

# Introduction to Anthropology, Spring 2014

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SOAN 110-00  
Days & Time: MWF, 2a  
Location: Lei 236

## Course Description

This course is an introductory survey of the discipline of Anthropology, the study of humankind. Anthropology is a holistic discipline that studies human beings and their behavior in all of its variety and complexity through the concept of culture. It draws on the insights of the natural and social sciences, humanities, and arts to draw conclusions about how human cultures shape and are shaped by historical, environmental, biological, and social processes. The discipline of Anthropology consists of four subfields, which are described as: *Cultural Anthropology* (sometimes also called *Socio-cultural* or *Social Anthropology*), *Biological* or *Physical Anthropology*, *Linguistic Anthropology*, and *Archaeology*.

*Cultural Anthropology* studies humans as meaning-making beings, using a variety of methods to investigate how people living in different societies experience and make sense of their worlds. *Archaeology* is the study of past human societies, primarily through the recovery and analysis of material culture and environmental data of the past. *Biological Anthropology* is the study of the development of the human species. It incorporates bio-cultural studies of human diversity, the ancestry of human species, and the comparative anatomy, behavior, history, and ecology, of historical and present-day primates. *Linguistic Anthropology* is the scientific study of human communication within its sociocultural context. Linguistic Anthropology studies both contemporary languages as well as those of the past.

This course will briefly introduce you to each of these subfields, but will focus primarily on Cultural Anthropology. Topics to be covered in the course include: human evolution; race and human biological diversity; method and theory in cultural anthropology; culture; language; economic systems and globalization; marriage and families; kinship; gender; religion; colonialism & global inequality.

As the instructor of the course, **I reserve the right to make changes to the syllabus based on the needs and progress of class participants.**

## Course Objectives

1. To familiarize participants with the basic content of the discipline of anthropology
2. To familiarize participants with the evolution of humans and the ways in which humans vary biologically.
3. To help participants develop critical thinking and analytical skills.
4. To help participants understand the ways in which culture constructs everyday life.
5. To help participants generate an appreciation for cultural diversity.
6. To help participants understand systems of privilege and oppression both locally and globally.
- 7 To help course participants understand global and local social processes.

## Student Learning Outcomes at the Departmental Level

In the Sociology and Anthropology Department, we have specified five distinct goals for our students. By taking our courses, we hope that you will be able to: (1) understand the nature of human variation and diversity as culturally, historically, and geographically situated; (2) demonstrate knowledge of the main subfields of anthropology and be familiar with key theoretical perspectives and concepts in anthropology; (3) design and execute an anthropologically oriented research project; (4) demonstrate an ability to think holistically, comparatively, and ethically in an effort to address questions of concern to humanity; and, (5) appreciate how anthropological thinking can assist you in your career and in living a well-developed life.

## A Climate of Mutual Respect:

This class will foster free expression, critical investigation, and open discussion of ideas. This means that all of us must help create and sustain an atmosphere of tolerance, civility, and respect for the viewpoints of others. Similarly, we must all learn how to probe, oppose and disagree without resorting to tactics of intimidation, harassment, or personal attack. No one is entitled to harass, belittle, or discriminate against another on the basis of race, religion, ethnicity, age, gender, national origin, or sexual preference. Still we will not be silenced by the difficulty of fruitfully discussing politically sensitive issues that arise in the course content.

## Course Format

Course format will vary but will typically include mini-lectures from the instructor at the beginning of class followed by panel discussions, small group work, or the screening of a film. Each week students will post a short reflection Moodle post demonstrating their ability to connect the course concepts and themes to the reading. Writing short reflection Moodle posts helps to facilitate class discussions and our understanding of the course materials.

## Course Requirements

Completing the reading and mastering the information contained in the assigned texts; Panel Discussion Assignment; 2 Response Papers (2-3 pages each); Final Concept Essay (5-8 pages); Moodle Post Assignment and participation in class discussions; and attendance.

## Course Readings

All students are encouraged to have their own copies of the core texts and electronic reading assignments. Please prepare the readings for the days they are shown on the class schedule below. Please bring the assigned texts with you to class on the appropriate days. **Students in this course should expect to read at least 200 pages of course-related text each week. Students should anticipate spending a minimum of 12 hours per week on reading assignments.**

These texts are available at the Carleton Bookstore.

