

## :: Anthropology 210: Comparative Cultures ::

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**NSH 209: MWF 11:00-11:50**  
**Office: SSH 111**  
**Hours: M 1-2, T 9-10, W 1-2**

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### **Course Description**

Welcome to Anthropology 210. This course introduces students to comparatively study human beings, societies, and cultures. This course provides students with an overview of cultural anthropology and its ways of understanding people. The course material explores the diversity of human cultures and takes a close look into a varied number of human communities in order to understand how they work, how they are different from others, and the forces that shape their worldviews.

Anthropology makes the strange familiar and the familiar strange. Why do we do the things we do? Throughout the course, you will be challenged to confront what you think is “normal” because the way you view the world is just one of many well-organized, equally sophisticated, and historically contingent approaches to life. Embrace this challenge and you may gain a better understanding of how you and others make sense of everyday life. Simply put, by exploring other cultures, you will better understand your own.

### **Learning Outcomes:**

- Objectively analyze a variety of cultural practices from around the world
- Understand the pre and post-colonial influences of the cultures under study and recognize the interconnections between history, society, and culture
- Broadly and narrowly define and identify a culture’s characteristics including setting and history, values, economy, social networks, community, and governance
- Develop a critical understanding of cultural diversity and its implications, ultimately enhancing sensitivity to other cultures

### **Instructor Philosophy**

One of my primary goals in teaching anthropology is to enable my students to develop appropriate tools to be able to engage and employ them both in and out of the classroom. As anthropologists we fully understand that the condition of being a human is that we have to understand the meaning of our

experience. In the context of learning anthropology in the classroom, it is vital for students to viscerally learn to make their own interpretations rather than act on the purpose, beliefs, and judgments of others. Facilitating such an understanding is the pinnacle of my teaching philosophy. In other words, it is my hope and expectation that this course will help you create your own ideas and opinions about cultural phenomenon, particularly your own culture.

One of the foundational methodologies used in my classroom is focusing on each student's needs, abilities, interests, and learning styles placing the instructor as a facilitator of learning, acknowledging that the student voice is central to the learning experience. The benefits of this approach strengthens student motivation, promotes peer communication, builds student-teacher relationships, and engages in learning as an active process, while simultaneously fostering each student to *take responsibility for their own learning*.

### **Required Textbooks:**

- 1) Conformity and Conflict: Readings in Cultural Anthropology, 15th Edition By James W. Spradley, David W. McCurdy, Dianna Shandy.
- 2) The Trobrianders of Papua New Guinea by Annette Weiner (1988). New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

\*You will need a copy of these textbooks to succeed in this course. If you are experiencing any obstacles in trying to purchase the textbook, please talk to me as soon as possible.

### **Course Rules and Classroom Culture:**

**Student Conduct:** Social Sciences, and particularly Anthropology, requires us to explore the lives of others as well as our own. This means that certain topics can be sensitive at times and we have to act with the utmost *respect* for one another. The classroom at all times must remain a safe space for us to explore our thoughts and learn. You are expected to conduct yourself in an honest, professional, and ethical manner and will be held to this standard.

\*Laptops have been consistently proven to be a distraction in class for the students using them, other students, and the instructor. Use of a laptop or other technological device are not permitted in class without the prior consent of the instructor.

### **Requirements for success in this course**

- 1) Access required texts
- 2) Complete your work on time
- 3) Participate and engage respectfully with your classmates
- 4) Access and use CANVAS course online

\*All assignments must be submitted to our CANVAS site to receive credit. Assignments not uploaded to CANVAS will not be counted towards your grade.

### **Late work policy**

Late work is accepted. However, please note that late assignments are marked down one full letter grade for each time the class meets. For example, if you have an assignment that is due on Monday and submit it on Wednesday, it will be marked down one letter grade. If this same assignment is handed in on Friday, it will be marked down two letter grades.

Reminder: *\*In-class writings can not be made up.*

Additionally, the last day to submit any late assignments is the last day of class - **March 15th**.  
*No assignments will be accepted after this date.*

If you are going to miss class or something comes up unexpectedly, always communicate with me. When we keep an honest, open line of communication, everyone benefits.

