

Department of Anthropology

Instructor

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ANTH 135

Behavioral Systems Science
Spring 2008
W 3:00 – 5:45 PM
CL 204

Office Hours

W 9:30-2:30 PM

Teaching Assistant

Sarah Gallardo
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Course Website

www.sjsu.edu/faculty_and_staff/faculty_detail.jsp?id=840

Course Description

This is an upper-division undergraduate course for people who are interested in learning more about a systems approach to understanding individual and collective dimensions of human behavior. Behavioral Science integrates insights and skills from three major social sciences (anthropology, psychology, and sociology) to examine human behavior and appreciate the mix of biological, cognitive, cultural, and societal factors that generate it. Our focus will be on clarifying the systemic nature of human factors, the self-organizing processes that often cause counter-productive human behavior, and the cybernetics of how people regulate their individual and collective actions to act in purposeful ways. We will also examine the nature of leadership in human society and its role in fostering meaningful systemic change in complex social systems.

Course Learning Objectives

The main goals of this course are to help people think critically about different aspects of human behavior, appreciate multiple perspectives on complicated matters associated with such behavior, develop a solid grounding in the major features of a systems approach to behavioral science, and exercise collaborative leadership to make the world a better place for all to live. Specific objectives include:

- examining systemic similarities and differences in how human beings behave on an individual and collective basis
- developing a systems framework for understanding the complex connections that characterize life and link people to an increasingly interconnected world
- applying systems ideas to understand specific human systems, ranging from small groups and large organizations to communities and nation-states
- creating a metadisciplinary systems basis for encouraging and supporting more effective life-long learning

Our primary focus throughout the course will be on integrating fundamental intellectual and practical matters in order to become more reflective human beings and change agents.

Course Format and Requirements

This is an undergraduate seminar and will be participatively designed by the class as a whole. The first two weeks will be devoted to organizing our course work. The majority of the semester will be devoted to addressing selected topics through the reading, discussion, and writing of assigned materials; presentations by the instructor and outside experts; and a variety of class activities. The last two weeks will be devoted to pulling everything together into a coherent result. Everyone is expected to participate in helping us create a systemic teaching-learning experience. Specific responsibilities include the following assignments: a substantial systems paper (human social system); elective paper or presentation (resource, critical review, case analysis, essay, etc); final examination; and appropriate participation in the course.

Each person's learning will be evaluated on the basis of his/her performance on the systems paper (??%-??%), elective paper/presentation (??%-??%), final examination (??%-??%), and class participation (??-??%) as specified in his/her individual learning contract.

Course Schedule and Topics

<u>Dates</u>	<u>Content Topics</u>	<u>Learning Topics</u>
28 January 09	Course Introduction	Systemic Learning
* 4 February 09 *	* ????	
11 February 09	Systemic Course Design	Learning Contracts
18 February 09	Diversity & Human Behavior	Myers-Briggs
25 February 09	Behavioral Systems Science	
4 March 09	Complex Behavioral Systems	
11 March 09	Cybernetic Systems	
18 March 09	<i>Friday Night at the ER</i>	<i>Friday Night at the ER</i>
25 March 09	☺ Spring Break ☺	☺ Spring Break ☺
1 April 09	Self-Organizing Systems	
8 April 09	Evolving Global World	
* 15 April 09 *	* <i>Mindwalk</i> *	* <i>Mindwalk</i> *
22 April 09	Systems of Systems	
29 April 09	Systemic Leadership	
6 May 09	Leadership & Social Responsibility	Social Change
13 May 09	Synthesis & Closure	

Course Resources

- Albom, Mitch. *Five People You Meet in Heaven*. New York: Hyperion, 2006.
- Briggs, Katharine C. and Myers, Isabel B. *Myers-Briggs Type Indicator: Self-Scorable*. Palo Alto: Consulting Psychologists Press, 2006.
- Brugardt, Curtis L. *Social Change Leadership Inventory*. Longmont: Rocky Mountain Institute for Leadership Advancement, 1999.
- Kauffman, Draper L. *Systems I*. St. Paul: Future Systems, 1980.

Course Grading Policies

An integrated set of course materials are available in electronic form on the course website, including detailed guidelines for all assignments that include specific grading criteria for each assignment. Students should familiarize themselves with these materials and use them to proactively prepare for class sessions and assignments on a timely basis. Assignments will be penalized 10% each week they are late, unless there are compelling circumstances. When preparing these assignments, it is important to remember that people who live and work in a globalizing world must be able to communicate successfully with a broad variety of audiences. SJSU graduates are expected to write well and deliver effective presentations, which usually require several iterations to refine before work is sufficiently polished to be shared with others. Students should pay close attention to the guidelines and templates for each assignment, particularly in terms of ensuring that they are submitted in the appropriate format for that assignment. It is also helpful to seek feedback and suggestions from others (including members of the learning teams) to help finalize your work. In addition, the University offers assistance for students through group workshops and individual consultations at the SJSU Writing Center (<http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter/>).

SJSU Academic Integrity Policy

SJSU expects all students enrolled in the University, whether on a matriculated or extended education basis, to act in accordance with accepted academic and professional standards for integrity at all times. Official University policy states that:

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. The policy on academic integrity can be found online (<http://www2.sjsu.edu/senate/S04-12.pdf>).

The most common issues of academic integrity are usually associated with some form of plagiarism, which is using other people's ideas and words without clearly acknowledging the source of that information. Sometimes it is tempting to copy other people's ideas (from the Internet, textbooks, magazines, lectures, or student papers) and incorporate them into your own work. As a result, it is very important to give proper credit to those sources. If proper credit is not given, then you are passing these ideas and words off as your own. This

is both unethical and illegal. Students who engage in any form of academic dishonesty that contravenes SJSU policy will result in a failing grade (F) on that assignment for all parties involved and may lead to dismissal from the course and possibly the University.

SJSU Disability Policy

SJSU also recognizes that some students may require special accommodations to participate in a course. If any student in this course needs such assistance and/or would like to share emergency medical information, especially as it might affect potential safety issues like evacuation procedures, please contact me privately as soon as possible so we can decide how to proceed. Presidential Directive 97-03 requires that students with disabilities register at the Disability Resource Center (924-6000) to establish a record of their disability so they can utilize the University's resources.

Department Learning Objectives

Knowledge

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

Skills

- Ability to access various forms of anthropological data and literature.
- Awareness of importance and value of anthropological knowledge in contemporary society, and the ability to apply it to social issues.
- 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.
- Ability to present and communicate anthropological knowledge and the results of anthropological research to different audiences.

Professional Values

- Knowledge of political and ethical implications of social research.