

SYLLABUS
CULTURE AND SOCIETY
ANTH 2300.001
FALL 2018

Professor: Dr. Jara Carrington

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Office Hours: Tuesdays 2:00- 3:30,

Wednesdays 10- 11:30, by appointment

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Class meetings: Tuesdays and Thursdays from 12:30 to 1:50 PM

Meeting location: Curry Hall 103

Course Description

Humans are social and cultural beings; our very survival depends upon it. This course introduces students to the field of cultural anthropology, which is the study of human cultures in their diversity and variations. Rather than providing a collection of facts about other cultures, however, this class attempts to help students understand, and utilize, the general approach anthropologists take when they study a culture; in other words, it will help you to *think like* an anthropologist. This class thus focuses on asking critical questions, rather than simply offering an inventory of answers.

Thinking like an anthropologist is a critical life and career skill in our globalized world. We interact with people from different cultural backgrounds than our own at a more rapid pace than ever before and across all domains of life. Furthermore, every day we see ample evidence of how social institutions and cultural norms influence everything from the distribution of wealth to the fate of the climate. Understanding humanity's social and cultural diversity, and being able to approach cultural diversity intelligently when you face it in your daily life, is one of the most important skills you can develop as a student. From politics to language to our understandings of social differences, this course will introduce you to the diversity and the commonalities in human societies and shed light on what it means to be human.

Course Objectives

- Learn key anthropological concepts and theoretical approaches
- Learn and practice methodologies used by cultural anthropologists
- Become more aware of the complexity and diversity of cultures and societies within the United States and around the world
- Gain an understanding of your own experiences as a cultural and social being

Course Expectations

This course requires reading, preparation, and engagement with new and sometimes academically rigorous materials. Further, we may cover content in this course that challenges your personal beliefs and opinions. I do not expect you to agree with course materials or discussions in order to do well in this course, but I do expect you to a) approach these topics in an open and intellectual fashion and b) use course content and the provided resources to complete assignments and exams. Comments that are disrespectful to your classmates and/or myself will not be tolerated.

Each class period, I will expect you to:

- Have completed the readings
- Pose questions for clarification or extension of points
- Participate actively in discussion and debate

Required Texts and Other Readings

One textbook is required for this course, entitled *Cultural Anthropology: Global Forces, Local Lives, 3rd edition*, by Jack David Eller. (MAKE SURE YOU GET THE THIRD EDITION!) The text is available at the UNT University Bookstore. Additional articles and other required course materials will be posted on our course webpage for your downloading pleasure. All readings listed on the syllabus are required.

Important Information

Late work: As a general rule, I do not accept late assignments or exams unless you have made specific arrangements with me in advance, have a doctor's note, and/or otherwise have received my approval. However, if you think you will miss a grade for a reason other than a medical excuse, please get in touch with me prior to the deadline and we may be able to work something out. Even if it is for partial credit, it is better than no credit at all!

Extra Credit: Extra credit can be earned at any point during the semester. I will suggest several opportunities in class, and I am relatively open to creative ideas from you. Options to earn extra credit include: completing a relevant movie/documentary analysis, attending a talk/lecture on campus and writing a summary, going to a relevant cultural event, festival, or location and writing a brief summary and analysis, or creating an artistic piece such as poetry, painting, sculpture or music. You must get approval from me ahead of time for your choice, so check with me before you do the work.

Electronics in the Classroom: Please turn off your cell phone prior to coming to class. Students may use laptop computers to take notes and for class purposes only; students

checking email, using Facebook, etc. will be asked to turn off their computers and will not be allowed to use their computers in subsequent classes.

Academic Honesty: The Department of Anthropology does not tolerate plagiarism, cheating, or helping others to cheat. For this class, writing assignments will be submitted through Turnitin, a Web based resource that compares the text of student papers to an extensive electronic database. Writing assignments will be assessed by Turnitin for textual similarity review.

