

Phy SE

# Welcome to AN200, <sup>9C</sup>Cultural Anthropology!

Spring Accelerated Term 1999

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## TEXT

Robbins, Richard H.(1997) Cultural Anthropology: a Problem-Based Approach. Itasca, IL: Peacock.[2nd.ed.]

## SUMMARY COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course introduces the "stuff" of cultural anthropology. That is, what do cultural anthropologists study and how do they go about investigating cultures in a systematic manner? Do anthropologists only study strange, "exotic" cultures -- or can we learn from studying our own culture? What do anthropologists mean when they talk about "culture"?

Because this is an introductory course, the emphasis will be on providing you with a thorough grounding in anthropological terminology, concepts and methods. These basics will be reinforced and illustrated in several ways:

1. Through case studies taken from many different cultures.
2. By giving you a range of the best sites on the web that feature anthropological topics.
3. Through "real-world" exercises in anthropological fieldwork, where you become the anthropologist.
- 4.

In addition to mastering fundamental concepts, several major themes are woven throughout the course: first, what contribution can anthropologists make to the study of human cultures; and second, what are some of the methodological and ethical problems facing anthropologists as they pursue their investigations of "other people"?

## OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this class is to:

- provide students with a basic understanding of cultural anthropology
- foster an appreciation of not only cultural diversity but also the unifying, universal characteristics that all human groups share;
- encourage critical thinking, especially in evaluating the validity of anthropological methods and investigations;
- suggest that you question [yourself.is](#) the way "my culture" does things the "only way"?
- give you hands-on experience in conducting anthropological research.

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING

Students are responsible for reading and understanding the syllabus and for meeting deadlines for readings and written assignments. If you do not understand the syllabus, please contact me at [adixon@mailcity.com](mailto:adixon@mailcity.com) or [altamaha@fptoday.com](mailto:altamaha@fptoday.com) as soon as possible.

### Your final grade is based on these 5 things :

1.	Ethnographic exercises (2)	40%
2.	Fieldwork Exercise	10%
3.	Web Board Discussion Participation 8 sessions @ 2 pts. per session	15%
4.	Online Quizzes (2 at 10 pts. each)	20%
5.	Final Exam	15%

### Deadlines:

Because this course is part of an accelerated 10-week session, it is imperative that you keep up with readings and deadlines. The amount of work involved in this course is equivalent to a full semester course. This requires self-motivation and self-discipline on your part.

I will not accept late assignments, nor will I allow make-up assignments unless you can provide documented reasons for missing an assignment. It is your responsibility to contact me as soon as possible to inform me that you will miss an assignment, and to arrange to turn in any missed work.

### Web Proficiency:

Many students have taken online courses before, but even if you have not, I expect you to know how to use the internet, to send e-mail, and using the WebBoard program. There are online tutorials available for all of these applications.

### Web Board Participation:

Note that WebBoard participation is 15% of your grade. This online course is structured so that students will learn as much from each other's contribution as they will from the book, assignments, and my guidance.

There are a series of weekly discussion groups on our WebBoard focused on problems from our text book **and/or** the ethnographic exercises. Discussions open on the **first** day of that week (Sunday) and close the following Saturday. You must contribute to each discussion in order to earn points. Full points are awarded for answers that reflect the fact that you have read and thought about your assigned readings in the text and other sources. I expect students to "carry" the discussion, although I will moderate when necessary.

### E-Mail

An e-mail directory of students in the class is provided so that students can correspond. It is essential that you let us know if your e-mail address changes during the course. Check your e-mail and the WebBoard regularly.

### Ethnographic Exercises

An ethnographic exercise is the product of your reading, digesting, and explaining **IN YOUR OWN WORDS** some body of literature on a particular culture or subculture. (For more detailed instructions, see the papers section). Each exercise should be no less than 3 but no more than 5 typewritten pages (double-spaced).

Sources must be fully and completely documented, and ethnographic exercise papers will be posted on the course web page for other students to read, and you will be responsible for this material on the quizzes and final.

#### **A - Characteristics of an "A" caliber paper include:**

- A clear indication that the student has read and understands materials related to the assignment, including relevant text chapters and reference sources.
- Appropriate examples taken from the relevant chapters and additional references that are used to illustrate the student's arguments. Proper use and evaluation of examples demonstrates analytical ability.
- Very few grammatical or spelling errors, and written in an academic manner (see writing tips on course web page).
- Student provides full citations for all sources used.

