

ANTHROPOLOGY 101 Introduction to Anthropology

Oxford College
Fall Term 2011
MWF 9:35-10:25 / 11:45 am – 12:50 pm
Room: Humanities 201
Office Hours: by appointment

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[The anthropologist] is interested in human behavior, not as it is shaped by one tradition, our 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:

Anthropology addresses the issues of humans and their interaction with one another and the world around them across time and space. The discipline is especially concerned with exploring new and less harmful ways of perceiving, understanding and validating the experiences, histories, and values of people from different communities and cultures around the world. An introduction to the basic concepts and problems of anthropology, this course explores creativity and diversity and attempts to “make the familiar strange” as it makes the “strange familiar.” An introductory course such as this one necessarily only brushes the surface of many topics. Yet it is the goals of this course 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.

I use minimal lectures in this course and focus on in-class activities and discussions. Course materials include introductory materials as well as articles, films and handouts. Regardless of a student’s major, this course is designed to help students develop analytical skills and to further the ability to communicate ideas about society and diversity through the analysis of evidence and the use of key concepts and scholarly written language.

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.
- *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*.

REQUIRED READINGS:

Available at the bookstore:

- Novak, Shannon (2008) *House of Mourning: a Biocultural History of the Mountain Meadows Massacre*, Salt Lake City, University of Utah Press.
- 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 5%
- Second short paper 10%
- Exams (2 x 15% =) 30%
- Class participation 15%
- Vocabulary and pop quizzes 10%
- In-class assignments and reports 10%
- Final paper 20%

SHORT PAPERS:

Essay papers will be between approximately 500-900 words (approximately 2 1/2 - 3 pages, double spaced, in 12 pt. type with one-inch margins). Topics will be handed out at least two class periods 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.

EXAMS:

There will be two exams, a midterm and a final. The final exam will be cumulative in the sense that we are learning how each of four fields of anthropology interacts and is important to the others. Each exam will be a combination of definitions, multiple choice questions and short answer.

CLASS PARTICIPATION:

As you can see from the percentages above, I take class participation VERY seriously. In nearly every classroom, and in anthropology *especially*, sharing your ideas of culture and your understandings of the readings are a critical part of the learning experience. If you have a question, it's likely that someone else does, also. Class participation includes attendance, timely completion of reading assignments (by the class in which the material is to be discussed), and regular and thoughtful contributions to class discussions. This class is based on a student-centered and active-learning approach because I think anthropology is a discipline best experienced through a combination of texts and practical engagement. I expect students to come to class prepared to discuss the readings and share their experiences with others. Your class participation will be graded on whether or not you demonstrate that you have actually read and engaged with the assigned readings. Questions regarding the readings are *highly encouraged* and are an excellent way of helping yourself and other students. You will also get bonus points for making connections between readings that show you are actively engaging with the concepts and ideas expressed in class. Included in your class participation grade are random **pop quizzes**. Quizzes are designed to encourage timely reading, and will be graded as follows: a – means that you have not demonstrated that you did the readings. ¶ means that it seems you have done the readings but perhaps not had much time to think about them. ¶+ means you have demonstrated that you did a careful reading of the assignment and have thought about their implications and connections to other readings.

ATTENDANCE AND BEING ON TIME:

Though your attendance is part of your class-participation grade, it warrants a separate heading. 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 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 and will affect your grade. If *you* miss class, *everyone* suffers.

ASSIGNMENTS:

All papers and assignments 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. In addition, 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, or an A- will become a B+). Any paper turned in more than 15 minutes after the start of class will be considered a day late.

COMPUTERS, CELL PHONES AND OTHER ELECTROIC 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 distraction than assistance, and I ask that they remain put away during class time unless they are being used for presentation purposes. Cell phones should be turned OFF (not on vibrate or silent) in the classroom and 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.

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 see me immediately. Or if you must miss class for a religious holiday, please notify me, in writing, one week prior to the class you expect to miss in order to be excused (assignments due on a particular day must still be turned in on or before the day specified).

