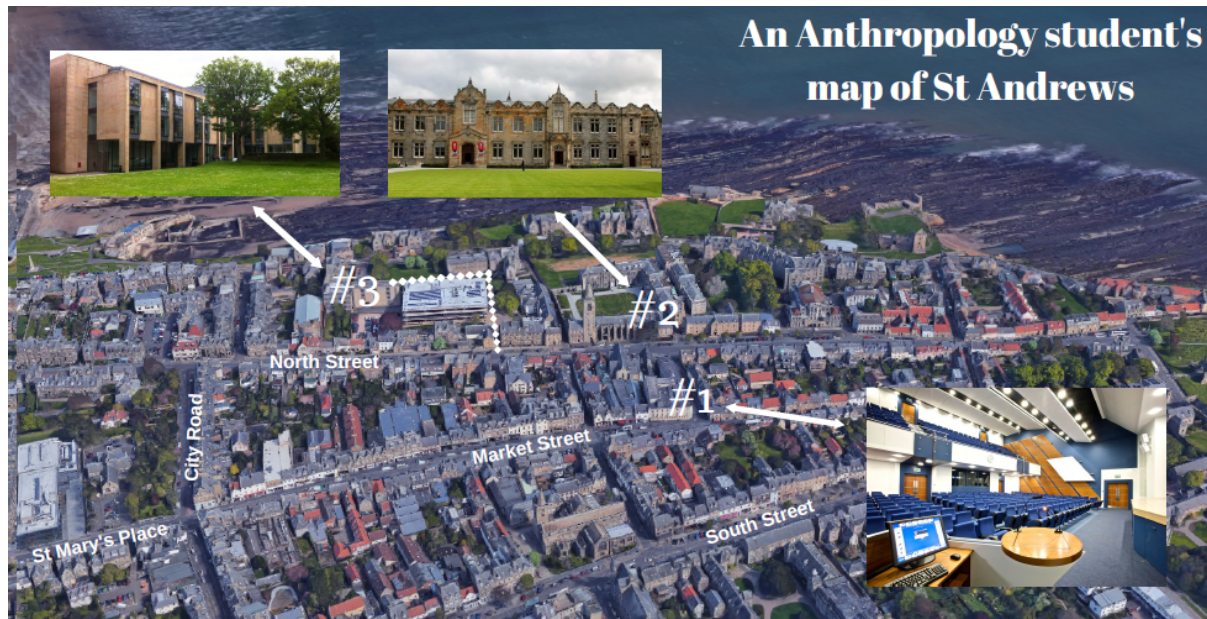
As something new this year, we sent out “welcome packs” to new undergraduate students. These packs were, as the name suggests, supposed to wish new students welcome to the department, but they were also intended to bring useful information.

These packs included:

- Three welcome letters: one from the Head of Department, another from the Anthropology Society and lastly one from me as School President
- An Anthropology student’s map of St Andrews, which also explained how to get to class rooms and other locations needed by Social Anthropology students (see image below)
- Quotes from current students
- Information about the Social Anthropology Mentoring Scheme (see the section below)

See the full pack at the departmental web page: <https://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/anthropology/current-students/for-new-students/>

Learning points: It might be beneficial to include information about the Academic Skills Workshops in the undergraduate pack. If I can find a couple of postgraduate students willing to help me, I would like to expand the welcome packs to new MRes and PhD students also.



**Buchanan Lecture Theatre (no.1)** is usually the location for first-year lectures.  
**Secretaries' office:**  
 Walk into the Social Anthropology building (no. 2 next to school 5). It will be the second door on your right.  
**The Social Anthropology Coffee Room (no. 2)** is used for a range of departmental social events. Go in the doors of School 5 and go through the first door on your left.  
**CAS (no. 2)** is the location for tutors' office hours. See guide in the right column.

**Tutorial rooms:**  
**UC Room 50 (no. 2):** Enter through the doors of School 6 and enter the second door on your right (you will need to walk up two steps).  
**CAS (no. 2):** Enter through the doors of School 6 and walk up two long flights of stairs. Walk in the door that is marked with "Computer Classroom & School VI". Go straight ahead until the hallway turns right. Walk up another small staircase and enter the door.  
**Arts seminar rooms (no. 3):** To find this building, walk from North Street, past the entrance of the library and turn left down the stairs. Keep walking until you get to the swing doors. Once in the building, follow the signs.