#### **B - Characteristics of a "B" caliber paper include:**

- Student relies primarily on describing/summarizing the reading, rather than analysis.
- Does not use sufficient examples and/or outside research to support points.
- Some grammatical/spelling errors.
- Written in professional academic style, including full citations.

#### **C- Characteristics of a "C" caliber paper include:**

- Paper is primarily descriptive, rather than analytical.
- Student fails to draw in outside research and examples to bolster his argument.
- Significant number of grammatical/spelling errors.
- Tone of paper is informal rather than academic.

#### **D/F- Characteristics of a "D" or "F" caliber paper include:**

- Fails to meet the minimum requirements outlined above.
- Sloppily written, with a clear lack of time and effort put into the work.

**NOTE:** Failure to provide full citations for any work that is not your own, whether intentional or unintentional (i.e. plagiarism) will result in an automatic "F" for the whole course, as well as other possible academic penalties.

### Fieldwork Exercises

At some point in the semester, take several hours of your time and observe some cultural event. It could be a baby luau, a football game, people relaxing in the park - any kind of event where you can observe human behavior (legally and unobtrusively). Take notes regarding what you saw and did, and write a 3-5 page paper, with your notes appended. It's not as easy as it sounds!

### Personal Grading Sheet

Each student will be assigned their own confidential web page (URL will be sent to you after beginning of class) where you may track your progress throughout the course.

### WEEKLY READING ASSIGNMENTS

**\*\*** These are only the assigned readings from your textbook. At the same time, you should be reading the resources for your ethnographic exercises.

<b>DATES &amp; TOPIC</b>	<b>FOCUS</b>	<b>ROBBINS</b>
<b>5-10 April. Wk 1</b>	<b>ANTHROPOLOGY</b> What do anthropologists study?	Chap. 1
<b>12-17 April Wk 2</b>	<b>CULTURE</b> What is culture? Why do cultures differ?	Chap. 1
<b>19-24 April. Wk 3</b>	<b>CULTURE CHANGE</b> Why and how do cultures change?	Chap. 2
<b>26 Apr.-1 May Wk 4</b>	<b>WORLDVIEW</b> Why do cultures see "reality" so differently?	Chap. 3
<b>3-8 May Wk. 5</b>	<b>FAMILY &amp; KINSHIP</b> Who is our family? What makes a "family" in different cultures?	Chap. 4
<b>10-15 May Wk. 6</b>	<b>IDENTITY</b> How do you learn to be a member of your society?	Chap. 5
<b>17-22 May Wk. 7</b>	<b>SOCIAL HIERARCHY</b> Is everyone in your society equal? Why does social inequality exist?	Chap. 6
<b>24-29 May Wk. 8</b>	<b>VIOLENT CONFLICT</b> Why do societies resort to violence? Is conflict inevitable?	Chap. 7
<b>31 May-5 June Wk.9</b>	<b>CULTURAL DIVERSITY IN TODAY'S WORLD</b> Can't we all just get along? Can anthropology help?	Chap. 8
<b>7-12 June Wk. 10</b>	<b>STUDY AND REVIEW</b>	

Review text readings and the student ethnographies/fieldwork exercises on the course website.

**FINAL EXAM:** Place and time to be announced.

Grades:

Grading will be determined as set forth in the Chaminade University General Catalog, as follows:

<b>A</b>	<b>Outstanding scholarship and an unusual degree of intellectual initiative</b>	<b>(90% or better)</b>
<b>B</b>	<b>Superior work done in a consistent and intellectual manner</b>	<b>(80-89%)</b>
<b>C</b>	<b>Average work; indicating a competent grasp of the subject matter</b>	<b>(70-79%)</b>
<b>D</b>	<b>Inferior work of the lowest passing grade; it is not satisfactory for fulfillment of prerequisite coursework.</b>	<b>(60-69%)</b>
<b>F</b>	<b>Failure to grasp even the minimum subject matter; no credit given</b>	<b>(59% &amp; below)</b>

**Incompletes:** As a rule, I do not give incompletes unless there is a documented, compelling reason.

**QUIZ & ASSIGNMENT DUE DATES**

Dates here are the final due dates; however, you may turn in assignments any day before these final due dates. All work should be sent by midnight of the due date. Quizzes will be posted 1 week in advance.

<b>Ethnographic Exercise #1</b>	<b>30 April (turn in topic &amp; initial references by 19 April)</b>
<b>Ethnographic Exercise #2</b>	<b>21 May</b>
<b>Quiz #1</b>	<b>4 May</b>
<b>Quiz #2</b>	<b>18 May</b>
<b>Fieldwork Exercise</b>	<b>1 June</b>