CLASS SCHEDULE

Introduction to Cultural Anthropology

AN 101 Fall Term 2011: M/W/F 9:35-10:25 Humanities Building 201M/W/F 11:45-12:35 Humanities Building 201

Note: This syllabus is subject to change. Changes will be announced and reflected on blackboard

This schedule does not include small take home assignments that will be factored into your participation grade

DATE	DISCUSSION TOPIC	READINGS DUE (<u>by</u> class date listed)	pp#	E/T*	ASSIGNMENTS DUE
Wed 8/24	Introduction to class				
Fri 8/26	Who are "we"?	Bohannan, Ch 1	1 -24	E	
Mon 8/29	Displacing the "we"	Miner (Nacirema) Using Science to Think Anthropologically	... 36-43	E E	Bring in 1.5 (450 words) pages of notes on how each anthropologists makes you reflect upon "your" particular culture. I will call on you, so be prepared.
Wed 8/31		FILM	TBA		
	Ethnocentricity & relativism are BOTH problematic	Robbins Ch. 1 (Culture & Meaning)	1-32	E	
Fri 9/2	Ethnography and judgment	Scheper-Hughes (Love-Boat ethics) Sterk: Tripping and Tricking	40-47 13-20	E	
Mon 9/5	Anthropology and responsibility	Tracy Kidder (Mountains beyond Mountains, excerpt Part I)	1-44 +epigr am	E	Begin reading Kidder – finish by next class along with shorter readings due on Wed.
Wed 9/7	Ethnography and judgment revisited	Farmer & Kleinman (Aids as Human Suffering) Bourgois: Crack in Spanish Harlem	7-10 21-28		FIRST VOCAB EXAM
Fri 9/9		LIBRARY CLASS			Library Class – Meet in Library
Mon 9/12	Functionalism	The Essentials of the Kula (Chp. 3 Argonauts of the W. Pacific)	81-104	E	
Wed 9/14	Functionalism	E.E. Evans-Pritchard Ch 5, The Nature of Witchcraft Explains Unfortunate Events	63-83	E	Baseball Magic, Gmelch (reminder for me)
Fri 9/16	Symbolism	Mary Douglas, External Boundaries in McGee and Warms	467-478	E	
Mon 9/19	Post Modernism	Victor Turner, Betwixt and Between from	93-	E	

		The Forest of Symbols	111		
Wed 9/21	Structuralism	Levi-Strauss Intro & 1,2 in The Jealous Potter	1-32	E	
Fri 9/23		FILM	368-393	E	FIRST SHORT ESSAY DUE
Mon 9/26	Linguistic Anthropology	Language & Communication, Chp. 16, Haviland et. al.			
Wed 9/28	Language and Culture	Wogan, preface & chp. 1	Vii – 26	B	
Fri 9/30	Magic and Writing	Wogan , chp 2	27-47	B	
Mon 10/3	Making the familiar strange	Wogan, chp 3-5	49-115		
Fri 10/7	And the familiar strange	Wogan, chp 6-7	117-152	E B	
Mon 10/10	Linguistics in your everyday lives	Ladousa: House Signs and Collegiate Fun, Excerpt		E E	
Wed 10/12	Kinship	Trobrianders by Weiner			
Fri 10/14	Family	When brothers share a wife			
Mon 10/17	Gender	Emily Martin –The woman in the body			
Wed 10/19		Kulik - Travesti			
Fri 10/21	INTRODUCTION TO BIOLOGICAL ANTHRO	Introduction to Biological Anthropology: What is Biological Anthropology in Exploring Biological Anthropology, Stanford et. Al			
Mon 10/24			1-30		SECOND SHORT ESSAY DUE
Wed 10/26	Evolution	Evolutionary Background chapter 1 in The Human Species, Relethford	31-62		
Fri 10/28	continued	Microevolution Chapter 3 in The Human Species, Relethford	65-85		Group problem solving – Sickle Cell trait exercise
Mon 10/31		Nesse, Disease Darwin and Medicine Why we Get Sick AND http://classic.the-scientist.com/news/display/58057/ .			
Wed 11/2		FILM			

Fri 11/4		Mayr – Darwin's Legacy	E		
Mon 11/7		Goodall In the Shadow of Man			
Wed 11/9		SECOND EXAM			SHORT ANSWER AND VOCAB
Fri 11/11		Modern evolution to primate behavior chp 4-5 in Biological Anthropology	95-159		
Mon 11/14		Small – What's love got to do with it Small – Aping Culture			
Wed 11/16		Boaz and Almquest – Introduction to the Hominoids			
Fri 11/18		LIBRARY CLASS 2			MEET IN LIBRARY
Mon 11/21		Boaz and Almquest - Australopithecines			
Wed 11/23		Novak – Intro and Chapter 1			
Fri 11/25		Novak Chapter 2			
Mon 11/28		Novak Chapter 3			
Wed 11/30		Novak Chapter 4			
Fri 12/2		Novak Chapter 5			
Mon 12/5		Novak Chapter 6			SHORT ESSAY #3 EITHER APES, EARLY HUMANS OR NOVAK
Wed 12/7					
Fri 12/9					
Mon 12/12					
Wed 12/14					
Fri 12/16					

*E = Reading is on electronic reserve on Blackboard (All electronic reserves should also be on 2 hour reserve at the library)

T = Reading is in your textbook