

ANT 4403

Environment and Culture

Spring 2011

Section 8118
Lecture: Tuesdays 8-9th periods
 Thursday 9th period
Turlington 2305

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 6th period & by appt.

Introduction

The study of ecological anthropology is at its most basic level the examination of the relationship between humans and the natural environments in which they live. Although the nature of how anthropologists approach this relationship have changed and varied considerably over the past century, ecological anthropology is best characterized as a materialist enterprise. Studies of ecology and anthropology have at their core an implicit assumption that human societies are the products of adaptation to specific environmental conditions. Additionally, the human capacity for culture is most often seen as a primary mechanism for achievement of successful adaptation. Despite this general framework, however, contemporary approaches to ecological anthropology range from the very materialist application of evolutionary theory to approaches like historical ecology that incorporate traditional humanistic approaches to the study of human-environment relations. The first part of this course will focus on basic concepts and the origins of ecological anthropology, focusing on both method and theory. The second part of the course will examine the development of different approaches to the study of human-environment interactions over time. Significant attention will be paid to contemporary issues, among them population growth, urbanization, globalization, and climate change.

Textbooks and Reading Requirements

There are four textbooks for this course:

- Berkes, Fikret. 2008. *Sacred ecology*, 2nd edition. New York:Routledge.
- Crate, Susan A., & Mark Nuttall (eds). 2009. *Anthropology and climate change: From encounters to actions*. Walnut Creek, CA: Left Coast Press.
- Moran, Emilio. 2008. *Human adaptability: An introduction to ecological anthropology*, 3rd edition. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.
- Haenn, Nora, & Richard R. Wilk (eds). 2006. *The environment in anthropology: A reader in ecology, culture, and sustainable living*. New York: New York University Press.

All are required. Moran is a basic introduction to fundamental concepts in ecology and anthropology, while Haenn and Wilk provide some important examples of these concepts. Berkes looks at ecology from the point of view of nonwesterners, relying primarily on Cree concepts of ecology and environment. Crate and Nuttall present material on perhaps the most important issue in the study of human-environment relationships. All are available at the bookstores, but used copies of these texts can be had at significant savings. Using earlier editions of Berkes or Moran is acceptable.

Exams and Grading

There are two exams for this course – a mid-term and a final. Both exams will be in essay format and will be comprised of short answers and longer essay questions. Typically, I will allow some choice on the exams, which are take-home exercises and, hence, open-book. Each exam will be worth 100 points.

Students are also required to write a term paper during the semester. The paper is expected to be between 14-16 pages, typed and double-spaced, on a topic of your choice but approved ahead of time. Detailed directions and a list of suggested topics will be forthcoming next week. To facilitate your paper writing, students are expected to submit a brief proposal, outlining the paper topic and key sources. The paper is worth 100 points.

Because of the discussion-oriented nature of the class, students will be graded on the quality of class participation. Participation is a constructive activity, which means that you must not only have interesting and useful things to contribute to the discussion but also remain sensitive to others in the classroom. Being disrespectful of other opinions or hogging the spotlight are just as bad as not saying anything. Your participation grade is worth 50 points. You should note that 50 points is more than enough to make for a whole letter grade in this class, so this is not a trivial component of the course.

Because real participation remains such an unusual component of most college classrooms, I should add here that “participation” and “discussion” are not unstructured activities. Rather, much of the discussion is guided either by discussion questions provided to accompany readings and periodic small-group, in-class discussions of particular topics.

In summary, the grade breakdown for the course looks like the following:

Mid Term Exam	100
Final Exam	100
Term Paper	100
Participation	50
Totals	350

As for letter grades, the numbers play out as follows:

A=315+, A-=308, B+=301, B=280, B-=273, C+=266, C=245, C-=238, D=210, E=<210

Ground Rules

Sakai

I will be using Sakai to manage the course. This means that all important materials can be viewed online using Sakai, including a copy of the syllabus, exams, assignments and any supplemental readings or links I might think to post. While Sakai is a useful tool for managing this course, it is important to remember that this is not an online course, and I am only using Sakai as an organizational tool.

Classes, Readings, & Attendance Policy

Students are expected to complete the assigned readings before class. Although attendance in class is not compulsory, class discussion will incorporate information not available in the assigned textbooks. Indeed, class discussions provide material in addition to the material found in the textbook.

