

DEPARTMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGY
San Jose State University

**Anth 11 Cultural Anthropology
Fall 2008 Greensheet**

Section 1 (code 40022): 9-10:15 MW Clark Hall 204

Dr. Chuck Darrah can be reached at 924-5314 or by dropping by Clark Hall 469 during office hours: Mondays and Wednesdays 10:30 a.m.-12 p.m., Mondays 5-6 p.m., Tuesdays 12-1, and by arrangement. Office hours are for you—use them. But be aware that I occasionally wind up in meetings that are unavoidably scheduled during office hours, so it's advisable to let me know if you plan to come by. You can also reach me by email at darrahc@email.sjsu.edu, but do not submit assignments for grade via email or email attachments: *I will not read them without prior arrangement.*

Any student wishing an electronic version of this greensheet may obtain one by emailing me.

READINGS

Lee, Richard

2003 *The Dobe Ju/'hoansi* (3E). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth/Thomson Learning.

Murphy, Yolanda and Murphy, Robert

2006 *Women of the Forest* (30th Anniversary Edition). New York: Columbia University Press.

Spradley, James and McCurdy, David

2005 *Conformity and Conflict* (12th Edition). Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Stack, Carol

1974 *All Our Kin*. New York: Harper and Row.

In addition, there is a short, inexpensive guide to the lectures that you should purchase from Maple Press (San Carlos Street, between 10th and 11th Streets).

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Cultural anthropology is the study of how humans adapt to, interpret and affect the world in which they live. This course is designed to provide you with an overview to the discipline, as well as an appreciation of what it has meant to be human in different places at different times. The course is divided into three major parts:

1. Human Nature and Culture
2. Sociocultural Systems in Cross-Cultural Comparison
3. Anthropology and the Modern World

A major course goal is to convey to you a sense of the anthropological perspective and its merits. After introducing the basic concepts and cross-cultural comparisons, we conclude the course by showing the practical applications of this perspective in America and elsewhere. Furthermore, you are provided with some first hand experience in observing the world as an anthropologist. This will permit you to develop an experiential and intellectual appreciation of a perspective which can be used to better understand a variety of academic, professional and community situations. There are no prerequisites to this course.

ANTH 11 is required for the anthropology major and minor requirement, as well as the four behavioral science majors. ANTH 11 also satisfies the Human Behavior D1 Area requirement in Core General Education. Area D courses should enable students to identify and analyze the social dimension of society as a context for human life, the processes of social change and social continuity, the role of human

agency in those social processes, and the forces that engender social cohesion and fragmentation. Students will be able to:

1. Place contemporary developments in cultural, historical, environmental, and spatial contexts;
2. Identify the dynamics of ethnic, cultural, gender/sexual, age-based, class, regional, transnational, and global identities and the similarities, differences, linkages, and interactions between them; and
3. Evaluate social science information, draw on different points of view, and formulate applications appropriate to contemporary social issues.

Students in Area D1 courses will be able to recognize the interaction of social institutions, culture, and environment with the behavior of individuals.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Students who satisfactorily complete this course will:

1. be introduced to the concept of culture and a cultural approach to understanding human behavior;
2. gain a working knowledge of how cultural anthropologists conduct field research through completion of a course project;
3. develop a cross-cultural perspective on how humans relate to each other and the material world through symbols;
4. Learn about several societies in depth by reading ethnographies; and
5. Understand the relevance of cultural anthropology for understanding the complexities of modern life both abroad and in this country.

DEPARTMENT OBJECTIVES

KNOWLEDGE

1. Understanding culture as the distinguishing phenomenon of human life, and the relationship of human biology and evolution.
2. Awareness of human diversity and the ways humans have categorized diversity.
3. Knowledge of the significant findings of archaeology, cultural anthropology, and physical anthropology, and familiarity of the important issues in each sub-discipline.
4. Knowledge of the history of anthropological thought and its place in modern intellectual history
5. Comprehension of migration, colonialism, and economic integration as significant phenomenon shaping global society.