### **Request for Special Needs or Accommodations**

Direct questions about or requests for special needs or accommodations to the LBCC Disability Coordinator, RCH-105, 6500 Pacific Blvd. SW, Albany, Oregon 97321, Phone 541-917-4789 or via Oregon Telecommunications Relay TTD at 1-800-735-2900 or 1-800-735-1232. Make sign language interpreting or real-time transcribing requests 2-4 weeks in advance. Make all other requests at least 72 hours prior to the event. LBCC will make every effort to honor requests. LBCC is an equal opportunity educator and employer.

### **LBCC Comprehensive Statement of Nondiscrimination**

LBCC prohibits unlawful discrimination based on race, color, religion, ethnicity, use of native language, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, marital status, disability, veteran status, age, or any other status protected under applicable federal, state, or local laws. For further information see Board Policy P1015 in our Board Policies and Administrative Rules. Title II, IX, & Section 504: Scott Rolen, CC-108, 541-917-4425; Lynne Cox, T-107B, 541-917-4806, LBCC, Albany, Oregon. To report: [linnbenton-advocate.symlicity.com/public\\_report](http://linnbenton-advocate.symlicity.com/public_report)

### **LBCC Basic Needs Statement**

Any student who has difficulty affording groceries or food, or who lacks a safe and stable place to live, is urged to contact a Student Resource Navigator in the Single Stop Office (T-112): Amanda Stanley, [stanlea@linnbenton.edu](mailto:stanlea@linnbenton.edu), 541-917-4877.

## **Course Requirements & Grades:**

### **Group Teaching Project: Language and Communication (10 points)**

Each person will teach their assigned reading although we will brainstorm ideas in a group. Do not think of this assignment as a presentation, approach it from the perspective of a teacher. Some of the central questions teachers need to ask themselves before preparing their classes are as follows:

- What are the goals of the class session going to be?
- What do I already know about this topic?
- How can I best prepare for the class session?
- What questions do I already have about this topic that I want to find out more about?
- What is the significance of this?
- How can we apply this knowledge directly to our own lives?

Readings: One reading for each group, but will be taught individually to another group.

- 1) Morgan, Mindy, J. (2005) Redefining the Ojibwe Classroom: Indigenous Language Programs within Large Research Universities. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*, 36.1: 96-103
- 2) Meek, Barbra A. (2006) And the Injun goes "How!": Representations of American Indian English in White Public Space. *Language in Society* 35.01: 93-128.
- 3) Conformity and Conflict textbook, Chapter 7. "Manipulating Meaning: The Military Name Game" by Sarah Boxer, p. 57
- 4) Conformity and Conflict textbook, Chapter 5. "Shakespeare in the Bush" by Laura Bohannon, p. 41

### **Concept Journal (15 points)**

In this course you will keep a concept journal - a journal that is kind of like a vocabulary journal. Throughout the class, I will mention the journal and we will add new key terms to it. Your concept journal follows three steps: a) definition b) a sentence that *provides context* for the term and c) a short explanation of how you relate this word to your own life. You can staple pieces of paper together to create a journal or use a small notebook - whatever works for you.

Here is an example: let's imagine in class the word "ethnocentrism" comes up in the lecture or text. This is not a word that is typically used in everyday conversation, yet is common in the social sciences.

a) Ethnocentrism (noun) or Ethnocentric (adjective)

1. the belief in the inherent superiority of one's own ethnic group or culture
2. a tendency to view alien groups or cultures from the perspective of one's own
3. belief in the intrinsic superiority of the nation, culture, or group to which one belongs, often accompanied by feelings of dislike for other groups

b) Believing that your culture is superior to others shows someone's lack of imagination for not being able to see things from a different perspective.

c) I have a friend who sees things ethnocentrically. He often makes large generalizations about groups of people that are misinformed. He always talks about his "African neighbor" who makes a lot of noise upstairs as if all people from there are loud. It is ethnocentric to think of a group of people as one stereotype. Africa is a diverse continent with 57 different countries, but Americans too often make that ethnocentric mistake.

### **Trobriand Islanders reading quizzes + in-class writings (10 X 1 = 10 points)**

These ten points are a combination of reading quizzes on the Trobriand Islanders in Papua New Guinea book and writing reflections on our learning in class. These can **not** be made up and can only be taken in class on the day of the assignment.

### **Review/Discussion Questions (2.5 X 6 = 15 points)**

At the end of your readings are review questions for the chapters. Each question should be thoughtfully answered with a minimum of a paragraph for each question. These discussion questions are to be submitted on Canvas *before* class on their due date. This will help you be prepared to have a generative discussion in class.

