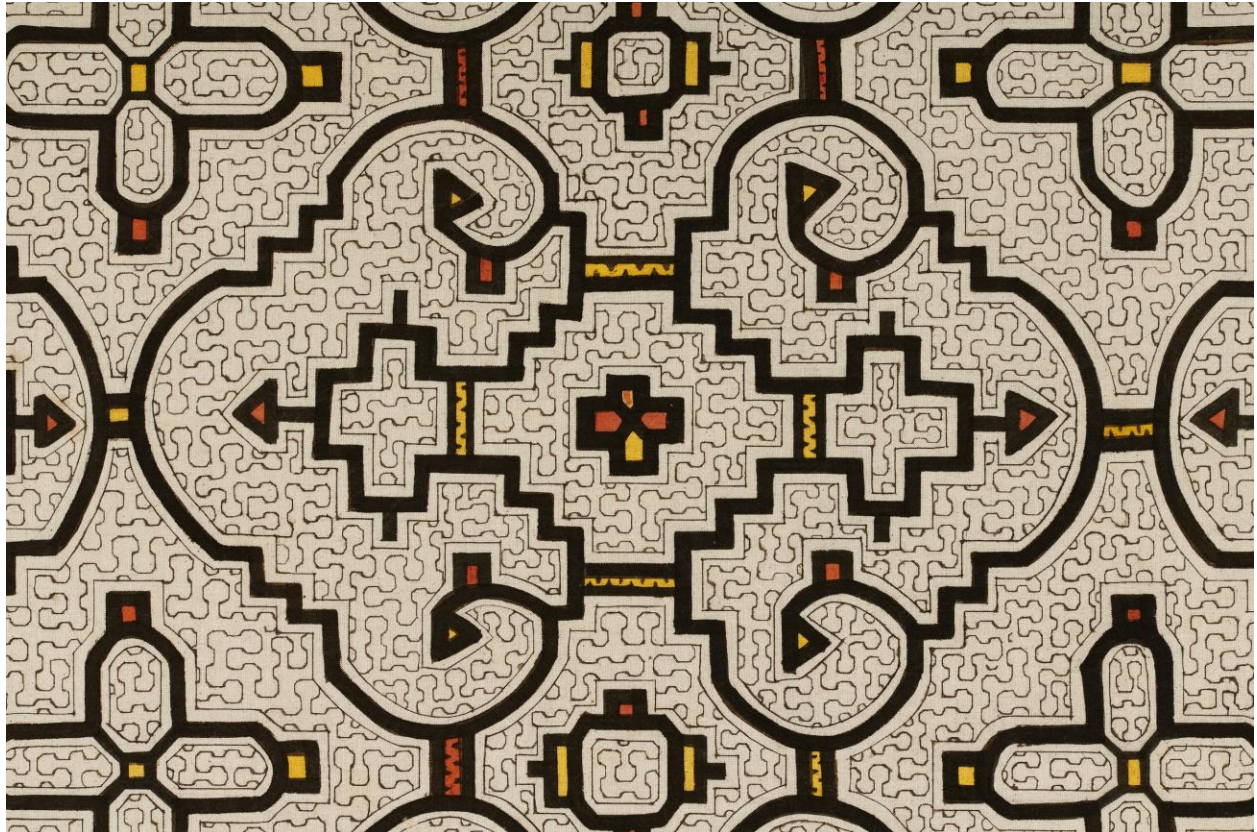


INTRODUCTION TO CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY ANTH 1140-501
SYLLABUS (Online 8-week session, Fall 2023/H1)

Instructor: Dr. Tressa Berman Contact: tberman@unm.edu
Office Hours: By appointment via Zoom. Please email me for appointment



Required Textbooks and Course Materials (available in bookstore and UNMV Reserve or can be purchased online, e.g., “Used” on [amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com) or other online vendor. Some materials available as online links and PDFs to be posted.)

1. *Core Concepts in Cultural Anthropology* (Lavenda and Schultz) [Book; PDF]
2. *Essentials of Cultural Anthropology: A toolkit for a global age* (Guest) [Book]
3. *Perspectives: An Open Introduction to Cultural Anthropology*, Eds, Brown, McIlwraith, Tubulle de Gonzalez (Open Source link to be provided, online)
4. Additional articles, films and case studies to be posted online in Course, as assigned

Course Content:

This course introduces students to core concepts in anthropological theory and method in order to better understand and engage with inter-cultural dialogue in our global world. We will look at the historical roots of ethnographic approaches in the context of their times, to contemporary investigations of how world systems affect local culture and these intertwined relations. Specifically, we will explore social and cultural differences and similarities through various lenses—kinship and social organization, political economy, religion and ceremony, sex and gender, social inequality, art, media and material culture—through focused case studies of diverse cultural groups.