SKILLS

6. Ability to access various forms of anthropological data and literature.
7. Awareness of importance and value of anthropological knowledge in contemporary society, and the ability to apply it to social issues.
8. Knowledge of the research methods of the sub-disciplines of anthropology, and the ability to apply appropriate research methods in at least one sub-discipline.
9. Ability to present and communicate anthropological knowledge and the results of anthropological research to different audiences.

PROFESSIONAL VALUES

10. Knowledge of political and ethical implications of social research

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING

There are two midterm examinations (20% each), two ethnographic exercises (10% each), a course project (20%), and a final exam (20%) in this course.

Examinations. Each examination consists of two parts, each of which is worth 50% of the exam grade: (1) objective questions based on lectures and readings and (2) an essay question, also based on lectures and readings. In order to complete an exam you must bring a blank T & E 200 answer sheet and a blank large bluebook to class on test date, as well as pen and #2 pencil. You will be given the essay questions in advance and may prepare an answer to one of them in advance. You will have up to 45 minutes to answer the objective questions and the remainder of the class time to write your essay in the bluebook. Each exam is open book and open note, but you will only have time to look up a few facts during the test. This format allows you to retrieve something from notes or readings that you “blank on,” but it is no substitute for studying for the test.

Course Project. The project is an effort to “do” some anthropology on the real world. It is intended to develop your skills as an observer and interpreter of social life, and thus it assesses your mastery of Student Learning Objective D1-3 Evaluate social science information, draw on different points of view, and formulate applications appropriate to contemporary social issues.

Ethnographic Exercises. There are two out of class exercises that will help you understand an ethnographic approach to studying social phenomena. They require a bit of work, but are also (I hope) enjoyable. Doing them can also help you decide on your course project. In the first exercise you will interview someone about how they identify themselves (assesses Student Learning Objective D1-2 Identify the dynamics of ethnic, cultural, gender/sexual, age-based, class, regional, transnational, and global identities and the similarities, differences, linkages, and interactions between them). In the second exercise you must describe and analyze a home as a social system (assesses Student Learning Objective D1-1 Place contemporary developments in cultural, historical, environmental, and spatial contexts).

Course grades will be assigned as follows: 100-90% = A; 89-80% = B; 79-70% = C; 69-60% = D; and below 60% = F. I assign plus and minus grades at my discretion and use participation to adjust marginal grades.

MISCELLANEOUS

Attendance. If you wish to drop the course it is your responsibility to do so. If you vanish during the semester your name will appear on the final grade roster and you will receive a WU grade, which is equivalent to an F. If you fail to complete all the major course assignments you will also receive a WU. Incompletes are only granted if I have been notified in advance and approved the request. Attendance is not graded, but I doubt you will get much out of the course, including a passing grade, if you are frequently absent.

Disability Accommodations. If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, or if you need special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible, or see me during office hours. Presidential Directive 97-03 requires that students with disabilities requesting accommodations must register with DRC to establish a record of their disability.

Late Papers, Missed Exams. All assignments must be completed during the designated period. You may be allowed to make up an exam only if (1) you contact me immediately and (2) you can provide a compelling and documented excuse for your absence (e.g. family emergency, sickness, injury, etc). It is unfair to both your classmates and the instructor to request exceptions to the official examination dates or paper deadline.

A copy of the project report is due in class (or the Department of Anthropology office) by 5 p.m. on the due date. Since you have many weeks to complete the assignment, late submissions will be heavily penalized unless you make prior arrangements with me. I suggest that you plan for the inevitable crises that arise at the end of each semester. The ethnographic exercises, too, must be submitted by the due date and late ones will be heavily penalized. All late work must be submitted for grade within one week of the assignment's due date unless you have the instructor's permission to turn it in later. I encourage all students to keep copies of the papers they submit for their own protection.

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism. If you pass off someone else's work as yours then you are plagiarizing. The work you submit this semester must reflect your original research and thought. It must conform to the instructions provided with each assignment. Do not submit work in this class if any part of it has been submitted for grade in another class without my approval.

