

Introduction to Cultural Anthropology

ANT 2410 – Fall 2021



Bearden (1964), *Young students*

Instructor:

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Course description: Anthropology is the academic discipline that studies humanity across all space and time. Cultural anthropologists study the distinctive ways people create, negotiate and make sense of their own social worlds vis-à-vis the worlds of others. Through research in places both far away and near to home, anthropologists examine relations and events that influence and determine social belonging and exclusion, whether based in gender, kinship, religion, language, political economy or historical constructions of race, ethnicity and citizenship. The scope of cultural anthropology is thus broad. Studying culture is crucial to understanding our increasingly connected planet, human relationships, and actions. An anthropological perspective is also essential to efforts which aim to resolve the major crises that confront humanity today.

This class provides an introduction to the discipline through a consideration of topics and themes that are not only of vital relevance today, but hold an enduring place in the intellectual tradition of anthropology. The purpose of this class is to increase your familiarity and comfort with concepts of cultural analysis, and to show how these notions can increase awareness and understanding of others', as well as your own life experiences. In so doing, the course aims to enhance sensitivity to social differences, while also underscoring the moral and ethical dimensions entailed by ethnographic research.

Student learning outcomes

- Identify, recognize, and recall influential concepts and concerns of cultural anthropology
- Demonstrate a comprehension and appreciation of the diversity of cultural phenomena
- Describe the interconnectedness of the contemporary world and how it is being transformed through globalization, development, migration, and dynamics of power
- Practice skills of textual interpretation
- Express a basic understanding of anthropological modes of research and representation
- Develop a sensitivity to the ethical implications of ethnographic fieldwork
- Apply key anthropological concepts to everyday life experiences
- Develop research questions

Course format

This is an asynchronous **on-line** course that uses **Canvas** to distribute and submit all course materials. You will find the course syllabus, modules, reading assignments, quizzes, discussion boards, videos, grades, and course updates and announcements on the course website. In addition to course management and the posting of readings and assignments, Canvas will be used as a contact interface between students, the instructor, and the TAs. Questions can be sent to the instructor through Canvas messaging. The student is responsible for checking Canvas regularly.

Course communications

We have several avenues for communication in this course. First, there is a general Course Questions Discussion Board where you are encouraged to ask general questions about the course contents and assignments. Private questions should be sent through Canvas messenger or email directly to the instructor or TA. You can expect a prompt reply if you email/message during posted office hours. The instructor and TAs are also available to meet via Zoom by request.

Required textbook & readings

Robert Welsh & Luis Vivanco, *Asking questions about cultural anthropology: A concise introduction*, Oxford University Press, 2018. ISBN: 978-0190878078

Additional readings will be posted on Canvas. The students are required to integrate the book chapters with additional resources (articles, videos, pictures, etc.). These resources will be available on Canvas and will cover, together with the textbook, the different topics/concepts discussed each week.

**Please note that weekly quizzes will test your comprehension of all the materials provided, and not just the textbook.*

Course requirements

This course consists of 15 modules. Each week we will cover crucial concepts and ideas in Cultural Anthropology. You will be asked to actively participate to the discussion boards and complete the quiz assigned for every week. You are also required to submit 2 writing assignments during the semester, and to write an original paper as your final project.

Discussion boards	240 points	24%
Quizzes	300 points	30%
Assignments	260 points	26%
Final project	200 points	20%
Total	1000 points	100%

*All quizzes and discussion posts are due on Saturdays by 11:59pm (alternatively Sundays when a university-recognized holiday occurs during the week). You are of course free to complete work earlier in the week as well.

Discussion Boards (24%)

Discussion Board participation consists of 24% of your final grade. You are required to write a an original discussion board post based on the module's discussion prompt.

Discussion posts are due by 11:59 pm ET on Saturday each week. There will be a total of 12 discussion boards. Your posts must be between 150-300 words in length. Always provide a proper reference when using or quoting another source. Please be succinct and always respectful. You will receive 0 points if any content from another student or the internet is copied. You will receive 0 points in case of late submission without an anticipated and approved valid excuse. Please review and adhere to the following UF "Netiquette" guidelines:

When communicating with **fellow students** for formal class purposes, you should:

- Treat your colleagues with respect in all forms of online communication
- Use clear and concise language
- Remember that all college level communication should have correct spelling and grammar.
- Use standard fonts such as Arial or Times New Roman and use a size 12 or 14 font.
- Avoid using the caps lock feature, AS IT CAN BE INTERPRETTED AS YELLING.
- Limit and possibly avoid the use of emoticons like ☺
- Be cautious when using humor or sarcasm as tone is sometimes lost in an email or discussion post and your message might be taken seriously or considered offensive.

