

Inst.: Richard Bordner

Off. Hrs.: MWF 10-11, TR 9:30-12 or by app't.

Phone: 739-4644(off.), 942-3563(hm)

Texts: Robbins, Richard 1997 (2nd ed.). Cultural Anthropology. Itasca: Peacock.

Course Description: This course is intended to provide an introduction to cultural anthropology.

Anthropology is a very broad field - the systematic study of human beings. It aspires to describe and explain the similarities and differences between human groups and the stability, diversity and change within groups.

Anthropologists are interested in all peoples, past and present.

Specifically this course is an introduction to what anthropologists have learned and how they study contemporary cultures. Culture is presented as a complex and dynamic mechanism by which human beings solve a variety of basic problems posed by existence.

Culture is defined as a system of concepts, ideas, values, attitudes and beliefs which are learned and shared within a human group. It is used to make things, to generate behaviors and interpret experience. It is a way of thinking about and looking at the world. Culture is symbolic and ideational. It is integrative - all parts are interrelated and constantly adjusting to one another. It is also adaptive, changing in response to circumstances.

Traditional cultural anthropology focused on "primitive societies" and less technologically-advanced groups. But in the last 50 years there has been a growing recognition that anthropology must devote more energy to the study of dominant cultures such as Japan and the United States. Thus while we will still follow the traditional orientation of the discipline in areas of the class, we will also be examining groups such as Americans from an anthropological perspective.

Course Objectives: 1) To develop a greater awareness of the role of culture in human experience. Specifically to help each of us to gain greater awareness of our own implicit assumptions, beliefs and values with the goal of developing a greater and more sympathetic appreciation of alternative ways of looking at and relating to the world. To limit Ethnocentrism

2) To increase our understanding of similarities and differences between human groups, of how and why cultures and societies change in different ways under different conditions. To provide a basic theoretical perspective for thinking about socio-cultural change.

3) To provoke intellectual curiosity which will lead to a lifelong interest in the basic questions raised by anthropology.

To provide better questions, rather than a set of simplistic and useless pseudo-answers.

Modes of Instruction: 1) Lectures and discussions: The lectures will supplement but NOT repeat the material covered in the texts. Both lectures and textual materials will be on the exams, and you are responsible for BOTH. Attendance is mandatory if you want to pass the class.

2) Simulations: We will be doing several simulations this semester. You will be working in small groups and all members are expected to contribute their equal share to the group effort. These simulations have proved in the past to be very useful learning tools to get across sophisticated concepts, so your active participation is required. Attendance will be mandatory.

3) Films: Films will be shown during the semester. You will be responsible for viewing them - attendance is mandatory and will be taken.

4) Reaction papers: in lieu of doing "real" fieldwork we will be getting into a number of situations during the semester where I will expect you to look at the world through with an anthropologist's perspective. These situations will include some fieldtrips and at least one film.

Grading:

- 1) **Exams:** There will be 3 exams in this class. All will consist of a combination of objective and short essay questions. The 3 exams will count for 70% of your course grade
- 2) **Research Paper:** You will have to complete a research paper on a topic of your choice based on the parameters defined in the FN 102F1 class. It must be approved by me or you may suffer the consequences. It will be 10 pages in length and will count for 20% of the course grade.
- 3) **Reaction papers:** You will have to complete 3 reaction papers based on situations we get into during the semester. . You will be required to write a 2-4 page paper on your reactions to part of the situation. I will give you the issues or topics for the paper prior to the situation so you won't get jammed up trying to figure out what to write about. Remember a reaction paper is your opinion on a topic, not a research paper. The reaction papers are worth a total of 20% of your course grade.
- 3) **Class participation/ Attendance:** In introductory courses to stay awake and interested requires a little effort, so participation is necessary both to understand the material and stay conscious. This is also part of the mandate for the Freshman Integrated Course. Various projects, such as the simulations also require not only your physical attendance but also some mental effort. This will count for 10% of your course grade.

THERE IS NO POSSIBILITY OF EXTRA-CREDIT WORK IN THIS CLASS

Grade Weight: Exams(3).....60%

Reaction papers 10%

Part/Attend 10%

Research Paper 0%

A= 90-100 T)=60-69

B= 80-89 F= -60

C= 70-79

Jan. 12: Introduction

Ass: **Read** R. ch. 1

14: What is **Anthropology**--**Participant Observation** and "doing anthropology"

19: What is Culture?

21: Groups, ethnicity and **segregation**

26: Studying **group** behavior and the "dance of communication"

Ass: Read R. Ch.

28: Value of conservatism, value of **change**, Production and **labor**

Feb. 2: Political and economic control-Colonial and Post-colonial

Ass: **Read** R. ch. 3

4: Power and **control**—**religion** and politics

9: **Perception** and reality---the role of **Religion**

11: **Language** and perception

16: Communication: sociolinguistics and **nonverbal** communication / Review for EXAM T

18: **EXAM T**

Ass: Read R. ch. 4

23: Kinship and descent

25: Who are kin and why?

March 2: **Marriage** and **family**

Ass: Read R. ch. 5

4: Individualism and the **group**

9: The concept of "self" and **personality**

Ass: **Read** R. ch. 6

11: **Social** Stratification

16: Rank, Class, Caste / **Review** for EXAM TT

18: EXAM IT

Ass: **Read** R. ch. 7

22-26: Spring Recess

30: Competition and conflict

April 1: Conflict resolution

6: **Religious systems** and **conflict**

Ass: Read R. ch. 8

8: **Diversity** as rhetoric **vs.** reality

13: **Religion** as a **barrier** to **diversity**, as a support

Ass: **Read** ch. 9

15: **Diversity** and ethnic **identity**

20: 'High culture', the Arts and "good **taste**"

22: Cultural identity on a **shrinking** planet, consumption and **needs**—**Post-colonialism** revisited

29: World Culture and **compatibility** with ethnic identity / Review for EX AM TT / Research Paper **Due**

May 5: FRAM TIT, 12:45