

**Anthropology 302-Spring 2013**  
**INTRODUCTION TO CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY**  
 Lecture Class Time: Monday, Wednesday 9:00-10:00am ART 1.102  
 Weekly Section Meetings: SAC 4.118 As Scheduled

**Instructor:**

**Dr. Suzanne Seriff**

Office: SAC 4.126 (24th and Speedway)

Office Hours: MW 11am-12:00pm or by appointment

Phone: 471-0816

[sseriff@mail.utexas.edu](mailto:sseriff@mail.utexas.edu)

NOTE: Please address your instructor as Dr. Seriff or Professor Seriff in formal correspondence via email or in person. And don't forget to include your name and your section on your correspondence to the instructor or your TA.

**Teaching Assistants and Discussion Sections:**

Unique#	Classroom	Day/Time	T.A.	E-mail	Office Hours /Location
31030	SAC 4.118	TH 8:30-9:30am	Elvia Mendoza	eamendoza@utexas.edu	9:30-10:30 TH SAC 5.114
31035	SAC 4.118	F 9-10AM	Mitsy Chanel Blot	mitsy.chanelblot@gmail.com	
31040	SAC 4.118	M 11am-12AM	Derrick Washington	washingtondee@sbcglobal.net	W 10:15-11:15; SAC 5.114
31045	SAC 4.118	W 11am-12pm	Mitsy Chanel Blot	mitsy.chanelblot@gmail.com	M 10:30-11:30; W 12-1; by apt. SAC 5.114
31050	SAC 4.118	F 12-1pm	Arnold Farias	farias@utexas.edu	Th 4-5; F 1-2 SAC 5.114
31055	SAC 4.118	W 1-2pm	Lynn Selby	lseyby@utexas.edu	M 1-3; BEL 213B
31060	SAC 4.118	W 3-4pm	Alix Chapman	alixandrew@gmail.com	
31065	SAC 4.118	TH 3-4pm	Arnold Farias	farias@utexas.edu	Th 4-5; F 1-2 SAC 5.114
31070	SAC 4.118	W 2-3pm	Lynn SELby	lseyby@utexas.edu	M 1-3; BEL 213B
31075	SAC 4.118	W 4-5pm	Alix Chapman	alixandrew@gmail.com	
31080	SAC 4.118	TH 4-5pm	Derrick Washington	washingtondee@sbcglobal.net	W 10:15-11:15; SAC 5.114
31085	SAC 4.118	T 5-6pm	Elvia Mendoza	eamendoza@utexas.edu	9:30-10:30 TH SAC 5.114

**Course Description:**

This course is an introduction to Cultural Anthropology. It is designed to introduce students to the central concepts, theories, and techniques employed by cultural anthropologists to explore the social and cultural dimensions of human experience. The course is organized around central questions in the study of human societies, including: the anthropological idea of progress; language and symbolism; gender and race; power and resistance; nationalism; and modernization, globalization and post-modernism.

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This course carries the flag for Cultural Diversity in the United States. Cultural Diversity courses are designed to increase your familiarity with the variety and richness of the American cultural experience. You should therefore expect a substantial portion of your grade to come from assignments covering the practices, beliefs, and histories of at least one U.S. cultural group that has experienced persistent marginalization.

The instructor's aim is for students to emerge from the course with an enhanced understanding of their own experiences as social and cultural beings, an awareness of the diversity and complexity of cultures and societies, an awareness of the historical structures of power that shape both the practice and representation of culture, and an awareness of various approaches to communication, interpretation, and representation across cultures. The development of critical and analytical thinking skills is also a central aim of this course. Readings, lectures, group activities, and films all work together to develop these skills and equip students to better understand, interpret and navigate the complexities of distinct cultures and societies, including their own.

### **Course Requirements and Grading:**

Success in this course involves mastering both the concepts and the methodology of the cultural anthropologist. Thus, students will be asked to do certain things as well as display certain knowledge. As this is a class based on active participation of all students, students can expect a steady diet of in-class activities, short writing assignments, and week-by-week forms of evaluation. Students are expected to attend all scheduled classes and section meetings—including media presentations and guest lectures.

There will be two in-class tests for this course (a midterm and an end of term test), two take-home essay tests over the two ethnographies we read, and two additional written assignments. Tests may be made up only with the instructor's permission (which will be given only in the case of documented illnesses or emergencies). Written exercises and take home tests are due on or before their due dates and will not be accepted after the published due date in the syllabus. All written assignments must be turned in IN PERSON to your TA—NO emailed assignments will be accepted!

