ENVIRONMENTAL ANTHROPOLOGY
Anthropology 5400

University of North Texas
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COURSE DESCRIPTION

As a subfield of Socio-Cultural Anthropology, Ecological Anthropology concentrates on basic scientific and academic research on the relationship between human population and ecosystems with an emphasis on the influence of culture. In contrast, Environmental Anthropology may be viewed as the study of applied action and/or advocacy research to address practical environmental questions, problems, and concerns. Often, new policy is the outcome of such applied action or research. In most cases, such study centers upon the dynamic interaction between human beings and their ecosystems or natural environments.

Although Environmental Anthropology only emerged in the 1980s, it has flourished since the 1990s. The material in this course will differ to some degree from ecological anthropology because of the substantial literature now available and the rapidly growing interest in the subject as well as more jobs in this emerging field. Given the rapid increase in the amount of material of environmental anthropology and ecological anthropology during the 1990s, it is now necessary to develop separate courses for each of these subfields of study.

This course in Environmental Anthropology will focus on theory, major environmental questions, problems, issues, and possible solutions illustrated by case studies from different parts of the world. We will examine environmental issues pertaining to land/sea and natural resources, food production systems, deforestation, population problems, poverty and environmental justice, natural hazards and risks, resource conflicts and warfare, over-fishing, economic development, mineral and oil extraction, cultural landscapes, ecotourism, environment and gender, indigenous people and environmental rights, biodiversity conservation, protected areas, climate change, environmental belief systems, spiritual ecology, environmental justice, and effects of globalization and trans-nationalism.

OBJECTIVES

The primary objectives of this course are to provide:

1. A global sample of the literature in environmental anthropology;

2. A survey of concepts, issues, theories, methods, and practices in environmental anthropology;

3. An in-depth acquaintance with a particular topic in environmental anthropology through an individual research project.

A secondary goal of this course is to help every student to improve their critical thinking and communication skills. Here student-centered participatory and cooperative learning is essential. Furthermore, while some individuals may be more skilled than others in written communication, there is always room for
improvement, and this can be facilitated best through everyone cooperating in a friendly and constructive manner.

**PREREQUISITES**

This is a **graduate level** course. Prior anthropological or environmentally-related course work is strongly advised. Students who do not have such background may be at a disadvantage. If you have doubts on this matter, please consult with the instructor before enrolling in the course. Please be advised that the work load for this course will be fairly heavy.

**FORMAT OVERVIEW**

This is a critical thinking course based primarily on critical reading and online discussion of texts and videos. The focus designation for this course is written communication, and as such the format is predominantly that of a seminar; however, each lesson will be introduced in a modular format with some background information on the topic of the week. A number of selected videos or video segments will be accessible to the class, which will illustrate aspects of the topics. In addition to discussion, every student is required to prepare a **PowerPoint presentation** (see below) for the class and instructor to view and a separate individual research paper on a topic of the student’s choice. **The individual research project** and the PowerPoint presentations will allow students to pursue their own particular interests in environmental anthropology. **The individual research project must receive prior approval from the instructor (proposal due February 22).**

**Students can enjoy freedom of expression and academic freedom in this course as long as their statements are concise, relevant, respectful, and polite.** As mentioned above, this is a critical thinking course that offers students the opportunity to candidly express their questions, ideas, and comments for discussion. **Note: If necessary, changes to the syllabus will be made to accommodate scheduling of assignments and projects.**

**Films:** On some weeks, students will be expected to view a film and comment on it as part of the weekly assignments. The films are easily accessed on your computer through online video streaming from the UNT multimedia library. Below are instructions on how to access and download the necessary software for viewing the online films.

**Weekly Discussions:**

For each class meeting you will be expected to do the assigned readings before participating in the online discussion. Students may post their discussions prior to the Tuesday deadline but no later than Tuesday night at 8 p.m. Central Time. **See Weekly Cycle below for details. The instructor will be observing the preparedness, organization, and quality of the discussions.**

You will also be expected to write one thought-provoking, original question about any of the week’s readings. This question is not meant to be something that has a specific answer, but rather a question that raises discussion, but rather should be a question that arises from your reflection of the issues we have focused on this week.

As this is a discussion, you should also post a substantive response to at least two other students’ posts.

**In sum, each week, you will post:**

a) Your original response to each topic (usually 3-4 substantive posts).  
b) A thought-provoking, original question about any of the week’s readings.
In the Subject line of this post, type Question about [the title of the reading you are responding to].
c) A substantive response to at least TWO other students’ posts.

