

# ***Introduction to Anthropology: ANT 101***

Oxford College of Emory University  
Spring 2007  
Dr. Valerie Singer

Office: 101 Language Hall

Office Hours: Tuesday and Thursday 1:30-4:00 PM

and by appointment (Office hours may change in March; changes will be posted to the class conference.)

Email: [vsinger@emory.edu](mailto:vsinger@emory.edu)

Office Phone: x 4614

Home Phone: 678 342-8659

(Feel free to call me at home, however I ask that you don't call after 9 PM.)

## **Course Description**

Anthropology is the study of humankind, across both time and space – from our earliest beginnings to our most current dilemmas and from the most urban ‘modern’ settings to the most rural ‘backwoods’ locales. It is thus an extremely broad discipline. An introductory course such as this one necessarily only brushes the surface of many topics. Yet it is the goal of this course to provide students with an overall understanding of anthropological concepts, particularly the holistic approach to studying humanity. We will touch on each of anthropology's four sub-disciplines: cultural anthropology, biological anthropology, archaeology, and linguistics. We will look at how cultural images of “the other” are formed, and what these images say about those who create them. We will pay close attention to how ethnicity, gender, sexuality, and religion shape and are shaped by culture.

## **Course Objectives:**

By the end of this course students will:

- Be familiar with basic anthropological terms and concepts
- Understand the basic methods and challenges of ethnographic fieldwork
- Understand why race has no biological meaning, but significant, varying, historical and cultural meanings
- Be familiar with the principals of human evolution and modern human variation
- Be familiar with basic traits shared by all primates, and their relevance to evolution
- Be able to discuss the interrelationship of cultural change and continuity
- Understand the significance and meaning of cultural relativism
- Understand basic anthropological approaches to religion, conversion, and ritual
- Understand basic anthropological approaches to family, kinship, and marriage
- Be able to think holistically about human traits – biological or cultural

### **Required texts**

- The Gebusi: Lives Transformed in a Rainforest World by Bruce Knaft
- Guest of the Sheik, An Ethnography of An Iraqi Village by Elizabeth Fernea
- Learning Capoeira, Lessons in Cunning from an Afro-Brazilian Art by Greg Downey
- Numerous articles on e-reserve (listed with an R on course schedule)

### **Course Grade Breakdown**

Exam One:	15%
Exam Two:	20%
Final Exam:	25%
Quizzes:	10%
Term Paper:	15%
Attendance and Participation:	15%
Total	100%

### **Academic Honesty:**

Both Oxford College and I take the matter of academic honesty very seriously. I would like to remind you that you are required to follow the Honor Code. Any suspected breaches to the Honor Code will be referred to the Honor Council for review and possible disciplinary action. This includes acts of plagiarism. I have found in the past that many college students do not understand what does and does not constitute plagiarism. Student papers must be written without the help or collaboration of other anthropology students, though you are welcome to get writing help at the writing center. We will be discussing what constitutes plagiarism and proper citation methods later in the semester.

### **Attendance:**

I will be taking attendance each day. Each student is allowed TWO absences during the semester. This is to allow for the occasional illness, personal matter, or accidental nap.

**Each additional absence will result in a 1 point lose to your attendance and participation grade (out of 15 points).** There are only two exceptions to this policy: 1) absences for religious holidays *if you notify me ahead of time that you will be absent*, and 2) extreme unexpected situations (extended illnesses, death in the family, etc.). If you have an extreme situation that prevents you from attending class, please notify me as soon as possible, and be prepared to show documentation of the situation. If you do not notify me in a timely manner, I reserve the right NOT to excuse your absence. Please be aware that students with perfect attendance who remain silent all semester in the classroom will NOT received 15 points on their attendance and participation grade.

### **Participation:**

Your active participation is a vital part of this course. You are expected to have carefully read the assigned materials *before* each class session, and come prepared for discussion. I believe strongly that you can each learn a great deal in the classroom from your fellow students, not just from your professor. We are all both learners and teachers. You share

with me the responsibility of creating a classroom atmosphere in which all of your classmates feel comfortable expressing their individual questions, ideas, and opinions.

