

ANTH-121: INTRODUCTION TO CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY

Effective Term

Fall 2025

CC Approval

01/21/2025

AS Approval

02/13/2025

BOT Approval

02/20/2025

COCI Approval

04/16/2025

SECTION A - Course Data Elements

CB04 Credit Status

Credit - Degree Applicable

Discipline

Minimum Qualifications	And/Or
Anthropology (Master's Degree)	

Subject Code

ANTH - Anthropology

Course Number

121

Department

Anthropology (ANTH)

Division

Arts and Humanities (ARAH)

Full Course Title

Introduction to Cultural Anthropology

Short Title

Intro to Cultural Anthropology

CB03 TOP Code

2202.00 - Anthropology

CB08 Basic Skills Status

NBS - Not Basic Skills

CB09 SAM Code

E - Non-Occupational

Rationale

Updating as part of regular review cycle.

SECTION B - Course Description

Catalog Course Description

This introductory course positions culture as a key concept for understanding and engaging with diverse ways of life both internationally and in American communities. Primary anthropological methods and concepts of kinship, gender, ethnicity, race, sexuality, disability, and class will be explored as formative elements of society and culture. Through analyzing the intersections

between global processes and local realities, this class will explore what it means to be "American," as well as to be human, in the contemporary world.

SECTION C - Conditions on Enrollment

Open Entry/Open Exit

No

Repeatability

Not Repeatable

Grading Options

Letter Grade or Pass/No Pass

Allow Audit

Yes

Requisites

Advisory Prerequisite(s)

Eligibility for ENGL-C1000 or appropriate placement.

SECTION D - Course Standards

Is this course variable unit?

No

Units

3.00

Lecture Hours

54.00

Outside of Class Hours

108

Total Contact Hours

54

Total Student Hours

162

Distance Education Approval

Is this course offered through Distance Education?

Yes

Online Delivery Methods

DE Modalities	Permanent or Emergency Only?
Hybrid	Permanent
Entirely Online	Permanent
Online with Proctored Exams	Permanent

SECTION E - Course Content

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon satisfactory completion of the course, students will be able to:	
1.	Analyze the varied contributions of diverse cultural groups and the interplay of global and local processes in shaping the everyday lives of people around the world.
2.	Use evidence-based, holistic approaches to understand a problem or issue rather than relying upon personal opinions or beliefs.

3. Understand the relevance of theories and methods in anthropology that are applicable in many academic fields and real-world employment.

Course Objectives

Upon satisfactory completion of the course, students will be able to:	
1.	Distinguish between ethnocentrism and cultural relativity as responses to cultural diversity using examples from contemporary ethnic groups.
2.	Compare and contrast the major theories and historical roots of cultural anthropology.
3.	Perform the basic qualitative methods of ethnographic fieldwork (interviewing, participant observation, fieldnotes, etc.) and formulate logical conclusions based on data collection and analysis.

Course Content

1. The Scope of Anthropology (for example: historic roots; geographic reach; fieldwork; subfields of anthropology; applied anthropology; theories and methodology).
2. The Concept of Culture (for example: mechanisms of culture change; uses of culture; universality and particularity; elements of culture; types of cultures).
3. Theories and Evidence in Anthropology (for example: characteristics of scientific theory; anthropology as a social science; ethnography; the comparative method; basic vs. applied research; anthropology in public debate).
4. Communication and Language (for example: language origins; structural linguistics; historical linguistics; sociolinguistics; intercultural communication; kinesics; gendered speech patterns).
5. Subsistence Technology (for example: foraging; horticulture; pastoralism; spread and intensification of food production).
6. Economic Systems (for example: systems of exchange and reciprocity; redistribution; stratification; informal economies; division of labor; comparative economic roles of men and women).
7. Sex, Gender, and Culture (for example: sexual orientation; diversity of human sexuality; gender patterns; sexual dimorphism).
8. Marriage and Family (for example: diversity of marriage types; residence patterns; dowry and bride wealth; polygyny and polyandry).
9. Kinship and Descent (for example: kinship structures; kin terms; lineages, clans, chiefdoms; patrilocality; matrilocality).
10. Ethnicity, Identity and Race (for example: ethnicity and social status; prejudice and discrimination; multiculturalism; the biological and cultural dimensions of race, ethnicity, and identity; race and language).
11. Religion and Magic (for example: diversity of belief systems; variation of rituals; spirit possession; healing magic; rites of passage; animism; religion and community).
12. Bodies, the Arts, and Health (for example: concepts of embodiment and adornment; culture and disability; cultural interpretations of aging and death; medical anthropology).
13. Culture Change (for example: diffusion, borrowing, colonialism, enculturation and acculturation; assimilation).
14. Applied Anthropology and Social Problems (for example: development anthropology; non-governmental organizations; studies in poverty and inequality; the role of anthropologists on a global scale).
15. Globalization and Identity (for example: multilocality and the media (Local, Global, "Glocal", etc.); development studies; cyberspace; mobility and speed; rural and urban studies; civil society and rights-based movements; indigenous peoples; migration, immigration, transnationalism, and diasporas).

Methods of Instruction

Methods of Instruction

Types	Examples of learning activities
Lecture	For example, a Socratic-type lecture about theory in anthropology.
Discussion	For example, discuss the challenges of defining the Culture Concept.
Activity	For example, using Quizlet, Blooket, or similar to review important concepts from the textbook(s).
Field Experience	For example, visiting a public location to practice various types of observation techniques (observation, participant observation, slow-looking, concepts of the gaze, etc.).
Field Trips	For example, a trip to the Tulocay cemetery to analyze the symbolism and beliefs expressed through cemetery and mortuary artifacts (gravestones, mausoleums, etc.).
Group Work	For example, a group presentation on the impacts of expose or "disrupter" ethnography (Darkness in El Dorado, Tripping on Utopia, etc.).
Individualized Instruction	For example, a scheduled "1-on-1" meeting with the instructor as a required piece of a larger project.

