

**ANTH 111B: HUMAN CULTURE AND COMMUNICATION**

Section 004 MWF 3:00-3:50 Peck 0405

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Office hours: MWF 2:00-3:00 or by appointment

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**Course Description:** An introduction to cultural anthropology. Cultural anthropology investigates the diversity of human cultures through time and space. Topics include patterns of work, family, law and order, spirituality, artistic expression and communication. Cultural anthropology examines these patterns both in our own culture and in other societies. At the end of the course, you should be more aware of the role of culture in your own life, and also of the diversity of cultures around the world.

**Learning Objectives:** After completing this course, you should be able to:

- Define basic anthropological concepts and apply them to everyday life
- Identify, discuss, and compare different cultural ideas and practices
- Question common assumptions about what is “normal” or “natural” in human behavior
- Describe some of the ways anthropologists study human behavior
- Discuss the ways anthropology can contribute to the study of local and global issues

**Course Requirements:** The requirements for this course include:

- Three in-class essay exams, 3 x 100 = 300 points
- Five in-class quizzes, 5 x 20 = 100 points
- Two fieldwork reports (1-2 pages), 2 x 30 = 60 points
- Attendance and participation = 40 points (40 class periods out of 44 x 1 point/day; 1 point extra credit for each day over 40)

Grades will be based on a total of 500 points as follows:

- 450-500 points = A
  - 400-449.5 points = B
  - 350-399.5 points = C
  - 300-349.5 points = D
  - 0-299.5 points = F
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- **Exams** will consist of two short (1/2-1 page each), or one long (1-2 pages) essay questions, covering issues or material discussed in that section of the course. The full class period will be allowed for each exam.

Review sheets will be provided one or two class sessions in advance of each exam, and will include a list of possible essay questions. You may choose the long or short essays you wish to write. Exams will be closed book (no books, notes, or electronics of any kind allowed during the exam), but essays may be thought through in advance.

- **Quizzes** will consist of 20 objective (true/false and multiple choice) questions covering the textbook chapter and other readings just completed. Quizzes will be given the day following completion of each textbook chapter. (Note: there will be no quizzes on the Mondays that are exam days.)
- **Fieldwork Reports** allow you to try out “being an anthropologist” on a small scale. For each report, you need to describe a cultural event you attended which was outside of your normal cultural comfort zone. Examples can include: attending an ethnic or cultural festival, going to hear a kind of music you were not familiar with, going to a restaurant with a kind of food you had not eaten before, going to a worship service of a faith you had not attended before, or interviewing someone from a different cultural background than your own. Your report will describe what you did (including specific details), and your reactions, and then will link your experience or what you learned to material we have covered in class.

Papers should be 1-2 pages (more is fine) and must be turned in in hard copy (typed, double-spaced, or neatly handwritten). E-mailed papers will be graded down 10%.

Initial drafts of fieldwork reports are welcome and may be shown to me in person or e-mailed in enough time before the due date to get feedback and make changes. (There is no penalty for e-mailing drafts, only for e-mailing the final version of papers.)

- **Make-up Exams, Quizzes and Late Reports** must be taken or turned in within one week of the scheduled exam or due date, and may be graded down 10% at the instructor’s discretion. Proof of excused absence must be submitted in order to qualify for a make-up quiz, exam or late paper without penalty.
- **Attendance and Participation** are both expected and required. There are 44 class periods, plus one free day for the Labor Day holiday. You are allowed to miss 4 classes without penalty, but students who attend more than 40 classes will get 1 point extra credit for each day attended over 40. This can make the difference in borderline grades. Active engagement and participation in class are also required. You are expected to come to class prepared to discuss the readings and assignments for that day, and you may be called on at any time to contribute input to class discussions.

**Course Policies:** The following are basic ground rules for the course:

- **Courteous behavior** is expected at all times. This includes being in class before class begins, staying the entire class period, and only engaging in activities related to the class. Students engaging in other activities (homework for other classes, texting, talking privately to other students, etc.) will be asked to leave the class. Students arriving late or leaving early without prior permission will lose their attendance point for the day.
- **Electronic devices** of all sorts (laptops, ipods, phones, etc.) are strictly prohibited during class hours. Students using electronic devices will be asked to leave the class.

- **No cheating or plagiarism** will be tolerated. Students caught cheating, plagiarizing, or falsifying attendance sheets will receive an F for the course and will be reported to the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences and the Provost of the University.
- **Students with disabilities** will be happily accommodated, with an ID card from Disability Support Services. Disability Support Services is located in the Student Success Center in the MUC, and their phone number is 650-3726.

