

# **Economic Anthropology**

ANT 4266  
Section 2637  
Fall 2023

Tuesdays 4<sup>th</sup> period, Thursdays 4<sup>th</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> periods  
Dauer 342

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## **Course Overview and Objectives**

Economic Anthropology explores the models and methods anthropologists use to study economic behavior – the production, distribution, and consumption of goods and services – in both subsistence and market economies. This course examines the contributions of neo-classical economics, political economy, and development theory to the study of economic behavior and how anthropologists' understanding of economy differs from that of economics. We will explore case studies from the ethnographic literature and, debate different theoretical views about economic behavior, and discuss current trends in the world economy and discuss their effects on peoples in peasant and tribal societies.

The objectives of this course include the following:

- Discussing basic terms and concepts associated with how anthropologists examine economics and the relationship between economy and culture.
- Examining and analyzing the differences between Economics and Economic Anthropology.
- Developing skills in the research methods commonly employed in Economic Anthropology.
- Improving abilities in communication through written, oral, and visual methods.
- Applying lessons from the study of economic anthropology to contemporary economic problems.

## **Required Reading**

There is no required textbook. All readings are available as .pdf files through the Canvas/Elearning Portal.

## **Assessments, Exams, and Grading**

Assessments in this class consist of a series of bi-weekly assignments, each worth 30 points, and two take-home essay assignments (100 points each). Both exams will be in essay format, with questions distributed one week prior and essays submitted electronically. Each exam will be worth 100 points.

***Bi-Weekly Assignments.*** The course is broken up into units of approximately 2 weeks each. At the end of each unit, students will submit a brief essay synthesizing the material – readings, exercises (some in-class, some as homework) and in class discussions – covered during the unit. Each assignment is due by midnight of the due date and worth 30 points. Late assignments will be penalized 5 pts/day. For final grades, the lowest grade will be dropped.

***In-Class Activities and Participation.*** This classroom is designed to be much more interactive, which includes both discussion of the assigned readings, workshop-like activities, and some lecturing. Because of the interactive and discussion-oriented nature of the classroom, participation is expected and is worth 50 points toward the final grade.

**Policy on the use of AI and assignments.** The use of AI to assist in completing assignments and essays for this class is acceptable. If you employ AI (such as ChatGPT), however, you will be expected to acknowledge its use and cite it, and to document how you used it. Further information on AI use will be included via Canvas.

**Final Grades.** Final grades are based on points accumulated during the semester. Points will be awarded as follows:

Bi-Weekly Assignments:	30 points each (total 150)
Mid-Term Essays	100 points
Final Essays	100 points
Participation	50 points
<b>Total Points</b>	<b>400 points</b>

Grades will be assigned as follows:

A= 372+, A-= 360-371, B+=348-360, B=332-347, B-=320-331, C+=308-319, C=292-307, C-=280-291, D=240-279, E=<240

**There is no extra credit offered for this course.**

## **UF Policies**

**Academic Honesty:** When students enroll at UF they commit themselves to honesty and integrity. As a result of completing the registration form at the University of Florida, every student has signed the following statement: "I understand the University of Florida expects its students to be honest in all their academic work. I agree to adhere to this commitment to academic honesty and understand that my failure to comply with this commitment may result in disciplinary action up to and including expulsion from the University." On work submitted for credit by UF students, the following pledge is either required or implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment."

**Campus Helping Resources:** Students experiencing crisis or personal problems that interfere with their general wellbeing are encouraged to utilize the university's counselling resources. The UF Counselling and Wellness Center provides confidential counselling services at no cost for currently enrolled students.

1. Counselling and Wellness Center, <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/>
2. Student Health Care Center: <http://shcc.ufl.edu/> For an overview of various resources see <http://www.distance.ufl.edu/getting-help>

**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.

### **Technical assistance:**

For issues with technical difficulties for E-learning, please contact the UF Help Desk at:

- [Learning-support@ufl.edu](mailto:Learning-support@ufl.edu)
- (352) 392-HELP - select option 2
- <https://lss.at.ufl.edu/help.shtml>

**Course Evaluations.** Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing [online evaluations](#). Evaluations are typically open during the last 2-3 weeks of the semester, but students will be notified of specific times when they are open. [Summary results](#) of these assessments are also available to students.

## **Course Outline**

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

### **Important Dates:**

Assignments Due 9/14, 9/28, 10/12, 10/26, 11/9, & 11/30  
October 19: Mid term Essays due  
December 13: Final Essays due

### **August 24-29: Introduction and Orientation to Economic Anthropology.**

Readings: Sahlins 1988, Polanyi 1957

### **September 5-14: Principles of Exchange**

Readings: Malinowski 1920, Mauss (chapters 1&2 from *The Gift*), Blurton-Jones 1984, Trivers 1971, Axelrod and Hamilton 1981.

*September 14: Assignment 1 due*

### **September 19-28: Production Systems**

Readings: Dahl 1989, Collings 2011, Bird and Bird 2008, Ember 1978, Fratkin 2001, Hardin 1968, Pedersen and Benjaminson 2008, Johnson 1989

*September 28: Assignment 2 Due*

### **October 3-12: Markets, Money, and the Moral Economy**

Readings: Dalton 1965, Berdan 1985, Graeber 1996, Tymowski 1991, Wolf 1982a

*October 12: Assignment 3 Due.*

### **Mid-Term Essays Due October 19**

### **October 17-26: Capitalism and Assorted Critics**

Readings: Roseberry 1978; Marx 1959, Littlefield 1978 Plattner 1989, Moore 1991, Wolf 1982a&b

*October 26: Assignment 4 Due.*

### **October 31-November 9: Commodities and Labor**

Readings: Vasquez-Leon 2010, Roseberry 1996, Reichman 2018, Ember 1983, Bartlett 1986, Cone and Myhre 2000, Smith 1984

*November 9: Assignment 5 Due.*

### **November 14-30: Informal Economies**

Readings: Kersh 2018, Stoller 1996, White et al. 1981

*November 30: Assignment 6 Due.*

### **Final essays Due December 13**

### **List of Readings:**

Axelrod, R., & W. D. Hamilton (1981). The evolution of cooperation. *Science*, 211, 1390-1396.

