INTRODUCTION TO CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY

ANT 2410

Fall 2013

Tue 3-4th periods (9:35-11:30am) & Thu 4th period (10:40-11:30am)
Location: Turlington L005

Instructor: Dr. Ieva Jusionyte
ijusionyte@latam.ufl.edu
Grinter Hall 368
Office Hrs: Thur 1-4pm

TA: J. Antonio Tovar-Aguilar
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Turlington B346
Office Hrs: Tue, Wed, Thur 12-1pm

This course introduces the principal ideas and methods of cultural anthropology. The special mandate of the field is to discover new and less harmful ways of perceiving and understanding, and, therefore, validating the different experiences, histories, and values of people and communities from all parts of the world. Anthropologists show that other possibilities, beyond the ones we are most familiar with, exist for solving problems and for achieving meaningful lives. It is the task of an anthropologist to discover and interpret these different social worlds by learning from others, some similar, some unlike ourselves.

The course is organized around central questions that anthropologists ask: What is culture (the conceptual question)? How can we learn to understand another culture the way its practitioners do, and does our studying it alters the behaviors we are observing (the methodological question)? What does a particular practice mean to those who engage in it (the interpretive question)? What was this practice or idea in the past (the temporal question)? How are human biology, culture, and the
environment interacting (the bio-cultural question)? How are people organized to get things done, and how social institutions and groups affect their practices and ideas (the social-structural question)? On what grounds can we judge a practice we do not agree with? Does our moral judgment limit our understanding of unfamiliar ideas (the judgment question)? What does studying other cultures teach us about our own culture (the reflexive question)? And, how can we use different cultural practices and ideas together to improve individual and social wellbeing (the dialogic and practical questions)?

In search of the answers we will examine several primary domains of cultural anthropology, including the concepts of culture and fieldwork; symbols and ritual; kinship and social organization; political and economic stratification and discrimination; gender and sexuality; sickness and healing; and cultural contact and change. We will particularly consider the often pernicious effects of social difference through class, race, gender and other hierarchies in human societies as they translate into inequality and suffering. We will also engage with moral and ethical dilemmas at the heart of the discipline, asking how to balance our quest to understand the varied human condition with the duties and responsibilities this pursuit entails.

**REQUIRED BOOKS:**
Podolefsky, A., P. Brown, and S. Lacy  
Rabinow, Paul  
Biehl, Joao  
Lutz, Catherine  

All remaining class readings can be downloaded through e-Learning website.

**ASSIGNMENTS and GRADING:**

**Observation exercise (10%):** This will be a short, informal and engaging exercise in which you will be asked to observe particular kinds of social-cultural practices in the environment surrounding you, and to write up 1-2-page description and analysis of the phenomenon, drawing on course concepts. The assignment will be distributed in class on Tuesday, September 24 and it is due in class on Tuesday, October 1.

**Exams (60%):** The exams will consist largely of questions requiring short answers (1-2 paragraphs) based on the readings, lectures and films. You will be asked to supply both detailed factual information and your own interpretations. It will be difficult to do well on the exams if you do not carefully keep up with both readings and lectures. The lectures often cover material not duplicated in the readings, so attending class is very important. Before the exams, the instructor will hand out study sheets, which will list the major concepts and theories you will need to revise in order to perform well. The first exam will be held during class time on Tuesday, October 8, and the second exam - Tuesday, December 3.

**Essay (30%):** This assignment will give you an opportunity to reflect on the ways anthropology interacts with and intervenes in culturally diverse human lives. Topics for the 3-4-page essay, due by Tuesday, November 26, will be handed out in class on Thursday, November 7.

**Class participation (extra credit):** Participation includes both attendance, and thoughtful contribution to class discussions. Extra credit will be awarded to students who consistently
demonstrate their familiarity with the assigned readings and volunteer original thoughts or questions that lead beyond the texts.

**Late Work and Extensions:** Assignments will be handed out well in advance of their due date. If you know you will not be able to turn in the assignment on time, please notify the instructor as early as possible. Extensions are not granted lightly and must be arranged in advance. Assignments are due at the beginning of the class and will be marked down a grade for each day they are late (i.e., a B+ paper turned in a day late will receive a B).

**ACADEMIC HONESTY:** All work submitted by a student for a grade must be completed by that student and free from unauthorized assistance or deliberate misrepresentations. The penalty for plagiarism or cheating is a grade of zero points on the assignment in question; in such cases an incident form will also be sent to the Office of the Dean of Students. If you have questions about what constitutes academic misconduct, please consult the UF Honor Code as well as the UF Policies on Academic Honesty, Student Rights and Responsibilities. These are available online at: [http://www.dso.ufl.edu/studenthandbook/studentrights.php#academichonestyguidelines](http://www.dso.ufl.edu/studenthandbook/studentrights.php#academichonestyguidelines)

**ADA STATEMENT:** Students with disabilities, who need reasonable modifications to complete assignments successfully and otherwise satisfy course criteria, are encouraged to meet with the instructor as early in the course as possible to identify and plan specific accommodations. Students will be asked to supply a letter from the Disability Resource Center to assist in planning accommodations.

**GRADING SCALE**

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<th>Passing Grade</th>
<th>4.0</th>
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<tr>
<td>Grade Points</td>
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Please consult UF grading policies at [https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx](https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx)

**HEALTH AND COUNSELING:**
The University offers the following health and counseling services for students in the event personal problems threaten to hinder academic performance:
University Counseling Center (301 Peabody Hall, 392-1575),
Student Mental Health (Student Health Care Center, 392-1171), and
Sexual Assault Recovery Services (Student Health Care Center, 392-1161).

