

INTRODUCTION TO CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY

ANTH-053, 4.000 Credits
University of the Pacific
Fall 2009

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Class Meets: TR 10:00 am - 11:50 am, WPC 232
Office Hours: TR 3:30pm - 5pm, 1st Floor, George Wilson Hall

Are all cultures equal? Is gender "natural"? Is race "real"? Cultural anthropologists come up with counter-intuitive yet persuasive analysis of these and many other important contemporary issues. We draw on our studies of societies near and far to critically address issues of great political, practical, and philosophical concern.

Cultural anthropology is one of the "four fields" of anthropology (the others: archaeology, biological or physical anthropology, and linguistic anthropology). Anthropologists study the ways in which human behavior is shaped by its cultural, social, economic, and political contexts. Unlike other social scientists, we do not regard these spheres of collective life as exclusive of each other. Rather, we see culture, society, economy, and politics as interconnected. For example, a given cultural assumption not only helps to order our everyday lives; it may also justify a certain political order, pattern specific kinds of economic exchange, and may guide us as social beings interacting with others in our collective worlds.

Moreover, although anthropologists have traditionally focused on the distant, the seemingly exotic, and the unfamiliar, we have more recently looked at the close, the commonplace, and the familiar. In juxtaposing the two perspectives, we try to provoke critical points of view on issues of both practical and philosophical significance: social and gender inequality, conflict, political organization, diversity, and intolerance. Trying to simultaneously keep in mind the two premises of human diversity and human similarity across different contexts of time and space, we ultimately aim to say something of interest and importance about the existential human condition.

I. COURSE OBJECTIVES

After taking this course, students will be able to:

- Understand patterns of diversity and similarity in human cultures.
- Grasp the role of culture, as well as that of the intersection of culture with politics, economics, and social order, in shaping everyday lives.
- Write in appropriate analytical and scholarly prose.
- Perform basic ethnographic fieldwork and analysis.
- Connect ethnographic fieldwork and anthropological theory.
- Use anthropological concepts and examples to reframe contemporary social issues.

II. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

A. Required Texts

Bestor, Theodore C. (2004), *Tsukiji: The Fish Market at the Center of the World*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Deeb, Lara (2006), *An Enchanted Modern: Gender and Public Piety in Shi'i Lebanon*. Princeton U.P.

Podolefsky, Aaron, Peter J. Brown, and Scott M. Lacy eds. (2009), *Applying Cultural Anthropology: An Introductory Reader*.

When indicated below, a reading will be posted on the course Sakai site. Students should use their Pacific ID and password to log in at <https://pacific.rsmart.com/xsl-portal>. The course site is found under the heading "Anth 053 01 STK." The readings are found at the "Resources" link.

B. Recommended Text

Nordstrom, Carolyn (2007), *Global Outlaws: Crime, Money, and Power in the Contemporary World*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

C. Exams: 150 + 200 = 350 points

There will be two written exams in this course, a midterm and a final. The midterm exam (150 points) will be given on **Thurs, 10/15/09**, and will cover the first half of the course material. The final exam (200 points) will cover the remainder of the course. Exams will consist of short answer and essay questions. All exams must be completed on the day they are scheduled.

D. Reflection Papers: 50 points each X 3 = 150 points

Three 2–3 page, double-spaced reflection papers assigned during the semester. Each reflection paper should discuss how the course material has helped you think about how culture has shaped your life and your own social groups and communities. Guidelines for these reflections will be handed out a week before each assignment is due. You will be graded on your thoughtfulness and engagement with the material as well as your ability to relate it back to your own experiences or observations.

E. Ethnographies: 100 points each X 3 = 300 points

Three ethnographies will be assigned during the course of the semester. For each of these, students will perform fieldwork exercises and analyze their findings in a 4–5 page, double-spaced paper. Specific instructions will be provided for each of these ethnographies.

F. Attendance and Participation: 150 points

Attendance is mandatory. More than two unexcused absences or late arrivals will result in a reduction of the final course grade (1/2 letter grade per incident).

Class Participation will be graded on the basis on your attendance, your verbal participation in small and large group discussions, your evident preparedness for class, and your reading quizzes. Just showing up for class every day will earn you a grade of a "C" for participation. Earning a higher grade requires active engagement with the material of the class.

G. Grading Scale (%)

95 – 100 = A	75 – 78 = C+
92 – 94 = A-	70 – 74 = C
88 – 91 = B+	60 – 69 = D
84 – 87 = B	< 60 = F
79 – 83 = B-	

Grades of "Incomplete":

The current university policy concerning incomplete grades will be followed in this course. Incomplete grades are given only in situations where unexpected emergencies prevent a student from completing the course and the remaining work can be completed the next semester. Your instructor is the final authority on whether you qualify for an incomplete. Incomplete work must be finished by the end of the subsequent semester or the "I" will automatically be recorded as an "F" on your transcript.

III. RULES

1. In-class work cannot be made up. No late assignments will be accepted without a valid physician's note, obituary notice, or official notification from the Athletic Department (or other campus office).
2. Use of wireless devices is prohibited during all class meetings and exams.
3. All exams must be completed on the day scheduled. Should exceptional circumstances prevent this, it is **YOUR** responsibility to notify me **IN ADVANCE** to make appropriate arrangements.
4. Copies of student work may be retained to assess how the learning objectives of the course are being met.
5. Revisions to this syllabus will be announced in class and will take precedence over this document.

A. Honor Code:

The University Honor Code is a crucial guarantee of academic integrity. It is a violation of the Honor Code to submit all or part of someone else's work or ideas as your own. If you violate the Honor Code, you will receive zero credit for the work. Violations of the Honor Code usually result in failure of the course. All Honor Code violations will also be reported to University administration, which may result in expulsion from the University. This expulsion would then appear on your UOP transcript. A complete statement of the Honor Code may be found in the Student Handbook, *Tiger Lore*, beginning on p. 43.

