

# ANTH 2300

## Culture and Society

### Fall 2016

#### **Class Sessions: MWF 9:00-9:50, Cury 103**

Instructor: Dr. Adam Dunstan  
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Office Hours: M 10:00-11:30 AM, T 12:30-1:50 PM

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#### **Course Description**

In a globalized world we interact with people from different cultural backgrounds at a more rapid rate than ever before and across every domain of life. As well, every day we see examples of how social institutions and cultural norms influence everything from the distribution of wealth to the fate of our climate. Understanding the social and cultural dimensions of human life is, therefore, one of the most important skills that students in any career path can develop. In this course, we explore cultures and societies across the globe through the lens of cultural anthropology, addressing large-scale issues by delving into specific societies across the globe: in short, by seeing the global in the local.

Throughout the semester, we will study some of the most pervasive social spheres of activity that human beings find themselves enmeshed in, including kinship, economies, politics, and religions, and we will discuss how these relate to, and vary, by culture. We will also focus on such critical facets of cultural life as race, gender, and communication. This course takes a contemporary approach, and throughout the semester we will explore the rapid change that has occurred in cultures and societies over the past two hundred years under regimes of colonialism, globalization, and the spread of nation-states, while highlighting the relevance of an anthropological perspective to students' contemporary lives.

#### **Learning Objectives**

- Students will comprehend the concept of culture, its significance, and its relationship to anthropological theory and practice.
- Students will understand the diversity of kinship systems, economic activity, political organization, religious practice, language, and understandings of race and gender across cultures and how these relate to each other and to human existence.
- Students will be able to apply concepts of culture change to the contemporary world.

#### **Skills Development**

This course seeks to provide opportunity and training for students to improve their proficiency in the following skills:

- Effective written communication
- Ethnographic research methods
- Holistic analysis of social phenomenon
- Foundational perspectives and approaches of cultural anthropology

## Assigned Texts

- Kenneth J. Guest, *Cultural Anthropology: A Toolkit for a Global Age* (W.W. Norton & Company, 2014)
- Other readings will be posted on Blackboard (BB)

**Grading Scale:** 90-100 A / 80-89 B / 70-79 C / 60-69 D / 59 and Below F

## Grade Breakdown

2 Weekly Questions.....	200 Points
Midterm.....	300 Points
“Culture and You” Paper.....	200 Points
Final Exam.....	300 Points
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Total.....	1000 Points

## Assignments

- **2 Weekly Questions:** Students will compose two insightful questions or comments which respond to, and show critical thinking about, each week’s reading, and submit these through Blackboard by the start of class on Monday. **Due: Mondays by Start of Class.**
- **Midterm Exam:** On **Friday, 10/14/2016**, students will take an in-class midterm examination. This exam will include multiple-choice and short answer questions. **Date: 10/14/2016.**
- **“Culture and You” Term Paper and Seminar:** On **Wednesday, 11/30/2016**, students will come to class and turn in a single-spaced, 12 point font, typed 5-7 page reflective essay about (1) how their cultural background has affected them in their lives and (2) how the material learned in this course will impact their career or graduate studies. A rubric with formatting and other guidelines will be provided. In addition, on this day we will hold a seminar where we discuss our papers; **attendance is mandatory** and counts towards your paper grade. **Due: 11/30/2016.**
- **Final Exam:** The final exam will take place in class on **Wednesday, 12/14/2016**, from 8:00-10:00 AM. This exam will include multiple-choice and short answer questions. **Date: 12/14/2016, Cury 103.**

## ASSIGNMENT DUE DATES

**10/14/2016: Midterm Exam**

**11/30/2016: Term Paper and Seminar**

**12/14/2016: Final Exam (8:00-10:00 AM)**

**2-Questions: Weekly on Monday by start of class (9:00 AM) via Blackboard**

## Course Policies

**Withdrawal:** If you are unable to complete this course, you must officially withdraw by the University-designated date (for a “W” with instructor approval). Withdrawing from a course is a formal procedure that YOU must initiate. I cannot do it for you. If you simply stop attending and do not withdraw, you will receive a performance grade, usually an “F.”

**Attendance:** There is no attendance requirement; however, without attendance you will likely learn much less, miss announcements, and do poorly on the assignments and exams. Miss class at your own risk.

**Late Work:** Submissions of late assignments (the 2 weekly questions or term paper) will incur a 20% loss of points per calendar day, including the day the assignment was due. Thus, if you turn the term paper in after class on the day it was due, that is 1 day late; the next day is 2 days late. **The exams cannot be taken late without prior written approval from the instructor.**

**Discussion Participation:** Students are expected to complete required readings and to be prepared to discuss these in class. Discussion will play a critical role in this class and will be a benefit both to you and your colleagues.

