

**ANTHROPOLOGY 102  
UNDERSTANDING OTHER CULTURES**

**BULLETIN INFORMATION**

ANTH 102: Understanding Other Cultures (3 credit hours)

**Course Description:**

An exploration and comparison of selected contemporary cultures, including their languages. An introduction to the concepts, methods, and data of socio-cultural anthropology and anthropological linguistics.

**SAMPLE COURSE OVERVIEW**

What is culture? How have anthropologists studied it? This course is designed to better understand creative similarities & differences expressed through cultural diversity in all of its social and symbolic manifestations. It will also deal with the effects of class, ethnic, racial, and gender hierarchies across a range of historical and societal contexts. The course will introduce the beginning student to the primary domains of cultural anthropology: the concept of culture, fieldwork, and professional ethics. The overarching objectives of this class include: to help students develop an appreciation of how human cultural diversity is always understood against the backdrop of what is shared, to develop awareness of their own cultural ethnocentrism, to deepen students' understanding of different forms of social stratification and inequality in cross-cultural perspective, and to illustrate how anthropology contributes to interdisciplinary approaches which seek to ameliorate contemporary world problems.

**ITEMIZED LEARNING OUTCOMES**

Upon successful completion of Anthropology 102, students will be able to:

- 1) Recall and define the four subfields of American Anthropology
- 2) Explain cultural anthropologists' orientation to the study of culture as a dynamic set of beliefs made manifest in social practices
- 3) Identify and define concepts in cultural anthropology such as culture, cultural relativism, holism, worldview, emic, etic, enculturation and socialization, ethnocentrism, fieldwork, social group, structure, and agency
- 4) Summarize and evaluate knowledge about other cultures and how anthropology contributes to interdisciplinary approaches and professional ethics, addressing topics ranging from child development to economic development
- 5) Demonstrate knowledge of cultural diversity in cross-cultural perspective as it pertains to language, healing, religion, aesthetics, race, gender, class, identity, modes of production, consumption, politics, rights, kinship, migration, and development

6) Conduct an ethnographic interview and critically evaluate and interpret the information learned in a written format.

### **SAMPLE REQUIRED TEXTS/SUGGESTED READINGS/MATERIALS**

- 1) Miller, Barbara. 2011. *Cultural Anthropology in a Globalizing World*. 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition. Pearson.
- 2) Kingsolver, Ann E. 2011. *Tobacco Town Futures: Global Encounters in Rural Kentucky*. Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press, Inc.
- 3) Tobin, Joseph, Hsueh, Yeh, and Karasawa, Mayumi. 2009. *Preschool in Three Cultures Revisited: China, Japan, and the United States*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- 4) Selected readings posted on Blackboard.

### **SAMPLE DESCRIPTION OF EXPECTATIONS FOR ASSIGNMENTS AND/OR EXAMS**

**Examinations:** Complete **one midterm** and **one final exam**. Expect exams to include multiple choice, short answer, and essay formats. The final exam will include comprehensive questions.

**Discussion Section Attendance, Participation & Essays:** Discussion section is a student-centered space where you have the opportunity to engage in a **guided discussion** of required texts, films, and assignments. You should view your TA as a facilitator of discussion and group activities, not someone whose job it is to lecture at you. This means that the onus is upon you and your classmates to make the most of these sections. So come prepared and be an active participant. Active participation involves all of the following:

You should have not only read all of the assigned texts and viewed any required films for that week but also thought about them and **prepared questions to raise during discussion**. Questions can seek clarification of course concepts/topics as well as be open-ended, facilitating discussion and providing opportunities to apply concepts.

You will prepare a total of **8 short essays** to submit during section. There are two types of essays: **1) Summary Reflection Essays** and **2) News Essays**. Both types of writing should explore anthropological concepts and issues raised either in the readings, films or lecture. These essays must be no more than two typewritten pages, double-spaced.

**Summary Reflection Essays [SREs]:** During weeks when there is an assigned reading due for discussion, you must read and take notes on the text. Then, using those notes, you must craft an informed summary of the points raised in the piece while also writing reflexivity about your reactions to the issues raised.