**PLEASE NOTE: THERE WILL BE AN EXAM GIVEN DURING OUR FINAL EXAM SLOT. DO NOT SCHEDULE A PLANE TICKET OR LEAVE TOWN BEFORE THIS DATE!**

**CLASS LECTURES:** Students are expected to attend class regularly. Exercises and discussions in section meetings will assume you have heard the lecture materials and completed the assigned readings. Students missing a class will be responsible for consulting with their T.A. about viewing any video materials used in class.

**ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION: (25%):** Every student will be assigned a section with obligatory meetings each week. Attendance will be taken, and regular exercises will be submitted and discussed in section. Attendance and participation—

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through in class discussion, weekly discussion blogs, and class presentations-- will constitute 25% of your semester grade.

Most weeks, your instructor and/or TA will formulate a question/prompt in the discussion section of your blackboard which relates to your readings/topic for the week. There will be ten blogs total, which will each count 1 % of your final grade. You will get a point for turning the blog in on time; no points for a late or missed blog. All blog entries are due by 5pm the day before your section.

Attendance is worth 10% of your grade. Just showing up each week to section is thus worth 10% of your grade. (Each unexcused absence will count for 2 points off of your final grade)

The final 5% of your Section Meeting grade is based on your in-class participation. This includes your contributions to section discussion, formulation of interesting and relevant questions, and leading of class discussion.

The section you are assigned is listed on your registration materials, and is also available through the Blackboard. You must attend the section for which you are officially enrolled. If you need to change sections for any reason, you must go through the University administrative system for changing courses.

FILMS: The written text materials and ethnographies will be supplemented with a variety of ethnographic and other films and media clips. These will be shown during class, and most are also available for viewing in the UGL Audio-Visual Collection (FAC, 3<sup>rd</sup> floor). Some are only available in the Department of Anthropology and you must arrange with your T.A. to view these if you need to do so outside of class.

TESTS (30%): This portion of your grade consists of your midterm and end of term exam. The midterm exam will be given on a regular class day, and the final exam will be given during the regular three hour final exam period. The course final will only cover material from the second half of the course (after spring break). Each test (the midterm and the final) will include both multiple choice questions, fill in the blank questions, and short answer questions. Questions will include material covered in the assigned readings, lectures, discussions, and films from class. Make-up exams will only be given in the event of a serious illness or emergency, for which official documentation is required. Each in-class exam is worth 15% of your final grade.

TAKE-HOME ESSAYS (20%): There will also be two 2-page written take-home essays during the course of the semester, which will specifically test you on your understanding of the ethnographies we have read in class. Each essay is worth 10% of your overall course grade.

WRITTEN EXERCISES (25%): Two written ethnographic exercises will be assigned during the semester. Each should be between 4-5 pages in length. These must be typed, double spaced and brought to your section meeting on or before the due date posted in

your syllabus. The first exercise is worth 10% of your overall course grade; the second assignment is worth 15% of your overall grade.

**GRADING:** Grades for each assignment will carry the following weight toward your final grade for the course. Your final grade will be based on the University's +/- system of grading:

Midterm Exam	15%
End of Semester Exam	15%
Written Exercises	25%
Take-Home Essays	20%
Section Attendance	10%
Discussion Blogs	10%
Discussion in Section	5%

### **Required Course Readings**

Required readings include three textbooks, as well as a small number of articles or book chapters. All required textbooks will be available in the University Co-op Bookstore. All required articles will be available on Blackboard. The required textbooks include:

- (1) Richard H. Robbins, Cultural Anthropology: A Problem-Based Approach. 5<sup>th</sup> edition. Itasca, IL: F.E. Peacock Publishers, Inc. 2009. (If you have an earlier edition or a later edition, you are responsible for making sure the reading is the same)
- (2) Elizabeth Warnock Fernea: Guests of the Sheik: An Ethnography of an Iraqi Village. Anchor Books, 1989.
- (3) Steve Striffler, Chicken: The Dangerous Transformation of America's Favorite Food, Yale University Press 2007.

### **UNIVERSITY POLICIES**

**Scholastic Dishonesty:** Students are required to do their own research and work. All students are responsible for knowing the standards of academic honesty: <http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/scholdis.php>. Plagiarism, using research without citations or using a created production without crediting a source, is forbidden; will result in a grade of zero for the assignment or for the class, or even expulsion from the university, depending on the severity of the plagiarism. This applies to any non-credited websites as well as written sources!