**Extra Credit:** There is no extra credit planned at this time; however, I will notify you if this changes.

**Acceptable Student Behavior:** Student behavior that interferes with an instructor’s ability to conduct a class or other students’ opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated in any instructional forum at UNT. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be directed to leave the classroom and the instructor may refer the student to the Dean of Students to consider whether the student’s conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct. The university’s expectations for student conduct apply to all instructional forums, including university and electronic classrooms, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The Code of Student Conduct can be found [deanofstudents.unt.edu](http://deanofstudents.unt.edu). In this classroom, “**acceptable student behavior**” includes (but is not limited to):

- Being respectful of others’ thoughts, opinions, perspectives, and experiences.
- Giving every student a chance to participate by not dominating discussions.
- Arriving to class on time.
- No usage of electronics unless directed by the instructor.
- Refraining from engaging in side-conversations.

**Contacting the Professor:** Please feel free to come by office hours for assistance. Otherwise, email is the best way to get in touch with me outside of class: [adam.dunstan@unt.edu](mailto:adam.dunstan@unt.edu). **In the email, you must indicate your course and full name. You must also use your official UNT email, not a private email. I cannot communicate with you through email other than your UNT account.** Understand that I have hundreds of students and may not respond immediately. Also, never use Blackboard email to contact me.

**Do Not Miss Exams:** If you have a conflict with any seminar or exam date, it is your responsibility to make alternative arrangements ahead of time – NOT the week of the due date. Students may not take exams late unless there is written permission from the instructor beforehand. **Allowing alternative arrangements is up to the discretion of the instructor.**

**Academic Misconduct:** The Department of Anthropology does not tolerate plagiarism, cheating, or helping others to cheat. Students suspected of any of these will be provided the opportunity for a hearing; a guilty finding will merit 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 dismissal from the university. Plagiarism is defined as misrepresenting the work of others (whether published or not) as your own. It may be inadvertent or intentional. Any facts, statistics, quotations, or paraphrasing of any information that is not common knowledge, should be cited. 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/>.

**ADA:** The Anthropology Department does not discriminate based on an individual’s disability, as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act. Our program provides academic adjustments or help to individuals with disabilities, and attempts will be made to meet all certified requirements. Please see me if you have a documented disability so that appropriate arrangements can be made to help you get the most out of this class. In such cases, you must obtain written documentation through the Office of Disability Accommodation and provide this to me in a timely manner.

## Professional Expectations

I am extremely excited to teach you this semester, and I have expectations which will help ensure that the environment is conducive to your learning and professional development. As an instructor, I believe in treating students as adults and professionals; as such, the following expectations apply:

1. Read the syllabus thoroughly – and then read it again. It is your guide in this course.
2. If you ask me a question that's on the syllabus, I will refer you to the syllabus.
3. When you email, tell me your full name and course number (since I have hundreds of students).
4. When you write an email to me, please compose the email as if you are writing a letter, not a text message.
5. If you email me outside of regular work hours – i.e. after 5 PM – I will likely not respond until the next business day.
6. Do not panic if I do not respond immediately to an email. Please allow me at least one full (24 hour) day to respond (and 72 hours on the weekends). ***Most of the time I will respond much quicker than that***, but if I do not respond rapidly it does not necessarily mean that I did not see your email or that I am ignoring you, I just may be otherwise engaged.
7. Although I absolutely love to talk with students, please either come by during office hours or make an appointment to make sure you catch me and that I have time to talk.
8. I cannot provide extensions or make-up work retroactively/after the fact. If you missed an assignment, that is your responsibility. If there are extenuating circumstances, you must let me know well in advance, and it is up to my discretion to allow any modifications to due dates.
9. If a true medical or family emergency prevented you from doing assigned work, it is your responsibility to go through proper university channels and (as applicable) obtain medical or university documentation. It is up to my discretion to allow make-up work, and the format of it, in the case of documented emergencies.
10. At the end of the course you will receive the grade you earned. Even if you feel you need a higher grade (for your GPA, financial aid reasons, scholarships, graduate school applications, etc.) I will not bump your grade up, give you extra credit, or accept past assignments and exams – you will receive the grade you earned based on the mathematics of the grading system and the points available in the course. This is the only way to ensure fairness to all students and transparency in assigning grades.
11. Most importantly: if you have a problem, are falling behind, or even just need some extra help understanding a concept, reach out to your professor! I am here to help – but I can't help you if I don't know what's going on. Keep the lines of communication open. The sooner you reach out, the more helpful I can be.