The SJSU Office of Judicial Affairs reminds you: "Your own commitment to learning, as evidenced by your enrollment at San Jose State University, and the University's Academic Integrity Policy requires you to be honest in all your academic course work. Faculty members are required to report all infractions to the Office of Judicial Affairs." You can find the complete policy on academic integrity on the Office of Judicial Affairs website; familiarize yourself with it.

Civility. Please arrive at class on time. If you *are* unavoidably delayed, please arrive quietly and take a seat without disrupting those around you. If you must depart class early you should let me know that you will be doing so and then you should sit close to the door. Finally, your cell phone **must** be turned off during class.

CLASS CALENDAR

Note that the Spradley and McCurdy reader is referred to below as "S/M". "To learn more" directs you to the relevant anthropology course(s) if you are especially interested in a topic. In addition, the Department of Anthropology offers several SJSU Studies courses that are not listed on the calendar: Just ask the instructor for further information. Note that you are responsible for any changes to the course calendar (e.g. rescheduled exam dates) during the semester. Due dates will never be moved up, but they may be pushed back.

Part I Human Nature and Culture

Week 1

8/25 Course Introduction Begin Lee's *The Dobe Ju'hoansi*

8/27 Concept of Culture S/M Culture and Ethnography p. 1-5
To learn more: Take ANTH 12 Introduction to Human Evolution, ANTH 13
Archaeology, ANTH 131 Theories of Culture
ETHNOGRAPHY EXERCISE #1 DISTRIBUTED

Week 2

9/1 LABOR DAY

9/3 Concept of Culture S/M Chapters 1 and 2

Week 3

9/8 Concept of Culture S/M Chapters 3

- 9/10 Fieldwork S/M Chapter 4 & 5
To learn more: Take ANTH 149 Ethnographic Methods
- Week 4
- 9/15 Fieldwork & Course Project
COURSE PROJECT ASSIGNMENT DISTRIBUTED
- 9/17 Culture and the Individual S/M Identity, Roles and Groups p. 219-222
S/M Chapters 20-21
To learn more: Take ANTH 25 Human Lifecourse in Context, ANTH 141 Culture and Gender, and ANTH 142 Culture in Mind
ETHNOGRAPHY EXERCISE #1 DUE
- Week 5
- 9/22 Culture and the Individual S/M Chapters 22-23
- 9/24 Communication S/M Language and Communication p. 58-62
S/M Chapters 6 and 7
ETHNOGRAPHY EXERCISE #2 DISTRIBUTED
- Week 6
- 9/29 Communication S/M Chapters 8 & 9
Complete *The Dobe Ju/'hoansi*
- 10/1 MIDTERM #1
- Week 7
- 10/6 Video: *Nai*
- Part II Sociocultural Systems in Cross-Cultural Comparison
- 10/8 Comparison Begin *Women of the Forest*
To learn more: Take ANTH 166 Chiefdoms, States, and Empires
- Week 8
- 10/13 Kinship S/M Kinship and Family p. 178-181
S/M Chapters 16 & 17
To learn more: Take ANTH 130 Kin, Kith, and Community, ANTH 125 Urban Anthropology
- 10/15 Kinship S/M Chapters 18 & 19
- Week 9
- 10/20 Kinship
- 10/22 Marriage and Family S/M Law and Politics p. 260-263
S/M Chapters 24 & 25

Week 10

- 10/27 Marriage and Family S/M Chapter 26
ETHNOGRAPHIC EXERCISE #2 DUE
- 10/29 Making a Living S/M Economic Systems p. 142-145
S/M Chapters 13-15
To learn more: Take ANTH 143 Culture and Adaptation, ANTH 144 Gifts, Markets, and Money

Week 11

- 11/3 Making a Living
COURSE PROJECT PROPOSAL DUE
- 11/5 Religion and Ideology S/M Religion, Magic, Worldview p. 294-298
S/M Chapters 27 & 28
To learn more: Take ANTH 136 Thought Control in Contemporary Society, ANTH 148 Religion and Anthropology

Week 12

- 11/10 Religion and Ideology S/M Chapters 29 & 30
Complete *Women of the Forest*
- 11/12 MIDTERM #2