- Basso, Keith H. *Wisdom Sits in Places: Landscape and Language Among The Western Apache*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press. 1996.
- Garcia, Angela. *The Pastoral Clinic: Addiction and Dispossession along the Rio Grande*. Berkeley: University of California. 2010.
- Moore, Jerry D. *Visions of Culture: Introduction to Anthropology 4<sup>th</sup> Edition*. Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press. 2012.

- Shostak, Majorie. *Nisa: The Life and Words of a !Kung Woman*. Boston: Harvard University Press. 2000.

Electronic readings available on Moodle in the course readings folder, as assigned.

### **Attendance and Participation**

*Attendance:* Class attendance is mandatory and roll will be taken. If you will be absent for religious holiday observances, sports activities, College related obligations, or other legitimate reasons, please make sure I know ahead of time. You are allowed one unexcused absence during the term. Any additional unexcused absences will result in the loss of one point for each absence from your final grade for the course. You are responsible for acquiring class notes for missed classes.

*Participation:* At the college level the role of the instructor is to construct a context for learning. Knowledge is not transmitted from professor to student, but rather actively created during classroom encounters. Learning—and the development of the course—depends on student engagement. Participation in class discussion is a critical component of the course's success. The more engaged you are in class discussions, the more you will learn and grow from this course. Discussions and in-class activities depend on you reading the assignments. I will look for evidence of you having read the assigned texts.

You should come to class prepared to engage your fellow classmates in critical dialogue, raise thought provoking questions, and provide interesting insight that could add to others' understanding. Participation will count as part of your grade in this course as noted below.

1. Attendance and preparedness:
  - Be present and punctual
  - Books/articles should be out at the beginning of class
  - Disengage laptops: front row only, if necessary for notes
  - Power down cell-phones. **Any cell-phone use during class will be counted as an absence.**
2. Participation during class:
  - Note taking
  - Listening to your colleagues
  - Contributing comments based on the reading
  - Giving your classmates a chance to speak
3. Integrating:
  - Carrying over themes between classes
  - Connecting coursework from other classes
  - Making connections to events and activities outside of class
  - Demonstrating attentiveness through written work

Prior to each meeting students will post a question, comment, or speaking point on Moodle. These notes should be related to the readings and help promote further understanding of the materials under consideration. Moodle posts are due 24 hours before our class meeting. You do not have to post on the days that we have panel discussions.

### Writing Assignments

You will have three writing assignments: Moodle posts (one each week), Response Paper (x2), and Concept Essay. All assignments are due on the day assigned by 1:00pm. *All assignments must be submitted electronically on Moodle unless otherwise instructed.*

### Formal Oral Presentation

Every student will serve as a panel discussant once this term. More information about the panel discussant assignment can be found on Moodle in the separate handout.

### Carleton College Disability Policy

Carleton College is committed to providing reasonable accommodations to students with documented disabilities. Students requesting accommodation must place documentation on file with the Coordinator of Disability Services who will then inform faculty about student accommodations. College policy is that faculty can and should wait for this notification before making course modifications for students. Disability Services contact information: Andy Christensen, Coordinator of Disability Services – email: [anchrist@carleton.edu](mailto:anchrist@carleton.edu); phone: ext. 4080.

### Academic Integrity:

Students are directed to the Carleton College Handbook concerning issues of standards and policies that govern conduct at the College in general as well as in this course. Please pay close attention to the rules concerning plagiarism, and consult me during office hours if you have any questions about what does or does not constitute plagiarism.

**How to contact LaToya:** During my office hours (listed at the top of the syllabus) I have set aside time to meet and talk with students. Feel free to drop by in groups or as individuals to ask questions about the readings and class discussions; talk to me about your individual projects, assignments, and grades; and/or any problems or concerns about your performance or difficulties in relation to class. You can also bring your personal passions about anthropology to me and I would be happy to help you explore them. If the listed times conflict with other commitments in your schedule, please email me for an appointment. I myself occasionally have conflicts and cannot be in my office at those times. In the event of this, I will make an announcement in class and/or post a note on my door. Finally, **I use email for brief communications and appointment setting, but not to carry on extended conversations.** When you want to discuss your grade, your paper topic, attendance concerns, and so forth, please schedule a meeting.

### Course Grading Distribution:

Panel Discussion Assignment: 20 percent
Panel Response Papers: 20 percent each (x2)
Weekly Moodle Responses: 10 percent
Concept Essay: 30 Percent

**The course schedule is on Moodle**