As for attendance, this is a university, and you are all grown-ups. I do not grade for attendance, though I should

add that class attendance is highly correlated with performance on exams, and thus the final grade in the course. I'm not inclined to do any favors for students who are borderline if they have shown a half-hearted commitment to being in class. And, of course, if you are not in class you are not participating, which means you are not earning those points. Finally: University policy is that students are expected to attend all class meetings.

Classroom Behavior

I recognize that UF students are, for the most part, conscientious and hard-working, but that there are a few (or more) in every crowd. For those few, I would remind you that being in class is an indication that you are here to learn something about anthropology. I expect that cell phones will be turned off during the lecture, that you will pay attention in class, and that you will remain seated during class. Passing notes, chatting with your neighbors, reading the newspaper, doing your math homework, playing World of Warcraft, surfing Facebook, getting up to get a drink of water, running to the potty, or leaving early are distracting to and disrespectful of everyone in the class. If you do need to leave early, please sit in a location where your movement will cause the least disruption. If you need to chat with your neighbor, please wait until after class. And if you can't stay away from checking email, logging onto Facebook or playing an online game for an entire class period, you really need to seek professional help.

How to Succeed in this Course

Some keys to success in this course include attending class regularly and taking good notes during lecture. Make sure that you read the chapter before class; that way, the lecture will not seem completely foreign, and the tricky terminology from the textbooks will make more sense. Begin studying at least a week before the exam. One night of cramming will not help you do your best. If you are in doubt about anything, *do not hesitate to seek help*. Our office hours are listed here, and you are welcome to drop by and see us if you have questions about specific issues. We can only help you, however, if you see us before an exam.

Your grade for this course is your responsibility. If you attend class regularly, read the assigned material carefully, and participate in our discussions, then you will likely do well. You will only get out of this class what you put into it.

Communication

I don't bite. Don't be shy about contacting me via email, coming to office hours, or asking questions. There is only a single caveat: I have a very full life at both work and at home. Teaching this class is but one of the many facets of my job as a professor. In addition, my activity patterns are quite different from that of the average college student. All this is to say that when you email me, you are not likely to get an immediate response. I don't live for email or update my life on Facebook hourly. But be patient. I will get back to you.

Academic Honesty

Unless it is specifically connected to assigned collaborative work, all work should be individual. Evidence of collusion (working with someone not connected to the class or assignment), plagiarism (use of someone else's published or unpublished words or design without acknowledgment) or multiple submissions (submitting the same work for different courses) will lead to the Department's and the University's procedures for dealing with academic dishonesty. All students are expected to honor their commitment to the [University's Honor Code](#).

Accommodation for Students with Disabilities

Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation. **Please make any requests by the second week of class.**

UF Counseling Services

Resources are available on-campus for students having personal problems or lacking clear career and academic goals that interfere with their academic performance. These resources include:

1. [University Counseling Center](#), 301 Peabody Hall, 392-1575, personal and career counseling
2. [Student Mental Health](#), Student Health Care Center, 392-1171, personal counseling
3. [Sexual Assault Recovery Services](#) (SARS), Student Health Care Center, 392-1161, sexual counseling
4. [Career Resource Center](#), Reitz Union, 392-1601, career development assistance and counseling
5. [Reading & Writing Center](#), Broward Hall, 392-0791, writing assistance, study skills, test preparation

Course Outline

The following course outline is approximate. We may spend more or less time on specific topics as class interest dictates. Exams will occur as scheduled and are not subject to change.

Week and Dates	Topic and Reading Assignment
Jan 6-20	<i>History, Theory, and Method in Environmental Anthropology</i> Readings: Moran 1-4, Wilk 1-7
Jan 18-27	<i>Population and Environment</i> Readings: Moran 5-9, Wilk 8-12
Jan 27	Paper Proposals Due, 5pm
Feb 1-10	<i>Development and Urbanization</i> Readings: Moran 10, Wilk 13-18
Feb 15-24	<i>Biodiversity and Management</i> Readings: Wilk 19-30
Feb 22	Mid-Term Exams Due, 5 pm
Mar 1-24	<i>Indigenous Groups and Ecology</i> Readings: Wilk 31-36, Berkes (All)
Spring Break 3/5-3/13	
Mar 29-31	<i>Globalization</i> Readings: Wilk 37-42
April 7	Term Papers Due, 5 pm
Apr 5-19	<i>Climate Change:</i> Readings: Crate and Nuttall (All)
April 28	Final Exams Due, 5 pm