

Syllabus for Anthropological Thought and Praxis I

ANTH 5010 On-Campus ☛ University of North Texas
Dr. Christina Wasson
Fall 2015 ☛ Audobon 201

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

My office is Chilton 330D. My office hours are Wednesdays 3-5. I would also be happy to meet at other times, and 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.

Online Course Resources

Various course materials are stored on Blackboard Learn (<https://learn.unt.edu/>), including the syllabus, discussion leader instructions, readings, and a few other items.

There is also an email list for the class. Its address is anth-5010-001@unt.edu.

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. The book is available through the UNT bookstore. It is:

Eriksen, Thomas Hylland and Finn Sivert Nielsen. 2013. *A History of Anthropology*, second edition. London: Pluto Press.

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. Attendance and participation in classroom discussions (20%). As a graduate seminar, participation is very important in this course. Your participation grade will be based on the following elements:

- Do you demonstrate that you have completed the assigned readings
- When relevant, do you bring a copy of your classmate’s report to class, and show that you have read it beforehand and reflected on it
- Do you offer thoughtful analyses, reflections, and critiques of the topics discussed in class
- Do your comments build on the comments of other class members
- Are you usually present in class (if you have more than one unexcused absence, your grade will go down)

You are responsible for all materials and announcements presented in class, whether or not you were there. If you miss a day, your first step should be to ask a classmate for their notes. If you have questions after that, you are welcome to ask me.

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. 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 lead the class discussion of that day's topic. You will receive separate instructions for this activity.

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>). 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>. 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/>.

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.**

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.

The course is organized around the following structure:

- Week 1 deals with administrative and introductory issues
- Weeks 2-4 provide you with tools to analyze the rest of the readings
- Weeks 5-14 cover the history of ideas in anthropology
- Week 15 is a review

For the history of ideas in anthropology, 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.

Week	Readings	Lesson
1 Aug 24	N/A	Welcome to the Course
2 Aug 31	Clifford 1983 Narayan 1993	Critical Analysis of Readings
3 Sep 7		NO CLASS – Labor Day
4 Sep 14	Klinenberg 2002a Klinenberg 2002b Klinenberg 2002c	Using Theory to Solve Problems
5 Sep 21	<i>History</i> Ch.2, Ch.3:58-61 Morgan 1973 [1877] Boas 1940	American Foundations
6 Sep 28	<i>History</i> Ch.4:68-80, Ch.7:161-165 Mead 1928 Benedict 1934	Culture and Personality Receive Instructions for Midterm
7 Oct 5		NO CLASS – Christina is at a conference
8 Oct 12	<i>History</i> Ch.3:46-58, 61-67, Ch.4:86-92 Malinowski 1922a and 1922b Radcliffe-Brown 1973 [1952]	Functionalism Midterm Due

9 Oct 19	<i>History</i> Ch.6 Turner 1967 Geertz 1973a and 1973b	Symbolic and Interpretive Anthropology
10 Oct 26	<i>History</i> Ch.7:138-151 Heyman 2013 Wolf 1982	Political Economy
11 Nov 2	<i>History</i> Ch.7:151-155 Lewin 2006 Ortner 2006 [1974] Visweswaran 2004	Feminist Anthropology
12 Nov 9	<i>History</i> Ch.8:176-179 Nader 1972 Said 1978 Feuchtwang 1973	Studying Up and Postcolonial Studies
13 Nov 16	<i>History</i> Ch.8:166-175, 179-191 Foucault 1977 Rabinow 1977	Postmodernism and Poststructural Approaches 1 Receive Instructions for Final Exam
14 Nov 23	<i>History</i> Ch.7:158-161 Bourdieu 1990a and 1990b	Poststructural Approaches 2
15 Nov 30	<i>History</i> Ch.9 Appadurai 1996 Hannerz 2003	Anthropology of Globalization and Review
Finals Dec 7		Final Exam Due

