

**ANTHROPOLOGY 100**  
**Spring 2012**  
**Varieties of World Culture**  
**Instructor: Patrick Weston**

Office Hours: Tuesday and Thursday 3:30-4:30 pm

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Section 1 - Tuesday and Thursday 2-3:20 pm

Section 2 - Tuesday and Thursday 12:30-1:50 pm

ES 114

"Imagine yourself suddenly set down surrounded by all your gear, alone on a tropical beach close to a native village, while the launch or dinghy which has brought you sails away out of sight... Imagine further that you are a beginner, without previous experience, with nothing to guide you and no one to help you... This exactly describes my first initiation into field work on the south coast of New Guinea."

Bronislaw Malinowski (1922:4)

Now imagine that you have access to a set of tools you can use to understand culture anywhere. Arising in the context of encounter with the "other," cultural anthropology has developed into a holistic science of human society, belief and behavior in all its complexity and fluidity. This course is an introduction to the ways anthropologists have come to understand cultural life, whether encountered in faraway places or in our own social groups. As the concept of "culture" becomes more widely recognized as central to human survival, conflict, and development, anthropology has become more and more essential to a variety of fields, both within and outside of the academy.

Consider the fact that we human beings are unique in that we are cultural creatures. We use culture to make sense of the world. Different groups have offered different answers and solutions to questions shared by all people. For example: what is a person? What is the relationship of the individual to society? What is power - and who should have it? What is the difference between men and women?

We will examine ways that these and other fundamental questions have been asked and answered by many groups of people. In our anthropological explorations of culture and society, we will certainly look at the ways of life of people living in other parts of the world, but we will also be turning a critical gaze upon the culture and society of the United States. By learning about the lives of others, this course aims to provide a way for us to learn something about ourselves.

Course Objectives:

At the end of the semester, the student will...

- be familiar with the anthropological perspective and be able to apply it to various situations;
- be able to discuss ways in which human beings are simultaneously social, cultural and biological creatures;
- be able to discuss anthropological theories and views on such topics as ritual, religion, myth, symbol, cultural constructedness, personhood, gender, and kinship;

-be able to discuss anthropological theories and views on economic and political activities as practiced in various societies including their own;  
-be familiar with various anthropological views regarding the impact of Western colonialism on the non-western world;  
-be able to discuss the various social and cultural factors that affect the process by which refugee and immigrant groups accommodate to life in the United States; and be able to apply that knowledge to similar situations elsewhere.

Students are expected to be familiar with and to follow UW policies and procedures regarding student rights and responsibilities.

Academic integrity is an expectation in all UW classes. Plagiarism and cheating are unacceptable in this class. Please remember that plagiarism includes presenting another person's ideas as your own as well as using another's exact words. Cheating or plagiarism will result in a failing grade. For a complete discussion of academic misconduct policy, see Chapter UWS 14 of the Wisconsin Administrative code.

### **Classroom Expectations and Policies:**

I do my best to treat the students in my classroom with respect and I expect them to do the same for me and their fellow classmates. Therefore, it should probably go without saying that using cell phones, text-messaging, reading newspapers, checking your email or performing other extraneous activities or disruptive behaviors (such as chatting with your neighbor) are not acceptable in class.

### **Required Texts:**

Lavenda, Robert H. and Emily A. Schultz. 2007. *Core Concepts in Cultural Anthropology*

Nanda, Serena. 1999. *Neither Man nor Woman: the Hijras of India*

Turnbull, Colin M. 1961. *The Forest People*

Koltyk, Jo Ann. 1998. *New Pioneers in the Heartland: Hmong Life in Wisconsin*

Additional required readings will be posted on the D2L page for this course. Readings in electronic format are listed in *italics* in the schedule of assignments.

**Attendance:** A great deal of material that is not found in the textbooks will be presented and discussed during lectures and discussion. Missing a class will seriously harm your ability to do well in the course. **Each student is permitted two absences during the semester, no questions asked.** The student is responsible for lecture notes, handouts, assignments, and announcements given during their absence – make sure you have a classmate's contact information. **Each additional absence will lower the student's final percentage score by three points.**

**Participation:** although the large lecture format limits our ability to hold inclusive conversations, there will be activities that require active input from students. Your contribution to group discussions, games, or projects is required for you to receive the full 25 points for participation and attendance.

Your final grade in the course will be calculated as follows:

First Exam: 25%

Second Exam: 25%

Third Exam: 25%

Participation and Attendance: 25%

Total Percentage Score:                      Letter grade:

92-100	A
86-91	AB
80-85	B
76-79	BC
70-75	C
66-69	CD
60-65	D
0-59	F

There will be *no make-up exams*. If an emergency forces you to miss an exam, you must notify me before the class meeting to make special arrangements.

