

Las Positas College  
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**Course Outline for ANTH 3**  
**SOCIAL/CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY**  
**Effective: Fall 2004**

**I. CATALOG DESCRIPTION:**

ANTH 3 — SOCIAL/CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY — 3.00 units

How human beings in different cultures meet basic biological, social and cultural needs, including kinship and marriage practices, political and social organization, economic institutions, religious and childrearing practices, social change, as well as other aspects of cultural behavior. Emphasis on understanding other cultures on their own terms. Includes the many subcultures making up North American populations. 3 hours lecture. [Typical contact hours: lecture 52.5]

3.00 Units Lecture

**Grading Methods:**

Optional

**Discipline:**

	<b>MIN</b>
<b>Lecture Hours:</b>	54.00
<b>Total Hours:</b>	54.00

**II. NUMBER OF TIMES COURSE MAY BE TAKEN FOR CREDIT:**

**III. PREREQUISITE AND/OR ADVISORY SKILLS:**

**IV. MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES:**

**Upon completion of this course, the student should be able to:**

1. describe and understand the methodologies of social and cultural anthropology, including ethnography
2. describe the basic subject matter of social and cultural anthropology
3. demonstrate an ability to study cultural issues objectively, including issues of cultural diversity
4. demonstrate a broadened knowledge of indigenous cultures, beliefs and practices
5. describe and apply some of the modern theoretical approaches to the study of social and cultural anthropology
6. describe the historical development of the science of social and cultural anthropology

**V. CONTENT:**

- A. The four-field, holistic approach of anthropology
- B. The culture concept
- C. History of social and cultural anthropology
  1. Colonialism and imperialism
  2. Post-colonial studies
  3. Post-modernist anthropology
  4. Applied anthropology
- D. In-depth description of the methods and practices of social and cultural anthropology
  1. Fieldwork and participant observation
  2. Ethnography
  3. The power of representation
- E. Theoretical approaches and methods used in social and cultural anthropology
  1. Cultural relativism, as opposed to ethnocentrism
  2. Participant observation and ethnography
  3. Emic and etic approaches, for example:
    - a. Structure-Functionalism
    - b. Culture and personality
    - c. Cultural materialism
    - d. Ideationism and thick description
    - e. Symbolic anthropology
  4. Rights and issues concerning indigenous peoples
  5. Ethics in anthropology
- F. The evolution of human cultures
- G. Universal culture topics
  1. Survival and subsistence
    - a. foraging
    - b. food production
      1. pastoralism
      2. horticulture

- 3. agriculture
  - c. industrialism
  - 2. Consumption and exchange (reciprocity)
  - 3. Fertility and mortality
  - 4. Culture, enculturation, socialization, and personality
    - a. morals, ethical values, and taboos
    - b. laws
  - 5. Kinship, sex, marriage, and the family
  - 6. Domestic groups and post-marital residence
  - 7. Social stratification; class and caste societies
  - 8. Social organization, associations and interest groups; initiations.
  - 9. Social control, political organization, and government
  - 10. Communication, symbolic behavior, language and linguistics
  - 11. Religion, religious practitioners, rituals, and the supernatural
  - 12. Medical anthropology and traditional healing practices
  - 13. Art and aesthetic culture
  - 14. Culture change, growth and diffusion
- H. Anthropology, globalization and the modern world

#### VI. METHODS OF INSTRUCTION:

- A. **Lecture** -
- B. Textbook reading assignments; additional Internet and/or print assignments
- C. **Lecture** -
- D. **Audio-visual Activity** - Presentation of audio-visual materials
- E. **Research** - Research projects
- F. **Discussion** - Class and group discussions

#### VII. TYPICAL ASSIGNMENTS:

A. Lectures 1. The five major modes of production with regard to the division of labor, property relations and the sustainability thereof 2. Language and paralinguistics; symbolic communication, the evolution of speech, and writing 3. Cultural materialist, ideationist and applied anthropological approaches to the problem of infanticide among the urban poor

B. Reading assignments 1. Read the textbook chapter on art and aesthetic culture. 2. Read the BBC News article, "Kenya: Changing Attitudes to Female Circumcision" (Monday, September 6, 1999). C. Homework 1. Read the textbook chapter on communication and answer the following questions: a. What are the key characteristics of human verbal language? What makes it different from other forms of animal communication? b. Explain the two different models presented in the text that seek to describe the relationship between language and thought (the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis and sociolinguistics). Use one of these models to explain the differences observed between men's speech and women's speech. c. What is paralinguistics? Describe a situation in which paralinguistics might be very important; how would you act to convey the appropriate information? D. Class and group discussions 1. Class discussion topic: How can we explain the so-called cannibalism of the Yanomami? How does this differ from the genuine cannibalism of the Aztecs? 2. Group discussion topic: What are the different forms of marriage cross-culturally? If virtually every culture has rules against adultery, why does it still occur almost everywhere? E. Audio-visual materials 1. "Masai Women: The Masai of Kenya," Shanachie Entertainment Corp., 1994. This video, originally produced in 1977, documents Masai life from the point of view of women, who must marry and produce sons in order to assure their own access to cattle resources. F. Research project 1. Choose a culture to study during the course of the term. Since culture is a group phenomenon, you must find a group of people who share substantially large things in common (ethnicity, nationality, religion) with whom you will have face-to-face access. Your fieldwork will consist of interviews, both one-on-one and in groups, and participant observation; your goal is to write a 10-page mini-ethnography about this culture by the end of the term.

#### VIII. EVALUATION:

- A. **Methods**
  - 1. Exams/Tests
  - 2. Research Projects
  - 3. Home Work
- B. **Frequency**
  - 1. Midterm and Final Examinations
  - 2. Weekly homework evaluation
  - 3. End-of-term evaluation of research project

#### IX. TYPICAL TEXTS:

- 1. Miller, Barbara D. *Cultural Anthropology (Study Edition)*. 2nd ed., Allyn & Bacon, 2004.
- 2. Bohannan and van der Elst *Asking and Listening: Ethnography as Personal Adaptation*. 1st ed., Waveland Press, 1998.
- 3. Suggs, David N. *A Bagful of Locusts and the Baboon Woman: Constructions of Gender, Change and Continuity in Botswana*. 1st ed., Wadsworth/Harcourt College Publishers, 2002.

#### X. OTHER MATERIALS REQUIRED OF STUDENTS: