

SYLLABUS
ANTH 2300.002- CULTURE AND SOCIETY
SPRING 2018

Professor: Dr. Jara Carrington

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Office Hours: Tuesdays 2:00-3:30, Thursdays 10:30-12, or by appointment

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Office Hours: Mondays 11:00-12:00, or by appointment

Office: Chilton Hall 308D

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

Meeting location: Gateway 132

Course Description

Welcome to the study of cultural anthropology! This course is designed to introduce students to key concepts, methods, theories, and debates in cultural anthropology. Students will develop and use new methodological and analytical tools to critically consider the multiple ways that human difference has been categorized and valued across historical and cultural contexts. Topics include politics and economics, language and communication, symbols and religion, material goods, and the body. Through readings, in-class discussions, visual media, and introductory fieldwork experiences, students will begin to glimpse the immense variety of human experience and ways of life. In doing so, they will be able to better understand their own positions and that of others in our globalizing world.

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, exams, and your final paper. 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: Asking Questions about Humanity*" Second Edition, by Robert L. Welsch and Luis A. Vivanco. It is available at the UNT University Bookstore. Additional articles and other required course materials will be posted on our course webpage on Blackboard. All readings listed on the syllabus are required.

Important Information

Late work: I do not accept late assignments unless you have made specific arrangements with me in advance, have a doctor's note, and/or otherwise have received my approval.

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: relevant movie/documentary analysis, attending a talk/lecture on campus and writing a summary, or developing a creative piece such as poetry or artwork. 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 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, or, Just Don't Cheat: The Department of Anthropology does not tolerate plagiarism, cheating, or helping others to cheat. 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. 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 can result in your dismissal from the university.

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.

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/>.

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:

Any student who has difficulty affording groceries or accessing sufficient food to eat every day, or who lacks a safe and stable place to live, and believes this may affect their performance in the course, is urged to contact the Dean of Students (940-565-2648) for support. You are not alone. We are here to help.

UNT Food Pantry: Any current UNT student in need can visit the 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. There is also a pantry located at the Discovery Park Location in the Engineering Library (M130) next to the Career Center. There is also a Food Pantry located at UNT's Frisco campus, which can be accessed by visiting the information desk.

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.

Evaluation

Class Participation	5%
Attendance	10%
Current Events	15%
Ethnographic Fieldnotes and Analysis	10%

Life History Interview	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. In order for the course to be effective, all students must have the reading assignments completed and ready for in-depth discussion for each class. Importantly, you need to bring assigned readings to class each day as we will refer to and utilize them throughout our meetings. 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.

II. Attendance (100 POINTS)

Attendance will be taken on ten days throughout the semester. Attendance checks will be random and unannounced. Students will earn 10 points if they are in class. Students who are absent will not be given the opportunity to earn these points unless they have a documented excuse.

III. Current Events (150 POINTS)

As a means to kick off each course meeting with student leadership and 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 complete one “Current Event” presentation and short paper during the course. Current Event presentation topics can include anything related to “culture” (which, you will find out, is most everything!) and can involve events or issues related to: economics, politics, current social movements, religion, language, social and news media, food, and more. While current news stories or notable events make especially good “Current Events,” other options include 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!

In the second week of class, you will sign up to give a short, **five minute presentation** that will take place at the beginning of class on the day you select. On the day of your presentation, you will also be required to turn in a **300-400 word paper** that is an analysis of your Current Event materials. In your presentation and paper, you should provide a description of your topic, explain its significance/relation to course materials or content, and offer your very insightful and critical analysis of the object (FYI: “I thought it was interesting” is neither insightful nor critical). Your verbal presentation should not go over five minutes, and be ready to answer any questions we might have for you.

IV. Writing Assignments (300 POINTS TOTAL)

a. Ethnographic Fieldnotes and Analysis Assignment (100 Points)

b. Life History Interview Assignment (200 Points)

This semester, you will conduct two “mini research projects” that will enable you to practice and obtain a hands-on understanding of basic anthropological fieldwork. These assignments will give you the opportunity to 1) perform basic anthropological research methods and 2) apply the theoretical perspectives and anthropological concepts we have learned this semester to explain your results. A handout with more detailed information about these assignments will be distributed and explained in class and posted on Blackboard.

V. Exams (400 POINTS)

There will be two examinations for this class, a midterm and a final. 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. NOTE: While the final exam is not fully comprehensive, it may draw on concepts and materials introduced earlier in the semester. The exams will consist of true/false, multiple choice, and short answer questions.

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: Any changes in the course schedule will be announced in class and on our course webpage on Blackboard Learn.

***A Note on Paper Formatting: All written assignments are to be double spaced, with 12-point font and 1-inch margins on all sides. In-text quotes and references should be properly cited using whatever format you are most familiar with (i.e. MLA, APA, Chicago). All papers should contain a works cited/references page.**

Dates To Remember

Your personal Current Event date

2/27: Turn in Ethnographic Fieldnotes and Analysis Assignment

3/8: Mid-term Exam

4/17: Turn in Life History Interview Assignment

5/10: Final Exam

Schedule of Required Readings

Section 1: Cultural Anthropology. The “Culture” Concept, and “The Danger of a Single Story”

1/16: First day of class; No readings assigned

1/18: Welsch and Vivanco (hereafter, W&V) pgs. 3-14

1/23: W&V pgs. 31-41

1/25: W&V pgs. 41-53

Section 2: Observing and Studying Culture: Understanding Anthropological Practice

1/30: Boas, “The Mind of Primitive Man” (Bb)

Said selection from “Introduction” to Orientalism pgs. 1-9 (Bb)

2/1: W&V pgs. 14-25

2/6: W&V pgs. 55-61

Miner “The Body Rituals of the Nacirema” (Bb)

2/8: W&V pgs. 63-77

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

Section 3: Culture, Power, and Violence: The Interplay Between Politics and Economics

2/13: W&V pgs. 201-214

2/15: Malinowski, Selection from “The Argonauts of the Western Pacific” (Bb)

2/20: W&V pgs. 109-126

2/22: W&V pgs. 219-231

2/27: Foucault, Selection from “Panopticism” (Bb; 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>

⇒ **WRITING ASSIGNMENT DUE! Ethnographic Fieldnotes and Analysis**

3/1: W&V 235-241

Farmer, “An Anthropology of Structural Violence”

3/6: Scott, Selection from Domination and the Arts of Resistance (Bb)

3/8: **MIDTERM EXAM**

3/13 & 3/15 SPRING BREAK- NO CLASS!
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Section 4: At the Intersections: Gender, Sexuality, Race, and Class

3/20: W&V pgs. 275-281

Martin, "The Egg and the Sperm" (Bb)

3/22: W&V pgs. 286-297

Fausto-Sterling "The Five Sexes" (Bb)

3/27: W&V pgs. 247-263

AAA Statement on Race

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

3/29: W&V 263-271

Crenshaw, "Mapping the Margins" (Bb)

Section 5: Analyzing Cultural Processes

a. Symbols, Rituals, and Religion

4/3: W&V pgs. 329-348

4/5: W&V pgs. 348-353

Gmelch "Baseball Magic" (Bb)

b. Language, Communication, and Culture

4/10: W&V pgs. 93-96; 100-105

4/12: Muehlmann, "Spread Your Ass Cheeks: And Other Things that should not be said in Indigenous Languages" (Bb)

Section 6: Anthropology and the Body

4/17: W&V pgs. 357-370

⇒ ***WRITING ASSIGNMENT DUE! Life History Interview***

4/19: Farmer, "On Suffering and Structural Violence: A View from Below" (Bb)

Section 7: Material Culture

a. Food and Culture, or, Are you what you Eat?

4/24: Barthes "Towards a Psychosociology of Contemporary Food Consumption (Bb)

4/26: Williams-Forsen "More than Just the 'Big Piece of Chicken': The Power of Race, Class, and Food in American Consciousness (Bb)

b. The Social Life of Things

5/1: W&V pgs. 385-410

5/3: No assigned readings - Concluding thoughts and final exam review

5/10: **FINAL EXAM 10:30-12:30**