**Textbooks:** There are two textbooks for this class. Both are available from Textbook Rental. Additional readings will be available on BlackBoard.

1. Richard Robbins and Rachel Dowty, *CulturalANTHRO2*, Wadsworth/Cengage, 2014.
2. Aaron Podolefsky, Peter J. Brown and Scott M. Lacy, eds., *Applying Anthropology: An Introductory Reader*. 10<sup>th</sup> edition. McGraw Hill, 2012.

### **Schedule of Topics and Readings:**

[Note: This schedule is subject to change or modification as conditions warrant.]

#### **Weeks 1-2 (Aug. 19-30): Culture and Meaning**

- **Read and Discuss:** *CulturalANTHRO2*, chap. 1, pp. 2-27

Mon. Aug. 19: Introduction to the course

Wed. Aug. 21: Discuss: Introduction: The World Behind Everyday Appearances;  
Question 1-1: Why do human beings differ in their beliefs and behaviors? (pp. 2-7)

Fri. Aug. 23: Discuss: Question 1-2: Why do people judge the beliefs and behaviors of others? (pp. 7-13)

Mon. Aug. 26: Discuss: Question 1-3: Is it possible to see the world through the eyes of others? (pp. 14-17)

Wed. Aug. 28: Discuss: Question 1-4: How can the meanings that others find in experience be interpreted and described? (pp. 17-22)

Fri. Aug. 30: Discuss: Question 1-5: What can learning about other people tell Americans about themselves? (pp. 22-26)

#### **Weeks 3-4 (Sept. 2-13): The Meaning of Progress and Development**

- **Labor Day holiday** Mon. Sept. 2. No class.
- **Quiz #1** Wed. Sept. 4
- **Read and Discuss:** *CulturalANTHRO2*, chap. 2, pp. 28-54

Mon. Sept. 2: Labor Day holiday. No class.

Wed. Sept. 4: **Quiz #1.** Discuss: Introduction: The Death of a Way of Life; Question 2-1: Why did hunter-gatherer societies switch to sedentary agriculture? (pp. 28-38)

Fri. Sept. 6: Discuss: Question 2-2: Why are some societies more industrially advanced than others? (pp. 38-42)

Mon. Sept. 9: Discuss: Question 2-3: Why don't poor countries modernize and develop in the same way as wealthier countries? (pp. 42-47)

Wed. Sept. 11: Discuss: Question 2-4: How do modern standards of health and medical treatment compare with those of traditional societies? (pp. 47-50)

Fri. Sept. 13: Discuss: Question 2-5: Why are simpler societies disappearing? (pp. 51-54)

#### **Weeks 5-6 (Sept. 16-27): Globalization, Neoliberalism, and the Nation-State**

- **Exam #1** Mon. Sept. 16
- **Field Report #1 due** Mon. Sept. 23
- **Read and Discuss:** *CulturalANTHRO2*, chap. 3, pp. 56-81

Mon. Sept. 16: **Exam #1**

Wed. Sept. 18: Discuss: Introduction: My T-Shirt; Question 3-1: How do we define happiness and well-being? (pp. 56-62)

Fri. Sept. 20: Discuss: Question 3-2: Where does the wealth needed to sustain growth come from? (pp. 62-66)

Mon. Sept. 23: **Field Report #1 due.** Discuss: Question 3-3: What kind of economic system is necessary to sustain growth? (pp. 66-71)

Wed. Sept. 25: Discuss: Question 3-4: What is the role of the nation-state in sustaining growth? (pp. 72-75)

Fri. Sept. 27: Discuss: Question 3-5: Why do economies collapse? (pp. 76-81)

#### **Weeks 7-8 (Sept. 30-Oct. 11): The Social and Cultural Construction of Reality**

- **Quiz #2** Mon. Sept. 30
- **Read and Discuss:** *CulturalANTHRO2*, chap. 4, pp. 82-106

Mon. Sept. 30: **Quiz #2.** Discuss: Introduction: The Central Question; Question 4-1: How does language affect the meanings people assign to experience? (pp. 82-89)

Wed. Oct. 2: Discuss: Question 4-2: How does symbolic action reinforce a particular view of the world? (pp. 89-93)

Fri. Oct. 4: Discuss: Question 4-3: How do people come to believe what they do, and how do they continue to hold their beliefs even if they seem contradictory or ambiguous? (pp. 93-100)

Mon. Oct. 7: Discuss: Question 4-4: How can we account for the different meanings people assign to experiences? (pp. 100-104)

Wed. Oct. 9: Discuss: Question 4-5: How can people reorder their view of the world if it becomes unsatisfactory? (pp. 104-106)

Fri. Oct. 11: In-class video: “As Nutayuneam = We Still Here” (library DVD #1569)

### **Weeks 9-10 (Oct. 14-23): Patterns of Family Relations**

- **Exam #2** Mon. Oct. 14
- **Read and Discuss**: *CulturalANTHRO2*, chap. 5, pp. 108-130

Mon. Oct. 14: **Exam #2**.