- Cheating includes the physical or electronic **distribution or use** of answers for graded components, such as discussion posts, writing assignments, and exams.
- Plagiarism is defined as misrepresenting the work of others (whether published or not) as your own.
- Plagiarism may be inadvertent or intentional. That is, plagiarism is still plagiarism even if you “didn’t mean to do it.” Any facts, statistics, quotations, or paraphrasing of any information that is not common knowledge, should be cited.
- Students suspected of any of these will be provided the opportunity for a hearing; if found guilty they can receive an automatic “F” in the course. In addition, I reserve the right to pursue further disciplinary action within the UNT legal system, which may result in your dismissal from the university.
- For more information on paper writing, including how to avoid plagiarism, and how to use citations, see <http://www.unt.edu/anthropology/writing.htm>. For information on the University’s policies regarding academic integrity and dishonesty, see the UNT Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities, <http://www.unt.edu/csrr/>.

Two more points about this: A) Just don’t do it. I promise, I will be able to tell if the writing is not yours. It is better to talk with me about why the assignment is not complete, or asking for (even late) help on in-text citations, rather than passing off someone else’s work as your own. B) This is also an issue of a politics of citation. When you represent someone else’s thoughts/writing as your own, you are denying them credit for their intellectual work. For many of our authors, especially those who are women, persons of color, queer, and/or live outside the United States and Europe, this is yet another way in which their voices are marginalized within the western academy. Actions have meaning. Please cite your sources.

Academic Accommodations: The University of North Texas is committed to providing accommodation for all students with disabilities. If you have or acquire a disability that may affect your participation in class, I will strive to accommodate your needs. To ensure that the necessary accommodations are made, be sure to contact the Office of Disability Accommodation (located in Sage Hall) as soon as possible to ensure your needs are met in a timely manner. They will work with both of us to ensure proper accommodations are made. If you need accommodations, please remember that reasonable prior notice needs to be given to the Office of Disability Accommodation. Note that students need to obtain a new letter of accommodation for every semester and meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. For additional information see the Office of Disability Accommodation website at <http://www.unt.edu/oda>. You may also contact them by phone at 940.565.4323.

Basic Needs: You can't learn if you are hungry! UNT is one of the few college campuses around the country that actually has a Food Pantry on campus. Any current UNT student in need can visit the UNT Food Pantry 8am-6pm Monday-Thursday and 8pm-5pm on Fridays. Students will check-in at the Dean of Students Office front desk in the Union, Suite 409. Students may go directly to room 366 from 5PM-6PM, Monday-Thursday. Students who visit the food pantry can request to meet with a staff member to discuss any difficulties they may be facing during the hours of 8am-5pm. When appropriate, referral to additional campus and/or community resources will be made. The Dean of Students Office has established protocols that allow for student confidentiality and dignity to be maintained. In addition, there is a pantry located at the Discovery Park Location in the Engineering Library (M130) next to the Career Center, as well as a Food Pantry located at UNT's Frisco campus, which can be accessed by visiting the information desk.

Course Evaluation

Class Participation	5%
Reading Quizzes	10%
Current Events Journal	25%
Ethnographic Fieldnotes and Analysis	20%
Midterm Exam	20%
Final Exam	20%

I. Class Participation (50 points)

This class relies on the intellectual commitment and *active* participation of all students. Active participation means going beyond merely showing up for class, but also, includes: responding to discussion questions that I pose to the class, asking your own questions for clarification, bringing in relevant contributing information, and respectfully responding to classmates' discussion points.

In order for you to participate, you need to have completed the reading assignment for that day. You may want to bring the assigned reading to class each day so that you can refer to them and utilize them during class. You should take notes on lectures and classroom discussions as well as readings, because these notes will come in very handy for the writing assignment and, *especially*, preparing for the midterm and final exams. As part of this grade, you will be evaluated on the frequency and quality of your contributions to class discussion and your participation in group work.

