Course Description

This course introduces students to key issues and concerns in cultural anthropology. Where anthropology as a four-field enterprise (cultural, biological, linguistic, and archaeological) can be defined as the study of human diversity across time and space, the subfield of cultural anthropology is generally focused on the analysis of contemporary societies.

Cultural anthropologists typically conduct long-term fieldwork in a particular society or culture. In most cases, they do so not only to document the social worlds they encounter—though this is vitally important—but also to address “big questions” about cultural difference and the human experience. Such questions inevitably have a comparative dimension and, as we will see, much of the anthropological endeavor involves placing one experience alongside another.

While cultural anthropology has often focused on “traditional” or small-scale societies (in part, a reflection of the intellectual landscape out of which it emerged), the discipline has been enriched by scholarship that brings anthropological insights and methods to bear on a range of topics, including globalization, digital subcultures, tourism, and science and technology.

Course Objectives

The course is designed to serve as a basic introduction to the field: its history, its methods, and some “classic” and contemporary issues that have generated debate among anthropologists. What do we mean by “culture”? How do cultural differences matter, but not necessarily in the ways we think they do? How can cultural anthropology help us better understand and engage with a changing world?

By examining these kinds of questions through readings and class discussion, students will gain knowledge and critical thinking skills that will serve them in their academic careers and beyond.

Required Books


You are expected to read assigned chapters and/or readings posted on Sakai prior to class meetings. Lecture notes will not be posted online.

A note on used textbooks: You are welcome to use earlier editions of these textbooks. Quiz and test questions will be based on the most recent editions, however, so use older versions at your own risk.

**Exams and Grading**

*Exams:* There will be three multiple choice exams based on lectures and readings. The last exam will be cumulative. The first two exams will be taken during scheduled class meetings and the last one will be taken during the final exam period.

*Quizzes:* There will be seven quizzes. These will not be announced in advance. Each quiz will be worth two points and have two questions. You will receive one point for writing your name. Your two lowest quiz scores will be dropped.

For calculating final grades, the distribution of points will be the following:

Exam 1: 30%
Exam 2: 30%
Exam 3: 30%
Quizzes: 10% (five highest scores)

Letter grades will be determined using the following scale:

- A: 93-100
- A-: 90-92.99
- B+: 87-89.99
- B: 83-86.99
- B-: 80-82.99
- C+: 77-79.99
- C: 73-76.99
- C-: 70-72.99
- D+: 67-69.99
- D: 63-66.99
- D-: 60-62.99
- E: 0-59.99

I may lower grade cut-offs, but they will not be any higher than the ones posted here. No extra credit will be offered.

**Attendance Policy and Make-Up Exams and Quizzes**

I will not take attendance. That stated, poor attendance will affect your final grade (most directly via quiz scores, but you will also miss information that will appear on exams).

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams and quizzes for this course are consistent with university policies that can be found at: [https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx](https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx)

**Accommodations for Students with Disabilities**

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, [www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/](http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/)) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be
presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

**Course Evaluations**

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at [https://evaluations.ufl.edu](https://evaluations.ufl.edu). Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at [https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results/](https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results/).

**Course Schedule**

**Unit 1: What is Anthropology?**

6/30: Chapter 1 (SL)

7/1: Miner, Horace. “Body Ritual among the Nacirema” (SM)

Spradley, James. “Ethnography and Culture” (SM)

**Unit 2: The Culture Concept**

7/2: Chapter 2 (SL)

Lee, Richard. “Eating Christmas in the Kalahari” (SM)

7/3: Benedict, Ruth. “Anthropology and the Abnormal” (Sakai)

Brown, Michael. “Cultural Relativism 2.0.” (Sakai)

7/4: INDEPENDENCE DAY

**Unit 3: Method and Theory**

7/7: Chapter 3 (SL)


7/8: Gmelch, George. “Nice Girls Don’t Talk to Rastas” (SM)

Hurston, Zora Neale. *Mules and Men* (excerpts on Sakai)

Film: Bronislaw Malinowski: Off the Verandah

**Unit 4: History of Anthropology**

7/9: Chapter 4 (SL)

Rosaldo, Renato. “The Erosion of Classic Norms” (Sakai)
**Unit 5: Culture and Communication**

