

:: Anthropology 210: Comparative Cultures ::

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Class: T/R 2:30-3:50
Benton Center 244
Office hours: T/R 2:00 + by appt

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) Come to class and be prepared
- 2) Access required texts
- 3) Complete your work on time
- 4) Participate and engage respectfully with your classmates
- 5) 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 on **June 7th.**

No assignments will be accepted after this date.

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, check the slides posted on Canvas, and contact your instructor if you have any questions after that. Any writing done in class can not be made up. The films, lectures, and discussions we watch in class are crucial to your participation in the course as well. If you miss the equivalent of two weeks in this course or have six absences, it is not possible to pass this course.

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.symplicity.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, 541-917-4877.

Policy on Children in Class:

It is my belief that if we want women in academia, that we should also expect children to be present in some form. Currently, the college does not have a formal policy on children in the classroom. The policy described here is thus, a reflection of my own beliefs and commitments to student, staff and faculty parents.

- 1) All exclusively breastfeeding babies are welcome in class as often as is necessary to support the breastfeeding relationship. Because not all women can pump sufficient milk, and not all babies will take a bottle reliably, I never want students to feel like they have to choose between feeding their baby and continuing their education. You and your nursing baby are welcome in class anytime.
- 2) For older children and babies, I understand that minor illnesses and unforeseen disruptions in childcare often put parents in the position of having to choose between missing class to stay home with a child and leaving him or her with someone you or the child does not feel comfortable with. While this is not meant to be a long-term childcare solution, occasionally bringing a child to class in order to cover gaps in care is perfectly acceptable.
- 3) I ask that all students work with me to create a welcoming environment that is respectful of all forms of diversity, including diversity in parenting status.
- 4) In all cases where babies and children come to class, I ask that you sit close to the door so that if your little one needs special attention and is disrupting learning for other students, you may step outside until their need has been met. Non-parents in the class, please reserve seats near the door for your parenting classmates.
- 5) I understand that often the largest barrier to completing your coursework once you become a parent is the tiredness many parents feel in the evening once children have *finally* gone to sleep. The struggles of balancing school, childcare and often another job are exhausting! I hope that you will feel comfortable disclosing your student-parent status to me. This is the first step in my being able to accommodate any special needs that arise. While I maintain the same high expectations for all student in my classes regardless of parenting status, I am happy to problem solve with you in a way that makes you feel supported as you strive for school-parenting balance. Thank you for the diversity you bring to our classroom.
- 6) Lastly, a lot of the course material we talk about in class is only for adults and can be too difficult for children to process. The instructor is more than willing to accommodate children in the classroom, but can

not make any changes to the content of the course based on what might be appropriate/inappropriate for children.

Course Requirements & Grades:

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) Ahearn, L. M. (2001). *Invitations to love: Literacy, love letters, and social change in Nepal*. University of Michigan Press.
- 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 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 (5 points) - Due Week 6

The midterm will be based on your concept journal. It will be a take home exam and handed out to you Week 5 and handed in on Week 6. We will discuss this in detail in class.

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.

Assignment	Points Possible
Danger of a Single Story	5
Discussion Questions	20
Teaching Project	10
News Analysis	5
Concept Journal	15
Midterm	5
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)

	Tuesday	Thursday
Week 1: April 1st Anthropology in a Global Age	Introductions, Syllabus, + Anthropology	(CC) Ch. 4 Nice Girls Don't Talk to Rastas p. 31-36 + review questions (CC) Read p. 2-5 (TRO) Read Introduction p. 1-13 Danger of a Single Story Assignment due
Week 2: April 8th Language & Communication	(CA) "Whorf Revisited: You Are What you Speak" p. 49-56 + questions (TRO) p. 15-31	(TRO) Ch. 2 p. 33-43 News Headline Analysis due Guest Speaker & activity: Jason Sarkozi-Forfinski
Week 3: April 15th Ethnographic Methods	(CC) Ethnography & Culture p. 6-12 (CC) Ch 2: Eating Christmas in the Kalahari p. 13-19 + review questions	Teaching Project due (articles on CA)
Week 4: April 22nd Technology & Cultural Change	(TRO) Ch. 3 p. 51-61	Eskimo Science article (CA) + review questions (TRO) Ch. 4 p. 65-77

<p>Week 5: April 29th Technology & Cultural Change</p>	<p>a) Watching The Clock: A Mother's Hope For A Natural Birth In A Cesarean Culture Health Affairs (CA)</p> <p>b) The Most Scientific Birth is Often the Least Technological One + questions</p> <p>c) How Natural Birth Became Inaccessible to the Poor</p> <p>(TRO) Ch. 5 p. 81-93</p>	<p>Ethnographic Interview due</p> <p>Midterm take home exam handed out</p>
<p>Week 6: May 6th Anthropology of Globalization</p>	<p>(TRO) Ch. 6 p. 97-108</p> <p>(CC) How Sushi Went Global by Theodore Bestor p. 297-306 + questions</p>	<p>Midterm exam due</p>
<p>Week 7: May 13th Towards an Anthropology of Women</p>	<p>(CC) Ch. 35 Global Women in the New Economy + questions</p>	<p>(TRO) Ch. 7 p. 111-119</p>
<p>Week 8: May 20th Towards an Anthropology of Women</p>	<p>(CA) Lila Abu-Lughod: Do Muslim Women Need Saving?</p> <p>(TRO) Ch. 8 p. 125-134</p>	<p>(CC) Ch. 20 Negotiating work and family in America + review questions</p> <p>(TRO) Ch. 9 p. 139-154</p>
<p>Week 9: May 27th Ecological Anthropology</p>	<p>(CC) The Hunters: Scarce Resources in the Kalahari + review questions</p> <p>(TRO) Ch. 10 p. 159-165</p>	<p>Comparative Cultures Essay due</p>
<p>Week 10: June 3rd Ecological Anthropology</p>	<p>Concept Journal due</p> <p>(CA) The Glaciers of the Andes are Melting: Indigenous and Anthropological Knowledge Merge in Restoring Water Resources + writing assignment</p>	<p>(CC) Ch. 10 We are Going Under Water + questions</p> <p>Final in-class writing</p> <p><i>*Last possible day instructor accepts assignments</i></p>