## Mentoring Scheme

Since last winter I have been the Scheme Coordinator for the Social Anthropology Mentoring Scheme. This scheme is supposed to encourage first-year's integration into the department and to increase connections between undergraduate cohorts. With help from Cat Wilson in CAPOD and Dr Stan Frankland, who is the Scheme Convenor, I started recruiting mentors in the late spring. Information about the scheme was sent out to mentees in an email from Registry and in the departmental welcome pack once new students had confirmed unconditional offers. Using the SUMAC computer programme provided by CAPOD, I matched incoming students with current honours students. Most pairings were made during summer – all in all we had around 35 pairs, which is quite a good number considering that it is around the same as the number of students who arrive at St Andrews with the intention to major in Social Anthropology.

Mentors and mentees first had the chance to meet during a mentorship meet & greet event I held with CAPOD on the 20<sup>th</sup> of September.

Learning point: Scheme feedback indicates that participants would have liked to have had more structure, so in future years we intend to hold a mid-semester meeting and to advocate Social Anthropology events as opportunities to meet. It would also definitively be a good idea to send out the scheme handbook in a separate email.

Scheme handbook: <https://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/anthropology/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/Mentorship-scheme-handbook-2017.pdf>

## Class Representative elections

Elections for Class Representatives were held in September. As something new, we have an Evening Degree Representative for the SA1901 & SA2901 and an unofficial Evening Degree Representative for SA3901 & SA3902. Elections for these two positions were held in class. The remainder of the elections were held as per usual via the elections portal. All positions were filled and half of the elections were contested.

**First Year Representatives:** Kate Renee Cohee (social & minutes rep) & Charlotte Perkins (careers rep).

**Second Year Representatives:** Katie Walker (social rep) & Seaf Hartley (careers & library rep)

**Third Year Representative:** Reem Awad Mohamed (careers rep)

**Fourth Year Representative:** Ali Huntley

**Evening Degree Representative (SA1901 & SA2901):** David Fullerton

**MRes Representative:** Neil Adam Hampshire (executive PGT rep & social rep)

**Pre-Fieldwork PGR Representative:** Maria Koulouri

**Post-Fieldwork PGR Representative:** Giuseppe Troccoli (executive PGR rep).

## Changes to the number of Class Representatives

Due to large class sizes, I decided to increase the number of Class Representatives in sub-honours, such that we now have two per year rather than just one. This has worked out very well and enabled Class Representatives to work together and to cover for each other in meetings where one or the other was unable to attend.

Similarly, the expansion roles (social, careers, minute & library) were also shared by more Class Representatives than usual. We have three Careers Representatives (Charlotte, Seaf & Reem) and three Social Representatives (Kate, Katie & Neil). As with the increased number of sub-honours representatives, this has enabled representatives to stand in for each other when unable to attend meetings and it has encouraged collaboration. Ultimately, this has resulted in more social events than in any previous semester and in a highly successful careers event.

## SSCC meetings

Every semester the Department for Social Anthropology holds a “Student Staff Consultation Committee” where student representatives and staff discuss student feedback gathered by class representatives. In this report, I include only the agendas for these meetings, as the minutes cannot be approved until the next SSCC meeting. Once they are approved they will be uploaded online.

### Undergraduate SSCC meeting (29<sup>th</sup> of November):

First-year:

- Cohesion & satisfied students
- Tutorials & tutors
- Engaging students in lectures
- Essays & feedback

Second-year:

- Teaching & overall satisfaction
- Making students more likely to attend class
- Theory teaching

Third-year:

- Teaching
- Class hours
- Essays
- Tutorials for SA3060

Fourth-year:

- Supervisors
- Dissertation workshops
- Module range
- Extension system
- SA4060 & SA4866

Evening degree:

- Satisfaction with teaching
- Technology “BRIDGET”
- Module handbooks
- Few students & course content (SA3901)

Postgraduate SSCC meeting (6<sup>th</sup> of December):

MRes:

- General satisfaction
- Essay feedback
- Lecture capture
- Friday seminars

Pre-fieldwork:

- Desks
- Printing costs
- CAS webpage & library
- Pre-fieldwork conference

Post-fieldwork:

- Post-fieldwork seminar
- Office / desk spaces
- Library provision

## Burn video

Each year the department arranges a weekend away for honours students and staff at the “Burn”, which is a beautiful manor house north from St Andrews. The purpose is to give students and staff the opportunity to meet and talk outside a formal classroom setting.

