

ANT 2200G (Section 2; Fall 2019. 3cr)

Introduction to Anthropology

Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays
2:00-2:50 PM

Classroom: 1165 Blair Hall

Office: 3137 Blair Hall

Office Hours:

12:00-1:00 PM; M, W, F (3137 Blair Hall)

3:00 PM -4:00 PM; M (3137 Blair Hall)

Instructor: Professor Don Holly

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Course Description

Anthropology is the holistic study of humanity. It encompasses human biology and evolution, history (archaeologists are anthropologists too), language, society, and culture. Culture, in particular, is the focus of much anthropological research since it is such an integral component of what it means to be human. Among other things, it enables us live in places that wouldn't be possible without it, it helps us identify our spouses and enemies, it informs our understanding of the past and our outlook on the future, it teaches us what clothes are appropriate to wear (if any), what foods taste good and are gross, and how one should behave on a date. It also offers answers to those fundamental questions of human existence: who are we? where do we come from? and what happens to us when we die? Culture is universal—no people lack it—but it is diverse in its expression and it is always changing. This course focuses on this fascinating and fundamental dimension of the human condition as observed by socio-cultural anthropologists working all over the world.

Introduction

This is very likely the first anthropology course you have ever taken. You may find that anthropology is difficult, but perhaps not in the way that some other subjects are. The difficult part is that in order to understand other cultural practices, beliefs, and behavior—often so different from our own—it's necessary to suspend judgment. This is not easy to do but it's critical to thinking anthropologically. Consider cannibalism: if you believe that the reason that people eat other people is because they are primitive, insane, or amoral, you are going to find (not surprisingly) that all cannibals are primitive, insane, and amoral. Obviously, by taking such a stance you wouldn't learn anything about cannibalism (only your own opinion of it). But what if you were to ask cannibals about cannibalism? If you did, you might discover that by consuming the dead some people believe that they can prevent the souls of the deceased from haunting them; or that cannibalism is a way to ingest the power of their enemies—or disrespect them; and you'd learn that cannibals don't consider people to be food. Such answers beg only more questions: like, why do some people perceive the dead as harmful? Are there certain conditions that favor the development of cannibalism as a cultural practice? Do all people who practice cannibalism share the same beliefs? Why or why not? Anthropology requires an open and critical mind.

In this class you'll explore the incredibly diverse ways that humans live and make sense of the world, have the opportunity to experience and learn about another culture, reflect on your own culture and society, and to reflect on what it means to be human.

Learning Objectives

- demonstrate an understanding of key concepts in socio-cultural anthropology
- be able to identify, explain, and apply anthropological perspectives and theory
- demonstrate an understanding of universal and diverse aspects of the human condition
- make anthropologically-informed and articulate observations of culture in a field setting

Class Schedule

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Assignments</u>
19 August	welcome	start reading “ <i>hungry lightning</i> ”
21 August	culture	
23 August	race	
26 August	language	
28 August	colors and numbers	
30 August	body talk	
2 September	no class: labor day	
4 September	<i>film</i> : framing the other	
6 September	food i	
9 September	food ii	
11 September	power i	finish “ <i>hungry lightning</i> ” start “ <i>grand valley dani</i> ”
13 September	power ii	
16 September	the gift	
18 September	exam i	
20 September	no class: prof traveling	
23 September	fieldwork	
25 September	no class: prof @ U. Toronto	
27 September	ritual	
30 September	making & becoming people	
2 October	incest and marriage	
4 October	what’s love got to do with it?	finish “ <i>grand valley dani</i> ” start “ <i>lost in transition</i> ” withdrawl deadline
7 October	kinship i	
9 October	kinship ii	
11 October	no class: fall break	
14 October	kinship iii	
16 October	death	
18 October	magic	
21 October	<i>film</i> : stori tumbuna i	
23 October	<i>film</i> : stori tumbuna ii	
25 October	war i: why we fight	
28 October	war ii: how we fight	
30 October	exam ii	experience paper due
1 November	sex	
4 November	gender	
6 November	art i	
8 November	art ii	
11 November	believing is seeing	
13 November	sickness & health	
15 November	hearts and minds	
18 November	mental illness	
20 November	<i>film</i> : the spirit possession of Alejandro	
22 November	no class: prof traveling	student evaluations finish “ <i>lost in transition</i> ”
25-29 November	no class: thanksgiving break	
2 December	understanding culture change	
4 December	the end of anthropology?	
6 December	looking in the mirror	
11 December (wed)	exam iii (2:45 PM)	