7/10: Chapter 5 (SL)

Bohannan, Laura. “Shakespeare in the Bush” (SM)

7/11: Deutscher, Guy. “Whorf Revisited: You are What You Speak” (SM)

Tannen, Deborah. “Conversation Style: Talking on the Job” (SM)

**Unit 6: Ritual and Religion**

7/14: Chapter 7 (SL)

Gmelch, George. “Baseball Magic” (SM)


Wolf, Margery. “The Woman Who Didn’t Become a Shaman” (Sakai)

7/16: **EXAM 1**

Excerpts from Chapter 6 (SL)

Dubisch, Jill. “Run for the Wall: An American Pilgrimage” (SM)

Turner, Victor. “Liminality and Communitas” (Sakai)

**Unit 7: Medical Anthropology/Environmental Anthropology**

7/17: Chapter 13 (SL)

Diamond, Jared. “Domestication and the Evolution of Disease” (SM)


Reed, Richard K. “Forest Development the Indian Way” (SM)

**Unit 8: Economic Anthropology**

7/21: Chapter 9 (SL)

Cronk, Lee. “Reciprocity and the Power of Giving” (SM)

Film: *Ongka’s Big Moka*


Ho, Karen. “Anthropology Goes to Wall Street” (Sakai)

**Unit 9: Politics and Power**

7/23: Chapter 8 (SL)
Harris, Marvin. “Life without Chiefs” (SM)

7/24:  Lutz, Catherine. “Making War at Home: Militarization and the Current Crisis” (Sakai)
Shandy, Dianna. “New Americans: The Road to Refugee Resettlement” (SM)

Unit 10: Kinship

7/25:  Chapters 11 and 12 (SL)

7/28:  Goldstein, Melvyn. “Polyandry: When Brothers Share a Wife” (SM)
Scheper-Hughes, Nancy. “Mother’s Love: Death Without Weeping” (SM)
Wolf, Margery. “Uterine Families and the Women’s Community” (SM)

Unit 11: Sex and Gender

7/29:  Excerpts from Chapter 12 (SL)
Abu-Lughod, Lila. “Do Muslim Women Really Need Saving?” (SM)

7/30:  EXAM 2
Fausto-Sterling, Anne. “The Five Sexes: Why Male and Female Are Not Enough” (Sakai)
Herdt, Gilbert. “Semen Transactions in Sambia Culture” (Sakai)
Lutz, Catherine. “The Gender of Theory” (Sakai)

Unit 12: Race, Ethnicity, and Nationalism

7/31:  Excerpts from Chapter 12 (SL)
Chin, Elizabeth. “Ethnically Correct Dolls: Toying with the Race Industry” (Sakai)

8/1:  Robbins, Richard H. “The Nation-State in the Culture of Capitalism” (Sakai)
Fish, Jefferson. “Mixed Blood” (SM)
Film: Herskovits at the Heart of Blackness

Unit 13: Performance, Play, and Sport

8/4:  Excerpts from Chapter 6 (SL)
Gmelch, George. “Rules and Respect, Pranks and Performance: The Culture of Professional Baseball” (Sakai)

8/5: Jordan-Young, Rebecca, and Katrina Karkazis, “Some of Their Parts: Gender Verification and ‘Elite Sports’” (Sakai)

Viatori, Maxwell. “Soccer Nationalism: Ecuador and the World Cup” (Sakai)

Film: *Trobiand Cricket: An Ingenious Response to Colonialism*

**Unit 14: Globalization**

8/6: Chapter 14 (SL)

Bestor, Theodore. “How Sushi Went Global” (SM)

Watson, James L., ed. *Golden Arches East: McDonald’s in East Asia* (excerpts on Sakai)

8/7: Ehrenreich, Barbara, and Arlie Russel Hochschild. “Global Women in the New Economy” (SM)

George, Susan. “A Short History of Neo-liberalism” (Sakai)

Film: *Chain of Love*

**Unit 15: Using Anthropology**

8/8: McCurdy, David. “Using Anthropology” (SM)

Ohohundro, John. “Career Advice for Undergraduates” (SM)

**Final Exam Week**

**EXAM 3** (date/time TBA)