

:: Introduction to Cultural Anthropology ::

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Class: 1:00-1:50 /NSH 109
Office + hours: SSH 111
Monday 2:00, Thursday 9:00

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.

Student Learning Outcomes

- Articulate an understanding of culture as a dynamic and adaptive mechanism used by humans to live a life that would be impossible if totally dependent on nature, while also recognizing that new environmental pressures and stimulus are continually at play.
- Apply anthropological theories, insights, and methods to contemporary situations students are likely to encounter in their professional and personal lives.

- Use cultural anthropology to understand specific societal problems in a wide variety of areas, such as medicine, education, social relationship, government, architecture, business and economic development.
- Develop a critical understanding of cultural diversity and its implications, ultimately enhancing sensitivity to other cultures.
- Identify and analyze complex practices, values and beliefs and the culturally and historically defined meanings of difference.

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.

Take responsibility for your own learning and participating in class discussions is what makes this course enjoyable!

Required Textbook:

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

*This text is essential in order to succeed in this course. Please talk to your instructor immediately if you are experiencing any access issues.

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.

Technology Statement

*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 solely permitted after discussing this need with your instructor.

However, we do use Canvas in this course! You are welcome to have your screen on our Canvas site any time. We will be uploading all of our assignments there. You will need to enroll in our course and can do so here: <https://canvas.instructure.com/enroll/PDMT7R>.

Alternatively, we can sign up at <https://canvas.instructure.com/register> and use the following join code: **PDMT7R**

Contact your Instructor as soon as possible if you are having any issues getting into Canvas.

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

*The last possible day to submit late work in this course is Friday, November 30th. No assignments will be accepted after this date other than your final exam.

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>

Basic Needs Statement: Any student who has difficulty affording groceries or accessing sufficient food to eat every day, or who lacks a safe and stable place to live, and believes this may affect their performance in the course, is urged to contact the Single Stop Office for support (SinglestopatLBCC@linnbenton.edu , 541-917- 4877, or visit us on the web www.linnbenton.edu under Student Support for Current Students). Our office can help students get connected to resources to help.

Course Requirements & Grades

Written Assignments (25 points)

These assignments are an important part of your course engagement. One of the written exercises is about a video, two are reflections on podcasts, one is an assignment on illness and healing that relates to observing medical anthropology patterns in your own life. These will be written in and outside of class.

Discussion Questions (10 points)

You will hand in the discussion questions that correspond to the readings. Here you engage with the textbook reading, but your reflections are always welcome as well.

Group Teaching Project (15 points)

Each person will teach their assigned reading, although we will brainstorm ideas in a group. You are responsible for individually teaching your article for 10 minutes to your classmates. A rubric will be provided to you beforehand.

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?

Midterm Exam (15 points)

This consists of 8 open-ended questions. You are allowed to use your notebooks. Zero technology is permitted during the use of this exam.

Group Quiz (10 points)

You will be paired with a classmate(s) 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) Hurricane Harvey, Texas

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 handwritten 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

Assignment	Points
Danger of a Single Story - First Assignment	5
Podcast Reflection	5
Discussion Questions # 1 p. 104	5
Illness & Healing Assignment	10
Group Teaching Project	15
Midterm	15
Group Quiz	10
Discussion Questions # 2 p. 166	5
Sapiens podcast assignment	5

Research Teaching Project	15
Final Reflection- in-class writing	10

Total points	100
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Course Calendar

* Textbook: Cultural Anthropology: A Reader for a Global Age = R

**Canvas = (CA)

	Monday	Wednesday	Friday
Week 1: Sep Anth in a Global Age	Introductions	1) R =Intro p. 3-7 2) R =From The Land of Open Graves, Jason De León, p. 7-18	In-class writing First Written Assignment due
Week 2: Oct 1 Culture, Ethnography & Fieldwork	1) R = Reading Ethnography p. 1-2 2) Podcast reflection due (CA) https://onbeing.org/programs/mahzarin-banaji-the-mind-is-a-difference-seeking-machine/		1) R = Shakespeare in the Bush, Laura Bohannon, p. 95-104. 2) +Discussion Questions due, p. 104
Week 3: Oct 8 Medical Anth	R= p. 348-350 Reading: Sociocultural Perspective of health & body (CA)	Illness & Healing Assignment Part I due Short film + interview in class for Illness & Healing Part II	Illness & Healing Assignment II + III due (see CA)
Week 4: Oct 15 Medical Anth	Podcast (1 hour). Be prepared to discuss and write in class (CA) https://www.democracynow.org/2012/12/25/dr_gabor_mat_on_the_stress	Preparation for Friday	<i>Group Teaching Assignment due</i>
Week 5: Oct 22 Economic Anth	(CA) Read Chapter on Economics handout p. 124-140		Midterm Exam

Week 6: Oct 29 Economic Anth	R = From Jibaro to Crack Dealer; Confronting the Restructuring of Capitalism in El Barrio, Philippe Bourgois p. 238-249	Film - Black Gold	Group quiz
Week 7: Nov 5 Ethnicity & Nationalism	1) R =p. 145-146 2) Read Chapter on Ethncity and Nationalism (CA)	1) R = From Mohawk Interrupts, Audra Simpson p. 158-166 3) + Discussion Questions due p. 166	R = “Landmine Boy” and Stupid Deaths, Paul Farmer p. 147-158
Week 8: Nov 12 Ethnicity & Nationalism	College closed for holiday	Film - Human Family Tree	SAPIENS podcast assignment due Film reflection in class
Week 9: Nov 19 Ecological Anth	<i>Research Teaching Project due</i>	Reading on CA, Forest Development the Indian Way, p. 1-10	College Closed - Holiday
Week 10: Nov 26 Ecological Anth	Film - Cuba	Film Group Assignment	Final Writing Reflection in class

***Our final exam is scheduled from Wednesday, December 5th in this classroom from 1:00-2:50 p.m.**