

## Emerging Global Cultures (Anth115 section 5)

Fall 2007

**Instructor:** Dr. Soo H. Choi  
**Meeting Time:** T 6:00-8:45 pm  
**Course Number:** 55425, 56038  
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### Course Description

The course examines the emerging global culture of the early twenty-first century. Those aspects of human culture which merge human societies—communications, popular cultures, population shifts, political movements, economic and environmental interdependencies—will be explored. In addition, the creation of "local" culture and identity will provide a complementary perspective. The central questions of the course are:

- What are the systemic principles that extend to culture and how does the systemic point of view illuminate the processes of change?
- How have cultures changed in the twentieth century and how has our understanding of that process changed?
- Is there an emerging global culture and if so, what is it? What forces—such as political economics, tourism, social movements, and popular culture—limit and nurture it?
- How can we anticipate future manifestations in global cultures?
- How does the experience of living in a "global culture" affect both individuals and cultures?

This course is taught from a multidisciplinary perspective, introducing the systems approach to social science issues. The course is based in the discipline of anthropology, however it will integrate sociological, cybernetic and historic perspectives. It satisfies the Area V requirements for the Culture and Civilization SJSU Studies, as well as departmental and program requirements in anthropology and behavioral science.

### Student Learning Objectives

- To be able to examine cultural systems, especially political economies, and select predictive elements to anticipate cultural development
- To be able to critically analyze the assumptions underlying various projections of social issues
- To comprehend the links between cultural values and technological choice

- To understand the links between cultural values and social organization
- To understand the shifting worldviews dominating various global regions in different times and places
- To be able to visualize how societies change and create new cultures
- To systematically analyze issues from the perspectives of the different actors involved
- To be able to engage in cooperative learning activities

## **COURSE ASSIGNMENTS (Exams, Papers, Participation)**

### **Required Assignments for the course**

Course assignments consist of (1) a series of group activities focused around a global alternatives project (see below); (2) a six to eight page paper based on your analysis of a commodity chain; (3) a two-page proposal that each student will prepare individually for the exhibit to be presented for the global alternatives project "Alternative Trade Fair"; (4) a short three page paper based on an in-class ethnographic interview about immigration and (5) two exams including an in-class midterm exam that will include short essays and a final exam. Detailed information on the global alternatives project, the ethnographic paper, and the global flows paper are included on the course website. No assignments will be accepted via e-mail—I must receive hard copies of all assignments.

**1)))) Global Alternatives Project (All assignments will be collected on the given day listed in the schedule of class.)**

The global alternatives project is a series of group activities designed to sharpen your awareness of the processes by which commodities are produced, distributed, and consumed. Project groups of 5-8 members will work together to analyze a global commodity from production point to its final destination, with particular focus on how people, environments, cultures, and other systems are affected. Examples include the following commodities: coffee, cell phones, handguns, batteries, silk lingerie, flowers, chocolate, corn, CDs, gasoline, dairy products, diamonds, leather jackets, diapers, plastic products, missiles. Each group should choose one of these products. Global alternatives projects will be conducted in five phases:

1. Topic Issue Statement/Annotated Bibliography and Group Issue Summary (10 points)
2. Global alternatives project individual and group proposal (10 points)
3. Commodity chain analysis paper (100 pts)
4. Fair trade fair (20 pts)
5. Peer evaluations (10 pts)

### **Phase 1 Issue Statements and Annotated Bibliographies**

After you have chosen a topic and group, identify the problems in the commodity chain which are mobilizing support for an alternative commodity. The problem could be one of health, the environment, or social inequality. The problem could be at the point of production, distribution or consumption. Explore the commodity online to see where social activism and global citizenship is being mobilized. Each group member will research any aspect of the commodity and report back to the group. Included in this discussion would be the key organizational players, corporate, governmental, transnational and non governmental. The group will make a short list of issues that will be the focus of the exhibit. For example, if your group is examining coffee, you might focus on health issues, impacts on plantation environments or the conditions of workers. Key organizations would include Global Exchange, Thanksgiving Coffee, Starbucks, and Peet's Coffee.

