

MONTGOMERY COLLEGE

Office of Anthropology

Department of Social Science, Takoma Park Campus

AN 101 - Introduction to Social and Cultural Anthropology

Instructor: Professor Tara Tetrault

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Course Description:

Welcome to Cultural Anthropology! Anthropology is the study of human behavior and as a result it is concerned the diversity of human existence in the past and present. By attempting to understand the views, traditions, and material culture, of other people, we are able to learn something about their culture and understand our own. This course is designed to introduce students to the general principles and methods of anthropology, as well as the value of using an anthropological perspective. The following outline of readings is designed to help you keep abreast of the readings. You will have a better understanding of what is going on in class, if each week's assigned readings are completed ahead of time. Information from each chapter will be on each test so use your class time to ask questions and make sure you understand the topics. If you have any problems with assignments or topics we discuss, PLEASE feel free to see me during my office hours or make an appointment to see me.

Objectives:

- 1) To get an understanding of culture, material culture, how cultural systems work, and the meaning of cultural relativity.
- 2) To begin to understand how people study culture and what the different disciplines of cultural anthropology are.
- 3) To become acquainted with the range of different peoples, perspectives, and cultures through time and around the world, and to recognize our common humanity.
- 4) To understand behavior from an anthropological perspective.

Textbooks:

[Humanity: an introduction to Cultural Anthropology](#). James Peoples and Garrick Bailey. Thompson-Wadsworth Publishing Company 2009, 2006

Shostak, Marjorie. [Nisa: The Life and Words of a !Kung Woman](#). Vintage Books. 1983.

Anthropology Matters! Shirley A. Fedorak and selected chapters from Medical Anthropology in Ecological Perspective by Ann McElroy and Patricia Townsend. Copies if chapter(s) will be on reserve in the library.

Suggested references are: M. C. Students Guide to Good Writing in the Social Sciences or The Elements of Style by William Strunk and EB White and the Writing with Style by John Trimble.

Others highly recommended books to refer to that should be in the library include:

James Spradley's 1) [The Ethnographic Interview](#) and 2) [Participant Observation](#)

In Small Things Forgotten: an Archeology of Early America by James Deetz and published by Anchor-Doubleday Books

Thomas Schlereth's Material Culture Studies in America

Exhibiting Culture ed' by Amy Anderson.

Course Requirements:

Your grade is based on **two exams and two papers and 1 journal**

1. **Smithsonian Museum Interpretation Project:** Museums are another venue that describes cultural systems. You will be asked to look at an exhibit at any of the Smithsonian Institution Museums. You are to consider how culture is portrayed in the Museum and to the public audience. Anthropologists know that objects found in context tell a lot about people, idea and perspectives. You are to select artifact(s) in the exhibit to describe and begin to analyze.

2. **Being the Anthropologist: Student Participant Observation Projects:** Some people say the only way to learn anthropology is to do it. Your assignment is to do some local fieldwork of your own and write up a short observation paper. Guidelines will be given out in class. **Part I is a topic statement and Part II is the final product. You must complete Part I and II to get credit for this assignment.**

Topic Suggestion only: President Barack Obama has people living in the United States to participate in it's revitalization.

Perhaps some of you might consider participating in a volunteer project & using that time doing community service to observe people in context.

3. **You are to keep a journal for this class** where you comment and react to the chapters we read in Fedorak's book, as well as McElroy and Townsend's text listed above. We will be addressing these readings in class. *You must summarize the article. You can discuss the author. You must critique or analyze the reading. Members of the class will be asked to involve themselves in the class discussion of these chapters. This will be kept on a volunteer basis if enough people are actively involved in the discussion. Members of the class who do not get involved may be asked to comment or react, so come prepared to class.*

Evaluation:

Grades will be based on the journal (10%), the museum project (20%), the participant observation (20%), two exams (20% each or 40%), class participation (10%) (journal and class participation (20)).