### **Ethnographic Interview (10 points) due Week 5**

You will find a person over the age of sixty to interview. There will be a separate handout explaining this assignment in detail. You will have to turn in three parts for this assignment: 1) fieldnotes 2) typed transcript and 3) an analysis/reflection of the experience.

### **Midterm (10 points) - Due Week 6**

The midterm will be based on your concept journal plus short answer questions. It will be a take home exam and handed out to you Friday of Week 5 and handed in on Friday of Week 6. Late assignments will not be accepted.

**Comparative Cultures Essay due (Trobriand Islanders + You) (10 points)**

Pulling out a theme from the book (funeral ceremonies, gender, food, ecology, etc.) you will compare one aspect of the Trobriand Islanders of Papua New Guinea to your own culture. This essay is a minimum of 1,500 words, which equates to about three pages. We will discuss this in detail in class.

**Final Reflection (10 points) -**

This will be discussed in depth in class.

**Extra-credit Assignment (optional) - (5 points) -**

Warning! This is a four hour documentary so do not count on this! Search for the BBC Documentary entitled, Century of Self by Adam Curtis. It is broken into four parts so searching “Century of Self Part 1” on YouTube can be helpful. The extra credit assignment is to watch the whole documentary, taking hand-written notes on points made that stuck out to you. Lastly, hand in a minimum one page essay reflecting on what you learned in the film and how it relates to your own life.

<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Points Possible</b>
Danger of a Single Story	5
Discussion Questions	15
Teaching Project	10
News Analysis	5
Concept Journal	15
Midterm	10
TRO + in-class writings	10
Ethnographic Interview	10
Comparative Cultures Essay	10
Final reflection	10
+ <u>Total</u>	<u>100</u>

- Conformity & Conflict (CC)
- Trobriand Islanders of Papua New Guinea (TRO)
- CANVAS...Files...Readings... (CA)

	Monday	Wednesday	Friday
Week 1: Jan 7th Anthropology	Introductions & Anthropology	(CC) Ch. 4 Nice Girls Don't Talk to Rastas p. 31-36 + review questions	Danger of a Single Story Assignment due  (CC) Read p. 2-5 (TRO) Read Introduction p. 1-13
Week 2: Jan 14th Language & Communication	(CA) "Whorf Revisited: You Are What you Speak" p. 49-56 + questions	(TRO) Ch. 1 p. 1-27	(TRO) Ch. 2 p. 33-43  News Headline Analysis due
Week 3: Jan 21st Ethnographic Methods	Holiday LBCC closed	(CC) Ethnography & Culture p. 6-12  (CC) Ch 2: Eating Christmas in the Kalahari p. 13-19 + review questions	Teaching Project due
Week 4: Jan 28th Technology & Cultural Change	(TRO) Ch. 3 p. 51-61	Eskimo Science article (CA) + review questions	(TRO) Ch. 4 p. 65-77
Week 5: Feb 4th Technology & Cultural Change	Watching The Clock: A Mother's Hope For A Natural Birth In A Cesarean Culture Health Affairs (CA)  (TRO) Ch. 5 p. 81-93	<a href="#">The Most Scientific Birth is Often the Least Technological One + questions</a>  <a href="#">How Natural Birth Became Inaccessible to the Poor</a>	Ethnographic Interview due  Midterm take home exam handed out
Week 6: Feb 11th Anthropology of Globalization	(TRO) Ch. 6 p. 97-108	(CC) How Sushi Went Global by Theodore Bestor p. 297-306 + questions	Midterm exam due

Week 7: Feb 18th Towards an Anthropology of Women	Holiday LBCC closed	(CC) Ch. 35 Global Women in the New Economy + questions	(TRO) Ch. 7 p. 111-119
Week 8: Feb 25th Towards an Anthropology of Women	(CA) Lila Abu-Lughod: Do Muslim Women Need Saving?	(CC) Ch. 20 Negotiating work and family in America + review questions	(TRO) Ch. 8 p. 125-134
Week 9: Mar 4th Ecological Anthropology	TRO) Ch. 9 p. 139-154	(TRO) Ch. 10 p. 159-165	Comparative Cultures Essay due
Week 10: Mar 11th  Ecological Anthropology	(CA) <a href="#">10 things you want to know about human nature if you're fighting climate change</a>  Concept Journal due	(CC) Ch. 10 We are Going Under Water + questions	Final in-class writing  *Last possible day instructor accepts assignments