

:: Introduction to Cultural Anthropology ::

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Benton Center Rm: 244
Class: Thursday 6:00-8:50 pm
Office hours Thursday 5:00-6:00 pm, Rm 223

Course Description:

Anthropologists today research sites as varied as Wall Street investment banks, India's Supreme Court, cities in Nigeria, villages in Japan, Indonesian mining towns, Miami's night clubs, Occupy Wall Street, health clinics in Sweden, caves in Greece, oceanographic research ships, and San Francisco's Chinatown. Their methods often involve months or years of observing, participating in the communities they study - an approach that generates deep knowledge of the immense variety of human experience and ways of life.

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.

This course introduces students to key concepts, methods, theories, and approaches in cultural anthropology. It provides an opportunity for new analytical strategies and frameworks for understanding culture, power, language, politics, economics, inequality, race, class, gender, migration, health, and globalization. We all hold enormous assumptions about these topics and hardly tease these assumptions apart, assuming they are "natural" - and under closer scrutiny, we come to understand that they are complex cultural processes. Cultural anthropology helps provide the tools to test these assumptions so that we can better understand the contemporary world and actively engage our shared challenges.

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 about your own culture.

I expect you to take responsibility for your own learning and participate in class discussions.

Required Textbook:

Guest, K. J. (2017) *Cultural Anthropology: A Toolkit for a Global Age*. Norton Publishers.

Facebook: All readings that are not found in our textbook will be posted to our class's Facebook page: search for "Lbcc Anthropology" and add as a friend.

(<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100013380434977>) If you would rather not use your personal account for this, then make another one. If you wish to use a different name on Facebook, just let me know what that name is so I can confirm and give you access.

*You will need a copy of this textbook 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. Also, there is a copy of the textbook on course reserves in the Learning Center on the second floor. The book is available for two hours at a time to check out.

Course Rules and Classroom Culture:

Student Conduct: The discipline of 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 must remain a safe space for us to explore our thoughts and learn. You will be expected to conduct yourself in an honest, professional, and ethical manner.

*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.

Late Assignment Policy: Please complete your work on time. Each day an assignment is late, it will drop a letter grade.

Absences: Attending all classes is correlated to student success. If you know you will be absent, communicate with your instructor prior to the absence and arrangements will be made. If you have an unexpected absence, please follow along with the class on the syllabus, contacting your instructor if you have any questions. In-class writings can not be made up. The films we watch in class are crucial to your participation in the course as well.

Statement on Academic Dishonesty: As a college student you will be held to the highest standards regarding academic integrity. Academic dishonesty includes: cheating (the intentional use of unauthorized

materials, information, or study aids); fabrication (falsification or invention of any information); assisting (helping another commit an act of academic dishonesty); tampering (altering or interfering with evaluation instruments and documents); and plagiarism (intentionally or knowingly representing the words or ideas of another person as one's own). At the discretion of the instructor, engaging in academic dishonesty risks will absolutely result in a zero on the dishonest assignment and risks failing the entire course

Students with Disabilities:

Accommodations are a collaborative effort between students, faculty, and staff. You should meet with your instructor during the first week of class if you have a documented disability and need accommodations. Your instructor needs to know this from you in order for you to best be accommodated. If you think you may need accommodation services please contact Center for Accessibility Resources (CFAR): 541-917-4789. <https://www.linnbenton.edu/cfar>

Course Requirements & Grades

Group Teaching Project (15 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 of the following articles will be assigned to your group **but will be taught individually to another group.** A rubric will be provided to you before the assignment.

1. Kaufman, S. (2005). And a time to die: How American hospitals shape the end of life. Simon and Schuster, pp. 1-20.
2. Lock, Margaret. 2002. "Medical Knowledge and Body Politics," in Exotic No More: Anthropology on the Front Lines, ed. Jeremy MacClancy. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, pp. 190-208.
3. Larsen, J.A. Finding meaning in first episode psychosis: experience, agency, and the cultural repertoire. *Med Anthropol Quarterly*. 2004 Dec;18(4):447-71

4. Davis-Floyd, R. E. (2004). Birth as an American rite of passage: With a new preface. University of California Press.

In-class Written Exercises (15) & Written Assignment (10 points)

These writings will take place both in-class and out of class. As an out of class assignment, they will warm you up for the material that will be presented in class that day. As an in-class writing assignment, they will act as an expansion exercise - an opportunity for you to express your opinions and reflect on the course material. For in-class writings, you will never be graded on organization, spelling, grammar, etc. This is called free association writing, or, in other words, a space for you to explore what flows out of your head and onto the paper. These cannot be made up outside of class so attendance is crucial.