Thus, you will have at least 6 posts per week.

**Individual PowerPoint Presentation:**
Each student will be required to research, organize, write, and develop a *15 minute PowerPoint presentation*. A 15 minute Powerpoint presentation is standard at academic conferences. You should plan to speak for 1-2 minutes/slide, which means that you should have no more than 10 slides. Again, this will be a PowerPoint presentation that should “speak for itself” *without* a live oral presentation. **Powerpoint presentations must be posted for the instructor and the class by May 1.** We will discuss half of the PowerPoint presentations on the May 3 and the other half on May 10 (finals day). The PowerPoint presentation must be on a topic that is *different* from your Individual Research Paper. Your PowerPoint presentation should apply some of the concepts, theories, methods, etc. learned from class readings and discussion. The presentation should have a title slide that includes the name of student, course, instructor, date. **The presentation should have the following sections:** Introduction, Statement of the Question or Problem, Brief Literature Review, Analysis or Findings, and Conclusions/Recommendations, Citations. All citations given in PowerPoint should include last name of author, year of publication, and page number. To illustrate, an article by Joe Smith would be cited in the text as (Smith 2003:45), (Smith 2004: www.Apache Rituals.com. Please DO NOT rely only on course readings and the internet for your research; library resources should be used as well.

**Student Evaluations of PowerPoint Presentations:**
All students in the class are expected to provide constructive feedback on each student’s PowerPoint presentation during the discussion periods on the day the presentations are due (see below). A set of evaluation criteria will be provided to the class prior to the time the PowerPoint presentations are due. The purpose of these evaluations is to provide constructive peer and instructor feedback to assist students in honing their PowerPoint organization, development, and presentation skills.

**One Page Individual Research Paper Proposal:**
This one page proposal (emailed to the instructor) provides a plan of the student’s individual research project. It should consist of the students’ topic, issue or question to be addressed and some of the intended sources of information. The instructor must approve this proposal before the student can begin the project. **The research paper proposal will be due on February 22.**

**Individual Research Paper:**
The individual paper will have the following general components: The paper will have a title page and be typed in *12 point font* using Times Roman font style. It should be double-spaced. All pages, except the title page should be numbered in the upper right and margin. Margins will be one inch all around. A title page will list the title of paper, date, course name and number, instructor, and contributing group members’ names. The first half of the paper should comprise about 8-9 pages of the total *20-page requirement (not including bibliography, notes, or reference page)*, which has the introduction, main issue or question raised by the case study and brief description of the socio-cultural and environmental context in which the study takes place. The remaining portion (about 10-11 pages) should be a critical analysis of the case study in terms of theory, method, and/or substantive aspects. The paper should end with a strong conclusion/recommendation statement that emphasizes a suggested course of action to address the question or problem as outlined by the author of the case study. This may be a policy or social statement. **Note: This assignment is not a book report and should not be written in such a way. Organizational and analytical abilities in communicating concepts presented in the course readings and class discussion will be evaluated in this exercise.** Each paper should have complete bibliographic references given, including web page links. All citations given in the paper should include last name of author, year of publication, and page number. To illustrate, an article by Joe Smith would be cited in the text as (Smith 2003:45), (Smith 2004: www.Apache Rituals.com.
Rituals.com). You can follow any of the www.worldcat.org citation style APA, MLA, or Chicago. In sum, the paper should have a title page that includes the following general headings: **introduction; main issue, problem, or question raised by case study; brief review of the socio-cultural and environmental context of study; group analysis of theory, method, and/or substantive material; and conclusions/recommendations.** Examples of proper citations and bibliographic references should follow the format given in the journal *American Anthropologist.* The individual research papers are due on April 26th.

**WEEKLY CYCLE**

The course runs on a weekly cycle – **Wednesday morning to Tuesday night.** There is one lesson for each week and it ends on Tuesday nights. Each week, students must read the lesson and the assigned articles, and view the film (if there is one for the week). You may post your assignments and discussions prior to the Tuesday deadline but no later than Tuesday night at 8 p.m. Central Time. Any exceptions to this requirement will be noted in the assignment page by the instructor. See syllabus section “guidelines for participation in discussions” for proper online discussion protocol.

**GUIDELINES FOR PARTICIPATION IN DISCUSSIONS**

Since this course is a graduate seminar, participation is essential. Class participation makes up twenty percent of your final grade. Your contributions to the online discussions will be included in your evaluation. You must post at least 6 substantive messages (answers to the topic questions, one original question, and two responses to other students’ questions) per week in the online discussions. You will be graded for the quality of your postings rather than the quantity.