Part III Anthropology and the Modern World

Week 13

- 11/17 Culture Change Begin *All Our Kin*
S/M Economy and Subsistence p. 102-106
S/M Chapters 11 & 12
To learn more: Take ANTH 143 Culture and Adaptation
- 11/19 Culture Change & Colonialism S/M Globalization p. 340-344
S/M Chapters 31 & 32

Week 14

- 11/24 Colonialism S/M Chapter 33
- 11/26 Colonialism S/M Culture Change and Applied Anthropology
p. 386-390
S/M Chapters 34 & 35
COURSE PROJECT DUE

Week 15

- 12/1 Applying Anthropology S/M Chapter 36 & 37
To learn more: ANTH 105 Applied Anthropology, ANTH 108 Medical Anthropology,
ANTH 132 Creating Built Worlds, and ANTH 133 Organizational Cultures

12/3 Applying Anthropology

Week 16

12/8 Applying Anthropology

12/10 What I Hope You Remember
(When You've Forgotten...) Complete *All Our Kin*

FINAL EXAMINATION: December 12 from 7:30-9:00 a.m.

TERM PROJECT GUIDE

Preliminaries

The project assigned for this course will provide you with some experience in doing anthropology. Although one paper does not make you an anthropologist, it should give you some sense of the difficulties and rewards of the field, and of the anthropological perspective. Note that the project must be based on activities that you observe or participate in during this semester, not on recollections of activities or observations in the past.

Since you are doing a project involving human beings, you are required to conform to the ethical guidelines that will be discussed in class. You may have to obtain written permission from the people you wish to study before undertaking your project; you will be provided the necessary form. Before you begin, you must turn in a 1-2 page typed description of your proposed project. If you cannot decide between several projects, submit proposals for each one. The proposal must answer four questions:

1. What is the topic of your project?
2. Why are you interested in this particular project and what do you hope to learn from it?
3. How are you going to carry it out/What are you going to do?
4. What ethical issues do you think might arise and what is the best way to protect people, including you?

Please remember that you're not alone on this: You may discuss your project with me before or after class (briefly) or during my office hours. However, ***no student term project may be undertaken without my approval, and to get that you must first submit that proposal.***

Finally, please remember that the two ethnographic exercises in this course can help you think through what sort of project would most benefit you. I also grade the writing on those assignments so you will clearly understand my expectations. I am happy to look over drafts of your papers and I encourage you to use the Writing Center for help.

Research

The topic of your inquiry is quite open, although you will investigate it through the basic anthropological methods of participant-observation or observation of some social setting, collecting an individual's life history, or interviewing someone about his or her special cultural knowledge. Topics have included: ballet, piano, and gymnastics rehearsals; life in the lounge of a dorm or cafeteria; an ethnic festival or religious observance; the flea market; selling a car or cruising a bar; informal rules for most any job (waitress, bus driver, etc.); culture of a business department, shopping mall, sports event; children on playgrounds; thrift shop etiquette; political rallies, fund raisers; riding elevators, using rest rooms, cell phones, ATMs; etc. In fact, most any slice of social life can form the basis for your project.

A key to a good project is to find something in which you are interested, which is accessible to you, and which will provide you with rich descriptions that you can analyze. The time you spend performing observations will vary depending upon your topic, but plan on about 6-10 hours of "fieldwork"-maybe more, maybe less.

Project Report

Your project report should contain sections addressing (1) perspective, (2) methods, (3) description, (4) analysis, and (5) interpretation/reflections.

1. Perspective. Introduce the reader to your topic, why you chose it, any preconceptions you had, and what you hoped to learn from the experience of investigating this particular topic. Several questions may help you get started here. Who are you that makes this topic compelling? What in particular interested you about the topic? Do you recognize any axes you're out to grind? How does this affect your ability to investigate the topic? Did you have any hypotheses to test? What are the more general lessons you can learn by studying this topic? Why should anyone care about this topic?

2. Methods. Describe what you did to investigate this topic, including how you analyzed your findings. Again, some questions can get you started here. How did you select the group, person, place, etc. that was the focus of inquiry? How did you gain access to what you studied? What steps did you take to protect the people you studied? Why? To what extent were you a participant in the action versus being an observer? How did people react to you--and you to them? What--in detail--were the actual occasions when you were "in the field?" How long were you there? How did you record information? How did you actually go about detecting patterns in your observations?

