Dear Student of Anthropology,

Welcome to Social Anthropology at St Andrews University! I want to take this opportunity to extend a warm welcome to you, and invite you to join fully in the life of our Department.

At St Andrews, we have a well-earned reputation both for our friendly working atmosphere and our stimulating intellectual environment. Coming to St Andrews you will be joining a cosmopolitan community of students and scholars from across the globe. By the time the academic year ends, we hope you will have learnt a lot more about the world(s) around you, both near and far, and begun to ask new questions of your own place in it.

We want you to find out a lot more about societies and cultures at present unfamiliar to you, but also to discover a great deal more, and perhaps alter your view, of your own society and of habits and traditions that you perhaps never questioned before. You will study in formal lectures and workshops and through group project work, but we will also introduce the subject by showing you anthropological films and via informal discussions, and by way of a range of assessment practices that will help you extend and reapply what you have learnt.

There are many opportunities to get to know how anthropologists work beyond the classroom: from getting involved as volunteers in the organizing of academic conferences, to internship and research assistant opportunities, careers events and participating in our student anthropology journal. If you progress to the senior years in Social Anthropology you will find that there are opportunities for residential training events away from St Andrews involving both students and staff. Please take a look at our Department website: https://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/anthropology, ask about these opportunities, and join us for advertised events.

As you will discover, our Anthropology Student President takes a very active role in helping students orient themselves in the university. Indeed, we encourage all students to engage in Anthropology in multiple ways both informal and formal. Student representation through the work of class representatives happens throughout each year and we always welcome the feedback you provide. Please do also take a look at the activities of our student-led Anthropology Society: they have a range of constantly evolving events, both academic and social, that are designed to bring students (and staff) together – I can say from experience that these are always fun and intellectually challenging.

Finally, my colleagues and I look forward to meeting you all soon and welcoming you to Anthropology at St Andrews.

Warmly,

Dr Huon Wardle
Head of the Department of Social Anthropology