The goal of our online discussions is to have a good back-and-forth among class participants. This is a seminar-style class, so much of your learning will come from each other.

The following guidelines for online discussions were developed by the 2006 online ANTH 5010 class, as we collaboratively learned how to make best use of **Blackboard Learn.** Some of you may not have much experience with asynchronous discussion boards – these simple tips can help the communication process flow smoothly!

- Post your first message(s) by Wednesday of every week.
- Try to check the discussions daily; focus on contributing to just a few threads.
- Only one idea per message!
- Frequent small posts are better than large messages at rare intervals. This will enable more back-and-forth between you and your classmates.
- If you have a new thought that you want to share, start a new conversational thread by clicking “Create Message”– this will promote discussion of the topic. If everyone just hits “Reply” to previous messages the overall structure of the conversation will become confusing.
- Change the subject line when you are replying to a message but shifting the focus. If other people have already said what you wanted to say about one topic, move on to a different topic.
- Type up your response in a word processing program (this will ensure you do not lose your work, as you can’t Save in the discussion message boxes and will also allow you to check your spelling, etc. before posting).
Here are some further useful guidelines from the University of Guelph, Canada (http://www.open.uoguelph.ca/online/learning_resources/online_discuss_tips.html):

**How to Write Good Messages**
1. Limit your messages to 1-2 screen lengths.
2. Fill in the subject line for each message.
3. Build on the ideas of others, as well as initiating new ideas. If your message builds on an existing thread, use REPLY. If you are starting a new thread, use CREATE MESSAGE.
4. Remember that quality is better than quantity. “Me too” and “I agree” type messages add little.
5. Quote the relevant part of a message in yours so that others know what you are referring to.
6. Ensure a respectful tone in all messages.
7. If your message is not relevant to the whole group, send it privately via e-mail.

**Interactive Learning Skills**
1. Focus on the subject of the discussion and bring it back to the main purpose if there is topic drift, e.g. “We seem to be getting off topic here. Could we return to…”.
2. Suggest people take their messages to alternative places for the “off topic” messages.
3. Encourage all to participate.
4. Weave several messages together and then push the discussion further with a question or thought provoker.
5. Present another perspective on the issue being discussed.
6. Provide a practical application for an idea.
7. Be willing to participate in a debate.
8. Illustrate your point with examples.
9. Actively seek out other perspectives, e.g. “This is what I think, but I’m sure others have another perspective to share.”
10. Accept and understand diversity in learning and personal styles. Respect different points of view.

**Dealing with Conflict Online**
1. Did you have a strong reaction to a message? Take a step back. Write your response but don’t send it. Wait 24 hours. Have someone else read it first.
2. Is there another interpretation? Perhaps clarification is in order. While online interaction can enhance learning, it has some limitations; non-verbal cues are missing.
3. Politely agree to disagree and walk away.
4. Disagreements over points of view are a necessary part of learning, but personal attacks on the motivations and intelligence of others cannot be tolerated. Remember that there are people behind the words that we see and treat others with the respect we all want and deserve.

**GRADING POLICY**

The final course grade with a total possibility of 100 points (100%) for each student and will be calculated as follows:

20% (20 points) regular weekly online class attendance and meaningful online participation during discussions of readings and other matters;

5% (5 points) research paper proposal (one page single-spaced uploaded to the course website);

5% (5 points) completed evaluations of student PowerPoint presentation from every student in class;

40% (40 points) for individual research paper over a topic of interest to the student;
30% (30 points) Fifteen minutes PowerPoint summarizing a study that reflects their knowledge of course material. **Note this topic must be different from the individual research paper.** Every student should give the instructor and the class copies of the proposal of their PowerPoint presentation before the presentation is sent to the class and the instructor for evaluation.

Grading policy:
- A = 90-100% of total
- B = 80-89% of total
- C = 70-79% of total
- D = 60-69% of total
- F = 59% & below of total

Students should be prepared to make a substantial investment of time and effort in this course. Those students who take advantage of as many of the resources provided in this course as feasible will obtain a systematic and thorough overview of the subject.

**Note:** The grade book feature will be turned off so contact the instructor for a copy of your grades. Otherwise, he will send them out mid-quarter so that everyone can know where they stand.

**ATTENDANCE**

Students are expected to participate in this online class on a regular basis. As this is an online class, attendance will be measured by your participation in class discussions and completion of the assignments. If you cannot complete an assignment on time, contact the instructor in advance and explain your circumstances. To be fair to your classmates, only under rare circumstances will permission be granted for late assignments. Late assignments without prior approval will not be accepted under any circumstances.