Midterm Exam (25 points)

Participation (10 points) -

You will be given ample opportunity to participate. Participation does not only mean speaking up in class. In fact, when the same person speaks all the time it hampers others ability to participate. Participation is about engagement. There are many ways to engage with the material. One such way is speaking up in class and another way is being a solid group member.

Group Quiz (10 points) -

This will be unannounced and based on the readings. You will be paired with a classmate to answer the questions.

Research Teaching Project (15 points)

You will be assigned a topic related to our module on Class Inequality. Similar to the Group Teaching Project, you will research the topic your group is assigned and then present your topic individually to another group in class. Do not think of this assignment as a presentation, approach it from the perspective of a teacher. You will be peer-evaluated and a rubric will be provided to you prior to the assignment.

Topics assigned:

- 1) Water Crisis in Flint, Michigan
- 2) Chemical Valley, Sarnia, Ontario Canada
- 3) Dakota Access Pipeline
- 4) Woborn, Massachusetts

You are responsible for teaching your group about your assigned site. Presentation should include, but is not limited to the following:

Brief history/map of the place.
 Who lives there? Who doesn't?
 What happened? Why did this happen? Did it "need" to?
 Apply an Environmental Justice framework to your site
 Discuss the public's response and resistance tactics.
 Was there any resolution? If so, what did it look like?
 How could this be avoided in the future?

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.

Overview of Grading

Your grade in the class can be cleanly calculated out of 100 points. It should not be a surprise to you.

In-class writing 1	5
Illness/Healing Assignment	10
In-class writing 2	5
Group Pop-Quiz	10
In-class Writing 3	5
Group Teaching Assignment	15
Midterm Examination	25
Research Teaching Project	15
Participation	10
+	
Total Points	100

Tentative Course Schedule

*(CA) = Cultural Anthropology textbook

Date	Monday Class
<p>Week 1: January 12th</p> <p>Anthropology in a Global Age + What is Culture?</p>	<p>Introductions & Syllabus</p> <p>Short Film: The Danger of a Single Story https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story?language=en</p> <p>In-class writing 1</p>
<p>Week 2: January 19th</p> <p>Culture + Fieldwork + Ethnography</p>	<p>Illness & Healing Written Assignment due</p> <p>Readings (CA): 1) p. 22-23 2) Chapter 2 p. 33-42, 48-60 3) Chapter 3 p. 71-95</p>
<p>Week 3: January 26th</p> <p>Medical Anthropology: Health, Illness, and the Body</p>	<p>In-class writing 2 (analysis/reflection of written assignment due)</p> <p>Chapter 16: p. 615-632</p> <p>The Business of Being Born - Video clips & Activity</p>
<p>Week 4: February 2nd</p> <p>Medical Anthropology: Health, Illness, and the Body</p>	<p>Group Teaching Assignment due</p> <p>Chapter 16: p. 633-653</p>
<p>Week 5: February 9th</p> <p>The Global Economy</p>	<p>Chapter 12: p. 437-464</p>
<p>Week 6: February 16th</p> <p>The Global Economy</p>	<p>Chapter 12: p. 465-482</p> <p>Midterm exam</p> <p>Black Gold Film & Activity</p>
<p>Week 7: February 23rd</p> <p>Gender</p>	<p>Chapter 8: p. 271-309</p> <p>In-class writing 3</p>

Week 8: March 2nd Race & Racism	Chapter 6: p. 195-234
Week 9: March 9th Class Inequality	Unnatural Causes Film
Week 10: March 16th Class Inequality & Environmental Justice	Research Teaching Project due In-class writing reflection: Environmental Justice framework applied to your topic