Readings Available through Blackboard Learn

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- WEEK 2** Clifford, James. 1983. On ethnographic authority. *Representations* 1(2):118-146.
Narayan, Kirin. 1993. How native is a “native” anthropologist? *American Anthropologist* 95(3):671-686.
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- WEEK 4** Klinenberg, Eric. 2002. *Heat wave: a social autopsy of disaster in Chicago (Illinois)*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press. The following chapters:
- Prologue: the urban inferno, 1-13
 - Introduction: the city of extremes. 14-36
 - Chapter 2: race, place, and vulnerability, 79-128
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- WEEK 5** Morgan, Lewis Henry. 1973 [1877]. Ancient society. In *High points in anthropology*, ed. Paul Bohannan and Mark Glazer. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 32-60.
Boas, Franz. 1940. *Race, language, culture*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. The following sections:
- The aims of anthropological research, 243-259
 - Introduction to *International Journal of American Linguistics*, 199-210
 - Race and progress, 3-17
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- WEEK 6** 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
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- WEEK 8** 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
- Radcliffe-Brown, A. R. 1973 [1952]. On the concept of function in social science and On social structure. In *High points in anthropology*, ed. Paul Bohannan and Mark Glazer. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 297-316.
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- WEEK 9** Turner, Victor. 1967. Symbols in Ndembu ritual. In *The forest of symbols: aspects of Ndembu ritual*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 19-47.
Geertz, Clifford. 1973a. Thick description: toward an interpretive theory of culture. In *The interpretation of cultures*. New York: Basic Books, 3-30.
Geertz, Clifford. 1973b. Deep play: notes on the Balinese cockfight. In *The interpretation of cultures*. New York: Basic Books, 412-453.
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- WEEK 10** Heyman, Josiah M. 2013. Political economy. In *The handbook of sociocultural anthropology*, ed. James G. Carrier and Deborah B. Gewertz. London: Berg.
Wolf, Eric R. 1982. Introduction. *Europe and the people without history*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 3-23.
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- WEEK 11** Lewin, Ellen. 2006. Introduction. In *Feminist anthropology: a reader*, ed. Ellen Lewin. Malden: Blackwell, 1-38.
Ortner, Sherry B. 2006 [1974]. Is female to male as nature is to culture? In *Feminist anthropology: a reader*, ed. Ellen Lewin. Malden: Blackwell, 72-86.
Visweswaran, Kamala. 2004. Gendered states: rethinking culture as a site of South Asian human rights work. *Human Rights Quarterly* 26:486-511
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- WEEK 12** Nader, Laura. 1972. Up the anthropologist – perspectives gained from studying up. In *Reinventing anthropology*, ed. Dell Hymes. New York: Random House/Vintage, 284-311.
Said, Edward. 1978. Chapter 1: The scope of orientalism (section I). In *Orientalism*. New York: Vintage Books, 31-49.
Feuchtwang, Stephen. 1973. The colonial formation of British social anthropology. In *Anthropology and the colonial encounter*, ed Talal Asad. New York: Humanities Press, 71-100.
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- WEEK 13** Foucault, Michel. 1977. The means of correct training. In *Discipline and punish: the birth of the prison*. Trans. Alan Sheridan. New York: Vintage Books, 135-169.
Rabinow, Paul. 1977. Ali: an insider's outsider. In *Reflections on fieldwork in Morocco*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 31-69.
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- WEEK 14** Bourdieu, Pierre. 1990a. Structures, habitus, practices. In *The logic of practice*. Trans. Richard Nice. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 52-65.
Bourdieu, Pierre. 1990b. Symbolic capital. In *The logic of practice*. Trans. Richard Nice. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 112-121.
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- WEEK 15** Appadurai, Arjun. 1996. Disjuncture and difference in the global cultural economy. In *Modernity at large: cultural dimensions of globalization*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 27-47.
Hannerz, Ulf. 2003. Being there... and there... and there! Reflections on multi-site ethnography. *Ethnography* 4(2):201-216.
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