Wed. Oct. 16: Discuss: Introduction: Soap Operas and Family Relations; Question 5-1: What is the composition of the typical family group? (pp. 108-116)

Fri. Oct. 18: Discuss: Question 5-2: How are families formed and ideal family types maintained? (pp. 116-124)

Mon. Oct. 21: In-class video: “N!ai: The Story of a !Kung Woman” (library digital video # DT 1058.K86 N32 2004)

Wed. Oct. 23: Discuss: Question 5-3: What are the roles of sexuality, love, and wealth? ; Question 5-4: What threatens to disrupt the family unit? (pp. 124-130)

### **Weeks 10-12 (Oct. 25-Nov. 4): The Cultural Construction of Identity**

- **Quiz #3** Fri. Oct. 25
- **Field Report #2 due** Mon. Nov. 4
- **Read and Discuss**: *CulturalANTHRO2*, chap. 6, pp. 132-150

Fri. Oct. 25: **Quiz #3**. Discuss: Introduction: The Importance of Self; Question 6-1: How does the concept of personhood vary from society to society? (pp. 132-136)

Mon. Oct. 28: Discuss: Question 6-2: How do societies distinguish individuals from one another? (pp. 136-139)

Wed. Oct. 30: Discuss: Question 6-3: How do individuals learn who they are? (pp. 139-142)

Fri. Nov. 1: Discuss: Question 6-4: How do individuals communicate their identities to one another? (pp. 142-146)

Mon. Nov. 4: **Field Report #2 due**. Discuss: Question 6-5: How do individuals defend their identities when they are threatened? (pp. 146-150)

### **Weeks 12-14 (Nov. 6-18): The Cultural Construction of Social Hierarchy**

- **Quiz #4** Wed. Nov. 6
- **Read and Discuss**: *CulturalANTHRO2*, chap. 7, pp. 152-177

Wed. Nov. 6: **Quiz #4**. Discuss: Introduction: The Rationale for Social Inequality; Question 7-1: How do societies rank people in social hierarchies? (pp. 152-159)

Fri. Nov. 8: Discuss: Question 7-2: Why do social and economic inequalities persist? (pp. 159-162)

Mon. Nov. 11: Discuss: Question 7-3: how do people come to accept social hierarchies as natural? (pp. 162-171)

Wed. Nov. 13: Discuss: Question 7-4: How do people living in poverty adapt to their condition? (pp. 171-175)

Fri. Nov. 15: In-class video: “The Hutterites” (Anth video # C-99)

Mon. Nov. 18: Discuss: Question 7-5: Can a nonstratified community exist within a larger hierarchical society? (pp. 175-177)

### **Weeks 14-16 (Nov. 20-Dec. 6): The Cultural Construction of Violent Conflict**

- **Quiz #5** Wed. Nov. 20
- **Thanksgiving Break** Mon. Nov. 25-Fri. Nov. 29. No classes
- **Read and Discuss**: *CulturalANTHRO2*, chap. 8, pp. 178-196

Wed. Nov. 20: **Quiz #5**. Discuss: Introduction: The Justification of Violent Conflict; Question 8-1: How do societies create a bias in favor of collective violence? (pp. 178-184)

Fri. Nov. 22: Discuss: Question 8-2: How do societies create a bias against violent conflict? (pp. 184-186)

Mon. Nov. 25-Fri. Nov. 29: **Thanksgiving Break**. No classes.

Mon. Dec. 2: Discuss: Question 8-3: What are the economical, political, or social differences between peaceful and violent societies? (pp. 186-189)

Wed. Dec. 4: Discuss: Question 8-4: What are the effects of war on societies? (pp. 189-193)

Fri. Dec. 6: Discuss: Question 8-5: How is it possible to justify the creation of weapons of mass destruction? (pp. 193-196)

**Week 17: Final Exam** Wed. Dec. 11 2:00-300