Bartlett, P. 1986. Profile of full-time farm workers in a Georgia county. *Rural Sociology* 51(1):78-96.

Berdan, F. 1985. Markets in the economy of Aztec Mexico. In *Markets and Marketing*, S. Plattner (ed.), pp. 339-367. Lanham, MD: University Press of America.

- Bliege Bird, R., and D. Bird 2008. Why women hunt: Risk and contemporary foraging in a Western Desert Aboriginal community. *Current Anthropology* 49: 655-693.
- Blurton-Jones, N. (1984). A selfish origin for human food sharing: Tolerated theft. *Ethology and Sociobiology*, 5, 1-3.
- Collings, P. 2011. Economic Strategies, community, and food networks in Ulukhaktok, NT, Canada. *Arctic* 64:207-219.
- Cone, C., and A. Myhre. 2000. Community-supported agriculture: A sustainable alternative to industrial agriculture? *Human Organization* 59(2):187-197.
- Dahl, J. 1989. The integrative and cultural role of hunting and subsistence in Greenland. *Etudes/Inuit/Studies* 13(1):23-42.
- Dalton, G. 1965. Primitive Money. *American Anthropologist* 67(1):44-65.
- Ember, C. 1978. Myths about Hunter-Gatherers. *Ethnology* 17(4):439-448.
- Fratkin, E. 2001. East African Pastoralism in Transition: Maasai, Boran, and Rendille Cases. *African Studies Review* 44(3):1-25.
- Graeber, D. 1996. Beads and money: Notes toward a theory of wealth and power. *American Ethnologist*, 23(1):4-24.
- Hardin, G. 1968. The tragedy of the commons. *Science*, 162, 1243-1248.
- Johnson, A. 1989. Horticulturalists: Economic behavior in tribes. In *Economic Anthropology*, S. Plattner (ed.), pp. 49-77. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Kersh, D. 2018. Women's small-scale, home-based informal employment during Cuba's Special Period. *Latin American Perspectives* 45(1):175-194.
- Littlefield, A. 1978. Exploitation and the expansion of capitalism: The case of the hammock industry of Yucatan. *American Ethnologist* 5(3):495-508.
- Malinowski, B. 1920. Kula; the circulating exchange of valuables in the archipelagoes of eastern New Guinea. *Man* 20:97-105.
- Marx, K. 1959. Excerpts from Capital: A critique of political economy. In *Marx and Engels: Basic writings on politics and philosophy*, L.S. Fuller (ed.) pp. 133-166. New York: Anchor Books.
- Mauss, M. 2011. *The Gift: Forms and Functions of Exchange in Archaic Societies*. Eastford, CT: Martino Fine Books.
- Moore, J. 1991. Kinship and division of labor in Cheyenne society. In *Marxist Approaches in Economic Anthropology*, A. Littlefield and H. Gates (eds.), pp. 135-158. Lanham, MD: University Press of America.
- Pedersen, J., and T.A. Benjaminson. 2008. One leg or two? Food security and pastoralism in the northern Sahel. *Human Ecology* 36: 43-57.
- Platter, S. 1989. Marxism. In *Economic Anthropology*, S. Plattner (ed.), pp. 379-396. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press. 379-396.
- Polanyi, K. 1957. The economy as instituted process. In *Trade and market in early empires*, K. Polanyi, C. Arensberg, and H. Pearson (eds.), pp. 243-270. New York: Free Press.
- Reichman, D. 2018. Big coffee in Brazil: Historical origins and implications for anthropological political economy. *Journal of Latin American and Caribbean Anthropology* 23(2): 241-261
- Roseberry, W. 1978. Peasants and Proletarians. *Critique of Anthropology* 11:3-18
- Roseberry, W. 1986. The rise of Yuppie coffees and the reimagination of class in the United States. *American Anthropologist* 98(4):762-775.
- Sahlins, M. 1988. Notes on the original affluent society. In *Tribal People and Development Issues* J. Bodley (ed.), pp. 15-21. Mountain View, CA: Mayfield Publishing.

- Smith, C. A. 1984. Does a commodity economy enrich the few while ruining the masses? Differentiation among petty commodity producers in Guatemala. *The Journal of Peasant Studies*, 11(3):60-95.
- Stoller, P. 1996. Spaces, places, and fields: The politics of West African trading in New York City's informal economy. *American Anthropologist* 98(4):776-788.
- Trivers, R. L. 1971. The evolution of reciprocal altruism. *Quarterly Review of Biology*, 46, 35-57.
- Tymowski, M. 1991. Wolof economic and political organization: The West African coast in the mid 15<sup>th</sup> century. In *Early State Economics*, H. Claessen and P. van de Velde (eds.), pp. 131-142.
- Vassquez-Leon, M. 2010. Free markets and fair trade, collective livelihood struggles, and the cooperative model: Two Case studies from Paraguay. *Latin American Perspectives* 37(6):53-73.
- White, D.R., M. Burton, and M. Dow. 1981. Sexual division of labor in African agriculture: A network autocorrelation analysis. *American Anthropologist* 83(4):824-849.
- Wolf, E. 1982a. *Europe and the people without history*, pp. 24-72. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Wolf, E. 1982b. *Europe and the people without history*, pp. 73-100. Berkeley: University of California Press.