Responses to other students' discussion posts are not required for full credit, but you are encouraged to engage with your peers' posts, as doing so will help enhance your understanding of course concepts. If you agree or disagree with someone else's take on something, don't focus on the fact that an agreement or disagreement exists—focus instead on trying to better understand the other person's perspective and/or better express your own.

Quizzes (30%)

Quizzes comprise 30% of your final grade. There will be a total of 11 quizzes, with 10 of them counting toward your final grade (lowest quiz is dropped). Students will be expected to complete all quizzes by the due date provided in the course schedule by 11:59pm ET. Normally, quizzes will be due by Saturday, but they will be due by Sundays when a University-recognized holiday occurs during the week. If an approved, excused absence is not provided, students should expect to receive a zero (0) for the quiz. If you have a question about a quiz prior to the due date, please use the Course Questions discussion board, or communicate with the instructor or TA no less than 48 hours before the deadline. When quizzes are made available, you may begin them at any time, but each quiz will have a fifteen (15) minute time limit. Please allow enough time to take the quiz in one sitting, as you will not be able to stop and come back to it. All quizzes are open book/note.

Assignments (26%)

There will also be 2 written assignments (.docx file, double spaced, 500-750 words) over the course of the semester. The assignments are submitted in essay form and are related to the course themes. You will be graded based on the quality of your response to the prompt, following the rubric provided, and by demonstrating that you are familiar with the material that we have covered over recent weeks. Specific instructions for each assignment are described in Canvas. Assignments must be submitted via Canvas by 11:59 p.m. ET on each of the due dates, which are listed below in the course schedule as well as on Canvas. All assignments must be uploaded in Microsoft Word format (.doc or .docx) and will be processed through anti-plagiarism software. If you attempt to upload your assignment in an incorrect format, Canvas will not accept the file. The assignment will not be graded until it is uploaded in the correct format and may be considered late.

Final project (20%)

As their final project students will write a short paper (750-1000 words) in which they demonstrate their familiarity with key anthropological concepts as well as their ability to connect those to everyday life experiences. Detailed instructions will be posted on Canvas.

Grading scale

See <http://www.registrar.ufl.edu/catalog/policies/regulationgrades.html> for calculating grade point averages. Also note that a grade of C- does not count for credit in major, minor, Gen Ed, Gordon Rule, or college basic distribution credit (for information regarding minus grades go to: <http://www.isis.ufl.edu/minusgrades.html>)

The grading scale for this course is as follows: 93% - 100% = A; 90% - 92% = A-; 87% - 89% = B+; 83% - 86% = B; 80% - 82% = B-; 77% - 79% = C+; 73% - 76% = C; 70% - 72% = C-; 67% - 69% = D+; 63% - 66% = D; 60% - 62% = D; Below 60% = E

Make-up policy

No make-up work will be offered except for approved excused absences. Requirements for make-up exams, assignments and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found in the online catalog: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>

If you have an event scheduled on the day coursework is due, plan to do the work early. All coursework is available 24/7 on Canvas. Students unable to complete assignments due to documented, excused absences must provide documentation to the instructor no less than 48 hours before the absence. Verification for excused absences due to illness must be received one week after the coursework due date. Technology issues while turning in assignments/completing quizzes are handled differently and are addressed in the following section.

Course technology

If you have technical difficulties with the course, you must contact the UF Computing Help Desk either by filling out an online request form or calling (352) 392-4357. The Help Desk is an excellent resource and they are very quick to resolve issues. Once you contact them, they will issue a ticket number detailing the problem and its resolution. Technological problems (hardware, software, Canvas, etc.) are not sufficient excuses for missed or late assignments without a Help Desk ticket number.

• <http://helpdesk.ufl.edu> • (352) 392-HELP

It is strongly recommended when taking an online exam or quiz that you use a wired connection not a Wi-Fi signal. It is also strongly advised you do not wait until the last few hours to complete any assignment so you can deal with a computer or internet failure. In addition, you should be using the most up to date version of Google Chrome or Mozilla Firefox when using UF's e-Learning interface. If you have any issue with UF e-Learning, you must contact the UF Computing Help Desk immediately at 352-392-4357 to create a ticket that you will then send to your professor so that they may follow up with the issue. The instructor will be the one who decides if the issue warrants further action.

University Policies

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, 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.

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful **feedback on the quality of instruction** in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.ua.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluer.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.ua.ufl.edu/public-results/>. Please note that your instructor and TAs also welcome your feedback at any point during the semester. If there is something that we can do to help you and your peers learn better (or if we are doing something that you find especially helpful), you don't have to wait until the end of the semester

to say so. We encourage you to attend our office hours or make an appointment with one of us to discuss your suggestions.