II. Reading Quizzes (100 points)

In order to encourage students to come to class, and to come to class having read the required readings, 10 reading quizzes will be given throughout the semester. Each quiz is worth 10 points. Quizzes will be random and unannounced; they will consist of multiple-choice questions, and will cover basic information contained in the required reading for

that day. Students who are absent will not be given the opportunity to make up these points unless they have a documented excuse and have received permission from the instructor ahead of time.

III. Current Events Journal (250 points)

In order to provide an opportunity for you to put the concepts and ideas we are learning in class in conversation with events and issues in our society today, each student will maintain one “Current Events” journal throughout the course. By the end of the course, you will have completed 10 journal entries worth 25 points each.

Journal entries will identify a “current event” and analyze it using concepts from class. Current Event topics can include anything related to “culture” (which, you will find out, is most everything!) including economics, politics, law, social movements, religion, language, kinship, social and news media, food, and more. While current news stories or notable events make especially good “Current Events,” other options include identifying and analyzing activist efforts/groups (history of organizations and/or coalitions, organizational brochures, manifestos, protest and mobilization, etc), artistic works (poems, music lyrics, artwork, performance art, etc), academic or intellectual work (articles, books, etc), or any other sites of analysis that you think are relevant. Be creative!

Each student will complete a total of at least 10 journal entries. Each entry should be between 150-200 words. In each entry, you will want to:

1. Identify and provide a brief description/summary of your topic
2. Explain this current event’s significance to course content using at least **one** concept or topic from class or your required readings
3. Offer your very insightful and critical analysis of the topic/materials (FYI: “I thought it was interesting” is neither insightful nor critical)
4. Include a weblink or copy of object if relevant

Please do not wait until the end of class to turn in your journal entries; try to space them out across the semester. It will not only be much more fun for you to do them as events happen that raise your curiosity or interest, but also, in class, I may sometimes ask students to describe/discuss a recent current event journal entry with your classmates.

IV. Ethnographic Fieldnotes and Analysis Assignment (200 points)

To complete this project, you will go to a designated site/location for at least one hour of time-- the place you choose is up to you, as long as it is within the parameters outlined below. You will observe and participate in the activities taking place at this location, especially paying attention to the setting itself, the people who are there, the environment, the mood, and anything else you might observe or sense. You will record these observations as fieldnotes, which you will turn in as part of the assignment.

You will turn in a **700-800 word paper** describing your experience, **along with a copy of your fieldnotes** from your observations. In the paper, you will use your fieldnotes to give a detailed description and analysis of the cultural meaning and/or function, including:

1. In-depth description of the people, including demographics, behaviors, interactions, moods, etc.
2. In-depth description of the place/space, including structures, activities, atmosphere/mood.
3. The site's cultural function, relevance, and/or meaning
4. A cultural analysis of the site/the people, **using at least two concepts from the course and/or your textbook** to understand what this space/place might tell us about broader cultural dynamics or processes

Keep in mind, the more descriptive detail, the better! Help your reader draw a picture in their mind.

Parameters: Choose some place or event that is different for you, it will make this project considerably more interesting! Please do not select a location or event on campus, and I would prefer that this study take place outside of any coffee shops, bars, or other "hangout" spots that you already frequent. Keep in mind you need to be in the space for at least one hour, so do not select a location where this would be difficult or inappropriate to do. Suggestions for good sites might include: cultural festivals or celebrations; parades and marches; museums; markets; a restaurant or café that you have never visited; a public location like the square in Denton, Deep Ellum in Dallas, Sundance Square in Fort Worth. Wherever you choose, please be respectful of the people who are there.

V. Exams (400 points)

There will be two examinations for this class, a Midterm and a Final Exam. The Midterm Exam is worth 200 points, and will cover lectures, readings, and all other materials from the first half of the course. The Final Exam is also worth 200 points, and will cover lecture, readings, and all other materials from the second half of the course. Although the Final Exam is not intended to be fully comprehensive, it may draw on concepts and materials introduced earlier in the semester. The exams will consist of true/false, multiple choice, short answer questions, and an essay question.