**According to the Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary, to "plagiarize" means**

- to steal and pass off (the ideas or words of another) as one's own.
- to use (another's production) without crediting the source.
- to commit literary theft.

- to present as new and original an idea or product derived from an existing source.

In other words, plagiarism is an act of fraud. It involves both stealing someone else's work and lying about it afterward.

*All of the following are considered plagiarism:*

- turning in someone else's work as your own.
- copying words or ideas from someone else without giving credit, including from a website.
- failing to put a quotation in quotation marks.
- giving incorrect information about the source of a quotation.
- changing words but copying the sentence structure of a source without giving credit.
- copying so many words or ideas from a source that it makes up the majority of your work, whether you give credit or not.
  
- Most cases of plagiarism can be avoided, however, by citing sources. Simply acknowledging that certain material has been borrowed, and providing your readers with the information necessary to find that source, is usually enough to prevent plagiarism. Web site for more information:
- <http://www.lib.utexas.edu/services/instruction/learningmodules/plagiarism>

**Documented Disability Statement:** Students with disabilities may request appropriate academic accommodations from the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, Services for Students with Disabilities at 471-6259 (voice) or 232-2937 (video phone) or <http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd>. Students need to inform the instructor and the teaching assistant(s) about their disability right at the beginning of the semester.

**Incompletes:** A grade of "I" is only given in cases of **documented** emergency or special circumstances late in the semester, provided that you have been making satisfactory progress. A grade contract must be completed and the criteria adhered to, in order to fulfill the requirements to take an incomplete. Please note that you must have some written documentation of your reasons for the incomplete—either from a parent, a counselor, a doctor, or some other official in charge of your mental or physical welfare.

**Withdrawals:** Students are responsible for finding out the appropriate dates for dropping the course and/or withdrawing without penalties.

**Use of Blackboard and Electronic Reserves**

The course has a Blackboard website which will be demonstrated during the first week of the class and in your section. It includes the syllabus, any instructions or announcements to students, an electronic gradebook and access to all required article readings. Students in the class are responsible for checking this Blackboard site regularly, which you can access by clicking on “Blackboard” under “Popular Sites” on the upper left side of the

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UT home page. Students are also responsible for regularly checking the e-mail account that is registered with the University. All e-mails to the professor or teaching assistants should either be done through Blackboard, or include “ANT 302” in the subject line; otherwise they may inadvertently be missed. Your weekly discussion blogs will be posted on the Blackboard account for your individual section (by unique number). All other communication—including the syllabus, any announcements, assignments, and class readings, will be found under a Blackboard account that has the word MASTER in it for our semester: (sp13) ANT 302 MASTER.

## **Schedule of Lectures and Reading Assignments**

### **Part I: Interpretations of the Concept of Culture**

Week One: January 14<sup>th</sup> and 16th. Introduction to the Course; Introduction to Cultural Anthropology

Introduction to the course, instructor, teaching assistants.

**NOTE: Your sections WILL meet this first week.** We will meet as a class all together in the lecture hall on Mon and Wed, January 14<sup>th</sup> and 16th. You will also meet with your section this week, according to the schedule on the syllabus. Each section has been assigned a different unique number. You can tell which section you are in from the unique number on your course registration (or on Blackboard). Section meeting times and places are listed in this syllabus on page 1 and on the Blackboard web site. Your assignment this week is to become familiar with the web site. You **MUST** attend the section with the unique number and time you have been officially assigned. If you attend a different section, you will be counted as absent, even if you are physically present and turning in work in a different section, and lose 25% of your grade!

Week Two: January 23rd : Introduction to Cultural Anthropology

What is anthropology? What is culture?

**NOTE: There will be no class on January 21 due to Martin Luther King Day Holiday; If you have section on Mondays, you will skip this week’s section as well as lecture.**

Readings: Robbins, Chapter 1: “How can people begin to understand beliefs and behaviors that are different from their own?”

Dick Hebdidge, “From Culture to Hegemony” PDF Article available on Blackboard (sp13 ANT 302 MASTER) under Course Documents

Week Three: 28, 30th: The Anthropological Method

What is participant observation? What is ethnography?

Readings: Robbins: Chapter 1: 15-36

Fernea:, Guests of the Sheik, Part I, pgs. 3-104

Week Four: February 4<sup>th</sup>, and 6<sup>th</sup>: The Idea of “Progress” in Anthropology

How has the idea of “progress” and “evolution” shaped the discipline of anthropology – for better or worse--and our understanding of cultural difference?