University policy requires that you be provided with the following link to information on current **UF grading policies** for assigning grade points: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/>. You may notice that this information classifies W, H, I, N, and U as “non-punitive grades,” which implies that other kinds of grades may in fact be punitive. Please note that the instructor unequivocally rejects the idea of any grades as punitive. A grade is simply an instructor’s assessment of a student’s learning outcomes in a given course—no more, no less. The idea that grades are punitive is pedagogically unjustifiable, counterproductive to effective teaching and learning, and has no place whatsoever in the instructor’s philosophy or practice of teaching.

UF students are bound by **The Honor Pledge** which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.” The Honor Code (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TAs in this class.

Course schedule

NOTE: Please refer to the schedule in e-Learning for all due dates, it will be the most up to date if any deadlines should change during the semester. You will be notified of any revisions to this schedule via email and e-Learning.

MODULE 1 (week of 8/23)

Introduction to Cultural Anthropology

Read: (1) Course syllabus, (2) “Why anthropology matters” (Statement by Executive Committee of the European Association of Social Anthropologists).

Activity: Discussion board (due by Saturday 8/28)

MODULE 2 (week of 8/30)

Anthropology: Asking questions about humanity

Read: (1) Book, Ch. 1, (2) Augé, M., & Colleyn, J. P. (2006). *The world of the anthropologist* (excerpt). Berg Publishers.

Additional reading (recommended): Brandt, A. M. (1978). Racism and research: the case of the Tuskegee Syphilis Study. *Hastings Center Report*, 8(6), 21-29.

Study: Slides lecture Ch. 1 on Canvas

Activities: Quiz + Discussion Board (due by Saturday 9/4)

MODULE 3 (week of 9/6)

Culture: Giving meaning to human lives

Read: (1) Book, Ch. 2, (2) Williams, R. (2014). *Keywords: A vocabulary of culture and society* (excerpt). Oxford University Press, (3) Rothman, J. (2014). The meaning of “culture” (<https://www.newyorker.com/books/joshua-rothman/meaning-culture>)

Study: Slides lecture Ch. 2 on Canvas

Activities: Quiz + Discussion Board (due by Sunday 9/12 extra day due to Labor Day)

MODULE 4 (week of 9/13)

Ethnography: Studying Culture

Read: (1) Book, Ch. 3, (2) van Tilburg, M. V. (1998). Interviews of the Unspoken: Incompatible Initiations in Senegal Fieldwork. *Anthropology and Humanism*, 23(2), 177-189, (3) Striffler, S. (2007). Neither here nor there: Mexican immigrant workers and the search for home. *American Ethnologist*, 34(4), 674-688.

Additional reading (recommended): (1) Lyon, D. (1971). Conversations with the Dead: Photos, of Prison Life, with the Letters and Drawings of Billy Mc-Cune (excerpts). *New York: Holt, Rinehart*, (2) Ottenberg, S. (1990). Thirty years of fieldnotes: changing relationships to the text. *Fieldnotes: The makings of anthropology*, 139-160. (3)

Study: Slides lecture Ch. 3 on Canvas

Activities: Writing assignment #1 (due by Monday 9/20)

MODULE 5 (week of 9/20)

Power

Read: (1) Book, Ch. 8, (2) Harcourt, B. E. (2011). Making willing bodies: The University of Chicago human experiments at Stateville Penitentiary. *Social Research*, 78(2), 443-478

Read and Watch: CNN Exclusive Report “People for sale. Where lives are auctioned for \$400” (<http://www.cnn.com/2017/11/14/africa/libya-migrant-auctions/index.html>)

Study: Slides lecture Ch. 8 on Canvas

Activities: Quiz, Discussion board (due by Saturday 9/25)

MODULE 6 (week of 9/27)

Gender, Sex, and Sexuality

Read: (1) Book, Ch. 10, (2) Allen, A. S. (2012). “Brides” without Husbands: Lesbians in the Afro-Brazilian Religion Candomblé. *Transforming Anthropology*, 20(1), 17-31, (3) Van Allen, J. (1972). “Sitting on a man”: colonialism and the lost political institutions of Igbo women. *Canadian Journal of African Studies/La Revue canadienne des études africaines*, 6(2), 165-181.

Study: Slides lecture Ch. 10 on Canvas

Activities: Quiz, Discussion Board (due by Saturday 10/2)

MODULE 7 (week of 10/4)

Social Ties

Read: (1) Book, Ch. 11

Study: (1) Slides lecture Ch. 11 on Canvas

Watch: Stephanie Coontz: On Marriage

(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gwtfb7jz8G4k&fbclid=IwAR1UQur5YNQlud4GQNUS5mk-m9_8VGgYDawbYo8TJw-KzP4STzdVVeXknnc)

Chris McCarty: Social Ties

(<https://mediasite.video.ufl.edu/Mediasite/Play/3abb9e4bcc424726a2738cf9cfea0c181d>)

Activities: Quiz, Discussion board (10/9)

MODULE 8 (week of 10/11)

Language and Culture

Read: (1) Book, Ch. 4, (2) Baldwin, J. (1997). If Black English isn't a language, then tell me, what is? *The Black Scholar*, 27(1), 5-6.