Last year less than half the usual number of Social Anthropology honours students chose to attend the Burn Weekend. Those who did attend, however, reported that they were very happy to have



done so and felt that it helped them make connections in the department. In order to encourage more students to utilise this opportunity (and ultimately to preserve the Burn Weekend tradition), I have collaborated with students to increase numbers. Most prominently, third-year student Abi Reid has produced an information video about the Burn Weekend with interviews of several fourth-year students and two members of staff. This video is supposed to give students a greater insight into what the Burn Weekend is, which we thought would increase attendance because lack of understanding for the event was one of the primary reasons why students reported choosing not to go last year.

This video by Abi Reid is available at:

[https://drive.google.com/open?id=1dZZEFZv35zagsmOigtOroV\\_hrR0QJOvOz](https://drive.google.com/open?id=1dZZEFZv35zagsmOigtOroV_hrR0QJOvOz)

We have also had a new page created on the departmental webpage about the Burn Weekend, where Abi’s video is also available: <https://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/anthropology/prospective-students/undergraduate-programmes/what-can-i-study/the-burn-trip/>

Learning point: Another reason why some students did not attend last year was because the Burn was on the same weekend the student-arranged SAASUM conference, which many Social Anthropology students attend. Unfortunately, these events also coincide this year and it has not been possible to move either of them (they were both scheduled in May and the clash was not discovered until the autumn). In future years, it would be best if these events did not coincide.

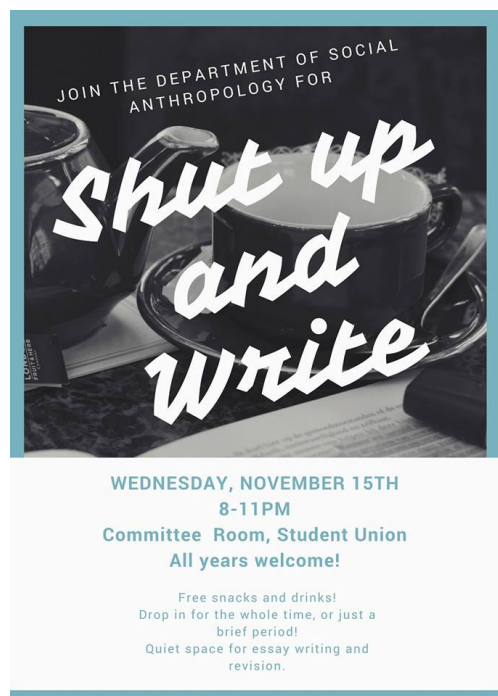
## Writing events

On initiative from first-year rep Kate, we have held two writing events called “Shut Up and Write”. These were held on the 20<sup>th</sup> of October and 15<sup>th</sup> of November in the Committee Room in the Student Union. Their purpose was to allow for quiet communal writing, intended to motivate students to start writing their coursework early. Coffee, tea and snacks were provided from EDF funding. Both events were very well attended and students have enquired whether “Shut Up and Write” events could be arranged more regularly. The first-year reps and I are looking into this for semester 2.

## Pre-fieldwork conference

On the 5<sup>th</sup> of November, the department hosted a pre-fieldwork conference arranged by the post-fieldwork representative, Giuseppe and Dr Raluca Roman. The department’s pre-fieldwork PhD students presented their research projects in two panels: “Art, representation and material culture” and “Turning points, identity and the state”. Post-fieldwork students, MRes and honours students present at the conference were invited to ask questions and give feedback. The conference was very well attended and received highly positive feedback from the pre-fieldwork students and other participants.

Refreshments and tea / coffee was provided halfway through the event in the Social Anthropology Coffee Room (funded by the Education Discretionary Fund).



## Careers event

In collaboration with the School of IR, we held a very successful careers event entitled “Internships in SA & IR” on the 15<sup>th</sup> of November in the Large Rehearsal Room. Four students presented their internships and explained how they got them and we had Kristin from the Careers Centre talk about what support they had available for students. After the panel, we had a careers reception with wine and cheese. I estimate that around 45 students attended the event (this is good attendance for a Social Anthropology careers event). In response to feedback from previous careers events, we had endeavoured to choose students who had had internships which were not topically overlapping and relevant to both subjects.

## Student meeting

As promised in my elections manifesto, I arranged a student meeting for all Social Anthropology students to discuss matters pertaining to our studies and student representation. Students were invited to suggest their own items for the agenda, which ended up looking like this:

1. Mini-trips for anthropology students
2. Mentorship scheme
3. Career initiatives
4. Funding for students
5. Study abroad opportunities
6. Social events for anthropology students
7. Questions and suggestions from students

The number of attendants at the event was unimpressive (there were seven), but the meeting nonetheless provided me and the Class Representatives with useful information and points of view and the matters discussed at the meeting have either been incorporated into student representation (such as agenda items relating to events) or brought up in meetings with staff (such as a suggestion to change the extension system and the study abroad options which will be discussed in early February).