Readings: Robbins, Ch. 2 (Intro and Questions 2.1, 2.2, 2.3)  
Fernea: Guests of the Sheik Part II, pgs. 105-172

Film Excerpt: *Cannibal Tours* ( available for makeup UGL VIDCLASS 3.138)

**First Written Exercise: Reading/Interpreting a Hollywood Film. Due Date: Week of Feb 25-29<sup>th</sup> in Section**

Week Five: February 11<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup>: Culture and Communication: Part I

Language and Metaphor : Does Language Determine How we Think?

Readings: Robbins: Ch. 4: Problem 4-Question 4.1: How Does Language Affect the Meanings People Assign to Experience?  
Fernea: Parts III and IV, pgs. 173-268

Film Excerpt: American Dialects

Week Six: Feb 18<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>: Culture and Communication: Part II

Symbolic Action: Ritual

Readings: Robbins: Ch. 4: Question 4.2 How Does Symbolic Action Reinforce a Particular View of the World? Pgs. 134-151  
Fernea: Parts V and VI

Week Seven: Feb. 25<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup>.: Cultural Categories and Social Identities

Question of Language, Gender and Race

Readings Robbins: Ch. 6: Problem 6: Intro; Question 6.1 and Question 6.2  
Fernea and Fernea: Symbolizing Roles: Behind the Veil (Blackboard article about Veils and Veiling)

Film Excerpt: *The Veiled Revolution*

**First Written Exercise Due in Section: Reading/Interpreting a Hollywood Film**

Week Eight: March 4<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> : Understanding Culture; Review

**3/4 Take Home Midterm Essay Topic Announced: Guests of the Sheik (Due: 3/6 in class)**

**Note: No late essays accepted. No emailed essays accepted.  
Midterm Review in Class**

**3/6 In Class Midterm: Bring #2 Pencil**

**Week Nine: Spring Break: March 11th-15th**

**Part 2: Culture, Power, and the Social Order**

Week Ten: March 18<sup>th</sup> and 20th: Starting at Home: Power Relations; Family Relations  
Writing Against the Trope of “The Oppressed Woman”

Readings: Robbins: Ch. 5 : Patterns of Family Relation: Problem 5: Question 5.1, 5.2, 5.4  
Blackboard reading: Writing Women’s Worlds: Bedouin Stories by Lila Abu-Lughod: Preface, Introduction, Ch. 1: Patrilineality

Week Eleven March 25<sup>th</sup> and March 27th: Anthropology in a Globalized World  
What is globalization and what does it have to do with me?

Readings: Robbins: Chapter 3 (Note: This chapter is new to the 5<sup>th</sup> edition of the Robbins textbook. )  
Sidney Mintz, Sweetness and Power: Blackboard excerpt chs. 1-2

Film: Film: Ilha das Flores

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E3AyWcptRx0&feature=related>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=endscreen&NR=1&v=5yl7STDk5nQ>

**Second Writing Assignment: Commodity Chain. Due Date: Week of April 16th**

Week Twelve: April 1<sup>st</sup> and 3rd: Globalization in our Own Backyard: An Anthropological View

Readings: Robbins: Chapter 7: Questions 7.1, 7.2, 7.3,  
Stiffler: Part I: A New Bird

Week Thirteen: April 8th-10th: Poverty: A Class Issue; A Race Issue?

Readings: Stiffler: Part II: A New Worker

Film: Mississippi Chicken. DVD 9550 Benson Latin American Collection

*The film takes the viewer into the lives of a Latin American immigrant population in a small poultry town in Mississippi. It explores the ongoing difficulties they face while documenting the increasing attempts by community organizers to change the situation.*

Week Fourteen: April 15th-17th: The Culture of Power and Resistance

How do people adapt to, rebel against, or subvert the influences of social hierarchy

Readings: Robbins: Ch. 7, Question 7.4

Media Presentation: From Bricks to Bricolage: Tactics of Subversion in the Art of the Workplace

**Second Writing Assignment: Due Date in Sections this Week**

Week Fifteen: April 22<sup>nd</sup> and -24th: The Politics of Cultural Representation: Museums as Sites of Civic Engagement

Cultural Representation in a Museum Context: How do Museums represent and/or misrepresent ethnic communities and global issues facing these communities around the world?

Readings: Suzanne Seriff: Immigrant Voices from the Forgotten Gateway  
(Blackboard article)

Mike Wallace: "Boat People; Immigration History at the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island.

Week Sixteen: April 29<sup>th</sup> and-May 1st: Summary and Conclusion

Review for Final Exam: Time and Place TBD. Exam will cover material from second half of course.