

ANTHROPOLOGY 101: Introduction to Anthropology
Fall 2012 • Oxford College
Email: adenico@emory.edu

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Class room: Branham Hall EAST
Meeting times: MoWeFr 8:15-9:20AM
Office Hours: Tu & Th by appointment

[The anthropologist] is interested in human behavior, not as it is shaped by one tradition, [one's] own, but as it has been shaped by any tradition whatsoever. He [sic] is interested in the great gamut of custom that is found in various cultures, and his object is to understand the way in which these cultures change and differentiate, the different forms through which they express themselves, and the manner in which the customs of any peoples function in the lives of the individuals who compose them. –Ruth Benedict, Patterns of Culture, 1934.

OVERVIEW:

In anthropology, as in every other science, we try to look beyond what seem to be obvious, everyday experiences, and to discover the underlying structures, patterns and meanings in the world that lie behind what we assume is there. Using empirical evidence and scholarly analysis, anthropology addresses the issues of humans and their interaction with one another and the world around them across time and space. The materials that make up the world around us, and the practices that we engage in, are not only physical objects and events, but also things that carry meaning in a human world. If we are to understand this world we must think beyond the individual moments and materials that we come in contact with and consider the larger symbolic structures and systems of relations that hold the human universe togetherⁱ. An anthropological truism is that the discipline makes the familiar strange as it makes the strange familiar. In other words, studying the different ways that people around the world live their everyday lives cannot but help make us wonder about and see our own practices (whatever those may be) in very different ways.

An introductory course such as this one necessarily only brushes the surface of many topics. Yet one of the key goals of this course is to provide students with an understanding of anthropology's holistic approach to studying humanity. We will touch on each of anthropology's four subdisciplines: cultural anthropology, biological anthropology, archaeology, and linguistics, paying particular attention to their interactions and overlaps. The fact that this is an introductory course means that we begin at the beginning. It does not mean that the course will be easy. In fact, anthropology, as a discipline relies on using evidence and rigorous scholarly analysis to understand the world around us. Writing (ethnography in anthropological terms) is the medium through which we share our knowledge with others. Writing is also the way I will assess your increasing ability to use these scholarly methods and tools to think critically and analytically about the world around you. Thus this class has a very heavy reading and writing component and you will not get writing credit for it. We use writing itself as an important tool to think with and through, not as an end in itself. You will also be required to work extensively in groups, to do empirical, anthropological research outside of class, and to present your work with your peers. But, if you are truly interested in culture and

the hidden meanings of your everyday world, the hard work will be both fun and worth the considerable effort.

Finally, in this class we will be joining Biology 124 for a two-week module in which students will work collaboratively with someone from biology to understand both the biological and social structures that contribute to the emergence of infectious disease. We will be assessing the efficacy of this module throughout, to monitor how useful this particular learning model is to you, the student. Your thoughtful participation and reflection about this interdisciplinary collaboration is appreciated.

COURSE OBJECTIVES: The course is designed to enhance students' abilities to:

- *understand and apply basic anthropological concepts for studying culture and humanity*, and in doing so to analytically engage with their own communities' assumptions of norms, values, and practices.
- *engage in the practice of anthropology/ethnography*. In small ways, we will be *practicing* anthropology and learning about some of its methods as we learn *about* it. From learning to use the anthropology and geographical areas sections of the library to gathering artifacts from the media and our own lives, we will explore popular ideas of anthropology alongside academic and personal experiences.
- *think critically*. This class will ask you to struggle intellectually to use evidence, see the world as complex and to deconstruct some of your most commonly held assumptions.
- *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*
- *analyze issues of cultural difference and diversity* using anthropological tools and theories
- *learn to think independently*, to question, and to *take risks* as you negotiate the learning process.

REQUIRED READINGS: Books are available at the Oxford College Bookstore. Additional articles are available on blackboard. You are required to bring your readings (books and articles) to class. I expect you to have read, taken notes on, and marked up your text. If I notice that you did not bring your book or article into class on a particular day your participation grade (and quiz grade – this is a hint) may suffer. Please complete the readings on or before the date listed in the syllabus.

Books:

- LaDousa, Chaise 2011. *House Signs and Collegiate Fun: Sex, Race, and Faith in a College Town*. Indiana University Press
- Novak, Shannon. 2008 *House of Mourning* □: *a Biocultural History of the Mountain Meadows Massacre*, Salt Lake City, University of Utah Press.
- Podolefsky, Aaron et. al. 2009. *Applying Cultural Anthropology An Introductory Reader*. McGraw Hill
- Wogan, Peter. 2004 *Magical Writing in Salasaca: Literacy and Power in Highland Ecuador*, Edward F. Fisher (ed.), Boulder Willamette, Westview Press.

ASSIGNMENTS and GRADING:

•First short paper	.....	05%
•Second short paper	.....	10%
•Third short paper (collaborative w/bio)	.....	15%
•Midterm Exam	.....	15%
•Class participation (includes 2 presentations)	.....	15%
•Pop quizzes	.....	10%
•Focus Papers	.....	15%

All writing assignments are subject to the following reading/writing criteria, which can be found online on blackboard:

- 1) How to Read by Paul N. Edward
- 2) The AAA Citation Guide (examples begin on page 7)
- 3) Dr. DeNicola's writing Rubric "How I Grade"
- 4) "Chapter 1: Seeing" FROM *Writing Analytically* by Rosenwasser and Stephen

WRITTEN WORK AND ASSIGNMENTS: All papers must be turned in on time. Turning in a paper late causes significant problems both for me (in trying to keep track of individual papers and juggling assignments) and also for you, because you will then continue to be behind throughout the class. Perhaps most importantly, turning in late papers is unfair to those who completed their papers on time. It is up to my discretion whether I will accept a late paper. Generally, I will not. However, on those rare occasions when I do, the paper's grade will fall by 1/3 grade for each day it is late (i.e. a B will become a B- on the first day, a C+ on the second, etc.). Any paper turned in more than 15 minutes after the start of class will be considered a day late. I never accept late final papers. Plan for this.