Learning point: I should gather feedback prior to next semester’s student meeting about how to increase attendance at meetings.

## Funding document

I initiated a knowledge-sharing document detailing funding available to Social Anthropology students. This was introduced at the student meeting. Thus far there is just four pages of it, but I intend for it to develop further through students and myself adding more funding options when we find them.

Subsections in the document include:

- Internship funding
- Non-PhD research funding
- Travel bursaries
- Bursaries for PhD fieldwork
- Other funding incl. funding to attend conference and funding for tutors

You are all more than welcome to add to the document. It is available at:

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1-c-27pq4jcd\\_6Zcr227WXz8lmlPzSGVj4mITg-Fqoow/edit#](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1-c-27pq4jcd_6Zcr227WXz8lmlPzSGVj4mITg-Fqoow/edit#)

## Revision Cake & Tea event

On the 1<sup>st</sup> of December, I held another cake and tea afternoon with the help of my class reps. This particular cake and tea event was Christmas-themed, though I regret to say that aside from myself, only one other student had worn Christmas-related pieces of clothing. As usual, the cake and tea event was attended by a good mix of undergraduates, postgraduates and staff. My class reps, Charlotte and Kate, helped bake for the event and also helped set it up.

Learning point: We had around 20 students stop by (instead of the usual 40) – as with the past five events I have held of this type, I held it on a Friday 2-4pm, but in this particular semester it clashed with an honours class and a postgraduate seminar. I will have to look out for timetable clashes better in the future.

## SP office hours

This year I have held a “drop-in session” or an “office hour” each week. The time and place are advertised in my weekly emails, where I encourage students to come talk to me if they have queries, questions or suggestions that they want to discuss in person. I vary the time such that it does not consistently clash with the same classes and occasionally place them before evening classes, such that evening degree students may come talk to me without having to come in during the day.

## Overview of Social Anthropology events

Events arranged by Social Anthropology student representatives in semester 1:

14<sup>th</sup> of September: Orientation brunch

20<sup>th</sup> of September: Mentorship meet & greet event

20<sup>th</sup> of October: “Shut Up and Write” event

15<sup>th</sup> of November: Careers event: Internships in SA & IR

15<sup>th</sup> of November: “Shut Up and Write” event



22<sup>nd</sup> of November: Student meeting

1<sup>st</sup> of December: Anthropology Cake & Tea Revision Event

5<sup>th</sup> of November: Pre-fieldwork conference

In addition to the above events, the MRes & social rep Neil arranged weekly socials for MRes students.

## Plans for next semester

Here are some plans that I am excited to continue / launch next semester:

### Study abroad options:

After we discussed study abroad options at the student meeting at the end of November, I have made plans to discuss possible expansions to the study abroad opportunities with the study abroad coordinator in week 2 or 3 in semester. First-year representative Kate has worked to compile a list of possible universities, which was discussed at the student meeting and which will be brought on to the meeting with the study abroad coordinator.

At the student meeting, it was also brought up that Social Anthropology students would like more support and encouragement to go abroad. I have been in contact with a few students who have been abroad who might be willing to help me set up the support needed – in the form of a study abroad guide perhaps.

### Transition to honours event:

As last semester, I intend to arrange an information event about Social Anthropology honours. Last year we had most of the staff present along with two current third-year students. Staff introduced their modules, the third-year students explained their personal experiences of transitioning to honours and gave tips and we finished with a cake and tea social. From the feedback, I had after the event, it seemed so well received that I will probably duplicate this format. I will, however, consult students and staff further first to enquire about suggestions for improvement.

### Transition to dissertation event:

In order to support third-year students starting their dissertations, I plan to hold a support event with speakers from fourth-year who have written a dissertation themselves.

### Day-trips for anthropology students:

The MRes rep, Neil, is labouring to arrange small trips out of town for anthropology students who wish to see more of Scotland whilst getting a chance to get to know more anthropology students. This was discussed at the student meeting where suggestions for destinations included the town Elie and the chocolate café in Pittenweem.

### Cake & Tea afternoons:

I plan to hold a mid-semester cake and tea afternoon as well as one at the end of the second semester.

### Welcome packs for postgraduate students:

I would very much like to labour to also develop welcome packs for postgraduate students. I will be looking for postgraduate students to help me in this endeavour next semester.