*Please note: The Instructor may make minor adjustments to class readings or assignments during the course of the semester. Any and all modifications will be announced ahead of time.*

**COURSE SCHEDULE:**

**Thursday, August 22**
Class and course introductions

**Culture (the conceptual question)**

**Tuesday, August 27**
Geertz, "The Impact of the Concept of Culture on the Concept of Man" (e-Learning)
In-class documentary: First Contact (Connolly and Anderson, 1984)

**Thursday, August 29**  
Bohannan, "Shakespeare in the Bush" (ACA)  
Simmel, "The Stranger" (e-Learning)  
Mullings, "Trayvon Martin, Race, and Anthropology" (e-Learning)

**Fieldwork (the methodological question)**

**Tuesday, September 3**  
Malinowski, "Introduction: Argonauts of the Western Pacific" (e-Learning)  
Rabinow, "Reflections on Fieldwork in Morocco" (1-100)

**Thursday, September 5**  
Rabinow, "Reflections on Fieldwork in Morocco" (100-162)  
Shea, "An Anthropologist Bridges Two Worlds" (e-Learning)

**Tuesday, September 10**  
Chagnon, "Doing fieldwork among the Yanomamo" (e-Learning)  
Laden, "Who is Fiercer: Yanomamö Indians or Dueling Tribes of Anthropologists?" (e-Learning)

In-class documentaries: The Ax Fight (Asch & Chagnon 1975) and Secrets of the Tribe (Padilha, 2010)

**Ritual (the interpretive question)**

**Thursday, September 12**  
Rothenbuhler, "Ground Zero, the Firemen, and the Symbolics of Touch on 9-11 and After" (e-Learning)  
Low, "The Memorialization of September 11" (e-Learning)

**Subsistence (the temporal question)**

**Tuesday, September 17**  
Lee, "Eating Christmas in the Kalahari" (ACA)


**Thursday, September 19**  
Mauss, The Gift (e-Learning)

**Body (the bio-cultural question)**

**Tuesday, September 24**  
Roscoe, “Strange Country This’: An Introduction to North American Gender Diversity” (ACA)  
Kulick, “Becoming a Travesti” (e-Learning)

In-class documentary: Sex Unknown (Sweigart and Cohen, 2001)

# Observation exercise assignment handed out #

**Thursday, September 26**  
Petryna, "Biological Citizenship” (e-Learning)
Moniruzzaman, "'Living Cadavers' in Bangladesh: Bioviolence in the Human Organ Bazaar" (e-Learning)

**Structure (the social question)**

**Tuesday, October 1**
Goldstein, "When Brothers Share a Wife" (ACA)
Small, “How Many Fathers Are Best for a Child” (ACA)
Tsuji, "Encounters with the Elderly in America" (e-Learning)

*In-class documentary: Maid in America (Prado, 2005)*

# Observation exercise due #

**Thursday, October 3**
Farmer, “On Suffering and Structural Violence" (e-Learning)
Schepers-Hughes, "Mother's Love: Death Without Weeping" (e-Learning)

**Tuesday, October 8**

# FIRST EXAM #

**Case study I**

**Thursday: October 10**
Biehl, *Vita* (1-119)

**Tuesday, October 15**
Biehl, *Vita* (123-265)

*In-class documentary: Favela Rising (Zimbalist and Mochary, 2005)*

**Thursday, October 17**
Biehl, *Vita* (271-319, 353-360)

**Perspective (the judgment question)**

**Tuesday, October 22**
Rosaldo, “Of Headhunters and Soldiers" (e-Learning)
Abu-Lughod, “Do Muslim Women Really Need Saving? (ACA)

**Thursday, October 24**
Conclin, "Consuming Grief: Compassionate Cannibalism in an Amazonian Society" (e-Learning)

**Case study II**

**Tuesday, October 29**
Lutz, *Homefront* (begin)

*In-class documentary: Restrepo (Junger and Hetherington, 2010)*

**Thursday, October 31**
Lutz, *Homefront*
Tuesday, November 5
Lutz, *Homefront* (finish)

*In-class documentary: Human Terrain: War Becomes Academic (Derian, Udris and Udris, 2010)*

Thursday, November 7
Price, "The Role of Culture in Wars Waged by Robots" (e-Learning)
Sluka, "Curiouser and Curiouser: Montgomery McFate’s Strange Interpretation of the Relationship between Anthropology and Counterinsurgency" (e-Learning)

# Essay topics handed out #

**Week 13: Intervention (the practical question)**

Tuesday, November 12
Fadiman, *The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down* (e-Learning)

Thursday, November 14
Mattingly, "Pocahontas Goes to the Clinic" (ACA)
Greenhalgh, "Weighty Subjects: The Biopolitics of the US War on Fat" (e-Learning)

**Week 14-15: Global encounters (the dialogic question)**

Tuesday, November 19
Clifford, "Diasporas" (e-Learning)
Malkki, “News From Nowhere: Mass Displacement and Globalized 'Problems of Organization’" (e-Learning)
DeLuca, "Transnational Migration, the Lost Girls of Sudan and Global ‘‘Care work’’: A Photo Essay" (e-Learning)

*In-class documentary: Dinka Diaries (Mebrahtu, 2005)*

Thursday, November 21
American Anthropological Association Meeting in Chicago (no class)

Tuesday, November 26
Tsing, “The Global Situation” (e-Learning)
Obbo, "But We Know It All! African Perspectives on Anthropological Knowledge" (e-Learning)

*In-class documentary: Life and Debt (Black, 2001)*

# Essay due #

Thursday, November 28
Thanksgiving Day (no class)

Tuesday, December 3
# SECOND EXAM #