I will be setting up a class conference for us on Learn Link. **As part of your participation grade, you need to contribute to the class conference regularly.** Your contributions may include comments on the readings or in-class lectures, discussions, or films. I also encourage you to write “discussion questions” for the rest of the class to respond to or comment on. I envision this conference as being a way to create more dialogue between students and help connected anthropology to our daily lives.

### **Exams**

There will be three exams over the course of the semester. The third, final exam will be cumulative and given during the final exam period. The exams will all be a combination of multiple choice, short answer, and essay. I will provide you with a review sheet for each exam, although we may not have specified review sessions before each exam.

### **Quizzes**

You will be quizzed weekly on the readings. These reading quizzes will ask questions which are obvious and simple to answer if you have done the readings, and otherwise impossible. They will all be ten questions each, usually 5 multiple choice and 5 true/false. The day of the week of the quizzes will vary, so there is a ‘pop’ nature to them. Your first quiz will be on the syllabus itself!

### **Final Paper**

You will write a 5-6 page final paper as a mini ethnological paper. In the paper you will analyze one aspect of culture as it appears within Papua New Guinea and Iraq according to the ethnographies we have read. You may choose between the topics of religion, gender, sexuality, or marriage and family. Consider how each anthropologist approaches the topic and what we can learn from a cross-cultural analysis. I will give you a handout detailing the questions you are to address in the paper at least two weeks before it is due. We will also be discussing anthropological techniques of paper citation and how to avoid plagiarism. Again – do not work with other anthropology students as you write this paper. **Late papers will be graded down a FULL LETTER grade for each day late – INCLUDING Saturday and Sunday.** Outside research is not required for these papers.

### **Grading**

Many students worry about professors’ subjectivity in grading. Please remember: I NEVER *give* grades, students *earn* their grades, irrespective of how I feel about them as individual people. The key to an A in this course is hard work and comprehension of anthropology, not the ‘correct opinion’ or being buddies with Dr Singer. Please note that I WILL be grading using the plus-minus system.

100-93% = A	79-77% = C+
92-90% = A-	76-73% = C
89-87% = B+	72-70% = C-
86-83% = B	69-60% = D
82-80% = B-	59% and below = F

That being said, I hope you all enjoy this class, as I believe learning should be fun. And anthropology in particular is a fascinating subject which hopefully will have you pondering new aspects of human history and culture long beyond the end of this course! If you find yourself struggling with the material – *please* come see me for help!

### **Making Sense of Anthropology**

Anthropology is the study of humanity, past and present. As such, it is an extremely broad field. The traditional four-field approach of American Anthropology, which this course follows, is particularly holistic. A holistic approach is one that investigates the interrelated and multifaceted dynamics between seemingly separate parts of a system. Therefore, we can discuss the relationship between orangutans, our grasping thumbs, our depth perception, and the structure of our shoulder sockets. Or we can discuss connections between the local Temples to the gods in Bali, Balinese rice harvests, ducks, and Green Revolution pesticide treatments. Students have sometimes felt that my lectures go on ‘tangents’ in that I do not appear to stay on one subject. Your challenge as a student in this class is to learn how to draw connections between these multiple subjects – i.e. to think holistically and anthropologically. This will be especially challenging without a textbook for you to follow. Therefore it is **IMPERATIVE** to your success in this course that you keep up with the course materials, learn to make holistic connections, and bring it to my attention whenever you may start to feel lost. I am here to help you understand and recognize these connections, both within and outside the classroom.

### **Class Structure**

From day to day our class will be structured in a variety of ways. About once a week I will give you a traditional lecture, with or without power-point. Other days will be focused on discussion, and I will lead or facilitate your conversation with your classmates about the material at hand. Most often, however, I try to blend segments of lecture and segments of discussion in one class. Occasionally you will work in small groups or watch films. I **NEVER** use films as a ‘filler’ or easy day. Ethnographic films serve as an important medium in anthropology to help bring cultures alive in your minds; each film I show I consider valuable. Indeed I have a long list of films I *wish* we had time to watch, and in some semesters I have required students to watch extra films outside of class. (Not this semester.) At various points in the course I will give you vocabulary lists of important terms, but I do not give students my power point presentations. All this is to say that it is essential for you to take notes everyday in class – even on discussion or film days.

