

DEPARTMENT Humanities and Social Sciences

COURSE OUTLINE - Fall 2026

**AN2270(A2): Indigenous and Cultural Minorities in the Modern World - 3 (3-0-0) 45
Hours for 15 Weeks**

Northwestern Polytechnic acknowledges that our campuses are located on Treaty 8 territory, the ancestral and present-day home to many diverse First Nations, Metis, and Inuit people. We are grateful to work, live and learn on the traditional territory of Duncan's First Nation, Horse Lake First Nation and Sturgeon Lake Cree Nation, who are the original caretakers of this land.

We acknowledge the history of this land and we are thankful for the opportunity to walk together in friendship, where we will encourage and promote positive change for present and future generations.

INSTRUCTOR:	Shawn Morton, PhD	PHONE:	(780) 539-2830
OFFICE:	L109	E-MAIL:	smorton@nwpolytech.ca
OFFICE HOURS:	W 11:00-12:00 or by appointment		

CALENDAR DESCRIPTION:

This course examines the survival of Indigenous and minority cultures in various societies. Anthropological perspectives on the relationships among race, class, culture, and politics, and on genocide, ethnocide, and the future of native peoples in the modern state are studied.

PREREQUISITE(S)/COREQUISITE:

None

REQUIRED TEXT/RESOURCE MATERIALS:

McKillop Wells (2015) *Among the Garifuna. Family Tales and Ethnography from the Caribbean Coast*. The University of Alabama Press.

Additional required readings will be made available through our myClass page as the semester progresses.

DELIVERY MODE(S):

On-Campus

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Define anthropology and articulate what distinguishes anthropology from other fields that study human beings.

- Define social science and articulate why anthropology is both scientific and humanistic.
- Describe the peoples covered in the course within specific cultural, geographic, and historical contexts, and more generally through cross-cultural comparison.
- Explain important issues related to those peoples covered in the course from an anthropological perspective.
- Explain the relevance of anthropological study.

TRANSFERABILITY:

Please consult the Alberta Transfer Guide for more information. You may check to ensure the transferability of this course at the Alberta Transfer Guide main page

<https://transferalberta.alberta.ca/>

**** For courses with alpha (letter) grading, a grade of D or D+ may not be acceptable for transfer to other post-secondary institutions. Students are cautioned that it is their responsibility to contact the receiving institutions to ensure transferability**

EVALUATIONS:

Assessment	Weight
Lecture attendance, 2 points each, for 20 points total	10%
Seminar participation, 2 points each, for 20 points total	10%
5 reading quizzes, 4 points each, for 20 points total	10%
4 article discussions, 10 points each, for 40 points total	20%
Seminar lead for 40 points total	20%
Final exam for 60 points total	30%
Total = 200 points	100%
Note: All points are weighted equally for 200 points total.	
Extra credit for up to 10 points	5%

Lecture Attendance (2 points each, for 20 points total)

One key to successfully completing your course is regular attendance. To encourage you to attend regularly, part of your final grade is tied to attendance. There are 13 regular lecture/ film periods this semester. To earn your full attendance points, you'll need to attend 10 of them. Points will be awarded at the end of each class period when you submit your single-sentence "take-home point."

Seminar Participation (2 points each, for 20 points total)

Much of the material covered by this course will be explored through discussion with your peers (seminar). For everyone's benefit, your presence and participation is essential. To encourage this, part of your grade is tied to participation. There are 10 seminar periods this semester. To earn your full participation points, you'll need to attend all of them.