Assessment

<u>assignments</u>	<u>percentage of grade</u>	<u>date</u>
Exam 1	25%	9/18
Exam 2	25%	10/30
Exam 3	25%	12/11 (2:45 pm)
“Cultural Experience” essay (3 pages)	25%	any time on/before 11/22

grading scale

A: 100-90; B: 89-80; C: 79-70; D: 69-60; F: 59-0

Exams

Exams are based on class lectures, discussions, readings, films, guest speakers—basically, anything covered and presented in the course of the semester is fair game for the test. Exams will include a wide variety of question-types: short answer, multiple choice, true/false, essays, etc. Each exam is worth 25% of your final grade. TIP: study early and more than you think is necessary.

“Cultural Experience” Essay (3 pages)

For this paper I’m asking you to go out and have a “cultural experience” and write about it. The point of this exercise is to try to learn about a *culture* that is different from your own/or one you are familiar with by observing and experiencing it as an anthropologist would. Your best bet is to do something involving an ethnic, social, or religious community that is very different from your own. In previous semesters, for instance, students have attended international music and dance performances, cultural events, religious services, ethnic family celebrations, and eaten at ethnic restaurants (see the last page of the syllabus for resources). You have some flexibility here, but you would be wise to discuss your ideas with me first. In addition, make sure that what you do is a “living/active” experience; that is, don’t go to museum to simply look at things or attend a lecture where you can simply sit and passively listen. Aim for something *immersive*.



When you are thinking and writing about your experience, be sure to note what you observed, but also try to *interpret* it. You can learn quite a bit about norms and beliefs, for instance, by simply observing gender, social stratification, knowledge “authority,” dress, and etiquette at a religious service. *Don’t do outside research or interview people.* Simply be present and have your eyes open and think. You are welcome to *reflect* on what you experienced too, just be sure to write from a position of cultural relativism: that is, try to understand the experience in terms of the culture you observed. In short, be sensitive to practices and beliefs that might be different from your own. The paper is due **11/22**, but I urge you complete the assignment before then. Good experiences usually result in good grades, and frankly the longer you wait to complete this assignment the fewer “good” opportunities for cultural experiences you will have. TIPS: 1) see the “cultural experience resources” on the last page of the syllabus and 2) start thinking about this right now.

Assigned Readings

Yu, Pei-Lin

1997 *Hungry Lightning*. University of New Mexico Press. [read entire book before exam I]

Heider, Karl

1997 *Grand Valley Dani*. Wadsworth [read entire book before exam II]

Ghodsee, Kristen

2011 *Lost in Transition*. Duke University Press [read entire book before exam III]

Policies

Assignments

Exams must be taken on the date specified in the syllabus. Failure to take the exam on the assigned date without adequate forewarning and documented excuse will result in a 10% penalty on the makeup. Don't miss the final.

All writing assignments must be typed and double-spaced, employ a standard 10-12 size font, and run the required amount of pages (see specific assignment) not including the bibliography (if necessary). *If* you cite anything, it must be referenced in a bibliography following the body of the document. I prefer that you use the author-date (Harvard) citation style. For example, an in-text citation should read: The flatlanders are a matrilineal, matrilocal, horticultural people that inhabit the plains of Chicagoland (EastFarmer 2016). Then, include the full reference in the bibliography:

EastFarmer, S.

2016 *The Flatlanders*. Free City Press, The Free City.

(see <http://www.americananthro.org/StayInformed/Content.aspx?ItemNumber=2044>) for information & examples.

All papers are due on the date specified. Papers will be assessed a 5% penalty for each day late for up to four days following the deadline. Papers should be submitted on D2L. Don't email me your paper.

There are no opportunities for extra credit.