**WHERE TO GO FOR TECHNICAL HELP**

Blackboard Student Resources Webpage: [https://bbsupport.unt.edu/](https://bbsupport.unt.edu/)

Technical Help
If you have a technical problem in this course, contact the Help Desk. (If you do not understand the assignments or need help with the course content, please contact the instructor.)

Help Desk: helpdesk@unt.edu
Phone: 940-565-2324
In person: SAGE 130
Mon-Thu 8am-Mid.
Fri 8am-8pm
Sat 9am-5pm
Sun 8am-Mid.

The Anthropology Graduate Programs Coordinator is Marisa Abbe. If you have any problems or questions, please email her at: marisa.abbe@unt.edu

**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 classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The Code of Student Conduct can be found at www.deanofstudents.unt.edu

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. For 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/.

DISABILITY STATEMENT

The Department of Anthropology does not discriminate on the basis of an individual’s disability as required by the Americans with Disability Act. The program provides academic adjustments and aids to individuals with disabilities in its programs and activities. If any student feels the need for reasonable accommodations because of the impact of a disability, then he or she should speak to the instructor in private to discuss specific needs. The instructor will then assist with access needs pertaining to a documented disability.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS


Note: Some additional readings may be assigned from time-to-time from book chapters, journal articles, and class. These readings will be available as directed links or posted on the classroom Blackboard Learn.

STREAMING FILMS FOR ANTH 5400
(See individual weeks for film assignments)

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<th>TITLE</th>
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<td>Trinkets and Beads</td>
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RELEVANT JOURNALS FOR RESEARCH

Especially relevant journals include:

Ambio

Biological Conservation

Conservation Biology

Conservation and Ecology (online journal)
http://www.ecologyandsociety.org

Conservation and Society

Environmental Conservation

Human Ecology: An Interdisciplinary Journal

Human Organization

Journal of Ecological Anthropology

Journal of Ethnobiology

Journal of Political Ecology

Practicing Anthropology

Wildlife Conservation

An extensive journal archive is available on the Public Anthropology website:
http://www.publicanthropology.org

The environmental anthropology listserv, based out of the University of Georgia, provides a valuable resource for current conversations in the field

Members of the American Anthropological Association may search AnthroSource: http://www.aaanet.org

A tutorial for the use of the internet by anthropologists is available at:
http://www.vts.rdn.ac.uk/tutorial/anthropologist/

SCHEDULE AND READING ASSIGNMENTS
Note: The instructor reserves the right to add, delete, or revise segments of this course or syllabus

**Week 1: Introduction (Lesson 1)**
Welcome, Introduction, Purpose, Objectives, Getting to Know Each Other
**FILM: First Contact**

**Week 2: Theoretical Foundations Part I (Lesson 2)**
**Haenn and Wilk:** Ch 1 Steward, The Concept and Method of Cultural Ecology; Ch.2 Netting, Smallholders and Householders; Ch 3 Moran, Ecosystem Ecology in Biology and Anthropology; **Bodley:** Ch 1 Anthropological Perspectives on Contemporary Human Problems 1-13
**FILM: The Goddess and the Computer**

**Week 3: Theoretical Foundations Part II (Lesson 3)**
**Haenn and Wilk:** Nazarea, Ch 5 A View from a Point: Ethnoecology as Situated Knowledge; Ch 6 Kottak, The New Ecological Anthropology; **Bodley:** Ch 1 Anthropological Perspectives on Contemporary Human Problems 13-22.

**Week 4: Population (Lesson 4)**
**Haenn and Wilk:** Ch 8 Boserup, Some Perspectives and Implications; Ch 9 Brown et al., Beyond Malthus: Sixteen Dimensions of the Population Problem; Ch 12 Dalby, The Environment as Geopolitical Threat: Reading Robert Kaplan’s “Coming Anarchy” **Bodley:** The Population Problem 191-218

**Week 5: Beliefs, Values, and Justice (Lesson 5)**
**Haenn and Wilk:** Ch 7 Simmons, Normative Behavior
**Crumley:** Ch 7 Johnston, Anthropology and Environmental Justice: Analysts, Advocates, Mediators, and Troublemakers; Ch 9 Sponsel, Do Anthropologists Need Religion, and Vice Versa? Adventures and Dangers in Spiritual Ecology
**FILM: In The Light of Reverence**