Do not miss the scheduled exams. If a legitimate medical or family emergency causes you to miss an exam, it is your responsibility to contact me as soon as possible to schedule a make-up exam. You must bring me written proof such as a doctor's note to justify your absence. Make-up exams may not follow the same format as regularly scheduled exams (for example, they may be all essay questions).

NOTE: The instructor reserves the right to add, delete, or revise segments of the syllabus. Any changes in the course schedule will be announced in class and on the course webpage.

***A Note on Paper Formatting: All papers are to be double spaced, with 12-point font and 1-inch margins on all sides, and should contain a works cited/references page. In-text quotes and references should be properly cited. You may use whichever format you are most familiar with (i.e. MLA, APA, Chicago), but you must be consistent. If you do not know what I am talking about here, please, please, please ask the Instructor, your Instructional Assistant, or the UNT writing lab for help.**

Dates To Remember

Your Current Events Journal entries

10/11: Midterm Exam

11/13: Turn in Ethnographic Fieldnotes and Analysis Assignment

12/13: Final Exam

Course Schedule

Section 1- "The Danger of a Single Story"

8/28: First day of class; No readings assigned

8/30: Douglas Raybeck "The Dawn of Interest"

Section 2- The Culture Concept

9/4: Eller pgs. 1-19

9/6: Eller pgs. 20-29

Section 3- Packing Your Anthropological Backpack: Methods and Practices

9/11: Eller pgs. 35-41

Anthropology fieldnotes <http://anthronow.com/fieldnotes/poco-a-poco-writing-from-the-road-in-lima-peru>

9/13: Horace Miner "The Body Rituals of the Nacirema"

Section 4- A Brief History of Anthropology

9/18: Eller pgs. 42- 55

9/20: Edward Said- selection from "Orientalism"

Section 5- Culture, Currency, and Power: Political and Economic Systems

9/25: Eller pgs. 169-185

9/27: Eller pgs. 185-191

10/2: Michel Foucault, Selection from "Panopticism" (read pages 1-top of page 7/finish paragraph from page 6)

Check out the interactive at the Corrections Documentary Project

<http://www.correctionsproject.com/prisonmaps/index.htm>

10/4: Eller pgs. 123- 145

10/9: Marcel Mauss, selection from "The Gift"

10/11: **MIDTERM EXAM**

Section 6- At the Intersections: Gender, Sexuality, Race, and Class

10/16: Eller pgs. 89- 98

10/18: Emily Martin "The Egg and the Sperm: How Science Has Constructed a Romance Based on Stereotypical Male-Female Roles"

10/23: Anne Fausto-Sterling "The Five Sexes"
AAA Statement on Race:

<http://www.americananthro.org/ConnectWithAAA/Content.aspx?ItemNumber=2583>

10/25: Eller pgs. 100- 118

10/30: Richard Delgado and Jean Stefancic "Introduction" *Critical Race Theory: An Introduction*

Section 7- Thinking Anthropologically About...

Language, Communication, and Culture

11/1: Eller pgs. 61-69

11/6: Eller pgs 70- 79

Kinship and Family

11/8: Eller pgs. 146- 160

11/13: Patricia Hill Collins, "It's All in the Family": Intersections of Gender, Race, and Nation" pages 61-75

DUE: Ethnographic Observation and Analysis Assignment

Religions, Rituals, and Symbols

11/20: Eller pgs. 191- 208

11/22: **THANKSGIVING BREAK, NO CLASS**

The Body

11/27: Eller pgs. 316- 329

Food and Culture

11/29: Psyche Williams-Forsen "More than Just the 'Big Piece of Chicken': The Power of Race, Class, and Food in American Consciousness"

Travel and Tourism

12/4: Christine Preble- "Cruise Ship Tourism in Cozumel, Mexico: Frios Como la Naturaleza de los Gringos lo Dice"

12/6: No required readings- Concluding thoughts and final exam review

12/13: **FINAL EXAM**