

Moravian College
Fall 2008 Syllabus
Cultural Anthropology

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Course #: 113
Time & Day: 2:20-3:30 MW
Location: COMEN 201

Purpose of Course

The purpose of this course, in a broad sense, is to provide you with answers to the questions: What is anthropology and what does it have to do with me? In order to answer these questions as fully as possible in a one-semester course, we will look at various theories, concepts, and methods anthropologists use in their work. By doing this, you will develop an anthropological perspective of human behavior that will make you see the world around you in a new way.

Get ready for an anthropological adventure around your world!

Classroom Climate

Anthropology involves some controversial topics and we'll be doing lots of talking this semester about some of those topics. In our conversations, I'd like to use the following statement as our guide in the classroom:

Respect is the cornerstone of all our interactions and behaviors. We acknowledge the dignity and worth of one another and strive never to diminish another by our conduct or our attitudes.

From www.tolerance.org; created at Mariner High School in Everett WA

Helpful Hint

Here's a poem I thought you might find useful for this class, especially if you label yourself as a procrastinator. It appeared in:

James, Simon. 1999. Days Like This: A Collection of Small Poems. Cambridge: Candlewick Press.

Tomorrow

Tomorrow's never there.
It always runs away.
Every time I catch it
It says it's called Today.

Student Learning Outcomes

You will be able to:

1. Define and explain the basic concepts, theories, and research methods of anthropology.
2. Acquire knowledge about some of the primary subfields within the discipline, including specific knowledge about class and caste, race and ethnicity, and gender.
3. Increase cultural sensitivity and knowledge regarding diversity in the US and around the world.
4. Apply concepts and theories to a particular case, including your own experience, using your skills of analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. In the process, you will be engaging in abstract reasoning.
5. Logically organize ideas according to social science criteria in written assignments.

Grading Based on Outcomes

A Excellent mastery of basic knowledge (1-3) and analysis and writing (4-5)
Exams, In-Class Work, and Out-of-Class Work are completed on time and according to directions, showing you can both remember and use the knowledge gained through reading and class work. Your writing shows organizational skill, the ability to use abstract reasoning, and the use of knowledge gained in the classroom and readings.

B Good mastery of all outcomes

C Moderate mastery of basic knowledge and minimal mastery of analysis and writing

D Minimal mastery of all outcomes

F Little, if any, mastery of outcomes

A 93-100 / A- 90-92

B+ 87-89 / B 83-86 / B- 80-82

C+ 77-79 / C 73-76 / C- 70-72

D+ 67-69 / D 60-66

F Below 60

Books

Nanda, Serena and Richard L Warms. 2007. Cultural Anthropology, 9thth Ed. Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadsworth.

Wormsley, William E. 2002. The White Man Will Eat You!: An Anthropologist among the Imbonggu of New Guinea. Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadsworth.

Other readings will be photocopied and handed out during class.

Policies

Attendance

While I do not grade your attendance directly, I do take attendance and it is clearly counted indirectly in your grades. I can't stress this enough. I'll be straight up. Students who miss class do not do as well as those who attend on a regular basis. I try to make class as interesting as possible so attending isn't painful.

When you miss class, you get out of sync. Missing class means missing notes and discussions that become part of your exams. You also might miss discussions about topics or further explanations about work due. Also, in-class work can't be made up.

Due Dates

The due dates for various assignments and tests are in the schedule. I should tell you now that make-up exams are tough and I wouldn't recommend them. You need to hand in any homework or papers at the beginning of class or they will be considered late. Late work will be reduced one letter grade per day, not per class. It's not fair to the other students who hand in their work on time if I accept late work without a penalty.

Academic Honesty

I will not tolerate cheating or plagiarism. You will receive an automatic F for the course.

Withdrawal

The last day to withdraw from the class with a W is in the Academic Calendar. After that time, you will receive a grade.

Methods of Assessment

Exams = 30%

Your exams will consist of essay questions. You will need to recall facts, discuss and explain concepts, apply your knowledge using illustrations and examples, and analyze information by comparing and contrasting various concepts.

Test#1 = 10%

Test#2 = 10%

Final = 10%

In-Class Work = 20%

As a group and individually, you will do various assignments during class such as reaction papers, example specifications, interviews, debates, and movie discussions.

Out-of-Class Work = 50%

You will be given homework assignments pertaining to topics covered in class, such as personalization and short reactions to classroom themes, as well as visits to websites.
Homework = 20%

You will be given projects called The I See Projects that apply knowledge gained in the class to the world around you. See directions under next heading.

I See Culture = 10%

Presentation of I See Culture = 10%

I See TV = 10%

The I See Projects

I See Culture

You will perform your own mini-ethnography of a culture of your choosing and write a paper in which you apply anthropological terms and ideas to your observation. No need to travel to distant lands though; there's plenty of interesting groups of people to do your fieldwork on right here in the US. More detailed instructions on this project will be handed out in class after we've covered ethnography.

Presentation of I See Culture

You'll share with the class your findings from your mini-ethnography.

I See TV

You are a cultural anthropology graduate student from Bug-la-Boo doing your dissertation research in the US. When you came here, the thing that amazed you the most about American culture was television. You were aware of TV. In fact, there were a few TVs in Bug-la-Boo and there were TVs in other countries you visited. American TV seemed very different though.

Since part of your dissertation is on enculturation and another part focuses on marriage, you decide to write a chapter on what children learn about marriage from TV. After months of watching shows about married couples, some new shows and some old shows, you realize American views on marriage have changed over time and you have gained 10 pounds ;-). You tune in to an exercise program and make the decision to analyze two shows with married couples in them – one new and one old – so you can discuss the changing views on American marriage. Write up your findings.

SCHEDULE

Date	Topic	Reading	Notes
8/25	Intro		
8/27	Intro to Anthropology	T: Ch 1	aaanet.org
9/1	NO CLASS		
9/3	Ethnography	T: Ch 3/HO	
9/8		R: Ch 1,2,17	
9/10	Culture	T: Ch 4	Bathroom List Due
9/15		HO	
9/17			Garbage List Due
9/22	Language	T: Ch 5 (only 125-138)	
9/24			Experiment Due
9/29	Review		
10/1	TEST #1		
10/6	NO CLASS		
10/8	Subsistence	T: Ch 6	I See TV Due
10/13			
10/15	Economics	T: Ch 7	
10/20	Marriage & Family	T: Ch 8	
10/22			
10/27	Kinship	T: Ch 9	umanitoba.ca/faculties/arts/anthropology/tutor/index.html
10/29			
11/3			
11/5	TEST #2		
11/10	Gender	T: Ch 10	
11/12		HO	I See Culture Due
11/17	Class & Caste	T: Ch 12	
11/19			
11/24	Race & Ethnicity	T: Ch 13	understandingrace.org
11/26	NO CLASS		

12/1 Presentations

12/3 Presentations

12/8 Presentations

12/10 I See Anthropology

Material World

FINAL EXAM

Remember, this syllabus is merely a guide. I will announce any changes made to it in class.