Introduction to Cultural Anthropology

ANT 2410
Section 7942
Tuesdays 8-9th periods
Thursdays 9th period
CSE A101

Instructor              Teaching Assistant

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6-7th periods & by appointment

Introduction
This course is an introduction to Cultural Anthropology, a subdiscipline of Anthropology that focuses on the study human cultural systems. Although Cultural Anthropology is a social science and therefore similar to the other social sciences (psychology, sociology, political science, and economics, among others), cultural anthropology is significantly different from the other social sciences both in terms of the scope of what cultural anthropology studies and in terms of how cultural anthropologists go about doing it. During this semester, we will explore the unique approach cultural anthropologists use to study their subject while also examining how and why societies around the world differ in such important and fascinating ways. Additionally, we will focus on how globalization and world systems threaten and undermine cultural systems (including our own), why globalization is a significant problem for humanity, and how anthropological approaches can help solve contemporary global problems.

Textbook and Reading Requirements
There are two textbooks for this course: Cultural Anthropology (12th ed), by Ember, Ember, and Peregrine, and Conformity and Conflict (12th ed), by Spradley and McMurdy. Both are required. Ember et al. is our basic introduction to cultural anthropology, and so pays attention to anthropological concepts as they apply to the study of culture. Spradley and McMurdy is a reader that provides case studies and examples of the concepts covered in the primary text.
Used copies of these texts can be had at significant savings. However, while Ember et al.’s 12th edition may not be significantly different from previous editions, Spradley and McMurdy does change in content; earlier editions may include significantly different chapters or organization.

You will also see variations on the text offered at the bookstores. In most cases, you should find the text all by itself, but you might see brand-new textbooks packaged as a “course pack”. All that is required for this course is the textbook. Some of you may find it helpful to purchase a copy of Ember et al. with additional materials, but the additional expense is significant. The presence of the extra material is designed to increase the cost of the textbook while discouraging you from buying a used copy.

You are expected to complete reading assignments prior to the class day for which they were assigned; lectures often focus on material in the textbooks and, while this is not rocket science per se, understanding bifurcate merging kinship systems will be much easier if you have read the material beforehand.

Lecture notes and Powerpoint slides will not be posted online.

Exams and Grading

Exams: There will be three in-class exams based on lecture material and our main textbook. These exams will consist of a combination of multiple choice, true/false, and other similar type questions. Exams will be taken via the Blackboard portal rather than in-class. On exam days, we will simply not have a regular class meeting. Furthermore, exam periods on Blackboard will be set for a 24 hour window; you may begin your exam at any point during that window. However, these exams are timed, once you begin the exam, you will have 75 minutes to complete the exam.

The 75 minute rule is non-negotiable; the exams are meant to be closed-book; students who study and know the material will be able to complete the exam within the parameters of the time constraints.

Because of the arrangements for exams, it is unlikely a student will require a make-up exam. In any event, make-up exams will only be given under special circumstances and are, incidentally, much more difficult (make-ups are in essay format). To arrange a make-up exam, you must contact me before the exam date. You must also have a legitimate reason for missing an exam. As long as you make arrangements on or before the day the exam is scheduled and have a legitimate excuse you will be allowed to take a make-up exam. Requests for a make-up exam days or weeks after the fact will not be granted. The final exam is not cumulative. I will post study guides before each exam. Note the day and time of the final exam (listed below) before making arrangements to leave town for Spring Break.

Quizzes: In addition to the exams, we will also administer 10 quizzes. Quizzes will also be managed and executed through Blackboard. Their purpose is to assess your comprehension of
the material that we are currently covering in class and to encourage you to keep up with the reading assignments. Makeups on quizzes are not granted.

It is important to note here that the quizzes are not merely a form of academic torture: the questions on the quizzes are excellent indicators of the kinds of questions you will see on the exams.

**Grades:** Final grades are based on points accumulated during the semester. Points will be awarded as follows:

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<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exams</td>
<td>60 pts each (total 180)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quizzes</td>
<td>10 pts each (total 100)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>280 points</strong></td>
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Final grades will be assigned based on points accumulated as compared to the class average. This means that I will not assign grades until the end of the semester, when I apply a curve to the entire class. For reference purposes, students who want to earn an A for the course will likely need 252 points, (which is 90% of 280). I may lower this bar, but I will never raise it.

There is no extra credit offered for this course, so please do not ask.

**Policies and Procedures**

**Attendance:** We will not be taking attendance in this course, our philosophy in this is that you are technically grown-ups, so it’s your choice to come or not. Furthermore, if you don’t want to be in class, we don’t want you here, either. However, that said: UF policy is that students will attend all class meetings. It is also worth noting that class attendance is highly correlated with performance on exams and quizzes. Students who do not attend class earn significantly lower grades than students who do. Finally, our attendance policy highlights our approach to this class: this is your education, not ours, and you are responsible for it. We are here to assist you in learning the material covered in this course, but you determine your own success here.

