

(ANT 2000) General Anthropology
Fall 2006, CSE A101

Instructor

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Teaching Assistant

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Introduction

Anthropology explores human diversity across space and time. At the core of anthropology are four subfields and a host of topical concerns. Socio-cultural anthropologists, archaeologists, physical anthropologists, and linguists study issues as far-flung as hip-hop music, ceramic technology, gene therapy, and logograms. Despite disciplinary origins rooted in colonialism, contemporary anthropologists are both academicians and activists, expediting bilingual education, improving community health, and making, representing, and conserving heritages. Consequently, anthropologists assist in better addressing humanity and its many challenges while improving cross-cultural understanding.

This course provides an introduction to anthropology by engaging core topics that define the discipline. Its first third establishes a foundation—an historical context—for examining contemporary human diversity. Human physical evolution, the origins of technology and language, and the emergence of cognition are its foci. A seminal question frames early lectures: What differentiates humans from other animals? These differences contribute to the eventual rise of agriculture, metal technologies, nation-states, and explicit ideologies, setting the stage for explorations of present human beliefs and actions. The more specialized subjects of health, kinship, gender, the household, (under)development, religion, and class comprise the second aspect of the course. Case studies drawn from Benin to Nepal clarify the often mystifying jargon that anthropologists employ. Language, particularly its social uses and political ramifications, alongside performance, constitute the remaining course subject matter. A solid introduction to anthropology offers students an opportunity to reflect on cultural relativism, analogy, and agency during the final weeks of the course while remaining cognizant of the necessity for “objectivity” and action when practicing the discipline.

Required texts

- (1) *Anthropology: The Human Challenge* (11th edition, 2005), William A. Haviland, *et al.*
- (2) Website readings to be assigned during the semester.

Grades/Attendance

Grading is based on a 400-point scale. Two non-cumulative exams covering lectures, readings, videos, and websites are worth up to 100 points each. The cumulative final exam accounts for up to an additional 200 points. Students have the opportunity to earn

up to 10 extra-credit points by regularly attending lectures as follows: 0-1 absences = 10 extra-credit points, 2-3 absences = 5 extra-credit points; > 3 absences = 0 extra-credit points. Extra-credit points are added to the total number of points accrued. Attendance is recorded on a sheet circulated around the lecture hall during each class period. It is the STUDENT'S RESPONSIBILITY to make certain they sign the sheet DURING THE LECTURE...a failure to do so results in one recorded absence WITHOUT EXCEPTION.

GRADE SCALE

A	=	400-360 points
B+	=	359-348 points
B	=	347-320 points
C+	=	319-308 points
C	=	307-280 points
D+	=	279-268 points
D	=	267-240 points
E	=	<239 points

Course/University Policies

Attendance is not required for lectures but is highly recommended as exams draw heavily from lectures, associated power points, and in-class discussions. Absences for exams will be accepted for three reasons ONLY: medical/disability, religious, or official University of Florida business. There will be no make-up exams unless the instructor is provided with a letter signed by a physician or university official (in all cases except illness this letter must be produced BEFORE the exam).

Students are encouraged to attend my office hours to consult about lectures, readings, and other issues. Every student must treat the instructor, the teaching assistant, any guest lecturers, and fellow students with respect. The honor system and all University of Florida policies are in effect at all times throughout this course (see your *Student Handbook* for elaborations). Violations of these policies may result in a final grade of E. Any student with a disability should meet with me ASAP to make arrangements to meet their special needs. I reserve the right to make scheduling and content changes to this syllabus.

Course Schedule

Course Schedule		Readings
August 23	Introduction	1
August 28	Genetics & Human Evolution	2
August 30	Early Hominins: Bodies, Brains & Bifaces	4, 6-8
Sept 4	LABOR DAY (no classes)	--
Sept 6	Later Hominins: Becoming Modern	9-10
Sept 11	Hunter-Gatherer-Fishers	--
Sept 13	Origins of Agriculture & Metals	11
Sept 18	Origins of Political Complexity	12
Sept 20	Technology & Ideology	--
Sept 25	Modern Human Diversity	13
Sept 27	EXAM I	--

Oct 2	Health, Disease & Nutrition	14, 17
Oct 4	Kinship	21
Oct 9	Gender, Marriage & the Household	16, 19-20
Oct 11	(Under)development	--
Oct 16	"Modernity"	--
Oct 18	Religion	24
Oct 23	Economy & Class	18, 22
Oct 25	Nation-States	23
Oct 30	EXAM II	--
Nov 1	Language: Origins	15
Nov 6	Language: Structure & Phonology	--
Nov 8	Sociolinguistics	--
Nov 13	Popular Culture & Performance	25-26
Nov 15	'The' 'Modern' 'World' 'System': Origins	--
Nov 20	Peoples 'Without History': Ethnographic Analogy & Time	--
Nov 22	THANKSGIVING (no classes)	--
Nov 27	Worldviews	--
Nov 29	Agency	--
Dec 4	Holistic Anthropology	--
Dec 6	Discussion: Prospects for Anthropology	27
Dec 11	FINAL EXAM	--