

Anthropology 1023—Introduction to Cultural Anthropology
Section 5: MWF 1:30–2:20, Science Engineering Auditorium
Fall Semester 2007

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This course is an introduction to the field of cultural anthropology, the study of human social life and culture. Cultural anthropology is concerned with the description and analysis of human culture, which consists of learned behaviors such as language, subsistence, kinship, gender, marriage, political organization, art, medicine, religion, and ritual. In this course, we will examine how these and other elements of human culture are interrelated in a wide range of traditional and complex societies. My goal in teaching this class is to provide you with a broader understanding and appreciation for the diversity of the human experience. Keep me informed about your thoughts on the course—I welcome your office visits and email!

Textbooks (2 required):

Bonvillain, Nancy.

2006. *Cultural Anthropology*. Prentice Hall, Upper Saddle River, NJ.

This text provides a comprehensive overview of the field of cultural anthropology, with a strong emphasis on globalization. Material from this text constitutes the basis of this class, so it is imperative that you acquire this book. Please refer to the schedule of assigned readings on this syllabus, as the lecture topics will generally correspond to specific chapters. For best results, I strongly advise you to read each assigned chapter before coming to class.

Podolefsky, A. and P. Brown.

2007. *Applying Anthropology: An Introductory Reader*. McGraw Hill, New York.

This book is a compilation of articles by anthropologists trained from a variety of academic backgrounds, whose ideas and methods have been applied to “real life” situations. The diversity of topics covered here is designed to expose you to the practical application of anthropological training, and to enhance your appreciation of developing cross-cultural awareness. Selected articles will be assigned from this text (referred to as ‘PB’ hereafter). See the course outline below for reading assignments.

Exams and Grading:

Three exams will be given in the course of the semester. These exams will consist of multiple choice questions, and each will count toward 33.3% of your semester grade. The last exam will be given during finals week during the time period designated for this class; however, it will **not** be cumulative. Please make an early note of the exam dates; they are printed in bold face on the course outline below.

- ***Absolutely no make up exams will be given without prior consent from the instructor or TA, and only under special circumstances. Make up exams will be given on “Dead Day” (December 5th) at the end of the semester.***

Intermittently throughout the semester, you will have the chance to score bonus points. These will be based on short, unannounced, in-class “quizzes” on the readings designed to reward those who have come to class and kept up with the assignments.

Your semester average will be based on the following percentages:

Exam 1: Sept. 21	33.3%
Exam 2: Oct. 19	33.3%
Exam 3: Dec. 8	<u>33.3%</u>
	100%

Semester grades will be assigned according to the following scale:

- A: 90–100%
- B: 80–90%
- C: 70–80%
- D: 60–70%
- F: below 60%

Grades will be posted outside my office door (Old Main 346) two days following the day of the test. For the sake of confidentiality, exam grades will be posted according to student number to ensure confidentiality.

Attendance:

In order to maximize our time spent in class, and given the number of students enrolled in this section, no attendance will be taken. **However, in exchange for this courtesy, I expect you to obtain the lecture notes from another student if you miss class.** Requests for notes will not be entertained. Experience and common logic reveals that students who attend class regularly earn MUCH higher semester grades than those who do not.

Inclement Weather Policy:

In case of severe winter weather, first check the UA webpage (www.uark.edu) to determine whether or not the University has closed. If you have no internet access, please call the Anthropology Department at 575-2508 or my home at 442-5509 for news of possible class cancellations. University classes are generally cancelled after an ice storm or a heavy snowfall. However, if you have any doubts whatsoever about your safety in such weather, do not attempt to drive or walk to class.

Other Concerns:

Students who have special conditions as addressed by the Americans with Disabilities Act and who need any test or course materials furnished in an alternate format should notify me immediately. Reasonable efforts will be made to accommodate the needs of these students. You are expected to observe the University's standards for academic honesty. Any student suspected of academic dishonesty will be reported to the Provost's office.

*******Course Outline and Assigned Readings*******

Week 1: Aug 20-24

Introduction to the course

Bonvillain: Chapter 1

Week 2: Aug 27-31

Overview of Anthropology
The Nature of Culture

Bonvillain: Chapter 2
Video: Modern Tribalism

Week 3: Sept. 3-7

Studying Human Culture
Using Methods in the Field

Bonvillain: Chapter 3
PB: *Tricking and Tripping: Fieldwork on Prostitution in the Era of AIDS*, by Sterk

Week 4: Sept 10-14
Subsistence Economies

Bonvillain: Chapters 6 and 7
PB: Culture and the Evolution of Obesity, by Brown
Video: Food Foragers and Producers

Week 5: Sept 17-21
Kinship Systems
Descent Patterns

Bonvillain: Chapter 8
PB: When Brothers Share a Wife, by Goldstein

*******Exam 1: Friday, Sept 21*******

Week 6: Sept 24-28
Political Systems

Bonvillain: Chapter 12
PB: Contemporary Warfare in the New Guinea Highlands, by Podolefsky
Video: Axes and Machetes: Tribal Warfare in the Amazon

Week 7: Oct 1-5
Marriage systems
Sex and gender

Bonvillain: Chapter 9
Bonvillain: Chapter 10
PB: Measuring up to Barbie: Ideals of the Feminine Body in Popular Culture, by Urla and Swedlund

Week 8: Oct 8-12
Language and Culture

Bonvillain: Chapter 4
PB: A Cultural Approach to Male-Female Miscommunication, by Maltz and Borker
Video: The Geography of American Dialects

Week 9: Oct 15-19
Anthropology of Religion

Bonvillain: Chapter 13 and 14
Video: The Devil's Playground

*******Exam 2: Friday, Oct 19*******

Week 10: Oct 22-26
Ritual, Magic, and Witchcraft
Cherokee Medicine and Sorcery

Bonvillain: Chapter 14
PB: Hallucinogenic Plants and their Use in Traditional Societies, by Davis
Video: Voodoo Secrets: Culture, Possession, and Exorcism in the Caribbean

Week 11: Oct 29-Nov 2
Anthropology of the Arts

Bonvillain: Chapter 15
Video: The Three Worlds of Bali

Week 12: Nov 5-9
Trans-cultural aesthetics
Ethnomusicology
Popular culture and mass media in the US

Bonvillain: Chapter 15
Video: Deep Blues in the American South
Presentation: Fear and Loathing at the Cineplex:
Gender differences in perceptions of slasher films

Week 13: Nov 12-16

Cultural contact and exchange
Medical anthropology

Bonvillain: Chapter 16
PB: Circumcision, Pluralism, and Dilemmas of
Cultural Relativism, by Kratz
Video: The Artist and the Shaman

Week 14: Nov 19-23

Foodways and folklore in American cultures
(Note: class meets only on Monday, Nov 19—Thanksgiving break starts on Wednesday of this week.)

Video: Folklife in Louisiana's Cajun Country

Week 15: Nov 26-30

Ecological anthropology
Globalization and cultural change

Bonvillain: Chapter 17
*Video: Taigana: The Reindeer Herders of
Mongolia*

Week 16: Dec 3rd

Applied anthropology
(Class meets only on Monday, Dec. 3rd, finals begin December 6)

Bonvillain: Chapter 17

********Exam 3: Saturday, December 8th,
12:30-2:30pm here in the Science Engineering
Auditorium.***