Reading Quizzes (5 reading quizzes at 4 points each for 20 points total)

You will be given 5 reading quizzes covering your syllabus and chapters in our textbook throughout the semester. Each quiz will consist of a small number of questions (multiple choice, matching, etc.) and are intended to encourage you to keep up with your readings. They are not

worth a whole lot of points in the grand scheme of things but could mean the difference between one letter grade and the next; don't let them slip past you! **Reading Quizzes are to be completed on our myClass page, will open Mondays at 8 am of the week assigned, and close Sundays at 11:59 pm (see due dates on schedule).**

Article Summaries (4 summaries at 10 points each for 40 points total)

Of the multitude of articles that we will be reading this semester, you are to reflexively summarize four of them. This means that, in addition to identifying key points of the article, you also must reflect on how these relate to your own society, experience, or those of other peoples we've discussed in this class. You are also responsible for coming up with one possible discussion question related to the article in question. **Article Summaries are to be completed on our myClass page and are due by the Sunday BEFORE their discussion at 11:59 pm.** Plan ahead! Don't wait until the end of the semester to do these.

Discussion Lead (40 points)

Nearly half of our class periods will be spent in seminar, discussing readings selected by both the instructor and by your peers. During our second week of class, you will be assigned a particular culture/ region and associated seminar period. You will be responsible for finding a (1) peer-reviewed journal article pertaining to the culture area in question and addressing a topic that you find personally engaging. The bibliographic reference—including author(s), year, article title, volume (issue), and page references—for this article will be turned in to the instructor to be distributed to the class at least 1 week prior to its discussion day. In addition to assigning the article, you are responsible for leading discussion on that day. Don't worry! We'll talk about what that means during our third week, and your instructor and classmates will be there to help.

Final Exam (60 points total)

You will have a scheduled final exam in this class; HOWEVER, your exam WILL NOT require you to be physically present on campus and will follow the same format as your midterm exam. Your exam is a TAKE HOME. As we will be invoking concepts that are foundational to the discipline of anthropology, it WILL build on the material covered throughout the course. Your final exam will be worth 60 points and consist of a single essay question and response that will be provided in advance and will be related to the ethnography we are reading this semester (*Among the Garifuna*). **Your final is to be completed on our myClass page and will open on the Monday (at 8 am) of the last week of scheduled classes. The exam is due and will close by 11:59 pm on the date scheduled by the registrar. I will let you know when this information is available.**

Note: I do NOT provide study guides. Extensive research demonstrates that it is not in a student's best interest to be provided with a study guide by the instructor. You may not like it, but creating your own study guide is an important study technique in its own right. Like eating vegetables, this is for your own good. Although this isn't a course where you need to memorize a lot of information, you do need to be familiar with what we've covered and where to find it.

Extra Credit (MAX. 10 points)

Extra credit is as stated, extra points above and beyond your regular class assignments. These points are somewhat easy to acquire, but to receive any point, you must do exactly as asked. Extra credit opportunities (worth 5 points each) will be announced throughout the semester.

GRADING CRITERIA:

Please note that most universities will not accept your course for transfer credit **IF** your grade is less than C-.

Grading Chart

Alpha Grade	4-point Equivalent	Percentage Guidelines	Alpha Grade	4-point Equivalent	Percentage Guidelines
A+	4.0	95-100	C+	2.3	67-69
A	4.0	85-94	C	2.0	63-66
A-	3.7	80-84	C-	1.7	60-62
B+	3.3	77-79	D+	1.3	55-59
B	3.0	73-76	D	1.0	50-54
B-	2.7	70-72	F	0.0	00-49

COURSE SCHEDULE/TENTATIVE TIMELINE:

