

Introduction to Anthropology: ANT 101

Oxford College of Emory University

Fall 2010

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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, tying each of these subfields to a bio-cultural perspective. 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 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 Knauft
- Hip Hop Underground, The Integrity and Ethics of Racial Identification by Anthony Kwame Harrison
- Numerous articles on e-reserve (listed with an R on course schedule)

Course Grade Breakdown

Exam One:	15%
Exam Two:	20%
Final Exam:	25%
Evolution Essay	10%
Term Paper:	15%
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:

This semester I have no formal attendance policy. You are adults and must take the primary responsibility for your time and your education. HOWEVER, please realize that you CANNOT do well in this class without being present in the classroom. You cannot get a good participation grade, and you cannot learn all of the material necessary. Much of what you need to know is presented in class lectures and not repeated in the readings. I do not give students copies of my power point presentations, so you must be present in class, both physically and mentally, to take thorough notes to succeed in this course.

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.

ALL CELL PHONES MUST BE TURNED COMPLETELY OFF DURING CLASS.

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 definitions, multiple choice questions, and short answer. I will provide you with a review sheet for each exam, although we will not have specified review sessions before each exam.

Please note: if you miss an exam due to unexpected circumstances, you **MUST** contact me within 24 hours of the exam period, or you will not be able to make up the exam.

Missed exams can only be made up in extreme situations, i.e. hospitalization or death of a family member. If you are ill at a scheduled exam period, you are expected to take the exam anyway. If you are severely ill, you must contact me BEFORE the exam for permission to reschedule.

Papers

You will write two papers this semester, a 3 page essay on a topic of hominid evolution, that I will give you in the third week of the semester, and a 5-6 page paper examining the Gebusi and our other course readings in relationship to one aspect of culture: religion, family, gender, or sexuality. 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. Do not work with other anthropology students as you write either paper.

Late papers will be graded down a FULL LETTER grade for each day late – INCLUDING Saturday and Sunday.

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, participation, 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 I may ask you to watch a couple films outside of class as part of your homework. 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.

Course Schedule

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

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| August 25 | Introductions
What is Anthropology? |
| August 27 | Class canceled, Dr Singer out of town |
| August 30 | Four Field Anthropology
Reading: <i>Thinking Holistically</i> (on e-reserve) |
| September 1 | The Four Mechanisms of Evolution
<i>Chapter 3: Evolution</i> by Scupin and Decourse (R) |
| September 3 | Primate Characteristics and Social Dynamics
<i>These are Real Swinging Primates</i> (R)
<i>What Are Friends For?</i> (R) |
| September 6 | Understanding Our Cousins
<i>Chimpanzee Cultures</i> by Whitten and Boesch (R)
<i>Got Culture?</i> by Stanford (R)
Film: Among the Wild Chimpanzees |
| September 8 | <i>Bonobo Sex and Society</i> by Frans deWaal(R)
Film Clip: The Uncommon Chimpanzee |

Hominid Evolution

September 10 Bi-pedalism and other developments
The Evolution of Human Birth by Rosenberg (R)
Lucy's Baby

September 13 Early Hominids and Brain Growth

September 15 Recent Hominids
Stranger in a New Land (R)
The Littlest Human (R)

September 17 The Neandertal Debate
Multiregional Theory of Evolution (R)
The Recent African Genesis of Humans (R)
Film: Neandertals on Trial

September 20 *Hard Times Among the Neandertals* (R)
Evolution Essay due in class

September 22 Why There is No Such Thing as Biological Race
Skin Deep (R)

September 24 *A Short History of Scientific Racism in America* (R)
The Perilous Idea of Race (R)

September 27 **Exam One**

Cultural Anthropology

September 29 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)

October 1 Anthropological Ethics and Cultural Relativism
Thinking Ethically in Anthropology (R)
Collecting your Fossils Alive from Skull Wars (R)
Film: Ishi

October 4 Linguistic Anthropology
Reading Shakespeare in the Bush (R)
To Give Up on Words, Silence Among the Mescalero Apache (R)

Families, Kinship, and Marriage

October 6 Marriage and Kinship in Anthropology
How Many Fathers are Best for a Child? (R)
When Brothers Share a Wife (R)

- October 8 Families and Gender
Arranging a Marriage in India (R)
(additional reading TBA)
- October 11 FALL BREAK
- October 13 Gender and Sexuality
Multiple Genders Among North American Indians (R)
Neither Man nor Woman (R)
- October 15 Reciprocity and Exchange
Eating Christmas in the Kalahari by Lee (R)
Potlatching (R)
- October 18 Families and Reciprocity
Claire Farrer from *Thunder Rides a Black Horse*
- October 20 ***Religion***
Candomble and Dr Singer's fieldwork
(no assigned reading)
- October 22 Religion and Liminality
Victor Turner: *Betwixt and Between* (R)
- October 25 Children, Death, and Spirituality
I Can Only Move My Feet Towards Mizuko Kuyo (R)
- October 27 **Exam 2**
- October 29 Gebusi intro-chapter 2
- November 1 Sorcery and other challenges to cultural relativism
Gebusi chapters 3-4
- November 3 Gender and sexuality revisited
Gebusi chapters 5-6
- November 5 Cultural continuity and change
Gebusi chapters 7-8
- November 8 Development and progress (?)
Gebusi chapters 9-10
- November 10 Gebusi chapters 11-12
- November 12 ***A Glimpse at Medical Anthropology***

Dancing Skeletons

November 15 Dancing Skeletons

November 17 Monique and the Mango Rains
Intro-Chapter 2
Paper due in class

November 19 Hip Hop Introduction and chapter 1

November 22 Hip Hop chapter 2

November 24-26 THANKSGIVING BREAK

November 29 Hip Hop chapter 3

December 1 Hip Hop chapter 4

December 3 Hip Hop chapter 5

December 6 Last Day of Class

Final Exam :

Friday December 10th 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 in Academic Affairs. They are very strict in this matter.