**Classroom Behavior:** We recognize that UF students are, for the most part, conscientious and hard-working, but that there are a few in every crowd. For those few, we would remind you that being in class is an indication that you are here to learn something about anthropology. We expect that cell phones will be turned off during the lecture, that you will pay attention to the lecture, and that you will remain seated during the lecture. Passing notes, chatting with your neighbors, reading the newspaper, doing your math homework, getting up to get a drink of water, running to the potty, or leaving early are distracting to and disrespectful of everyone in the class. If you do need to leave early, please sit in a location where your movement will cause the least disruption. If you need to chat with your neighbor, please wait until after class.
**Cheating**: As a UF student you are expected to display exemplary behavior with regard to all academic endeavors. This means you are not allowed to cheat, lie, steal, or write bad checks. Aside from cheating being bad for your karma, students caught cheating will fail the course, and the incident will be forwarded to Student Judicial Affairs for further disciplinary action. What constitutes cheating? We suspect you already know that copying from another on a test, passing another’s work as your own, having a proxy take exams or quizzes for you, or using unapproved external materials to help you on an exam are examples of cheating. If you are unaware of what actually constitutes plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty, Judicial Affairs also maintains the academic honesty guidelines on the web: [www.dso.ufl.edu/judicial/honestybrochure.htm](http://www.dso.ufl.edu/judicial/honestybrochure.htm). If you are unsure whether your activities are legitimate regarding exams and assignments, please do not hesitate to ask us.

**Final Notes**

This is a difficult course. Despite the 2000 prefix number, there is a great deal of material that you will find to be new and unfamiliar, if not downright mystifying. In addition, much of the class lecture material does not cover the material in the textbook. It has been our experience that students find the exams to be difficult and challenging, and that in a class of 250 there will be only 25-30 or so students who will earn an A for the course. We have found that students who spend their time studying for exams by memorizing terminology will, at best, earn a C for the exam in question. You will, of course, need to memorize terminology, but you also need to understand what the terms mean in the context of the anthropological issues we will be investigating. Exams test your ability to think critically.

**How to Succeed in this Course**: Some keys to success in this course include, attending class regularly and taking good notes during lecture. Make sure that you read the chapter before class; that way, the lecture will not seem completely foreign, and the tricky terminology from the textbooks will make more sense. Begin studying at least a week before the exam. One night of cramming will not help you do your best. If you are in doubt about anything, do not hesitate to seek help. Our office hours are listed here, and you are welcome to drop by and see us if you have questions about specific issues. We don’t bite. We can only help you, however, if you see us before an exam.

Finally, a reminder: Your grade for this course is your responsibility. If you attend class regularly, read the assigned material carefully, and take advantage of all of the opportunities to earn points by doing well on the quizzes, exams, and writing assignment, then you will likely do well. You will only get out of this class what you put into it.

**Communicating with Us**: As we have indicated above, we don’t bite. Don’t be shy about contacting us. However, we do have suggestions: We prefer you to use the email function of the Blackboard Portal to contact us, rather than our posted email addresses. We check the Blackboard course page frequently, so you will be sure to get a response. If you do contact us using our regular email address, please be sure to include the phrase ANT2410 in the message.
subject line. We both receive huge amounts of email, much of it junk, and you run the risk of having your message tossed in the trash, unread, unless you alert us that you are writing about this class.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: Students who have a disability that requires special accommodations for participating in this course should see us ASAP to make necessary arrangements for exams, quizzes, and lectures.

Course Outline

The following course outline is approximate. We may spend more or less time on specific topics as class interest dictates. Exams will occur as scheduled and are not subject to change. I will hand out study guides before each exam, and we will schedule a study session before each exam. The third exam is taken during the final exam period but will cover only the last unit of the course.

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<th>Week and Dates</th>
<th>Topic and Reading Assignment</th>
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| Week One (1/8, 1/10) | Introduction. Anthropology & The Culture Concept  
Readings: Ember Ch. 1, Spradley Ch. 1, 2 |
| Week Two (1/15, 1/17) | The Culture Concept (continued)  
Readings: Ember 1, 2; Spradley 3, 4 |
| Week Three (1/22, 1/24) | Method and Theory. Anthropology and Social Science  
Readings: Ember 3, 4; Spradley 5 |
| Week Four (1/29, 1/31) | Communication: Language and Culture  
Readings: Ember 5; Spradley 6,7, 8, 9 |
| Week Five (2/5) | Sex and Gender: The intersection of biology and culture  
Readings: Ember 9; Spradley 21, 22 |
| February 7 | First Exam Open 12 am - 11:59 pm |
| Week Six (2/12, 2/14) | Economic Anthropology: How people make a living  
Readings: Ember 6, 7; Spradley 10, 11, 12, 13 |
| Week Seven (2/19, 2/21) | Social Organization I: Marriage, Family, Kinship  
Readings: Ember 10, 11; Spradley 16, 17 |
Week Eight (2/26, 2/28)  
*Social Organization II*: Kinship, Descent, Association  
Readings: Ember 11, 12; Spradley 18, 19

Week Nine (3/4, 3/6)  
*Politics and Social Order I*: Evolution of Political Society  
Readings: Ember 13; Spradley 24, 25, 26

Spring Break 3/10-3/15

Week Ten (3/18)  
*Politics and Social Order II*: Class, Ethnicity, Race  
Readings: Ember 8; Spradley 20, 23

March 20  
**Second Exam Open 12 am - 11:59 pm**

Week Eleven (3/25, 3/27)  
*Psychological Anthropology*: Individual and Society  
Readings: Ember 14; Spradley 28

Week Twelve (4/1, 4/3)  
*Belief Systems*: Myth and Ritual, Comparative Religion  
Readings: Ember 15, 16; Spradley 27, 29, 30

Week Thirteen (4/8, 4/10)  
*Change and Globalization I*: World Systems and Culture Contact  
Readings: Ember 17, Spradley 14, 15, 33

Week Fourteen (4/15, 4/17)  
*Applied Anthropology*: Solving Contemporary Problems  
Readings: 18, 19; Spradley 34, 35, 36, 37

Week Fifteen (4/22)  
*Change and Globalization II*: Contemporary Global Issues  
Readings: 20; Spradley 31, 32

April 29  
**Final Exam Open 12 am - 11:59 pm**