## Course Schedule

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Reading</u>	<u>Important Dates</u>
	<b>Humans: Social and Cultural Beings</b>		
08/29, Monday	Social Groups	Guest Ch. 2	
08/31, Wednesday	Culture		
09/02, Friday	Culture & Society		
	<b>The Anthropological Approach</b>		
09/05, Monday	<u>Labor Day (No Class)</u>	Guest Ch. 1; Miner “Body Ritual” (BB)	<i>2 Questions Due</i>
09/07, Wednesday	Holism & Comparison; Cultural Relativism & Local/Global		
09/09, Friday	Ethnographic Research		
	<b>Relatedness, Kinship, Marriage: Who Are We?</b>		
09/12, Monday	Relatedness & Kinship	Guest Ch. 10	<i>2 Questions Due</i>
09/14, Wednesday	Descent & Family		
09/16, Friday	Descent & Family (Continued)		
09/19, Monday	Marriage across Cultures	Goldstein “When Brothers Share a Wife” (BB)	<i>2 Questions Due</i>
09/21, Wednesday	Marriage across Cultures (Continued)		
09/23, Friday	Sex and Gender		
	<b>The Environment, Our Life Support System: Subsistence &amp; Sustainability</b>		
09/26, Monday	Environmental Adaptation	Guest Ch. 12; Subsistence Reading (BB)	<i>2 Questions Due</i>
09/28, Wednesday	Foraging; Horticulture; Pastoralism		
09/30, Friday	Agriculture; Industrial Agriculture; Global Sustainability Challenges		
	<b>Economies From Small-scale to Neoliberal: Who Gets What, Why?</b>		
10/03, Monday	Production; Distribution	Clark “The Raw and the Rotten: Punk Cuisine” (BB)	<i>2 Questions Due</i>
10/05, Wednesday	Consumption and Identity; Colonialism; Globalized Economies		
	<b>Politics: Social Control and Resistance</b>		
10/07, Friday	Non-state Societies		
10/10, Monday	Formal and Informal Social Control	Guest Ch. 14	<i>2 Questions Due</i>
10/12, Wednesday	The Modern State; Political Resistance		
10/14, Friday	<b>Midterm Exam</b>		<b>Midterm Exam</b>

	<b>Religion, Part 1: Magic, Shamanism, and Other Religious Practices</b>		
10/17, Monday	Ritual and Worldview	Guest Ch. 15; Evans-Pritchard, "The Notion of Witchcraft..." (BB)	<i>2 Questions Due</i>
10/19, Wednesday	Shamanism and Magic		
10/21, Friday	Witchcraft and Sorcery		
	<b>Religion, Part 2: World Religions</b>		
10/24, Monday	Abrahamic and Indian Religions	Eck, "Darsan" (BB)	<i>2 Questions Due</i>
10/26, Wednesday	Chinese Religions, Other Religions		
10/28, Friday	Secularism and Culture Change		
	<b>Language and Symbolic Communication</b>		
10/31, Monday	Symbolism 101	Guest Ch. 4	<i>2 Questions Due</i>
11/02, Wednesday	Language and Cultural Meaning		
11/04, Friday	Language and Social Power		
	<b>Race, Ethnicity, and Identity</b>		
11/07, Monday	Social Construction of Race	Guest Ch. 6	<i>2 Questions Due</i>
11/09, Wednesday	Interpersonal, Institutional, and Structural Racism		
11/11, Friday	Ethnicity and Identity		
	<b>Applied Anthropology</b>		
11/14, Monday	Applied Anthropology	UNT Prof. Reading (Details in class)	<i>2 Questions Due</i>
11/16, Wednesday	Career Options in Anthropology		
11/18, Friday	Getting a Job		
	<b>Research Methods Training</b>		
11/21, Monday	Participant Observation	Guest Ch. 3	
11/23, Wednesday	Ethnographic Interviewing		
11/28, Monday	Other Methods		
11/30, Wednesday	<b>Culture and You Seminar</b> <i>(Class Attendance Mandatory)</i>		<b>Culture and You Term Paper Due</b>
	<b>Conclusions: Globalization and Culture in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century</b>		
12/02, Friday	Colonialism, Nation-states, and Non-states		
12/05, Monday	Capitalism and Globalization	Sanders "Buses in Bongoland" (BB)	
12/07, Wednesday	Anthropology Matters Now More Than Ever		
12/14, Wednesday	<b>Final Exam (8-10 AM, 103 Cury)</b>		<b>Final Exam</b>

**Note:** Schedule subject to change at instructor's discretion – attend class and check email and BB for updates.