

**AN 350: CULTURES OF OCEANIA****Instructor:** Dr. Chris Howard**Contact:** [christopher.howard@chaminade.edu](mailto:christopher.howard@chaminade.edu)**Course Description**

This course is designed to provide an introduction to the traditional and contemporary cultures of the island Pacific. The major emphasis will be on the Oceanic regions of Melanesia, Polynesia and Micronesia, though we will also examine trans-Pacific issues, including climate change, migration and sports. Since its European 'discovery', the Pacific has been a contradiction of images to the West and a backwater of important events – a place with beautiful people, palm trees, sparkling sand and water, a veritable Eden, yet also a place of dark disease-infested jungle and savage cannibals. These stereotypic images tend to clash both with traditional and modern realities, which are that: 1) the Pacific Ocean is *the* major undeveloped resource base left on the planet, and 2) Oceania contains the majority of the world's remaining colonial possessions. The region has made major moves towards both independence and a developing sense of regional and ethnic identity, yet is plagued by problems of transportation costs, small size, political unrest, economic dependency, ethnic violence and major health care issues. An informed understanding of this area should be a prerequisite for living in Hawai'i or any other area having contact with Oceania.

**Required texts**

Besnier, Niko (2011). *On the Edge of the Global: Modern anxieties in a Pacific island nation*. Palo Alto: Stanford University Press.

Throop, Jason C. (2010). *Suffering and Sentiment: Exploring the vicissitudes of experience and pain in Yap*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Other required readings and videos will be posted in the Modules section on Canvas.

**AN350 Catalog Description:** Introduction to native cultures of Polynesia, Melanesia, Micronesia and Australia. Emphasis on migration, differences in social organization, land tenure, and effects of contact with Western society. Offered annually.

### **General Course Objectives**

1. To develop an understanding and awareness of the island Pacific and the peoples that inhabit it.
2. To utilize anthropological theories, concepts and research techniques to analyze present situations, and predict future problems and opportunities in the region along with possible solutions.

**Specific Course Objectives:** During the semester, you will develop a general understanding of the following concepts and their application in Oceania:

- Implications of island environments
- Oceanic Prehistory and human settlement
- European impacts and colonialism in Oceania
- National and ethnic identity in Oceania
- Ritual, symbolism and ancestors in Oceania
- Migration and remittances in Oceania
- Patterns of change and affiliation in the Pacific

### **Course Learning Outcomes**

1. To develop a basic level of understanding and awareness of the island Pacific and the peoples who inhabit it.
2. To develop a basic awareness of issues of cultural/ethnic identity in relation to global change.

### **Behavioral Science Division Student Learning Outcomes**

1. Ability to apply the scientific method to the study of human behavior in various environmental contexts.
2. An understanding of human behavior relative to various environmental contexts.
3. An understanding of human behavior relative to adapting to various changing environmental contexts.

This course meets the following goals for the **Behavioral Sciences Program**:

1. Appreciating the diversity of peoples and cultures – other ways of seeing and being in the world
2. Understanding how social forces shape individual perceptions and behaviors
3. Understanding the dynamic relationship between the Self and the Group.

The **Marianist Values of Chaminade University**, which we strive to incorporate into our classes are:

1. Educate in formation of faith
2. Provide an integral quality education
3. Educate in family spirit

4. Educate for service, justice and peace
5. Educate for adaptation and change

### Course format

The course is divided into 5 modules, each of which lasts three weeks. The modules cover different topics and regions (Melanesia, Polynesia, Micronesia). They are designed to build upon one another, moving towards a comprehensive view of Oceania. You will access readings, maps, videos, web links and other learning materials within the modules section of Canvas. There will be weekly announcements that provide an overview of tasks to complete and learning aims.

As this is an entirely online course, there will be an emphasis on self-regulated learning, defined as the conscious planning, monitoring, evaluation, and ultimately control of one's learning in order to maximize it. The lecturer will post regular announcements, discussion questions and assignment guidelines. You will be responsible for putting 10-12 hours a week of work into AN350. The lecturer will be available for email contact, though not on a 24/7 basis.

### Course grading

1. **Discussions:** During each module, there will be Discussions on Canvas that you will be responsible for contributing to and learning from. Thoughtful responses that engage directly with the topics, course and use anthropological concepts will be rewarded full credit. You should also respond directly to your classmates posts in order to generate a productive discussion. Following proper netiquette, posts must be constructive and respectful. This component will be worth 5% of your course grade, or 1% per module.
2. **Reading Summaries:** You will submit summaries and notes for the readings for each module. These should include a short summary of what the reading covers, definitions and examples of key concepts and theories encountered, significant quotes, the author's central argument/thesis and other important findings. Taking systematic notes will help you on the module quizzes, the final exam, and will enhance your long-term memory of the material. Uploading either typed notes or a photo/scan of handwritten notes is fine. This component will be worth 10% of your course grade, or 2% per module.
3. **Module quizzes:** In the third week of each module there will be a quiz on the material covered (5 in total). These are designed to promote your memory retention and show you the effectiveness of your learning habits and strategies. The format will be a mix of multiple choice, true/false and short answer questions. The quizzes will be worth 10% each, accounting for 50% of your total grade.
4. **Research Paper:** You will write a research paper based on your choice of several topics or your own proposed topic. In order to write the paper, you will draw upon both course materials and collect your own. As per scientific writing, you will need to make an argument, and support it using evidence, concepts and theories, sound logic and argumentation. Topics and writing guidelines will be posted by your lecturer. The word count is 1500. The paper will be worth 15% of your overall grade and will be due April 23<sup>rd</sup>.