**News Essays [NEs]:** Search reputable local, state, or national news sources for stories that enable you to apply and illuminate issues or concepts raised in Miller's text. Next, summarize the main issues raised in the article, describing how it related to the assigned Miller Chapter due that week (include page references).

- I. Discuss article content in terms of
  1. How it relates to key topics studied in anthropology or,

2. How anthropological concepts discussed in Miller's chapter would shed greater light on the issues presented in the article
- II. Make sure that your essays are reflexive insofar as that you also examine any ethnocentrism that are expressed in the article vis-à-vis the issues and people discussed.
  - III. Please attach news article or indicate on-line source in your essay.
  - IV. On indicated days, part or most of section will be reserved to distribute, discuss, prepare for, or work on the required assignments.

**Assignment #1:** Activity based on *Preschool in Three Culture Revisited*. Students engage in a compare & contrast analysis of two case studies attending to etic and emic understandings, ethnocentrism, and holism.

**Participation in the Public Anthropology Op-Ed Campaign & Website:** Using the Internet to draw students at various universities together into an intellectual community, the Public Anthropology Community Action Website encourages students to consider ethical issues that lie at the interface of anthropology and the contemporary world. Participating in the Community Action Website project helps students improve both their critical thinking and writing skills.

You will write an **Op-Ed**—or opinion pieces of roughly three to seven hundred words—expressing your views on the steps that should be taken to address the ethical issue being considered. Past participants have played a critical role in encouraging prominent institutions to move toward actions that are more ethical.

You will pay a \$10 register fee to participate in the project. Once registered, you will have full access to the website, a complementary electronic copy of Prof. Rob Borofsky's book *Why a Public Anthropology?* and all activities associated with the project. You'll also have a free help email address to assist you with any problems. You have to complete the entire project to receive a grade for the project. More details will be forthcoming on this project.

**Assignment #2:** Conduct an ethnographic oral history about work experiences with a person who makes a living in your hometown [Based on *Tobacco Town Futures*]. See handout distributed in section for details.

## **SAMPLE COURSE OUTLINE WITH TIMELINE OF TOPICS, READINGS/ASSIGNMENTS, EXAMS/PROJECTS**

### **Week 1**

**Class 1:** Introduction

**Class 2:** American Anthropology: Four Field Approach

Reading: Miller – Ch. 1

[Concepts: "culture," four field anthropology, cultural relativism, universalism, ethnocentrism, holism, micro cultures]

**Discussion Section:** Careers in Anthropology

Reading: Omohundro [Blackboard]

## **Week 2**

### **Class 3:** Fieldwork & Ethnographic Methods

Reading: Miller – Ch. 2

Film: Bathing Babies in Three Cultures

[Concepts: fieldwork, culture shock, rapport, participant observation, ethnography, ethnology]

### **Discussion Section**

Case Study Ethnography #1:

Reading: Tobin et al. – Ch. 1

[Concepts: visual anthropology, ethnographic interviews and focus groups, case study approach; students practice observing and jotting field notes]

Summary Reflection Essay [SRE] #1

## **Week 3**

### **Class 4:** Language & Communication

Reading: Miller – Ch. 9

[Concepts: phonemes, morphemes, language typology, language families, sister languages, linguistic and communicative competence]

### **Class 5:** Language & Communication

Interactive Lecture with film segments

[Concepts: Linguistic relativism, linguistic relativity, productivity, displacement, reflexive, call system, language variety, sociolinguistics]

### **Discussion Section**

Language & Communication

Reading: Duncan & Taylor [Blackboard]

[Concepts: endangered languages, language revitalization]

SRE #2

## **Week 4**

### **Class 6:** Economic Systems

Reading: Miller – Ch. 3

[Concepts: mode(s) of livelihood, mode(s) of consumption, mode(s) of exchange, use rights, private property, extensive and intensive strategies, division of labor, exploitation]

### **Class 7:** Economic Systems

Film: T-Shirt Travels

[Concepts: competition, free trade, capital conversion, market externalization]