Visiting Lecturers	For example, guest panels with former anthropology majors/alumni, or a regional anthropologist working with CalTrans in the field of Cultural Resource Management (CRM).
Other	Projects and other appropriate methods as determined by the instructor of record.

Instructor-Initiated Online Contact Types

Announcements/Bulletin Boards
 Chat Rooms
 Discussion Boards
 E-mail Communication
 Telephone Conversations
 Video or Teleconferencing

Student-Initiated Online Contact Types

Chat Rooms
 Discussions
 Group Work

Course design is accessible

Yes

Methods of Evaluation

Methods of Evaluation

Types	Examples of classroom assessments
Exams/Tests	For example, a short essay final exam that addresses major course content and contains embedded questions to improve future testing efforts.
Quizzes	For example, a team-based, multiple choice vocabulary quiz designed in Quizlet.
Projects	For example, a group project that highlights a specific ethnography from an approved list by creating a flyer, wiki, blog, website, or similar online tool that "advertises" the chosen ethnography for future readers.
Portfolios	For example, creating an Interview Portfolio that contains the elements of an ethnographic research project (informed consent, draft questions, fieldnotes, personal reflections, etc.).
Essays/Papers	For example, using data from the article "Body Ritual Among the Nacirema," practice making the familiar strange using Miner's examples as a guide. Write a two-page essay that analyzes your own daily behaviors through this cultural lens.
Oral Presentations	For example, an oral presentation about a local, non-profit, culture-based organization's work (interpreted broadly).
Homework	For example, a mapping exercise where students can practice how to read maps critically and effectively.
Other	Field trip reports, media analysis, and additional methods of assessment as determined by the instructor of record.

Assignments

Reading Assignments

Reading assignments may include selections from textbooks, research studies, news articles, materials handed out in class (or online for online/hybrid courses), and other relevant supplemental materials as needed.

For example:

1. Read the "Introduction" section of Scheper-Hughes' *Death Without Weeping*, paying special attention to the research methods she intends to use in her study.
2. Read the Code of Ethics of the Association for Medical Anthropology to explore the special ethical issues involved in the cultural study of health and healing.
3. Read the supplemental article about the role of NAGPRA (the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act) in galleries, libraries, archives, and museums.

Writing Assignments

Writing assignments require critical thinking to address the readings, lectures, films, and related course activities (field trips, guest lectures, etc.).

For example:

1. Read the article on aging in China in your reader and answer the following question: "How do you feel about the status of the elderly in America today?" Do your views coincide or conflict with the author's perspective?
2. After viewing the film *Globalization and Women*, write a short essay on the advantages and disadvantages of globalization as depicted in the film. Include your personal viewpoint on globalization today.
3. Using data from Miner's article "Body Ritual Among the Nacirema," choose one familiar aspect of your daily life and make it strange, writing in the style of Miner's article. What are the symbols and practices associated with your activity? By analyzing this behavior in an "unfamiliar" way, do you learn anything about American culture in general?

Other Assignments

Other Assignments may include group projects, portfolios, field experiences (both as a researcher and as a participant), and similar unique learning experiences as determined by the instructor.

For example:

1. Structured interview analyses that develop ethnographic field techniques using qualitative and quantitative methods and rationale.
2. Participation in an optional workshop on basic statistical thinking that can help students link their qualitative data collection to empirical concepts (correlation, causation, significance, etc.) and various measures/test scenarios (univariate and bivariate tests of significance).
3. Participating in the Harvard University Implicit Association Test (IAT), the *Are We So Different?* community exhibit, and similar reflective opportunities that promote an intersectional mindset and contribute to wider research about diversity, implicit bias, and stereotypes.

SECTION F - Textbooks and Instructional Materials

Material Type

Textbook

Author

Kottak, Conrad

Title

Mirror for Humanity: A Concise Introduction to Cultural Anthropology

Edition/Version

13

Publisher

McGraw-Hill

Year

2023

ISBN

9781260729207

Material Type

Open Educational Resource (OER)

Author

Brown, N., McIlwraith, T. and Tubelle de Gonzalez, L., Eds.

Title

Perspectives: An Open Invitation to Cultural Anthropology

Edition/Version

2

Publisher

American Anthropological Association

Year

2019

ISBN #

9781931303675; online <https://perspectives.americananthro.org/>

Material Type

Textbook

Author

Guest, Kenneth J.

Title

Cultural Anthropology: A Toolkit for a Global Age

Edition/Version

4

Publisher

W.W. Norton & Company

Year

2023

ISBN #

9781324040446

Material Type

Open Educational Resource (OER)

Author

Wesch, Michael

Title

The Art of Being Human

Edition/Version

1

Publisher

CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform

Year

2018

ISBN #

9781724963673; online <https://anth101.com/book/>

Course Codes (Admin Only)

ASSIST Update

No

CB00 State ID

CCC000326575

CB10 Cooperative Work Experience Status

N - Is Not Part of a Cooperative Work Experience Education Program

CB11 Course Classification Status

Y - Credit Course

CB13 Special Class Status

N - The Course is Not an Approved Special Class

CB23 Funding Agency Category

Y - Not Applicable (Funding Not Used)

CB24 Program Course Status

Program Applicable

Allow Pass/No Pass

Yes

Only Pass/No Pass

No