Study: Slides lecture Ch. 4 on Canvas

Additional reading (recommended): (1) Baron, D. (2000). Ebonics and the politics of English. *World Englishes*, 19(1), 5-19, (2) Cavanaugh, J. R. (2006). Little women and vital champions: Gendered language shift in a northern Italian town. *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology*, 16(2), 194-210.

Watch: “3 ways to speak English” by Jamila Lyiscott

(https://www.ted.com/talks/jamila_lyiscott_3_ways_to_speak_english#t-145357)

Activities: Writing Assignment #2 (due by Monday 10/18)

MODULE 9 (week of 10/18)

Race and Racism

Read: (1) Book, Ch. 9, (2) AAA Statement on race, (3) Coates, T. N. (2015). *Between the world and me*. Spiegel & Grau (excerpts), (4) Gravlee, C. C. (2009). How race becomes biology: embodiment of social inequality. *American journal of physical anthropology*, 139(1), 47-57.

Study: (1) Slide lecture Ch. 9 on Canvas, (2) Study and explore the short lectures (“What is race”, “Sorting people”, “Race timeline”, “Human diversity”, “Me, my race, and I”, “Where race lives) on the website of *Race – The power of an illusion* (http://www.pbs.org/race/001_WhatIsRace/001_00-home.htm).

Activities: Quiz, Discussion Board (due by Saturday 10/23)

MODULE 10 (week of 10/25)

Economies (of working, sharing, and buying)

Read: (1) Book, Ch. 7, (2) Newell, S. (2006). Estranged belongings: A moral economy of theft in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire. *Anthropological Theory*, 6(2), 179-203.

Study: Slides lecture Ch. 7 on Canvas

Activities: Quiz, Discussion Board (due by Saturday 10/30)

MODULE 11 (week of 11/1)

Globalization and Migration

Read: (1) Book, Ch. 5, (2) Holmes, S. (2013). *Fresh fruit, broken bodies: Migrant farmworkers in the United States* (excerpts). University of California Press.

Study: Slides lecture Ch. 5 on Canvas

Activities: Quiz, Discussion Board (due by Saturday 11/6)

MODULE 12 (week of 11/8)

Sustainability and Foodways

Read: (1) Book, Ch. 6, (2) Poe, T. (1999). The origins of soul food in black urban identity. Chicago 1915-1947. *American Studies International*, 37(1), 4-33.

Study: Slides lecture Ch. 6 on Canvas

Watch: “A guerrilla gardener in South Central LA” by Ron Finley

(https://www.ted.com/talks/ron_finley_a_guerrilla_gardener_in_south_central_la)

Activities: Quiz, Discussion Board (due by Saturday 11/13)

MODULE 13 (week of 11/15)

Medical anthropology: Biocultural perspectives on health and illness

Read: (1) Book, Ch. 13, (2) Singer, M., Valentin, F., Baer, H., & Jia, Z. (1992). Why does Juan Garcia have a drinking problem? The perspective of critical medical anthropology. *Medical Anthropology*, 14(1), 77-108.

Study: Slides lecture Ch. 13 on Canvas

Activities: Quiz, Discussion Board (due by Saturday 11/20)

MODULE 14 (week of 11/22)

Religion: Ritual and Belief

Read: (1) Book, Ch. 12, (2) Hurston, Z. N. (1938). Tell my horse. *Voodoo and Life in Haiti and Jamaica* (excerpt), (3) Abu-Lughod, L. (2002). Do Muslim women really need saving? Anthropological reflections on cultural relativism and its others. *American anthropologist*, 104(3), 783-790.

Study: Slides lecture Ch. 12 on Canvas

Activities: Quiz, Discussion Board (due by Saturday 11/28 extra day due to Thanksgiving, will perhaps add another extra day, TBD)

MODULE 15 (week of 11/29)

Objects, Human and Non-Human

Read: (1) Book, Ch. 14, (2) Condry, I. (2013). *The soul of anime: Collaborative creativity and Japan's media success story* (excerpt). Duke University Press, (3) *The stubborn persistence of confederate monuments* by David A. Graham (<https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2016/04/the-stubborn-persistence-of-confederate-monuments/479751/>)

Study: Slides lecture Ch. 14 on Canvas

Activities: Final project (due by Thursday 12/8)