### Schedule of Assignments

Students must complete all readings for each week before our first class meeting of that week.

#### **Week 1 (1/24, 1/26)**

What is culture?  
What is anthropology?  
What can we expect this semester?

Reading assignments:

*Miner, "Body Ritual among the Nacirema"*

Nanda, "Preface" and "Introduction"

#### **Week 2 (1/31, 2/2)**

What was the "colonial encounter"?  
Where did anthropology come from?  
Some notes from my own fieldwork (part 1)

Film: "First Contact"

Reading assignments:

Nanda, chapters 1-2, "epilogue" (pp. 150-157)

Lavenda and Schultz, chapter 2

*Ramanujan, "Is there an Indian Way of Thinking?"*

### **Week 3 (2/7, 2/9)**

What is the difference between men and women?  
What is gender?

Film: "Killing Us Softly 4"

Reading assignments:

Lavenda, Chapter 2 and the sections on "gender" and "sexuality" in chapter 6 (pp. 103-107)

Nanda, Chapters 3-4

### **Week 4 (2/14, 2/16)**

What is religion?

What is magic?

Why are ritual, myth and symbol so important?

Some background on religion in South Asia (notes from my fieldwork part 2)

Film: "Off the Verandah"

Reading assignments:

Nanda, chapters 5-6 (chapters 7 and 8 are optional)

Lavenda and Schultz, chapter 5

*Gmelch, "Baseball Magic."*

### **Week 5 (2/21, 2/23)**

What is implied by cultural relativism?

What are materialist and idealist perspectives in anthropology?

Film: "Hijras: Seeped in Myth, Seeking reconciliation"

Reading assignment:

Nanda Chapter 9

**Exam 1 in class, Thursday, 2/23**

**Week 6 (2/28, 3/1)**

What is an “indigenous” culture?  
How did American anthropology acquire its identity?  
How should we approach a “classic” ethnography as contemporary readers?

Film: “Ishi: the Last Yahi”

Reading assignments:  
Turnbull, chapters 1-3  
Lavenda and Schultz, chapter 4

**Week 7 (3/6, 3/8)**

What is power?  
Who should have it?  
How are culture and environment related?

Reading assignments:  
Turnbull, chapters 4-6  
Lavenda and Schultz, chapter 7  
*Lee, “Eating Christmas in the Kalahari”*

**Week 8 (3/13, 3/15) Have a nice break!**

**Week 9 (3/20, 3/22)**

What are the different types of exchange we find in human societies?  
How are these economic systems related to other forms of social relationships?

Film: “Asante Market Women”

Reading assignments:  
Turnbull, chapters 7-9  
Lavenda and Schultz, chapter 8

**Week 10 (3/27, 3/29)**

Who are our “kin?”  
Who may we marry?  
What is a household?

Film: “Dadi's Family”

Reading assignments:  
Turnbull, chapters 10-12  
Lavenda and Schultz, Chapters 9 and 10  
*Goldstein, “When Brothers Share a Wife”*

**Week 11 (4/3, 4/5)**

How should we place local lives in a wider context?  
Reflections on postcolonial anthropology

Reading Assignments:  
Turnbull, chapters 13-15

**Exam 2 in class, Thursday 4/5**

**Week 12 (4/10, 4/12)**

What is the relationship between ethnicity, race, and inequality?  
What are the challenges of cultural diversity in the United States?

Film “Becoming American”

Reading assignments:  
Kolyk, chapters 1 and 2  
Lavenda and Schultz, Chapter 6  
*Diamond, “Race Without Color”*

**Week 13 (4/17, 4,19)**

How are language and culture related?  
What does language suggest about migration and power?

Film: “American Tongues”

Reading assignment:  
Kolyk, chapters 3 and 4  
Lavenda and Schultz, chapter 3

**Week 14 (4/24, 4/26)**

What is Shamanism?  
What do immigrant experiences in the United States suggest about change and continuity in culture?

Film: “The Split Horn”

Reading assignments:  
Kolyk, chapters 5 and 6  
*Fadiman, “The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down” (excerpt)*

**Week 15 (5/1, 5/3)**

What's new about globalization?  
Should it change the way we think about culture?

Film: "Joe Leahy's Neighbors"

Reading assignments:

Koltyk, chapters 7 and 8

Lavenda and Schultz, chapter 11

**Exam 3 during finals week, time and date to be announced**

This syllabus is subject to change throughout the course of the semester. Please stay in touch with the "assignments" and "course documents" pages on D2L. Please check your email before class meetings for updates.