

Culture and Society

ANTH 2300

Spring 2017

Class Sessions: T/TH 12:30-1:50 PM, Curry 104

Contact Information/Office Hours

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Course Introduction

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 social and cultural practices 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 impactful domains of social activity that human beings find themselves enmeshed within, including (but not limited to) kinship, economies, politics, race, and religions, and we will discuss how these relate to, and vary, according to cultural practices and ideologies. This course takes an explicitly contemporary approach, and throughout the semester we will explore the rapid sociocultural change which has occurred in societies over the past two hundred years under regimes of colonialism, globalization, neoliberalism, and 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 analyze patterns in the diversity of kinship systems, economic activity, political organization, language, understandings of race, and religion across cultures and how these relate to each other and to human existence.
- Students will be able to apply concepts of culture, social power, culture change, and globalization to the contemporary world.
- Students will improve proficiency in written and verbal communication, ethnographic research, and critical analysis of sociocultural phenomena.

Required Texts

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

Assignments

Weekly Engagement Assignment: Each week, students will compose **three** insightful questions or comments which respond to, and show critical thinking about, the week's reading, and submit these through Blackboard. **Due: Tuesdays by Start of Class (unless otherwise noted on course schedule).**

Midterm Exam: On Thursday, 10/19/17, students will take an in-class midterm examination. This exam will include multiple-choice and short answer questions. **Date: 10/19/2017.**

“Culture and You” Paper and Seminar: On Thursday, 11/09/2017, students will submit via Blackboard a double-spaced, 12 point font, typed 5-7 page reflective essay about how their cultural background has affected them in their lives. 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: 11/09/2017 by Start of Class.**

Final Exam: The final exam will take place in class on Thursday, 12/14/2017, from 10:30 AM – 12:30 PM. This exam will include multiple-choice and short answer questions. The final will be cumulative, but heavily weighted towards the latter half of the course. **Date: 12/14/2017, 10:30 AM – 12:30 PM.**

Assignment Due Dates

10/19/2017: Midterm Exam

11/09/2017: Term Paper and Seminar

12/14/2017: Final Exam (10:30 AM – 12:30 PM)

Tuesdays by Start of Class (unless otherwise noted): Weekly Assignment

Grading Scale

A: 900-1000

B: 800-899

C: 700-799

D: 600-699

F: 599 and Below F

Grade Composition

Weekly Assignment (10 responses x 20pts.).....	200 Points
Midterm.....	300 Points
“Culture and You” Paper.....	200 Points
<u>Final Exam.....</u>	<u>300 Points</u>
Total.....	1000 Points

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.”

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

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. **In addition, class is mandatory on 11/09/17.**

Discussion Participation: Students are expected to complete required readings and be prepared to discuss these in class. Discussion will play a central role in this course.

Late Assignment Policy: Submissions of late assignments (the weekly assignments or “Culture and You” paper) will incur a 10% 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, etc. In the case of medical or university-excused emergencies that prevent timely completion of work, you must immediately speak to the professor and provide documentation, **with extensions made at the discretion of the professor.**

Late Test Policy: Quizzes and exams **may not be taken late** unless arranged beforehand with the professor. In the case of unanticipated medical or university-excused emergencies that prevent test taking, you must immediately speak to the professor and provide documentation, **with alternative arrangements made at the discretion of the professor.**

Make up Work: I do not allow make-up work for assignments missed.

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. 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.
- Refraining from engaging in side-conversations.
- Not using electronics (other than note-taking) unless directed by the instructor.

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. 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. If you do not hear back immediately, bear in mind that I have hundreds of students. However, if I have not responded within 24 hours (72 hours on the weekend or holidays), please email me again to make sure that I have received your email.

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/csrr/>. 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. The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You may request accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. For additional information see the Office of Disability Accommodation website at <http://disability.unt.edu/>. You may also contact them by phone at 940.565.4323.

Course Schedule

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Reading</u>	<u>Due Dates</u>
	Humans: Social and Cultural Beings		
08/29, Tuesday	Social Groups		
08/31, Thursday	The Culture Concept	Guest Ch. 2	
	The Anthropological Approach		
09/05, Tuesday	Foundational Perspectives	Guest Ch. 1; Miner “Body Ritual among the Nacirema” (BB)	<i>Weekly Assignment</i>
09/07, Thursday	Ethnographic Research		
	Kinship and Marriage		
09/12, Tuesday	Kinship	Guest Ch. 10	<i>Weekly Assignment</i>
09/14, Thursday	Descent		
09/19, Tuesday	Marriage	Carsten, “The Substance of Kinship” (BB); Goldstein, “When Brothers Share a Wife” (BB)	<i>Weekly Assignment</i>
09/21, Thursday	Marriage (Continued); Sex and Gender		
	The Environment: Subsistence & Sustainability		
09/26, Tuesday	Adaptation; Subsistence Strategies	Guest Ch. 12; Hallett Hunter- Gatherers Reading (BB)	<i>Weekly Assignment</i>
09/28, Thursday	Subsistence (Continued); Global Environmental Crisis		
	Economies: Who Gets What, Why?		
10/03, Tuesday	Production, Distribution	Clark “The Raw and the Rotten: Punk Cuisine” (BB)	<i>Weekly Assignment</i>
10/05, Thursday	Consumption		
	Politics: Control and Resistance		
10/10, Tuesday	Bands, Tribes, Chiefdoms...and States	Guest Ch. 14	<i>Weekly Assignment</i>
10/12, Thursday	Political Control and Resistance		
10/17, Tuesday	Catch-up and Review		
10/19, Thursday	Midterm Exam		Midterm Exam
	Race and Ethnicity		
10/24, Tuesday	Social Construction of Race	Guest Ch. 6	<i>Weekly Assignment</i>
10/26, Thursday	Interpersonal vs. Structural Racism		
	Language and Symbolic Communication		
10/31, Tuesday	Language; Symbolic Communication	Guest Ch. 4; Barford, “Why do Norwegians use ‘Texas’ to Mean ‘Crazy?’” (BB)	<i>Weekly Assignment</i>

11/02, Thursday	Language as Meaning		
11/07, Tuesday	Language as Power	Bauman, "Let Your Words be Few" (BB)	
	Seminar		
11/09, Thursday	<u>Culture and You Seminar (Attendance Mandatory)</u>		<u>Culture and You Paper Due</u>
	Religion		
11/14, Tuesday	Religion; Ritual	Guest Ch. 15; Evans-Pritchard, "The Notion of Witchcraft..." (BB)	<i>Weekly Assignment</i>
11/16, Thursday	Shamanism, Magic		
11/21, Tuesday	World Religions; Contemporary Change	Eck, "Darsan" (BB)	
11/23, Thursday	<u>No Class</u>		
	Applied Anthropology		
11/28, Tuesday	Applied Anthropology	Applied Anthropology Reading (Details in Class)	<i>Weekly Assignment</i>
	Ethnographic Research		
11/30, Thursday	Participant Observation, Ethnographic Interviewing	Guest Chapter 3	
	Conclusions: Globalization and Culture in the 21st Century		
12/05, Tuesday	Colonialism, Capitalism, Nation-states	Sanders "Buses in Bongoland" (BB)	
12/07, Thursday	Conclusions: Globalization and the Ongoing Relevance of Anthropology; Review		
12/14, Thursday	Final Exam (10:30AM-12:30PM)		Final Exam

Note: The schedule and syllabus are subject to change at the instructor's discretion; attend class and regularly check email and Blackboard for changes.