

**Spring 2017 Anthropology 2F03E Cultural Anthropology
6:30- 9:30 pm Tuesdays and Thursdays in LWR 1055**

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Office Hours: Tuesdays 4:00-6:00 pm
and by appointment

Course Description:

This course is designed to familiarize students with the strengths of cultural anthropology, including:

- a commitment to **holism** in understanding human behaviour, rather than selecting out a single aspect of life (for instance, the economy) and studying it as if it existed in isolation, rather than as part of complex lives
- **positional thinking**, i.e. that by learning enough about other people, other societies, and other ways of life we are able to imagine and understand points of view that come from being in positions other than our own
- critical **self-reflection** and **comparison**, i.e. that learning about ways of life, practices, and societies different from our own forces us to ask questions about why we do things the way we do; this can be a significant source of innovation
- **ethnographic methods** of field-based research and description, i.e. a commitment to understanding human life by being part of the everyday context in which it takes place, and the belief that readers gain significant insights when we communicate as much of this context as possible.

This course encourages critical reasoning and analytic skills, active listening and reading skills. This includes getting comfortable with thinking theoretically. Theories are working explanations of aspects of the world; thus to think with and about theory is to identify what the basis of different explanations are, to understand the mechanics of persuasion, to be able to identify and articulate why you agree with an explanation or not, etc. Building on core concepts of anthropology studied in first year courses; students engage in advancing their knowledge throughout the course. This course is also organized around an engagement with theories, theorists and ethnographies. Students will learn how to “read” and create ethnographic writing from a critical perspective.

Course Text:

Perspectives: An Open Invitation to Cultural Anthropology
<http://www.perspectivesanthro.org/>

Grading:

Mid-Term: Essay Exam **40%**

Final: Multiple Choice Questions **60%**

Avenue to Learn will be used to serve as the method of communication for this course. Summarized Lecture Materials will be posted on our course Avenue **AFTER** each class: PowerPoint presentations will not be posted for use during classes. This course encourages your active participation. We will be in the Active Learning Classroom, and our course will use a combination of lecture on topics, and active student participation sessions.

Important Notes about the Course:

Class cancellations

In the unlikely event of a class cancellation, students will be notified on Avenue to Learn, please check before leaving for class.

Class attendance and preparedness:

Uneven class attendance is *very* likely to have a profound impact on your ability to thrive in the course. Make every possible arrangement to ensure that you are able to attend classes. Ensure that you come fully prepared for class by engaging with the assigned materials.

The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check his/her McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.

Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty consists of misrepresentation by deception or by other fraudulent means and can result in serious consequences, e.g., the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: “Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty”), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university.

It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various kinds of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, Appendix 3, <http://www.mcmaster.ca/policy/Students-AcademicStudies/AcademicIntegrity.pdf>

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

1. Plagiarism, e.g., the submission of work that is not one's own for which other credit has been obtained. (*Insert specific course information, e.g., style guide*)
 2. Improper collaboration in group work. (*Insert specific course information*)
 3. Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.
- (*If applicable*) In this course we will be using a software package designed to reveal plagiarism. Students will be required to submit their work electronically and in hard copy so that it can be checked for academic dishonesty.

FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES E-MAIL COMMUNICATION POLICY

Effective September 1, 2010, it is the policy of the Faculty of Social Sciences that all e-mail communication sent from students to instructors (including TAs), and from students to staff, must originate from the student's own McMaster University e-mail account. This policy protects confidentiality and confirms the identity of the student. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that communication is sent to the university from a McMaster account. If an instructor becomes aware that a communication has come from an alternate address, the instructor may not reply at his or her discretion.

Email Forwarding in MUGSI:

<http://www.mcmaster.ca/uts/support/email/emailforward.html>

*Forwarding will take effect 24-hours after students complete the process at the above link
(Approved at the Faculty of Social Sciences meeting on Tues. May 25, 2010)

MSAF

- The MSAF should be used for medical and non-medical (personal) situations.
- Approval of the MSAF is automatic (i.e. no documentation required)
- Rules governing the MSAF are as follows:
 - The timeframe within which the MSAF is valid has been reduced from 5 days to 3 days.
 - The upper limit for when an MSAF can be submitted has been reduced from 'less than 30%' to 'less than 25%' of the course weight.
 - The 'one MSAF per term' limit is retained.
 - As per the policy, an automated email will be sent to the course instructor, who will determine the appropriate relief. Students must immediately follow up with their instructors. Failure to do so may negate their relief.
- Policy: The MSAF policy can be found in the Undergraduate Calendar under General Academic Regulations > Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work or here: [http://academiccalendars.romcmaster.ca/content.php?catoid=11&navoid=1698#Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work](http://academiccalendars.romcmaster.ca/content.php?catoid=11&navoid=1698#Requests_for_Relief_for_Missed_Academic_Term_Work)

AODA

If you require this information in an alternate/accessible format, please contact Delia Hutchinson at 905-525-9140 extension 24523 or email hutchin@mcmaster.ca

Courtesy in the classroom:

Our demanding course schedule requires your attention, note taking and participation. Please turn off your cell phones, and refrain from non class related web-surfing during lecture.

Week & Date	Tuesday: Lecture	Thursday: Active Engagement
#1: May 2 & 4	Overview of the course content, the use of the course text materials, the expectations of the mid-term and final exams, and an introduction to the active learning classroom. Introductory lecture: <i>Cultural Anthropology and its tools</i> . *Please Note: Course material will be covered tonight, come prepared to start your course work.	Cultural Anthropology and Ethnographic ideas: <i>Cannibal Tours</i> versus <i>Nanook of the North</i>
#2: May 9 & 11	Holism in Understanding human behaviour: ways in which the tools of cultural anthropology (Positional Thinking; Self Reflection and Comparison; Fieldwork) are positioned in ethnographic studies	Positional thinking We will investigate how positional thinking expands ethnographic methods, and why this approach would be used.
#3 May 16 & 18	Reflexivity and World View We will discuss the effect of reflexivity and world view in an ethnographic study.	Who's point of view is the world view? We will investigate the complexity of the world view from participant observation and cultural voice.
#4 May 23 & 25	Mid-Term Essay Exam 40% Location TBA	Ethnographic Methodology: a critical evaluation
#5 May 30 & June 1	Observing relationships: Essentials of life and how this is the foundation of culture	Importance of Life Activities: examining the importance of work, play and rituals
#6 June 6 & 8	Race, Ethnicity and Religion: The overview of how race ethnicity and religion are situated in the study of culture.	Comparison This class will discuss comparative studies and analyze the value and limitations in this approach
#7 June 13 & 15	Reflections on seeing like a Cultural Anthropologist Final Class	Final Multiple Choice Exam 60% Location TBA