B. Accommodations for students with disabilities

In compliance with the University policy and equal access laws, I am available to discuss appropriate academic accommodations that may be required for student with disabilities. Requests for academic accommodations are to

be made during the first three weeks of the semester, except for unusual circumstances, so arrangements can be made. Students are encouraged to register with Student Disability Services to verify their eligibility for appropriate accommodations.

Students with Learning Disabilities: If you are registered with the Educational Resource Center as having a learning disability, you may decide to take advantage of accommodations the University can provide. To preserve student confidentiality, please discuss such accommodations with the instructor.

The Policy Manual can be found at <http://web.pacific.edu/Documents/school-education/acrobat/PolicyManualforStudentswithDisabilities.pdf>.

"The University of the Pacific is committed to providing access for qualified students, faculty, staff, and visitors to University programs. This non-discrimination policy applies to all qualified applicants or students who seek to or do participate in employment, in access to facilities, student programs, activities and services." The Educational Resource Center offers a variety of services for Pacific students with disabilities. These services may include, but are not limited to, extended time for completing exams, alternative testing procedures, note takers, and transportation to and from classes.

IV. COURSE OUTLINE:

Week 1: Introduction

Nanda + Warms, "Anthropology and Human Diversity," pp. 2–25 of Nanda and Warms (2007), *Cultural Anthropology* (Sakai site)

PBL Introduction + Miner, Bower (Chapters 1–2)

Week 2: Fieldwork and Ethnography

Tu: Nanda + Warms, "Doing Culural Anthropology," pp. 58–82 of *Cultural Anthropology* (Sakai); PBL Sterk (Chapter 3)

Th: PBL Lee (Chapter 8); Clifford Geertz (1973) "Thick Description: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture" (Sakai)

9/3/09: Ethnography #1 Assigned

LABOR DAY HOLIDAY = 9/7/09

Week 3: Cultural Relativism

Tu: Schultz + Lavenda, "Culture and the Human Condition," pp. 17–39 of Schultz and Lavenda (2009), *Cultural Anthropology: A Perspective on the Human Condition* (Sakai); PBL Bohannan (Chapter 4)

Th: PBL Abu-Lughod (Chapter 19), Kratz (Chapter 37)

Week 4: Language and Communication

Tu: Carol R. and Melvin Ember, "Language and Communication," pp. 43–67 of Ember and Ember (2009), *Human Culture: Highlights from Anthropology* (Sakai)

PBL 5 (Basso)

Th: Benjamin Lee Whorf (1936), "The Relation of Habitual Thought and Behavior to Language," in *Language, Thought and Reality*, pp. 134-159 (Sakai)

David S. Thomson (2006), "The Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis: Worlds Shaped by Words," in J. Spradley and D. W. McCurdy, eds., *Conformity and Conflict: Readings in Cultural Anthropology*, pp. 63-75 (Sakai)

11/19/09: Reflection #3 due

Week 5: Economics + Exchange

9/15/09: Reflection #1 due

Tu: Scultz and Lavenda, "Making a Living," pp. 258-285 of Schultz and Lavedna, *Cultural Anthropology* (Sakai)

Thu: PBL Goldstein (Chapter 14), Anderson (Chapter 24), Smith (Chapter 33)

Week 6: Gender and Sexuality

Tu: Nanda + Warms, "Gender," pp. 258-283 of Nanda and Warms *Cultural Anthropology* (Sakai)

Thu: PBL Stone, Roscoe, (Chapters 17, 18)

Deeb, *Enchanted Modern*, "Introduction"

Week 7: Worldview + Religion 1

Tu: Schultz and Lavenda, "Worldview," pp. 198-229

Tu/Th: L. Deeb, *Enchanted Modern*, pp. 99-128.

10/6/09: Ethnography #1 due; Ethnography #2 assigned

10/9/09 = FALL STUDENT BREAK

Week 8: Religion 2; Urban Life

Tu: PBL Sois (Chapter 29); Deeb, *Enchanted Modern*, pp. 42–66

Thu: Theodore Bestor, *Tsukiji*, pp. 1–49.

****Thurs. 10/15/09 = MIDTERM****

Week 9 Ethnographic Case I: Religious Practice in Contemporary Beirut

Tu: Deeb, pp. 129–164

Th: Deeb, pp. 165–219

10/22/09: Reflection #2 due

Week 10: Aesthetics, Taste, Manners

Tu: PBL Cooper, Urla/Swedlund (Chapters 9, 20)

Thu: Bestor, *Tsukiji*, pp. 126–176

Week 11: Ethnographic Case II: Aesthetics and Marketing in Tokyo

Tu: Bestor, *Tsukiji*, pp. 91–125

Thu: Bestor, pp. 177–213

11/5/09: Ethnography #2 due; Ethnography #3 assigned

Week 12: Ethnographic Case II, continued

Bestor, *Tsukiji*, pp.245–312

Week 14: Race and Ethnicity

Tu: PBL 11–12 (Diamond, McIntosh)

Frantz Boas (1940), "Changes in Bodily Form of Descendants of Immigrants," in F. Boas, *Race, Language, and Culture*, pp. 60–75. (Sakai)

THANKGIVING HOLIDAY = 11/25–11/27/09

12/3/09: Ethnography #3 due

Week 15: Globalization and Cultural Change

PBL Diamond (Chapter 7), Bodley (Chapter 38), Smith (Chapter 36)

FINAL EXAM PERIOD = 12/14–12/18/09