

Introduction to Cultural Anthropology

(ANTH 102.02 – 3 cr)

There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,
Than are dreamt of in your philosophy.
Hamlet (I, v, 166-167)

The knowable world is incomplete if seen from any one point of
view, incoherent if seen from all points of view at once, and empty
if seen from nowhere in particular.

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SGC 204
9:00-10:15 AM T/Th

Office Hours: M&W 9:00-10:15 am & M&W 1:30-2:30pm; I am usually in my office (except for meetings and classes) all day, every weekday. Please come by!

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, if you have emergency medical information to share with me, or if you need special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment to talk with me.

All class announcements/communication will be made through LCMail: be sure to check your in-box.

See my web page @ <<http://www.lcsc.edu/amarshal>> where you will find information about my classes, help with research and writing assignments, some student survival tips, and some multicultural issues. Also, I've put up an informal résumé, and pages about my other interests.

Cultural anthropology is an approach to studying and learning from people with different histories and experiences from one's own society. Those differences in life experiences result in diversity in worldview, emotional responses, and behavior. This diversity is fundamental to social life not only on a global basis, but also within our own communities. Consequently, many disciplines and professions, such as sociology, history, the health fields, and education, employ the concepts, theories, and methods developed and refined by cultural anthropologists in order to deal with the diversities they encounter. Case studies drawn from around the world and within the United States will be used to explore the implications of cultural differences and how those differences raise questions for social interaction. We will learn how those issues are clarified and understood by cultural anthropological ideas, explanations, and methods.

Objectives The fundamental goal of a college education is learning how to “think critically” about oneself and one’s world through information gathering, comparison and contrast, analysis of

information, and the examination of basic concepts/beliefs underlying how we understand, and often misunderstand, our natural and social environments.

The important general objectives of the course are:

- What is anthropology?
- What is "culture?"
- What is the significance of cultural difference in today's world?
- How does one go about studying culture?
- What is the range of human behavior, and how do we make sense of it?
- What is the relevance of anthropology to learning about, and dealing with, contemporary individual and social issues?

Those *general objectives are the final examination questions*. To answer these questions students should be able to discuss the following points (or *specific objectives*) using examples from the texts and lectures,

- describe the field of anthropology and its primary objectives (Chapter 1);
- provide and discuss the anthropological concept of culture (Chapter 2);
- describe how cultural anthropology is used to resolve social issues in business and government (Chapter 3);
- distinguish between "theory" and "hypothesis" and identify several theories of culture developed by anthropologists (Chapter 4);
- describe several methods used by anthropologists to gather reliable data (Chapter 5);
- define language/speech and describe their significance for social life (Chapter 6);
- discuss the social and cultural significance of how a community creates food and other resources (Chapter 7);
- describe the basic ways by which communities allocate resources, create and distribute goods, and the social/cultural significance of those actions (Chapter 8);
- discuss the role of marriage and family in the social economy (Chapter 9);
- discuss the significance of kinship and descent in society (Chapter 10) ;
- differentiate between sex, sexuality, and gender and their significance to society (Chapter 11);
- identify several ways by which people organize power (Chapter 12);
- discuss the reasons governing differential use of power (Chapter 13);
- distinguish between spirituality and the social expression of it in relation to cultural differences (Chapter 14);
- discuss how human creative expression is channeled by culture (Chapter 15);
- identify processes of social change and the affect of "globalization" on culture (Chapter 16).

Texts

Ferraro, Gary. 2006. *Cultural Anthropology: An Applied Perspective* (Custom Ed.). New York: Cengage.

Harris, Marvin. 1989. *Cows, Pigs, Wars, and Witches: The Riddles of Culture*. New York: Vintage

Methods

Instruction

lecture/note-taking
media

reading/writing
discussion

Evaluation

examinations
attendance

writing assignments
class participation

Writing Assignments -- All assignments must be typewritten (1.25" margins; double-spaced; stapled; do not use a report cover or title page; be sure that your name, the course number and title, and the date are in the upper right hand corner of the 1st page of each assignment).

"letters"

Letter 1 – The purpose of this assignment is for you to clarify your expectations of the course and your participation in it. What do you think or imagine cultural anthropology is? What do you want to get from the course? Try to limit your letter to 300 words. Hang on to this assignment!

Letter 2 – The purpose of this assignment is to reflect on your progress in the course; it should be no longer than 1 page. Has the course lived up to your expectations? Have you lived up to your expectations? How have they changed? Attach Letter 1 to this one before handing it in. Hang on to this assignment!

Letter 3 -- The purpose of this assignment is for you to reflect upon what you have learned in this course. The letter should be no longer than 2 pages. Attach Letter 1 and 2 to this assignment before handing it in. Write retrospectively on your first writing assignment. How have your ideas of culture and cultural anthropology changed? Did you meet your goals in the course? Did your goals change? What is the most important lesson that you learned from this course?

Tentative Schedule

<i>Date</i>	<i>Reading + Assignment Due</i>	<i>Lecture Topic</i>
Week 16 08/25(Tu) 08/27(Th)	Skim both textbooks	<i>Syllabus and Introduction</i>
Week 15 09/01(Tu) 09/03(Th)	<i>Labor Day Holiday</i> Read Ferraro Chp. 1 Harris "Prologue," "Mother Cow," "Pig Lovers" <i>Due: Letter 1</i>	What Is (cultural) anthropology?
Week 14 09/08(Tu) 09/10(Th)	Read Ferraro chps 2&3	What is culture? Is the idea useful?
Week 13 09/15(Tu) 09/17(Th)	Read chp 5, skim chp 4	How do anthropologists study culture? What do they make of it?

Week 12 09/22(Tu) 09/24(Th)	Wrap up/review <u>Test 1</u>	
Week 11 09/29 (Tu) 10/01 (Th)	Read: Ferraro Chp 6 – Harris “Primitive War,” “Savage Male,”	Speaking in symbols
Week 10 10/06(Tu) 10/08(Th)		
Week 09 10/13(Tu) 10/18(Th)	Read: Ferraro Ch 7 & 8 Harris “Potlatch” “Phantom Cargo”	<i>Finding symbols, making symbols</i>
Week 08 10/20(Tu) 10/22(Th)	<i>Due: Letter 2</i>	
Week 07 10/27(Tu) 10/29(Th)	Wrap up/Review <u>Test 2</u>	
Week 06 11/03(Tu) 11/05(Th)	Read: Ferraro 9 & 10 Harris “Messiahs,” “Broomsticks,” “Great Witch Craze,” “Return of...”	<i>Humans, the most important symbol</i>
Week 05 11/10(Tu) 11/12(Th)		
Week 04 11/17(Tu) 11/19(Th)	Read: Ferraro/ 12 & 13 <i>Due: Letter 3</i>	Globalization Anti-systemic activity

Week 03 11/23-27	<u>Thanksgiving Break</u>	<u>Thanksgiving Break</u>
Week 02 12/01(Tu) 12/03(Th)	Review Test 2	
Week 01 12/08(Tu) 12/10(Th)		Wrap up
Week 00 12/17	<u>FINAL EXAM 9:00 AM – SGC204</u>	