### **Discussion Section**

News Essay [NE] #1

## **Week 5**

### **Class 8:** Reproduction & the Human Life Cycle

Reading: Miller – Ch. 4

[Concepts: mode(s) of reproduction, biocultural approach, birth, rite of passage, life “stages” and relative age categories, circumcision, menarche, menopause, infanticide, enculturation, gender pluralism]

**Class 9:** Reproduction & the Human Life Cycle

Film: A Walk to Beautiful

**Discussion Section**

Hand-out Assign #1

**Week 6**

**Class 10:** Pre-School & Social Reproduction

Reading: Tobin et. al. – Chapters 2 & 3

**Class 11:** Pre-School & Social Reproduction

Film: Preschool in Three Cultures Revisited

**Discussion Section**

Reading: Tobin et al. – Chapters 4 & 5

**Week 7**

**Class 12:** Kinship

Reading: Miller – Ch. 6

[Concepts: descent patterns, rules of inclusion and exclusion, marriage patterns, gifts, residence rules, household patterns]

**Class 13:** Kinship

Film: Dadi's Family

**Discussion section**

Turn-in Assign #1

**Week 8**

**Class 14:** Midterm Review

**Class 15:** Midterm Exam

**Week 9**

**Class 16:** Social Groups & Social Stratification

Reading: Miller – Ch. 7

[Concepts: primary and secondary groups, countercultural groups, stratification, ascribed and achieved positions, status, "race," caste ethnicity, gender, class, civil society, corporate structures]

**Class 17:** Social Groups & Social Stratification

Film: Black in Latin America: Brazil a Racial Paradise?

**Discussion Section**

NE #2

**Week 10**

**Class 18:** Political & Legal Systems and Practices

Reading: Miller – Ch. 8

[Concepts: power, authority, influence, bands, tribes chiefdoms, state, nation, norm, law, customary law, trial by ordeal, court system, social justice, sectarianism, genocide, war, other forms of global-local conflict]

Community Action Campaign Begin

**Class 19:** Political & Legal Systems and Practices

Film: Ongka's Big Moka

**Discussion Section:** Readings: Juris & Razsa AND one other article of your choice on that hot spot [link <http://www.culanth.org/?q=node/641> & on Blackboard]

SRE #3

### **Week 11**

**Class 20:** Migrations

Reading: Miller – Ch. 12

[Concepts: internal, international & transnational migration, circular migration, displaced persons, refugees, institutional migrants, “new” immigrants, right of return, (cultural) citizenship]

**Class 21:** Migrations

Film: My American Girls: A Dominican Story

**Discussion Section**

Reading: Vargas

NE #3

### **Week 12**

**Class 22:** People Defining Development

Reading: Miller – Ch. 13

[Concepts: invention, diffusion, acculturation, theories of development, institutional and grassroots approaches to development, cultural fit and sustainability]

**Class 23:** People Defining Development

Film: Life and Debt

Community Action Campaign End

**Discussion Section**

Case Study Ethnography #2:

Reading: Kingsolver – Chapters 1-3

Hand-out Assign #2

### **Week 13**

**Class 24:** Disease, Illness & Health

Reading:

Miller – Ch. 5

[Concepts: ethno medicine, biomedicine, disease, illness, culture-specific syndromes, ethno-etiology, structural suffering, forms of healing, medical pluralism]

Kingsolver – Chapters 4, 5 & Postscript

### **Week 14**

**Class 25:** Magic, Religion, Ritual

Reading: Miller – Ch. 10

[Concepts: magic, religion, ritual, myth, doctrine, animatism, ritual of inversion, religious/ritual specialists, world religion, religious pluralism, revitalization movements]

**Class 26:** Magic, Religion, Ritual

Film: Roots of Love

Turn-in Assign #2

**Discussion Section**

Reading: Hagedorn [Blackboard]

SRE #4

**Week 15**

**Class 27:** Expressive Culture

Reading: Miller – Ch. 11

[Concepts: forms of expressive culture: ethno-aesthetics, ethnomusicology, “popular” culture heterotopia, cultural heritage]

**Class 28:** Expressive Culture

Film: Trobriand Cricket an Ingenious Response to Colonialism

**Discussion section**

NE #4

**FINAL EXAM ACCORDING TO UNIVERSITY EXAM SCHEDULE**