As you research an aspect you should assemble an annotated bibliography regarding the process that goes into the production of your commodity. This might include websites, journal articles, books, materials from organizations etc. These resources might include such information such as: (a) primary countries in which the commodity is produced; (b) labor conditions under which the commodity is produced; (c) environmental consequences of the production process; (d) effects of the production process on people in relevant regions; (e) health effects associated with the consumption of the product; (f) environmental effects associated with the consumption of the product. You should include the sources from which your information was collected. Coordinate specific research within your group. Wikipedia should be a starting place for research only, not a final bibliographic item. Make sure that you have a mixture of media, not only web-based materials. All material should be in a known bibliographic format such as APA, MLA, Chicago/Turabian or use the American Anthropological Association format.

### **Phase 2 Global Alternatives Project Proposal**

Each individual is responsible for preparing a two-page project proposal in preparation for the Global Alternatives Project trade show. Elements of the proposal should include (a) concise, specific statements of the proposed project and its goals; (b) description of methodology—describe the plan, strategy, and timeline for developing and completing the project; (c) use of community organizations or representatives; (d) proposed audience for the project; and (d) an action plan designed to changed the behavior of the audience (for example, urging Spartan Shops to sell only fair trade items made with sweatshop-free labor; demonstrating alternative products such as a hybrid Toyota Prius or Honda Civic; material consumers to adopt a policy rejecting "blood diamonds").

Once each member of the group prepares a proposal, you will meet with your groups in class to arrive at a consensus regarding the project, which you will prepare for display at the trade show. The instructor will ask you to fill out a two-page group project summary in preparation for the Fair Trade Fair that will include the following questions:

1. In 3-5 sentences, describe the group's projects and goals.
2. For each member of the group, give the member's name and job description.
3. What is the timeline for completing this project?

4. Which organizations will the group be contacting or working with?
5. Who is the proposed audience for the project?
6. What resources or materials will you need (audio or visual equipment, photocopies, etc.)?
7. Will you be producing a poster or Power Point exhibit?

### **Phase 3 Commodity Chain Analysis Paper (Individual)**

You should prepare a commodity chain analysis paper that considers the impact of the commodity on the individual worker, at the points of production or distribution, or individual consumer. The paper should outline the commodity chain for a product as specifically as possible (try to identify particular commodities and not the generic commodity if possible). The paper should also consider, analytically, the consequences of production or consumption on cultural, economic or political globalization. Include:

1. Choose ONE brand name product you or someone you know buys, uses, desires, needs, eats, or adores related to your group topic. Write a brief description of this product's role in your life (or that of the person you know). Was it a spur-of-the-moment purchase? A daily lunchtime item? A necessity? A luxury?
2. Try to locate information about those who work in the companies producing this product—at the beginning of the commodity chain. Summarize in a paragraph or two some of the issues they face. (The websites of the manufacturer and [www.sweatshopwatch.org](http://www.sweatshopwatch.org) or [www.globalexchange.org](http://www.globalexchange.org) are excellent places to start). If you cannot locate information on the specific product, find information relevant to the generic class of goods.
3. Try to trace out all of the factors in its production, distribution, and consumption – what resources are necessary for this product to reach you? What institutions or types of companies are involved? (Visit [www.soc.duke.edu/courses/soc142/tree.html](http://www.soc.duke.edu/courses/soc142/tree.html) for one representation of this "commodity chain.")
4. What conclusions can you reach about your connections to global cultural, political and economic landscapes through this exercise?

Your paper should be at least 6-8 pages, typed and double-spaced. **It is due on 10/16**

### **Phase 4 Fair Trade Fair (Group Exercise)**

You should execute a well-organized project on the day of the trade show, which should include at minimum three representatives from each group on hand to provide information. To make sure you are well prepared you will bring drafts of your poster or Power Points to class during the Fair workshop. The instructor will assign each group the same grade based on the following criteria: (a) accuracy, clarity, and presentation of the materials on display; (b) creativity of the presentation; (c) preparedness of the group's representatives; (d) viability of the action plan. Ideally the group should present global alternatives and/or an action plan related to the products under consideration.