3. Description. Present the description of what you observed. In the case of a life history, this would be the narrative you construct from the tape recorded (or untaped) interviews you conducted. Note that you will invariably do some organizing to make what the person tells you into a "life history," because they are unlikely to present a tidy, chronological tale. Sometimes, providing a polished, fleshed out version of your field notes here is appropriate (e.g. studies of playground activities lend themselves to this). In most cases, you will refer to your notes in order to write up a detailed, compelling account of what you observed.

These questions may help you write your description: Who are the actors? What is the setting? What is/are the activity/ies? How do the participants view the activity, and how do you know that? How do people use space and time? Do they have distinctive speech habits or attire? If you did your work in a formal organization such a company, describe its social organization, hierarchy, ideals, economic and political dimensions, symbols, stories, villains, heroes, ceremonials, annual events, socialization, speech, etc.

The way each of you handles this section will vary, and you may wish to query me once you have completed your observations. But the basic principle is to describe some slice of social life in a rich and detailed way so that the reader can really see and feel what you saw, and so you can base an analysis on it.

4. Analysis. After describing your slice of life, you must make some sense of it. Use some of the concepts of anthropology to analyze your description. The key question here is: How was what I described patterned? What regularities or patterns help you make sense of what you saw? Social life is patterned; that's how we make sense of it. Build upon that simple idea in your analysis. If you observed a ritual, for example, ask yourself how it was patterned in space (where did activities occur) and time (how did one activity lead to another?). How were the interactions of people patterned? Remember: your analysis consists of finding and discussing the patterns within your description, and all analysis must be supported by what you observed. This task may be unfamiliar and uncomfortable, and again, I can help you here.

5. Interpretation/Reflections. This is really the second, more speculative part of analysis. Here you look "out from" your analysis and interpret how what you found fits into a larger society. For example, what does watching people ride elevators help you learn about (or hypothesize about) wider American

culture? What does the life history of an Ethiopian refugee teach you about his--and your--culture? Or, what do you learn about life in America by watching kids on a playground?

You may ask some very specific questions here, depending upon what you observed. Was there a gap between the ideals that people espoused and their actual behavior? Was there a dominant symbol that brought people together with a system of shared values? If so, how did it do this? What diversity of views and behaviors characterizes the participants in the activity you observed?

In this section you should also reflect upon what you learned about the world around you through completing this assignment. Did you learn about yourself as an observer? As a member of the community? Did you learn anything about the community? About "American culture" (whatever that is) and/or its various sub- and micro-cultures?

Most students cover 1 and 2 easily. Section 3 creates some uneasiness ("Just what goes here?"), but it usually gets done. The most difficult sections are 4 and 5, and the best advice I can give is start your project early and keep talking with me about how to organize your paper.

Writing

Your report *must* be typed and referenced using the style of the American Anthropological Association (http://www.aaanet.org/pubs/style_guide.htm); photographs or sketches may be included. Most papers run between 8-15 pages. Typically, sections 1 and 2 take a page each; 3 takes 5-8 pages; 4 and 5 take one or two pages each. The quality of the work is much more important than the length, and I have had 'A' papers of 8 and 25 pages. This is a university course and, accordingly, I do grade your writing. If you fail to take pride in what you submit for a grade, then do not expect me to take it seriously. A good paper passes through several drafts and is proof read for mistakes. Reading it aloud is a good way to catch errors and awkward sentence constructions. The paper should be stapled on the upper left corner, and should *not* be placed in a plastic or paper folder unless you need something with which to organize and protect any photos. A copy of the paper must be submitted as per the course calendar.

Several lectures are germane to the project, and parts of several sessions will be devoted to discussions of your projects. If you are having difficulties with the assignment, or simply want to discuss your ideas (especially about analysis and interpretation), I encourage you to discuss them with me during office hours. This is a somewhat unusual assignment, and you may feel uncomfortable with it. I am here to help you out, but you have to take the initiative.