Ambiguity is the warp of life, not something to be eliminated. Learning to savor the vertigo of doing without answers or... making do with fragmentary ones opens up the pleasures of recognizing and playing with pattern, finding coherence within complexity... Improvisation and new learning are not private processes; they are shared with others — Mary Catherine Bateson, *Peripheral Visions* (1988), 9-10

**Course Description**

This course is an overview of the intellectual history of social and cultural anthropology. As such, it is an account of different authors’ ideas, with the emphasis placed on their major contributions to the development of anthropology. Special emphasis is given to the development of anthropological thought in the application of anthropological knowledge.

This course is taught as a seminar. Students will engage in critical analysis and reflection on the development of anthropological theory. Four themes will guide discussions:

- **Ethnographic authority.** How have anthropologists persuaded the readers of their texts that what they wrote was valid and important? How have they created their status as experts?

- **“Us” versus “the other.”** It is common for people to think about their own group (“us”) as separate and different from other groups (“the other”). In what ways have anthropologists implicitly or explicitly defined “us” and “the other” in their writings? How have these definitions changed over time?

- **Using theory to solve social problems.** How do the theoretical frameworks anthropologists use shape their understandings of particular social problems? How do those frameworks shape the approaches anthropologists develop to address social problems?

- **The genealogy of ideas.** In what ways did famous anthropologists build on the ideas of other scholars who came before them? In what ways were their theories a reaction against other scholars?

**Communication with Instructor**

You are welcome to communicate with me at any time via phone or email. My phone number is
940 565 2752. My email address is christina.wasson@unt.edu. You can also use the email option within the online course.

**Required Texts**

In this course, you will be reading 1) an overview book and 2) a set of “classic” articles and book chapters that were written over the last hundred years or so.

1. You are responsible for purchasing the book from any source you wish, such as Amazon.com. The book is:


2. The articles are in Blackboard Learn at https://learn.unt.edu/.

The reading assignments for each week are summarized in the course schedule, below, and they are spelled out in detail at the end of the syllabus. Readings are not optional. Students will be thoroughly tested on them.

**Course Requirements**

1. **Participation in discussions (20%).** 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, genealogy activities, and videoconferences will all be included in your evaluation. You must post at least 4 substantive messages per week in the online discussions; more postings are encouraged.

   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. I will be assessing you for the overall quality of the whole conversation, rather than the magnificence of an individual posting.

   The following guidelines for online discussions were developed by the first online ANTH 5010 class, as we collaboratively learned how to make best use of the discussion boards. 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 Tuesday of every week.
   - Try to check the discussions daily; focus on contributing to just a few threads if your time is limited.
   - Only one idea per message!
   - Frequent small posts are better than humongous 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 Thread”– 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.
• Don’t put your thoughts in a Word attachment, write them directly in the message field.

2. Midterm (20%) and final (30%). These exams will test you on your developing understanding of the evolution of anthropological thought. They will cover information contained in the readings and presented in class. Both will be essay exams. The midterm is due Monday of Week 8 and the final is due Monday of Finals Week. Instructions for the midterm will be made available two weeks before the due date. Instructions for the final will be made available three weeks before the due date.

3. Discussion leader (30%). Once during the semester, you will prepare a presentation about the week’s topic, and lead the class discussion of that topic. Instructions for this assignment are located in the Assignments area of the course, which you can access from the home page.

Grading

I am used to grading on an A/B/etc. system, and translating A = 4.0, A- = 3.7, etc. However, the gradebook in Blackboard requires me to use a point system. The table below shows how I have translated one system to the other. The number of points depends on whether the assignment is worth 20% of your course grade (200 points) or 30% of your course grade (300 points).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>Out of 4 (Traditional Numerical Scale)</th>
<th>Out of 200 (Traditional x 50)</th>
<th>Out of 300 (Traditional x 75)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>185</td>
<td>278</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>248</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>225</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>203</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>173</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D-</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An A on all assignments would result in a final score of 1000. A final score above 875 (i.e. 3.5 on a traditional scale) will result in an A in the course. According to UNT policy, final grades do
not have plusses or minuses.

**Plagiarism Policy**

The department of anthropology considers graduate students to be new members of the community of professional anthropologists, who are thus held to the high ethical standards of practicing professionals. They are expected to follow the American Anthropological Association’s code of ethics: “Anthropological researchers bear responsibility for the integrity and reputation of their discipline, of scholarship, and of science. Thus, anthropological researchers are subject to the general moral rules of scientific and scholarly conduct: they should not deceive or knowingly misrepresent (i.e., fabricate evidence, falsify, plagiarize), or attempt to prevent reporting of misconduct, or obstruct the scientific/scholarly research of others” ([http://www.aaanet.org/committees/ethics/ethcode.htm](http://www.aaanet.org/committees/ethics/ethcode.htm)). Any work not meeting this standard will be evaluated in a hearing before the student; infractions will merit dismissal from the master’s program.

For more information on paper writing, including how to avoid plagiarism, and how to use citations, see [http://anthropology.unt.edu/resources-writingpaper.php](http://anthropology.unt.edu/resources-writingpaper.php). 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/](http://www.unt.edu/csrr/).

**Non-Discrimination Policy**

It is the policy of the University of North Texas not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, disability (where reasonable accommodations can be made), disabled veteran status or veteran of the Vietnam era status in its educational programs, activities, admissions or employment policies. In addition to complying with federal and state equal opportunity laws and regulations, the university through its diversity policy declares harassment based on individual differences (including sexual orientation) inconsistent with its mission and education goals. Direct questions and concerns to the Equal Opportunity Office, 940 565 2456, or the Dean of Students, 940 565 2648. TDD access is available through Relay Texas, 800 735 2989.

