

GRANDE PRAIRIE REGIONAL COLLEGE

DEPARTMENT OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

ANTHROPOLOGY 3070

INTRODUCTION TO SOCIAL AND CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY

Instructor: Dr. Laurie Nock

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Office Hours: Wednesdays and Thursdays 1000-1100 or by appointment.

Drop-ins welcome.

Prerequisite: Anthropology 1010

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course has three main purposes:

- 1) to establish an anthropological framework which can be used to facilitate understanding of the diverse cultures of this world, and to apply this framework to specific cultures;
- 2) to introduce students to a variety of research methods used by anthropologists; and
- 3) to study a variety of topics in cross-cultural perspective.

To achieve these ends, the course will be divided into two parts. The first will deal with economic, political, social, and ideological systems and how they apply to particular cultures. The second will focus on specific topics as agreed by instructor and students. Discussion and practice of research methods will take place during this second part as well.

REQUIREMENTS AND EVALUATION

Through library research and in consultation with the instructor, students will become familiar with one non-Western culture. They will then write an ethnographic essay describing this culture. In a take-home test, they will compare the culture in which they have specialized with cultures studied by other students. The instructor will distribute detailed descriptions of each of these assignments.

In the second part of the course, students will implement at least three different forms of research methodology. A short (i.e. 10 minute) report on their experience and the results of their research will be presented to the class and submitted in writing to the instructor (approximately 5 pages). If a student chooses to carry out more than three, the best three marks will be used in calculating the final course mark.

Each student will conduct cross-cultural research on a topic of interest to them, and share their findings with the class in a 20-minute presentation. Topics and presentation dates will be determined in consultation with the instructor.

The final take-home test will consist of essay questions, and will be based on all course materials (lectures, class discussions, readings and/or films) covered in the second part of the course. This must be submitted to the instructor one week after the last class.

Assignments must be handed in to the instructor by Friday at 3 p.m. of the week they are due. Tardiness will result in the loss of 3 out of 9 points. Excessive grammatical or spelling errors may have the same result.

ASSIGNMENT	%	DUE DATE
Essay on ethnographies	20	Week 4
Take-home test	20	Week 6
Participant observation	10*	Week 9
Focus group/Interview	10*	Week 10
Oral history/Life history	10*	Week 11
Archival/documentary	10*	Week 12
Content analysis / Genealogy	10*	Week 13
Cross-cultural research presentation only	10	To be determined
Final take-home test	20	Week 14

* Best three marks on these assignments to be used in final grade calculation.

GRADING SYSTEM (All marking is done on the stanine system.)

Grade	Interpretation
9	
8	Excellent
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7	
6	Good
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5	
4	Pass
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3	
2	
1	Fail
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TEXTS

Gary Ferraro, CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY: AN APPLIED PERSPECTIVES, West Publishing, 1995. (CA)

William A. Haviland and Robert J. Gordon, Eds., TALKING ABOUT PEOPLE: READINGS IN CONTEMPORARY CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY. Mayfield Publishing, 1993. (TAP)

ANTHROPOLOGY 3070
INTRODUCTION TO SOCIAL AND CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY

SCHEDULE OF TOPICS, READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS

Readings are from Gary Ferraro, CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY: AN APPLIED PERSPECTIVES (CA) and from William A. Haviland and Robert J. Gordon, Eds., TALKING ABOUT PEOPLE: READINGS IN CONTEMPORARY CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY (TAP).

Week 1	Economic systems	
Weeks 2-3	Political systems	
Weeks 4-5	Social systems WEEK 4: ETHNOGRAPHY DUE	
Weeks 6-7	Ideological systems WEEK 6: TAKE-HOME DUE	
Week 8	"Cultures" in contact: development and modernization	
Week 9	Participant observation	special topic
Week 10	Interview / Focus groups	"
Week 11	Oral history / Life history	"
Week 12	Archival / Documentary research	"
Week 13	Content analysis / Genealogy	"
Week 14	TAKE-HOME DUE	

ANTHROPOLOGY 3070: SOCIAL AND CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY

ETHNOGRAPHY

Value: 20%

Due Date: Week 4

In this essay, you are to synthesize the description of a culture and society presented in the ethnography/ies you have read. Factors to consider include:

A presentation and evaluation of your sources

Ecological adaptation

- geographical location, climate
- productive activities: resources available and used,
- technological base
- demographic features (size of population and population density)

Economic organization

- access to and ownership of resources, e.g. land, animals, tools
- division of labor and/or occupational specialization
- distribution or sharing of production trade and/or tribute

Social organization

- residence/settlement pattern
- type of community; egalitarian or hierarchical society
- family and kinship structure
- marital patterns and practices
- non-kin based organizations

Political organization

- type of government
- authority structures
- social control—law, enforcers
- relations w/ neighbors—war, trade

Ideology and/or religion

- art forms
- mythology, deities, forms of worship
- ceremonies and rituals
- science

In an essay of this length (up to ten pages, or 2500 words) you will not be able to provide very detailed information. Your aim is to make sense of "your" culture by presenting a holistic view indicating, where possible, how environment, economy, society, political structure and ideological systems are interconnected and mutually reinforcing. Be prepared to present your ethnography to other members of the class together with supporting materials such as photographs, maps, etc. You are the primary informant on your culture.

ANTHROPOLOGY 3070: SOCIAL AND CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY
MID-TERM TAKE-HOME TEST

Value: 20% of final mark

Due date: Week 6

One of our fundamental aims in this course is to examine the relationship between a society's subsistence or economic system and its social and political organization.

PART I

To further your understanding of this relationship, compare and contrast the cultures studied by you and two other members of the group in reference to:

A. Infrastructure

- the ecological zone(s) occupied or used to satisfy basic needs
- demography: numbers and distribution of people
- productive activities, including methods and technology (briefly)

B. Structure

- access to resources: how an individual (or group) gains access to
 - or has the right to use the land he/she works,
 - or to his or her occupation
- division of labor and/or occupational specialization
 - who makes production decisions, regarding such things as
 - who will carry out what tasks, for how long
 - or producing how much;
- distribution: how products are distributed,
 - (exchanged, transferred, shared, etc.)
 - and who has control over products and the distribution process
- hierarchies: differences in lifestyle, privileges, wealth, etc.
 - between groups within the society

PART II

Given the above, how do these societies differ in terms of who controls resources, production and distribution, and the people themselves? Discuss factors that might help to account for different levels of concentration of power.

For the purposes of this assignment, it is not required that you do further research: you are only responsible for the information provided by other members of your group as well as materials covered in lectures and in course readings. It is recommended that you summarize the information requested in Part I above in point form or in a chart; Part II should be addressed in essay form.

CROSS-CULTURAL RESEARCH

Value: 10%

Date: to be determined, from Week 9 on.

Your purpose in this project is to carry out cross-cultural research on a topic of your choice, which may be as broad as gender relations or as narrow as eating utensils. In your twenty-minute class presentation, you are to demonstrate to fellow students how much can be learned about culture through a focus on a particular issue. You are required to submit a bibliography, but no written paper is required. You may wish to assign a reading, and you may use visual materials to supplement your discussion.

RESEARCH METHODS

Value: 10% each assignment, to a total of 30%. More than 3 assignments may be submitted, and the best 3 marks will be used in the calculation of the final course grade.

Date: See course outline above.

Following a discussion of the research methods, you will devise and carry out a short research project and evaluate the usefulness of the method to research and to yourself. A very short (i.e. 5 minute) report on your experience and the results of your research will be presented to the class and submitted in writing to the instructor (approximately 5 pages).