



ANTH 4 - Cultural Anthropology

Catalog Description

Transfer Status: CSU/UC

Unit(s): 3.00

Lecture: 51.00 Contact hours/102.00 Out of class hours/153.00 Total hours/3.00 Unit(s)

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Course Description: This course explores how anthropologists study and compare human culture. Cultural anthropologists seek to understand the broad arc of human experience focusing on a set of central issues: how people around the world make their living (subsistence patterns); how they organize themselves socially, politically and economically; how they communicate; how they relate to each other through family and kinship ties; what they believe about the world (belief systems); how they express themselves creatively (expressive culture); how they make distinctions among themselves such as through applying gender, racial and ethnic identity labels; how they have shaped and been shaped by social inequalities such as colonialism; and how they navigate culture change and processes of globalization that affect us all. Ethnographic case studies highlight these similarities and differences, and introduce students to how anthropologists do their work, employ professional anthropological research ethics and apply their perspectives and skills to understand humans around the globe. (C-ID ANTH 120).

Objectives

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

- 1. Define the scope of anthropology and discuss the role of cultural anthropology within the discipline.
2. Recognize the methods, theories and perspectives used to study and understand human cultures.
3. Explain the importance of the ethnographic method in the study of culture.
4. Employ the relativist perspective while discussing cultural variation.
5. Demonstrate an understanding of anthropological concepts including ethnicity, gender, political organization, economic systems, kinship, rituals and belief systems.
6. Explain the interconnectedness of the economic, political and sociocultural forces of globalization amongst diverse cultural groups.
7. Analyze and evaluate the ethical issues anthropologists encounter, and professional ethical obligations that must be met in the study of and application in cultural groups different from their own.

Course Content

Topic Titles / Suggested Time Topic

Lecture

Table with 2 columns: Topics and Lec Hrs. Topics include Anthropological theories, methods and perspectives (4.00), Anthropological study of human cultures in comparative perspective (4.00), Subsistence patterns (4.00), Social, political and economic organizations (4.00), Language and communication (3.50), Family and kinship (3.50), Belief systems (3.50), Art and expressive culture (3.50), Ethnicity and race (3.50), Gender and sexuality (3.50), Social inequality and colonialism (3.50), Globalization and culture change (3.50), Professional ethics (3.50), Applied anthropology (3.50).

Total Hours: 51.00

Methods of Instruction

- A. Group Discussions
B. Homework: Students are required to complete two hours of outside-of-class homework for each hour of lecture
C. Instructor Demonstrations
D. Lecture

E. Multimedia Presentations

Methods of Evaluation

- A. Quizzes
- B. Written Assignments
- C. Written Examinations
- D. Essays and research papers
- E. Students will be required to write 2,500 words or more through formal research based writing assignments.

Examples of Assignments

Reading Assignments

1. Read the article from Conformity and Conflict that focuses on anthropological definitions of culture. Be prepared to discuss why the concept of culture is so important to an understanding of human behavior—and why, to a significant degree, “culture” is deemphasized or left out in human behavior modeling in so many social and behavioral sciences.
2. Read the article from Conformity and Conflict that deals with the foundations of cultural relativism. Note, for purposes of discussion, how cultural relativism has changed over the years; compare and contrast these views through contrasting Franz Boas with Marvin Harris.

Writing Assignments

1. Write a three-page essay based on your social organization article. Compare and contrast at least two of the societies described in the article.
2. Write a five-page ethnographic essay on a chosen cultural community, describing culture core characteristics, including environment, technology, and subsistence practices. Then, cover 4 additional cultural traditions practiced by your community. You will need to provide 3 published sources for this research project.

Out-of-Class Assignments

1. Attend the American Association of Anthropology’s national meeting. Attend the session dealing with food production in Sub-Saharan Africa. Current attempts by international organizations have failed to assist people living in this region. Why? What insights can applied anthropologist offer that might make assistance programs more successful with regard to food production and distribution in this region?
2. Attend a session of the Anthropology Forum at the local University (CSU Chico). This week’s forum is a panel discussion (made up of some members of the anthropology department at CSU Chico) on reflexivity in ethnographic research. Note how various panel discussants handled issues of "observer obtrusive" and "non-obtrusive" descriptive data as a problem for field work.

Recommended Materials of Instruction

Ember, Carol and Melvin. (2021). *Cultural Anthropology*. Pearson, 15th. 9780134732831.

Conrad Kottak. (2022). *Cultural Anthropology*. McGraw Hill, 19th. 9781260259278.

Zero Cost Textbook

Nina Brown, Thomas McIlwraith, Laura Tubelle de González. *Perspectives: An Open Introduction to Cultural Anthropology* (2020). OER. <https://pressbooks.pub/perspectives/>

Dianna Repp. *Cultural Anthropology* (n.d.) OER. <https://library.achievingthedream.org/pimaant112/>

Minimum Qualifications

Anthropology (Masters Required)

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