Grading Policy:

The grades you receive in this class are determined by the amount of effort you put into your work. I will be evaluating your understanding of the concepts in this course. I am available to discuss any aspect of the course.

I expect all electronic devices to be turned off while you are in this classroom.

Late papers and make-up tests need to be negotiated before the papers are due or the tests are given. Unless you contact me ahead of time, late papers will be lowered one grade.

If you are having **any** problem with this class, please come see me and take care of the issue sooner rather than later. I can make changes but plans need to be made ahead of time. In an effort to be fair to the class, I will assume that unless students contact me ahead of time and arrange for an extension, students are not planning on handing in the assignment. Understand that it is unfair to the rest of the class if some students get extra time to hand in assignments or take exams. I am available through e-mail and the Department telephone number (both are listed on the top of this syllabus).

Disabilities

Any student who may need an accommodation due to a disability, please make an

appointment to see me during my office hour. A letter from Disability Support Services

(R-CB122; G-SA175; or TP-ST120) authorizing your accommodations will be needed. Any student who may need assistance in the event of an emergency evacuation must identify to the Disability Support Services Office; guidelines for emergency evacuations for individuals with disabilities are found at: www.montgomerycollege.edu/dss/evacprocedures.htm

Syllabus

Readings should be done BEFORE class

Week of ...	Readings	Detail on Chapter Topics	Culture Highlighted
1. 1/26	Humanity Chapter 1	Course Introduction to the Study of Humanity: 4 Fields of Anthropology	All
2. 2/2	Humanity Chapter 2 *****Ch 1 & 4 of Fedorak	Introduction to Culture Field Methods Film: Weave in Time	All Native American
3. 2/9	Humanity Chapter 5 *****Chap 3 Fedorak	Methods of investigation Foundation of Material Culture Studies	All
4. 2/16	Humanity Chapter 4	Chimpanzee Study in Gombe	Animal & Human Behavior East Africa
4. 2/23 PO TOPIC DUE	Humanity Chapter 3 PO TOPIC & JUSTIFICATION is DUE Required for grade participant observation project READ NISA BEFORE CLASS	Define Linguistics Discuss NISA See the N'ia Film - !Kung Culture	!Kung, South Africa
6. 3/2	Humanity Chapter 6 *****Chap 1 of McElroy and Townsend	Culture Interacting with Environment	Nepali
7. 3/9 MIDTERMS	Humanity Chapter 7 MIDTERM - TEST 1	Economics The Yanomamo Indians of Brazil	Brazil
8. 3/16	Humanity Chapter 8 *****Fedorak 6	Marriage & Family	Masia Women
9. 3/20-3/29	Spring Break		

10. 3/30	Humanity Chapter 9	Kinship & Descent	Rwanda
JOURNAL IS DUE	Humanity Chapter 11 Gender Akan Pottery Film JOURNAL IS DUE	Akan Pottery Women: a film on women, Lineage & Clans <i>(if time, Discussion Groups about Akan here)</i>	Akan, Ghana , West Africa
10. 4/6	Humanity Chapter 12	Organization of Political Life	European American
MUSEUM PROJECT DUE	MUSEUM PROJECT DUE	Revisit the Hmong Perspective on Medicine	Hmong
11. . 4/13	Humanity Chapter 14	Religion and Worldview	Balinese
	*****Chapter 9 Fedorack	3 Worlds of Bali	
12. 4/20	Humanity Chapter 15	Art, Aesthetics & Culture	Hopi Indian
		Hopi Songs of the 4 th World	
13. 4/27	Humanity Chapter 16	Globalization	
	*****Chapter 10 McElroy and Townsend		
14. 5/4	Humanity Chapter 18	World Problems & applying Anthropology	Global
PO DUE	Participant Observation DUE TODAY	International AID & Health	
15. 5/11-17	FINAL EXAM WEEK - TIME TBA		
EXAM WEEK			
FINAL GRADES DUE=MAY 20th			