Academic Integrity

Students are expected to maintain principles of academic integrity and conduct as defined in EIU's Code of Conduct <http://www.eiu.edu/judicial/studentconductcode.php>. I report violations to the Office of Student Standards. TIP: if pressed, write a bad paper or even fail, but never cheat.

Classroom Environment

A significant portion of your course grade is based on material presented in class, and many years of teaching and data tells me students who do not attend class do poorly in the course. Your presence and active participation also makes for a better course. Your classmates and I are counting on you to be in class and to participate.

The classroom is a wonderful place to share ideas and debate. Respect this sacred space: be civil and sensitive to other's viewpoints; also, be willing to take criticism.

Don't use your cell phones in class. They are a distraction to everyone (especially you).

Please come see me during office hours. This time has been set aside for you. You are also welcome to drop by my office outside of office hours. Come with questions, concerns, advice or just to chat.

Student Success Center

Struggling with school work? See me and/or contact the Student Success Center (www.eiu.edu/~success). The Student Success Center provides individualized consultations. To make an appointment, call 581-6696 or go to 9th Street Hall, Room 1302.

Disabilities Statement

If you are a student with a documented disability in need of accommodations please contact the Office of Student Disability Services (OSDS). All accommodations must be approved through OSDS. Stop by Ninth Street Hall, Room 2006, or call 581-6583.

Emergency Statement

For medical emergencies, call 911. In the event of a tornado warning, proceed to the center of the hallway on the first floor. Do not leave the building. If there's a fire, activate the fire alarm and exit the building. If there's an undead pandemic, muster in my office for the distribution of weapons. I get the Kayapo war club.

Cultural Experience Resources

Guidelines & Advice

The following is a list of resources to help you with the “cultural experience” assignment. This is only a guide, and I urge you to search for other cultural opportunities on your own. For those of you that live near Chicago or St. Louis or plan to visit a major city, you will have lots of options—take advantage of them.

When you attend an event, activity or a religious service, always respect peoples’ customs, beliefs and wishes. For events that are not open to the public or are sensitive in content (i.e. religious services) be sure to contact the relevant organization or group first to request permission to attend.

Student Associations

There are a number of student organizations on campus that are likely to have events that you could attend for this assignment. Web-links and contact information for a number of international groups can be found at EIU’s office of International Programs: www.eiu.edu/international/irso.php. For EIU’s LGBTQA+ community and event information see [eiu pride](#) on Facebook. You might also have luck perusing University of Illinois’ student organizations to find events in Champaign.

Cultural Events

Search EIU’s calendar to find cultural events during the semester (www.eiu.edu/calendar). The Doudna Fine Arts center often hosts international music performances and other events (www.eiu.edu/doudna/). Also see EIU’s office of inclusion and academic engagement webpage for event information (www.eiu.edu/oiae/index.php)

Find cultural events in Champaign on the University of Illinois’ calendar (calendars.illinois.edu/list/7); the Japan House at UICU hosts events & tea ceremonies (<https://japanhouse.illinois.edu/>) and the Krannert Center (<https://krannertcenter.com/>) international art events and music performances.

For larger cities, like Chicago, St. Louis and Indianapolis use metromix, tripadvisor, and other websites to find events and restaurants. In addition, for Chicago check out the events calendar at the website of the Chicago Cultural Alliance (www.chicagoculturalalliance.org/)

Restaurants

While Charleston and Mattoon have a few ethnic restaurants, for more variety and an immersive experience you really should go to a large city. Again, see metromix and tripadvisor and search for restaurants by cuisine. Look for places that offer atmosphere and experience (not just take-out) and different cuisines. Be adventurous! TIP: bring a friend and order the sampler plate. Also, remember that this is not a restaurant review, but an exercise in understanding culture.



Religious Services

A religious service is a wonderful way to experience a different culture/belief system. Major cities will offer a wide variety of religious services. The pluralism project has a useful database (<http://pluralism.org/profiles/>) that you can use to search for religious organizations (TIP: enter “Illinois” in search box and then sort by tradition). Or just use google. If you really must go somewhere local, try a denomination or faith that is *very* different from your own. Be sure to contact the appropriate group or place of worship first about attending, and as always, respect their beliefs, wishes and restrictions. If this isn’t for you, don’t do it.