## **Phase 5 (Group Exercise)**

After the trade show, each of you will be asked to fill out two evaluations. These will include (a) an evaluation of the peers in your group and your project as a whole; and (b) an evaluation of two other groups' presentations. You will conduct these evaluations in the first class meeting following the trade show.

### **2)))) Global Flows (International Migration) Exercise**

This project is based on an in-class ethnographic interview conducted with a fellow class member outlining the context of family arrival in the United States drawn from the Silicon Valley region. You will have an in-class interview and an in-class follow-up discussion. The exercise will integrate themes and ideas outlined in the course and be written into a 3 page report. (30 points for papers and 10 points for training and discussion. See participation policy)

### **3)))) Two Midterm Exams and Final**

Students will be provided with a study guide in advance to prepare for multiple choice and essay questions (100 points each).

## **Participation and Miscellaneous Activities**

Participation in class activities can be worth more than 100 points. Attendance is highly desirable and participation in class discussions is necessary to understand some issues. Exercise and discussion credit will be given on days in which such activity is essential. Participation will be assessed by giving full credit for active participation, partial credit for passive participation, late entry or early exit from an activity, and no credit for non-participation.

### **Plagiarism**

Passing off of another's work as ones own—will result in no credit for the assignment. Problems may result in failure in the course and appropriate action by the University. Plagiarism will be reported to the University's Student Judicial Affairs Office. This class takes a zero tolerance approach to plagiarism.

### **Late Papers or Makeup Exams**

No late papers or makeup exams will be accepted unless a genuine emergency arrives and the student notifies the professor in advance.

**NO EXCEPTIONS**

### **Disability Accommodations**

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, or if you have emergency medical information to share with me, 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.

### **Incompletes**

Incompletes will be granted only if the instructor has been notified and has approved. Students with missing major assignments (over 50 points) will receive a U (unauthorized withdrawal).

**NO WORK WILL BE ACCEPTED AFTER THE FINAL**

## **Grading**

A+ 98 % >  
A 94-97 %  
A- 90-93 %

B+ 88-89 %  
B 84-87 %  
B- 80-83 %

C+ 78-79 %  
C 74-77 %  
C- 70-73 %

D+ 68-69 %  
D 64-67 %  
D- 60-63 %  
F < 60 %

## **Texts**

Emerging Global Cultures, 2nd Edition, edited Sandra Cate et al, Pearson Custom Publishing

Culture and Global Change, edited by Tracey Skelton, Routledge

The Parish Behind God's Back, George Gmelch, Waveland

## **Class Schedule**

### **EGC (Emerging Global Culture) CGC (Culture and Global Change)**

8/28 Introduction (What is Globalization?, How did it happen?, What are the impacts on cultures and social organizations)

(EGC: Introduction by Jan English-Lueck; CGC: Culture and Global Change: An Introduction by Skelton & Allen)

9/4 History of Globalization and Culture Changes

(EGC "The Rise of the Merchants, Industrialists, and Capital Controller"  
The First Half p. 35-56)



**GAP Phase IV**

10/30 The Violation of Human Rights and Dignity

(CGC: "Sex Tourism" "The West, its Other, and Human Rights" "Street Lives and Family Lives in Brazil")

**GAP Phase V**

11/6 Discussion on "The Parish Behind God's Back" (The First Half)  
**Midterm II**

11/13 Discussions on "The Parish Behind God's Back" (The Second Half)

11/20 "Can We Save the Rainforest?" (video) The Discussion on the impact of the industrialization and globalization on the environment and the under-privileged people (Research topics will be given in advance.)

11/27 "Global Flows Exercise" (Specific guidelines will be given in advance for the study of the international migration in conjunction with globalization.)

12/4 Conclusion, Discussion on what anthropology can specifically do to reduce the negative impacts of globalization (Research topics will be given in advance.)

12/18 **Final Exam 6:00-8:45**