5. **Final Exam:** A cumulative final exam will be given at the end of the semester. Drawing upon the knowledge you have gained across the modules, you will complete a number of multiple choice, true/false and short essay questions. This will be worth 20% of your overall grade.

#### Grade Breakdown

Discussion participation (5)	5%
Reading summaries (5)	10%
Research Paper	15%
Final Exam	20%
Module quizzes (5)	50%
A=90-100, B=80-89, C=70-79, D=60-69, F= -60	

#### AN 350 Course Schedule, Spring 2017

MODULE	DATES	TOPICS COVERED	ASSIGNMENTS
1.1	Jan. 17-22	Island environments: geology and geography, human migration	
1.2	Jan. 23-29	Human settlement and ecological impacts in the Pacific	
1.3	Jan. 30-Feb. 5	Cultural identity, tradition, Pacific Studies	Module 1 quiz, Reading summary
2.1	Feb. 6-12	Tradition and change in Melanesia I	
2.2	Feb. 13-19	Tradition and change in Melanesia II	
2.3	Feb. 20-26	Tradition and change in Melanesia III	Module 2 quiz Reading summary
3.1	Feb. 27-March 5	Tradition and change in Polynesia I	
3.2	March 6-12	Tradition and change in Polynesia II	
3.3	March 13-19	Tradition and change in Polynesia III	Module 3 quiz Reading summary
	March 20-26	Spring Break	
4.1	Mar 27-April 2	Tradition and change in Micronesia I	

4.2	April 3-9	Tradition and change in Micronesia II	
4.3	April 10-16	Tradition and change in Micronesia III	Module 4 quiz Reading summary
5.1	April 17-23	Pacific island futures: climate change and migration	<b>Research Paper due</b>
5.2	April 24-30	Global mobility and sports	
5.3	May 1-7	Pacific identity and transnational frontiers	Module 5 quiz Reading summary
			<b>Final exam May 10<sup>th</sup></b>

### Scientific method definitions

The METHODS OF SCIENCE are tools that we use to obtain knowledge about phenomena.

The SCIENTIFIC METHOD is a set of assumptions and rules about collecting and evaluating data. The explicitly stated assumptions and rules enable a standard, systematic method of investigation that is designed to reduce bias as much as possible. Central to the scientific method is the collection of data, which allows investigators to put their ideas to an empirical test, outside of or apart from their personal biases. In essence, stripped of all its glamour, scientific inquiry is nothing more THAN A WAY OF LIMITING FALSE CONCLUSIONS ABOUT PHENOMENA. Knowledge of which the credibility of a profession is based must be objective and verifiable (testable) rather than subjective and untestable.

SCIENCE is a mode of controlled inquiry to develop an objective, effective, and credible way of knowing. The assumptions one makes regarding the basic qualities of human nature (that is, cognitive, affective, behavioral, and physiological processes) affect how one conceptualizes human behavior.

The two basic functions of scientific approach are 1) advance knowledge, to make discoveries, and to learn facts in order to improve some aspect of the world, and 2) to establish relations among events, develop theories, and this helps professionals to make predictions of future events.

A THEORY is a large body of interconnected propositions about how some portion of the world operates; a HYPOTHESIS is a smaller body of propositions. HYPOTHESES are smaller versions of theories. Some are derived or born from theories. Others begin as researchers' hunches and develop into theories.

The PHILOSOPHY OF SCIENCE decrees we can only falsify, not verify (prove), theories because we can never be sure that any given theory provides the best explanation for a set of observations.

THEORIES are not themselves directly proved or disproved by research. Even HYPOTHESES cannot be proved or disproved directly. Rather, research may either support or fail to support a particular hypothesis derived from a theory.

SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH has four general goals: (1) to describe behavior, (2) to predict behavior, (3) to determine the causes of behavior, and (4) to understand or explain behavior. In order to verify the reliability and validity of scientific research it is important to replicate the results. It is the preponderance of evidence that establishes/supports the theory.

### **Declaration of respect and dignity**

Chaminade University recognizes *the inherent dignity of all individuals and promotes respect for all people*. Sexual misconduct will NOT be tolerated at Chaminade University. If you have been the victim of sexual misconduct, we encourage you to report this matter promptly. As a faculty member, I am interested in promoting a safe and healthy environment, and should I learn of any sexual misconduct, I must report the matter to the Title IX Coordinator. Should you want to report to a confidential source you may contact Dr. June Yasuhara at the Chaminade Counseling Center. Tel. (808) 735-4845, Email: [j.yasuhara@chaminade.edu](mailto:j.yasuhara@chaminade.edu)