



INTRODUCTION TO CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY ANTH 1140 SYLLABUS (Online 8-week session, FALL 2024/H1)

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

Required Textbooks and Course Materials

1. *Perspectives: An Open Introduction to Cultural Anthropology*, Eds, Brown, McIlwraith, Tubulle de Gonzalez (NOTE: This is an Open Source PDF to be provided online. See Course Materials)
2. *Cultural Anthropology. A Toolkit for a Global Age*. 4E (4th Edition). Kenneth Guest. WW Norton, 2023. NOTE: This book is available as an e-book via RedShelf in Canvas. You may also purchase a hard copy via an online vendor, or read and copy chapters at the UNM-V Library Reserve desk. Instructions for how to access Redshelf will be posted in the course Announcements the first week of class.
3. Additional articles, films and case studies to be posted online in Course, as assigned. NOTE: Instructor reserves the right to modify assignments as needed

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 Modules/Topics:

MODULE 1/TOPIC 1: CORE CONCEPTS IN CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY

[Week 1. The “Culture Concept”](#)

Introduction to Theory and Methods of Cultural Anthropology

Readings: Chapter 1 through p. 25 in Perspectives

Weekly Discussion Questions posted to Discussion forum

Assignment:

1. Introduce yourself to the class. a) What do you hope to learn from the course, and b) what about the subject of “cultural anthropology” attracts you to the subject?
2. Answer questions on readings (To be posted)

Week 2. Applying Ethnographic Methods to the Study of Culture

Readings: Chapter 1 and Chapter 2 (Guest Text) pages to be assigned

Chapter 2, Perspectives (excerpts)

Assignment: Weekly Discussion Question will posted: Theory and Method

MODULE 2/TOPIC 2: FIELDWORK AND ETHNOGRAPHIC METHODS

Week 3. Case Studies as Ethnography

Reading: *Essentials of Cultural Anthropology* (Guest): Ch. 3, pages as assigned

Assignment: This will be a one-page assignment to apply a “core concept” to a case study. Essay guidelines will be posted at the opening of Module 2.

Week 4. Case Studies continued

Case Study Essay Due at end of Week 4

Week 5. Cultural Diversity in Contemporary Societies: Decolonizing Methodologies

Supplemental Readings as assigned (*Perspectives; Decolonizing Methodologies*)

MidTerm Exam - DUE AT CLOSE OF MODULE 2

MODULE 3/TOPIC 3: GLOBAL SYSTEMS, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

Week 6: Social construction of gender: social inequality

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

Chapter 7 and 8, Guest text, pages to be assigned

Excerpt: *Mapping Feminist Anthropology*

Assignment: Defining and distinguishing between ‘sex’ and ‘gender’: Definitions and short answer Quiz

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:* Guidelines and study questions in preparation for FINAL

MODULE 4/TOPIC 4: SYMBOLIC ANTHROPOLOGY, ARTS & MEDIA

Week 8: (Final Week of Class):

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

Guest: Chapter on Art & Media (Pages to be assigned)

Optional article (uploaded): from *Art as Technology*, by Arnold Rubin

- ***FINAL EXAM DUE at close of Module 4. Questions will be posted in ASSIGNMENT space for Upload**