Course Learning Objectives (CLO):

CLO1. To comprehend the development of cultural anthropology in the context of its times, i.e., the history of anthropological theories or “core concepts” of the field

CLO2. To learn the difference between a "theory" and a "method" -- and how they inform one another in anthropological fieldwork. How can we apply what we learn?

CLO3. To critically analyze the inter-connectedness of world systems in order to recognize human causes and conditions to global challenges of today (e.g., resource extraction and waste, causes of climate change and mitigating interventions, cultural nationalism and political power)

Class Schedule and Topics:

TOPIC 1: CORE CONCEPTS IN CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY

[Week 1. 8/21 – 8/27 The “Culture Concept”](#)

Introduction to Theory and Methods of Cultural Anthropology

Readings: Chapters 1 and 2, (Lavenda and Schultz)

Weekly Discussion Questions posted to Discussion forum

Assignment: Introduce yourself to the class. What you hope to learn from the course, and what about “cultural anthropology” attracts you to the subject?

Week 2. 8/28—9/4 Applying Ethnographic Methods to the Study of Culture

Readings: Chapters 12 and Appendix (Lavenda and Schultz)

Supplemental reading: Perspectives: An Open Source Introduction to Cultural Anthropology (Link uploaded)

Assignment: Weekly Discussion Question and assigned dyads (group of two)

TOPIC 2: CASE STUDIES AND ETHNOGRAPHIC METHODS

Week 3. 9/5-9/10 Case Studies as Ethnography

Reading: *Essentials of Cultural Anthropology* (Guest): Ch. 3, pp. 76-87

Assignment: Select a “core concept” chapter of your choice from the assigned text (Lavenda and Schultz) (e.g., Religion; Kinship; Language) and write a one-page paper (approx. 500 words) on how anthropologists define and study that aspect of human society using a case study of your choice as an example. (Additional essay guidelines will be posted.)

- Discuss in student groups (TBA) the core concept you selected, and share with each other what you learned (e.g., about Kinship; Language; Politics) from your case study

Week 4. 9/11 — 9/17 Ethnographic Film as Methodology

Assignment: Choose one of the videos (from links to be provided) and discuss which “core concepts” or methods of anthropological fieldwork or documentation the community study highlights. (Approx. 2 paragraphs).

Week 5. 9/18—9/24 Cultural Diversity in Contemporary Societies: Decolonizing Methodologies

Supplemental Readings from *Perspectives* (Brown, et. al.)

Excerpts: *Indigenous Methodologies* and others (will be made available)

- **Mid-term EXAM: Due Friday, 9/22 11:59 pm**

TOPIC 3: GLOBAL SYSTEMS, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

Week 6: 9/25—10/1 Social construction of gender: social inequalities of nation-state building

Chapter 10, *Perspectives* (Brown et. Al.)

Chapter 6, Lavenda & Schultz

Excerpt: *Mapping Feminist Anthropology*

Week 7: 10/2—10/8: Intersectionality, Environmental Racism and Environmental Justice

Ch. 9 Race and Racism (Brown et. al.)

Culture and Sustainability (Brown et. al.) pp. 357- 36

Chapter 5: *Essentials of Cultural Anthropology*, and pp. 169-172 (Guest)

Cultural Survival article (TBA)

Assignment:* Choose an article from a list to be provided that you feel best describes a case study of how race and ethnicity are factors in state-level policies of environmental degradation, chemical waste or other land use patterns that disrupt land-based or community economies. Use the concepts introduced in Brown et. al. and Guest to show how race and ethnicity are factors in the case study you select. Guidelines and questions will be posted in the Discussion section of the course. Article selections will be posted from *Cultural Survival Quarterly* (online)

Note: This assignment will form the basis of your final exam essay portion

TOPIC 4: SYMBOLIC ANTHROPOLOGY, ARTS & MEDIA

Week 8: 10/9—10/11 (Final Week of Class):

Chapters 3 and 4: Language, Religion and Worldview, pp. 30-37; 50-56 (Lavenda & Schultz)

“Bad Aboriginal Art,” (Michaels), Ch. 5 in Berman (on reserve and to be posted)

Digital Anthropology, Geismar and Knox, eds. (Excerpt to be posted; and available on Kindle)

- ***FINAL EXAM DUE: Friday, 10/11, 11:59pm*** Essay (see Week 7) plus short answers.