**Week 6: Economic Development (Individual Research Paper Proposal Due) (Lesson 6)***
**Haenn and Wilk:** Ch 13 White, Energy and Tools; Ch 14 Redman, The Growth of World Urbanism; Ch 16 Beckerman, Income Levels and the Environment; Ch 17 Shiva, Staying Alive: Women, Ecology, and Development; Ch 18 Fricker, Measuring up to Sustainability

**Week 7: Scale, Environmental Crises, Natural Resources and Consumption (Lesson 7)**
**Bodley:** Ch 2 Scale, Adaptation, and the Environmental Crisis, Ch 3 Natural Resources and the Culture of Consumption
**FILM: The Story of Stuff**

**Week 8: Conservation and Biodiversity (Lesson 8)**
**Haenn and Wilk:** Ch 19 Orlov, The Third Stage of Ecological Anthropology: Processual Approaches; Ch 20 Hill, Conflicts Over Development and Environmental Values: The International Ivory Trade in Zimbabwe’s Historical Context; Ch 21 Haenn, The Power of Environmental Knowledge: Ethnoecology and Environmental Conflicts in Mexican Conservation; Ch 22 Redford et al., Holding Ground; Ch 23 Escobar, Does Biodiversity Exist?; **Bodley:** Ch 4 Malnutrition and the Evolution of Food Systems 127-152
**FILM: The Shark Callers of Kontu**

**Mar. 10-16 Spring Vacation (No Class)**

**Week 9: Agricultural Issues (Lesson 9)**
Bodley Ch 4 Malnutrition and the Evolution of Food Systems 127-152; Johnston: Ch 7 Wheeler, Purity and Danger: Regulating Organic Farming; Ch 8 Phillips, Resource Access, Environmental Struggles, and Human Rights in Honduras

**FILM: Seeds of Plenty, Seeds of Sorrow**

**Week 10: Resource Management and Anthropology (Lesson 10)**
Crumley: Ch 12, McCay Environmental Anthropology at Sea

**Haenn and Wilk:** 25 Luke, On Environmentality: Geo-Power and Eco-Knowledge in the Discourses of Contemporary Environmentalism; Ch 27 Stonich and DeWalt The Political Ecology of Deforestation in Honduras; Ch 29 Bowman et al., New World, New Deal: A Democratic Approach to Globalization

**Week 11: Indigenous Peoples and Conservation (Lesson 11)**
Haenn and Wilk: Ch 31 Milton, Cultural Theory and Environmentalism, Ch 32 Berkes et al., The Benefits of the Commons; Ch 34 Brosius, Endangered Forest, Endangered People: Environmentalist Representations of Indigenous Knowledge; Ch 35 Anderson, Tribal Whaling Poses New Threat; Ch 35 Mabury-Lewis, On the Importance of Being Tribal: Tribal Wisdom; Igoe, Global Indigenism and Spaceship Earth: Convergence, Space and Re-entry Friction (article).

**FILM: Trinkets and Beads**

**Week 12: Marine Protected Areas and Ecotourism (Lesson 12)**
Leila Sievanen Presentation

**Haenn and Wilk:** Ch 41 Honey, Treading Lightly? Ecotourism’s Impact on the Environment; Leila Sievanen (Reading to be announced), Campbell (Political ecology perspective on tourism to parks and protected areas)

**Week 13: Consumption, Globalization and Environmental Issues (Lesson 13)**
Haenn and Wilk: Ch 37 Taylor and Buttel, How do We Know We Have Global Environmental Problems? Science and the Globalization of Environmental Discourse; Ch 38 Wilk, The Ecology of Global Consumer Culture; Ch 39 Kaplan, A World Without Boundaries: The Body Shop’s Trans/National Geographies; Ch 40 Kneen, The Invisible Giant: Cargill and Its Transnational Strategies

**Week 14: Poverty, Conflict, Justice, and The Future (Individual Research Paper Due) (Lesson 14)***
Bodley: Ch 7 Poverty and Conflict; Ch 8 The Future 277-298
Johnston: Ch 13 Barker, Fighting Back: Justice, the Marshall Islands, and Neglected Radiation Communities

**FILM: Bill Moyers Reports: Earth on Edge**

**May 1 (Individual PowerPoint Presentation and Outline Due for Class and Instructor)***

**May 3 (Individual PowerPoint (PP) Presentation Discussion I & Student PP Evaluations Due)***
Half of the Class Individual PowerPoint presentations and student evaluations to be discussed

**May 7 (Finals Day) (Individual PowerPoint (PP) Presentation Discussion II & Student PP Evaluations Due)***
Second Half of Class Individual PowerPoint presentations and student evaluations to be discussed