Week	Date	Topic(s)	Reading(s)
Getting Started			
1	Sep. 4	Introduction to course	Syllabus
Homework: Reading Quiz 1 - Due Sunday, Sep. 6, 11:59 PM			
Module 1: What is Anthropology?			
2.1	Sep. 7	Labour Day - No Classes	
2.2	Sep. 11	What is anthropology? What is a social science?	McKillop Wells, Pg. 1-30
Homework: Reading Quiz 2 - Due Sunday, Sep. 13, 11:59 PM			
3.1	Sep. 14	Approaches in socio-cultural anthropology	McKillop Wells, Pg. 31-64
3.2	Sep. 18	Parameters of course	
Homework: Reading Quiz 3- Due Sunday, Sep. 20, 11:59 PM			
Module 2: Hadzas of the central Rift Valley and Serengeti Plateau			
4.1	Sep. 21	Regional and historical context	McKillop Wells, Pg. 65-96
4.2	Sep. 25	Film	
5.1	Sep. 28	Seminar	TBD
5.2	Oct. 2	Seminar	TBD
Module 3: Yanomamis of Amazonia			
6.1	Oct. 5	Regional and historical context	McKillop Wells, Pg. 97-126
6.2	Oct. 9	Film	
Homework: Reading Quiz 4 - Due Sunday, Oct. 11, 11:59 PM			
7.1	Oct. 12	Thanksgiving - No Classes	
7.2	Oct. 16	Seminar	TBD
Module 4: Mayas of Lowland Mesoamerica			
8.1	Oct. 19	Regional and historical context	McKillop Wells, Pg. 127-158
8.2	Oct. 23	Film	
9.1	Oct. 26	Seminar	TBD
9.2	Oct. 30	Seminar	TBD
Module 5: Quechuas of Highland South America			
10.1	Nov. 2	Regional and historical context	McKillop Wells, Pg. 159-191
10.2	Nov. 6	Film	
Homework: Reading Quiz 5 - Due Sunday, Nov. 8, 11:59 PM			
11.1	Nov. 9	Reading Break - No Classes	
11.2	Nov. 13	Reading Break - No Classes	
12.1	Nov. 16	Seminar	TBD
12.2	Nov. 20	Seminar	TBD
Module 6: Aboriginal Peoples of Australia			
13.1	Nov. 23	Regional and historical context	McKillop Wells, Pg. 192-213
13.2	Nov. 27	Film	
14.1	Nov. 30	Seminar	TBD
14.2	Dec. 4	Seminar	TBD
Module 7: Garifunas of the Circum-Caribbean Region			
15	Dec. 7	Seminar	TBD
Final Exam - Date TBA			

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES:

Late Assignment/Make-up Policy: You are expected to follow the schedule as posted and **late assignments will not be accepted**, except with my permission. Contrary to a popular idiom, it is always better to ask for permission than forgiveness; if you know that you are going to miss a deadline, please let me know in advance.

Classroom Climate Expectations: To create and maintain a safe and productive learning environment in the classroom, standards of behaviours are expected as follows:

1. **Listen** attentively and TAKE NOTES.
2. **Communicate** clearly and actively when asking questions or during discussions.
3. **Be respectful** when asking questions/discussing topics with EVERYONE. This does not mean that you need to agree with all the views/opinions expressed but note that there is a difference between being critical or engaging in a productive conversation and being confrontational or abusive.
4. **Refrain** from excessive talking or use of technology for NONACADEMIC PURPOSES. You are supposed to be in class, so BE IN CLASS.

If you choose to violate the above expectations, either once or repeatedly the following consequences will be enforced:

1. Verbal warning;
2. Meeting after class/in office hours, or;

Pursuing a report of non-academic misconduct under the Student Rights and Responsibilities policy.

Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI): While you should develop a sense of how social scientists construct an argument, this is not a writing course. Using tools, including AI, to improve your prose is both allowed and appreciated. There is nothing wrong with using such tools to convey YOUR IDEAS more clearly. However, the use of Generative AI is strictly prohibited. If detected, it will result in an F grade on your assignment and an official note on your permanent record in accordance with NWP's Academic Misconduct policies.

STATEMENT ON ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT:

Academic Misconduct will not be tolerated. For a more precise definition of academic misconduct and its consequences, refer to the Student Rights and Responsibilities policy available at <https://www.nwpolytech.ca/about/administration/policies/index.html>

****Note:** all Academic and Administrative policies are available on the same page.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

Note that you should not take your performance in this course as an indication of how much I like or respect you. No, that will depend on whether you laugh at my jokes (that was a joke). It goes without saying that post-secondary education is a process. You'll figure out what works for you. I'm here to help. Also, looking for a little extra credit? Just send me an email with "AN2270 – Extra Credit" in the subject line and the phrase "My other car is a TARDIS." as the body.