I am requiring all students to attend the Oxford Studies event on April 9<sup>th</sup>, a lecture on hip hop by anthropologist Dr. Kwame Harrison. If you are unable to attend this lecture because of illness, work schedule, or a competing class, you need to give me a written note explaining your absence. I have known Dr. Harrison for almost 14 years, and I can promise you it will be an interesting lecture. This will **NOT** be an extra credit opportunity.

### **Extra Credit Policy**

Throughout the semester there will be multiple events that represent extra credit opportunities. These include Anthropology Club events, relevant Oxford Studies events, and anthropology lectures at the Atlanta campus. Students can earn a MAXIMUM of three percentage points of extra credit to be added to their final grade. Each extra credit opportunity is a chance to earn one extra credit point. To do so, you must attend the event, and write a 1-2 page paper discussing how the event relates to anthropology. You can NOT turn in an Oxford Studies critique for extra credit. If you are in Oxford Studies, you can write two papers for the same event, one for anthropology and one for Ox Studies. Extra credit papers are always due two weeks after the event in question. I offer these extra credit events because it is my goal to encourage you to immerse yourself in anthropology as much as possible this semester, both within and outside of the classroom.

### **Email policy**

I have several guidelines regarding use of email.

First: Please do not use anything but black ink in emails addressed to me or our class conference. Reading many colored inks gives me a migraine.

Second: Personal or private email should be addressed directly to me through learn link. Any questions that you believe maybe relevant to other students as well can be sent to the class conference.

Third: Please address me as “Dr. Singer”, not Ms, not Hey, not Crazy Anthro Lady.

Forth: Email is a form of professional communication in the context of this class. Please do not send out emails that are dramatically sloppy, choppy, or full of IM language.

### **Anthropology Club**

The Anthropology Club has come to life again this year, with over twenty students involved. This semester they will be planning multiple events, all of which I will offer as extra credit opportunities for ANT 101 students. The club has its own learn link conference. To sign up, please contact one of the club officers: Bilal Sarwari (president), Vadal Bolds (secretary), Halie Warren (treasurer). I will be announcing events in class.

### **Course Schedule**

(I reserve the right to make additions or changes to this schedule. All changes will be posted on the class conference.)

January 17     Introductions

January 19     What is Anthropology?  
Reading: *Thinking Holistically* (on e-reserve)

January 22     ***Understanding Evolution***  
*Chapter 3: Evolution* by Scupin and DeCorse (e-reserve)

January 24     ***Non-Human Primates***  
Primate Characteristics and Social Dynamics  
*These are Real Swinging Primates* (R)

*What Are Friends For?* (R)

January 26 Chimpanzees  
*Chimpanzee Hunting Behavior and Human Evolution* by Stanford (R)  
*Got Culture?* by Stanford (R)  
*Dim Forest, Bright Chimps* by Boesch and Boesch-Achermann (R)  
Film: Among the Wild Chimpanzees

***Hominid Evolution***

January 29 Bi-pedalism and other developments  
*The Evolution of Human Birth* by Rosenberg (R)  
*Food For Thought* (R)

January 31 Early Hominids  
*Once We Were Not Alone* (R)  
*Lucy's Baby*

February 2 Recent Hominids  
*Who Were the Neandertals?* (R)  
*Hard Times Among the Neandertals* (R)  
*Erectus* (R)

February 5 The Neandertal Debate  
*Multiregional Theory of Evolution* (R)  
*The Recent African Genesis of Humans* (R)  
Film: Neandertals on Trial

February 7 The Hobbit  
*The Littlest Human* (R)

February 9 Why There is No Such Thing as Biological Race  
*A Short History of Scientific Racism in America* (R)  
*The Perilous Idea of Race* (R)  
*Skin Deep* (R)

February 12 **Exam One**

***Cultural Anthropology***

February 14 Ethnographic Fieldwork: The Bakairi and the Yanomamo  
*Doing Fieldwork Among the Yanomamo* by Chagnon (R)  
*Lessons in Introductory Anthropology from the Bakairi* by Picchi (R)