Anthropology does not discriminate on the basis of an individual’s disability as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act. The program provides academic adjustments and aid to individuals with disabilities in its programs and activities. If you have a disability, you are strongly advised to contact the Office of Disability Accommodations (UU 318A) or by telephone at 940 565 4323. **It is the responsibility of the student to make the necessary arrangements with the instructors.**
Weekly Cycle

The course runs on a weekly cycle. There is one lesson for each week. Lessons will always be made available one week in advance, for students who wish to work ahead a bit. The students who are discussion leader for a given week must upload their reports by Sunday morning at 8 am central time.

All students must read the lesson, the assigned articles, and the discussion leader’s report no later than Tuesday of each week. Also, they must start posting to the discussions no later than Tuesday of each week.

Discussions for each lesson will last one week, from Monday morning through Sunday night.

There will be a weekly one-hour videoconference. During the videoconference, the week’s discussion leaders will present their topics briefly, and then all students will participate in a discussion. Every call will start with an opportunity to ask the instructor questions.

Schedule for the Semester

The readings in Blackboard are identified by author’s last name and year; for full information, see the next section of the syllabus.

For specific dates of each week, see the Blackboard Calendar.

The course is organized around the following structure:

- Week 1 deals with administrative and introductory issues
- Weeks 2-3 provide you with tools to analyze the rest of the readings
- Weeks 4-13 cover the history of ideas in anthropology
- Week 14 helps you start to put together your own toolbox of anthropological ideas and theories, that will be useful to you in your career
- Week 15 is a review

For the history of ideas in anthropology (weeks 4-13), I have primarily assigned original materials written by famous anthropologists.

In addition, I have assigned chapters from the textbook. The purpose of the textbook is to provide you with a context for the other readings. The textbook describes broader trends in anthropology; it goes over scholars whose work we don’t have time to cover in depth; and it gives you the political, economical, and cultural contexts that surrounded the writing of your assigned articles.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Readings</th>
<th>Lesson</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Welcome to the Course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Authors/References</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Critical Analysis of Readings</td>
<td>Clifford 1983 and Narayan 1993</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Using Theory to Solve Problems</td>
<td>Klinenberg 2002a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Klinenberg 2002b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Klinenberg 2002c</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>American Foundations</td>
<td>History Ch.2, Ch.3:58-61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Morgan 1973 [1877]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Boas 1940</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Culture and Personality</td>
<td>History Ch.4:68-80, Ch.7:161-165</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mead 1928</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Benedict 1934</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Functionalism</td>
<td>History Ch.3:46-58, 61-67, Ch.4:86-92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Malinowski 1922a and 1922b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Radcliffe-Brown 1973 [1952]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Symbolic and Interpretive Anthropology</td>
<td>History Ch.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Turner 1967</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Geertz 1973a and 1973b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Political Economy</td>
<td>History Ch.7:138-151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Heyman 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Wolf 1982</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Feminist Anthropology</td>
<td>History Ch.7:151-155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Lewin 2006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ortner 2006 [1974]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Visweswaran 2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Studying Up and Postcolonial Studies</td>
<td>History Ch.8:176-179</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Nader 1972</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Said 1978</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Feuchtwang 1973</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Postmodernism and Poststructural Approaches 1</td>
<td>History Ch.8:166-176, 179-191</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Foucault 1977</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Rabinow 1977</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Poststructural Approaches 2</td>
<td>History Ch.7:158-161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Bourdieu 1990a and 1990b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Anthropology of Globalization</td>
<td>History Ch.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Appadurai 1996</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Hannerz 2003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week</td>
<td>Reading</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>N/A Review</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Your Area of Interest:**
- Business Anthropology
- OR
- Medical Anthropology
- OR
- Anthropology of Education
- OR
- Migration/Border Studies
- OR
- Environmental Anthropology

**Readings Available through Blackboard Learn**

**WEEK 2**

**WEEK 3**
- Prologue: the urban inferno, 1-13
- Introduction: the city of extremes. 14-36
- Chapter 2: race, place, and vulnerability, 79-128

**WEEK 4**
Boas, Franz. 1940. *Race, language, culture*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. The following sections:
- The aims of anthropological research, 243-259
- Race and progress, 3-17

---

**Finals**

*Final Exam due on Monday*
**WEEK 5**  Mead, Margaret. 1973 [1928]. *Coming of age in Samoa: a psychological study of primitive youth for western civilization*. Washington, DC: American Museum of Natural History. The following chapters:
- Introduction, 1-8
- A day in Samoa, 8-11
- The education of the Samoan child, 11-21
- The experience and individuality of the average girl, 73-87

Benedict, Ruth. 1934. *Patterns of Culture*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin. The following sections:
- Acknowledgements, ix-x
- Dionysian versus Apollonian cultures, 79-81
- The northwest coast of America, 156-195

**WEEK 6**  Malinowski, Bronislaw. 1950 [1922]. *Argonauts of the western Pacific: an account of native enterprise and adventure in the archipelagos of Melanesian New Guinea*. New York: E.P. Dutton & Co. The following chapters:
- The subject, method and scope of this inquiry, 1-25
- The essentials of the Kula, 81-104


### WEEK 10


### WEEK 11


### WEEK 12


### WEEK 13


### WEEK 14

**Business Anthropology**


**Medical Anthropology**


**Anthropology of Education**

LeCompte, Margaret D. and Preissle, Judith. 1992. Toward an ethology of student life in schools and classrooms synthesizing the qualitative research tradition. In *The handbook of qualitative research in education*, ed. Margaret D. LeCompte,

**Migration and Border Studies**

**Environmental Anthropology**