Essays will need to be turned into me electronically, via email (adenico@emory.edu) as an attached .pdf file and the subject line must contain the word INTROAN. It is your responsibility to make sure I receive your paper. The chances that I will not receive it increase if you do not include the heading INTROAN. ALL essays brought to class for peer review must be STAPLED neatly. ALL written material MUST include a full bibliography and in-text citations that include the author's last name, date of publication and page number. For instance: (Durkheim 1984: 35). Papers turned in without citations and a bibliography will not be graded (and will be graded down for every additional day they are late).

Essay papers are double-spaced, in 12 pt. times or times roman type with one-inch margins. One double spaced page equals approximately 300 words. Topics will be handed out at least 1 week before the essays are due (due dates are specified in the syllabus). Written work submitted after the due date and time will be lowered by one third of a grade for each day (or fraction of a day) late, except in cases of *documented* illness or emergency. Work submitted 15 minutes beyond the start of class will be considered one day late. There will be no unexcused incompletes.

READING RESPONSES: Careful and analytic reading in this class is critical. To help you to think substantially through your readings before class, and to help you to be prepared to discuss the readings beyond the superficial, you will be required to turn in half-page (200 word) responses for each class reading. You may miss three responses without recourse. However, you will lose corresponding points for each response you miss after two. Grades for responses will work as follows: I will count responses to make sure you have done the prerequisite number of responses (worth two points each). I will also choose 6 of the responses randomly and grade them individually. You may choose up to two of your best responses, if you like, and ask me to grade those as two of my random selection. Reading responses begin the second week of class and go until finals. These reading responses are for your use: I grade some to make sure you are keeping up and practicing being analytical. It may seem like you are not getting credit for all of them (since I randomly grade only six), but in reality you are just doing the work you should be learning to do as part of any liberal arts college classroom: reading and reflecting analytically.

CLASS PARTICIPATION: Includes timely completion of reading assignments (by the class in which the material is to be discussed), and regular and thoughtful contribution to class and group discussions. Not having your assignment in class (in hard copy) will significantly affect your class participation grade.

One of the critical aims of this class is to learn about culture – both your own and others'. I consider the classroom to be an important field site and source of data. Thus learning from and LISTENING RESPECTFULLY to your classmates provides both valuable information and an exercise in listening (a very important skill for an anthropologist to master). Not coming to class is disrespectful to your classmates, and it WILL hurt your grade. Other students' ideas are just as much part of your learning experience as are the ideas of the instructor and the experts in the field. Learn to listen and use your classmates' ideas as data. *In addition, each of you will be responsible for several class presentations on the readings.*

POP QUIZZES: I give regular “pop” quizzes. Quizzes are designed to encourage timely reading. They will be short, generally one-word answers about the reading due for that day. You are responsible for knowing the author and date of the reading, having read the epigrams, titles and subtitles, and for having made any connections between authors and other readings. As part of your “participation” grade these assignments cannot be made up. If you are late to class and miss a quiz, it cannot be made up.

ATTENDANCE & BEING ON TIME: One of the major premises of this class is that we are here to help one another learn. If you're not in class you can't participate in this critical experience. You get two free absences, no questions asked. But, if you miss more than two classes, you should be aware that your FINAL grade will suffer BY 1/3 OF A GRADE FOR EACH CLASS THAT YOU MISS AFTER YOUR SECOND ABSENCE. Absences are only excused if ALL absences (including the first two) are excused. If you are late to class more than three times it will be counted as an absence. Much of this class is focused on in-class discussion and activities that you will not be able to make up. This will affect your grade. If *you* miss class, *everyone* suffers.

COMPUTERS, CELL PHONES AND OTHER ELECTRONIC DEVICES: Note taking in this class is critical, but you should not need to rely on a computer. My experience with computers in the classroom is that they provide more of a distraction than assistance, and I ask that they remain put away during class time unless they are being used for presentation or group work purposes. Cell phones should be turned OFF (not on vibrate or silent) in the classroom and kept in your backpack (NOT on the top of your desk). Leaving in the middle of class to have a phone conversation is not only obvious, but I (and the majority of your classmates) also consider it rude and unacceptable. The same goes for texting underneath the table during class. Other electronic devices should be turned off and put away unless they are being shared with the class in a presentation/demonstration context.

THE SMALL PRINT:

Student work submitted as part of this course may be reviewed by Oxford College and Emory College faculty and staff for the purposes of improving instruction and enhancing Emory education.

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One of the key benefits of a liberal arts education is the instructor's ability to react to students' needs, interests and abilities. In the spirit of providing you with an education that remains responsive to particular contexts, this syllabus and schedule are subject to change.

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Disabilities: *If you are a student with a documented disability on record and wish to have a reasonable accommodation made for you in this class please make an appointment to see me in my office. If you need a note taker please see me immediately after class.*

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Religious Holidays: *If you must miss class for a religious holiday, please notify me, in writing, one week before class in order to be excused (assignments due on a particular day must still be turned in on or before the day specified).*

ⁱ Culler, Jonathan 1977. “In Pursuit of Signs,” IN Daedalus 106 pp. 95-112.