February 16 Anthropological Ethics and Cultural Relativism  
*Thinking Ethically in Anthropology* (R)  
*Collecting your Fossils Alive* from Skull Wars (R)  
Film: Ishi

*Yom Kippur (please see attendance for my policy on religious holidays)*

- February 19 Linguistic Anthropology  
*Reading Shakespeare in the Bush* (R)  
*To Give Up on Words, Silence Among the Mescalero Apache* (R)
- Families, Kinship, and Marriage***
- February 21 Marriage and Kinship in Anthropology  
*How Many Fathers are Best for a Child?* (R)  
*African Polygyny, Family Values and Contemporary Changes* (R)  
*When Brothers Share a Wife* (R)
- February 23 Families and Gender  
*The Family of Woman* (R)
- February 26 Gender and Sexuality  
*Multiple Genders Among North American Indians* (R)  
*Neither Man nor Woman* (R)
- February 28 Anthropology of Religion  
TBA and  
*Manuel, Apprentice Yatiri* by Kuznar (R)
- Archaeology in Brief***
- March 2 Archaeological Methods  
*Archaeology: an introduction* by Fagan (R)  
*New Women of the Ice Age*(R)
- March 5 Historical Archaeology  
*In Small Things Forgotten* by Deetz (R)  
*Uncommon Ground* by Ferguson (R)  
Movie clip: *Digging for Slaves*
- March 5 Oxford Studies Event: Highly recommended (extra credit opportunity):  
Film & discussion on reggae-samba in Brazil “Favela Rising” 7 PM***
- March 7 Foraging vs Agriculture  
*Were Early Agriculturalists Less Healthy Than Food Collectors?* (R)  
*Life Without Chiefs* (R)  
*Potlatching* (R)
- March 9 Reciprocity and Exchange  
*Eating Christmas in the Kalahari* by Lee (R)  
*Too Many Bananas* (R)
- March 12-16 Spring Break

March 19	<i>Cultural Change in Papua New Guinea</i> Gebusi intro-chapter 2
March 21	Sorcery and other challenges to cultural relativism Gebusi chapters 3-4
March 23	Gender and sexuality revisited Gebusi chapters 5-6
March 26	Cultural continuity and change Gebusi chapters 7-8
March 28	Development and progress (?) Gebusi chapters 9-10
March 30	Gebusi chapters 11-12
April 2	<b><u>Exam 2</u></b>
April 4	<i>Iraqi Women's Culture</i> Participant-Observation and its challenges Guests of the Sheik Chapters 1-4
April 6	History and the Ethnographic Moment Guests of the Sheik Chapters 5-8
April 9	The world of women Guests of the Sheik Chapters 9-13
April 9:	<b><u>REQUIRED OXFORD STUDIES EVENT:</u></b> <b><i>Anthropologist Dr. Kwame Harrison will speak on his upcoming book: Blurring the Lines, Race and Hip Hop in the San Francisco Bay Area</i></b>
April 11	One Wife or Four? Guests of the Sheik Chapters 14-17
April 13	Guests of the Sheik Chapters 18-21
April 16	They never envied me: through the eyes of the other Guests of the Sheik Chapters 22-Post Script
April 18	<i>Capoeira: Culture through Art</i> Learning Capoeira Prelude-chapter 1 <b><u>Ethnology Term Paper Due</u></b>
April 20	Learning Capoeira chapters 2 and 3



- April 23      *The Poetic and Painful Past*  
Learning Capoeira chapters 4 and 5
- April 25      *Serious Play*  
Learning Capoeira chapters 6 and 7
- April 27      *Capoeira within Cultural Contested Arenas*  
Learning Capoeira chapters 8, 9, 10
- April 30      Learning Capoeira chapters 11, 12 and conclusion

**Final Exam :**

For the 9:35 MWF section: Thursday May 3<sup>rd</sup> 2-5 PM

For the 10:40 MWF section: Tuesday May 8<sup>th</sup> 2-5 PM

***PLEASE NOTE:*** I do **not** have the ability to let you take your final exam at any time other than the scheduled time for your section. If you wish to take the exam at any other time, you must get permission from Dean Anderson or Dean Linville in Academic Affairs. They are very strict in this matter.