

COURSE OUTLINE

Anthropology 1025F-650

Introduction to Sociocultural Anthropology

Fall 2018

Distance Studies

Instructor: Mingyuan Zhang

Office: SSC-3421

Office hours: By appointment or Skype

Email: mzhan227@uwo.ca

Teaching Assistants: Please refer to the course site in OWL.

Credit value: 0.5 credit

Calendar Course Description: An introduction to the basic concepts used in the anthropological study of non-Western social and cultural institutions that focuses on the unity and diversity of human experience. Topics include: kinship, economics, politics, religion, and the present-day conditions of indigenous societies. The ethnography of various peoples is discussed.

Prerequisite(s): None.

Antirequisite(s): Anthropology 1020 (or the former 1020E).

Course Syllabus:

What are the differences across cultures, social practices and belief systems? Despite all the differences that we learn about people from other parts of the world, what are the similarities that we all share as human beings? This course introduces students to the basic theoretical and methodological principles of sociocultural anthropology, and uses examples from all over the world to explain themes such as identity, religion, kinship, globalization, hierarchy, violence etc. The aim is to encourage students to be critical when thinking about what seems to be “familiar” in their own society and what seems to be “strange” in others. By familiarizing themselves to the rich and broad anthropological work, students will develop the ability to recognize, understand, respect and engage in cultural differences in the fascinating diverse human world.

A full course schedule including a week-by-week breakdown of topics and assigned readings will be available on the course's OWL site before the first day of class. Please note that although this is an online course, it has an on-campus exam by the end of the term.

Learning Outcomes:

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

Define basic and key concepts in sociocultural anthropology and explain the foundational methodologies that make the discipline unique among other disciplines in social sciences;

Examine critically taken-for-granted assumptions about diverse cultures and societies;

Analyze underlying causes of racism, inequality, globalization, violence, etc.;

Apply and integrate anthropological insights into their daily lives and understandings of contemporary issues;

Write clearly about a topic in anthropology by building their own arguments and using appropriate examples.

Course Materials:

Sociocultural Anthropology: A Problem-Based Approach, Third Canadian Edition (2017) Editors: Richard H. Robbins, Maggie Cummings, and Karen McGarry (available at Western Book Store for purchase)

Additional course materials will be available through the "Course Readings" section on OWL. Registered students will be able to access information about additional course readings through the course's on-line OWL site before the first day of class.

Evaluation:

Participation in Discussion Forums – 20%

You are required to choose four weekly topics that interest you the most and make one original contribution on each topic and provide one critical response to other people's contributions on the "Discussion Forum" on OWL. In total, you should submit 8 postings minimum throughout the term. Your contributions should be thoughtful and well-developed comments, not simply one or two sentences; however, they should not be more than one or two paragraphs in length. They must deal with issues raised in the course readings, including substantial comments on the reading materials, a question that you feel might offer useful ideas for exploring the readings, some reflection on your experience with the

issues in the course and so on. Also feel free to respond to each other's comments and queries. Postings must be made before the forum is closed by the end of each week. Please keep your postings and responses respectful. The purpose of these online discussions is to make the learning process interactive and collaborative. Your participation will be evaluated based on the quality of your online postings. At least four of your eight postings should be made before the midpoint of the course. You will receive half of your participation grade (10%) by the end of October, and the remainder at the end of class. If you choose to post comments on more than four weeks' topics, your best grades of your 8 postings will be used.

Quizzes – 10% (5% x 2 quizzes)

There will be two quizzes over the term available on OWL. Each quiz is worth 5% of your final grade. The quizzes will consist of multiple-choice questions directly related to the course readings and supplementary materials. Students who miss quizzes should contact the course instructor. You will not be able to submit a quiz after the closing date. Accommodations will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Quiz 1 must be completed by 11:55 pm on Sunday, September 30, 2018

Quiz 2 must be completed by 11:55 pm on Sunday, November 4, 2018

Reflection Papers – 30% (15% x 2 papers)

You will write two reflection papers (1000 words each, double spaced, font 12) about any topic related to the reading materials and online discussions. Your paper needs to have a central argument and concrete examples to support your argument. You will connect the anthropological concepts with your own experiences or a current real-world event. If you use other people's ideas or arguments, you need to follow proper citation formats. More information will be made available to students on the course OWL site.

Reflection Paper 1 - due Sunday, October 21, 2018 by 11:55 pm

Reflection Paper 2 - due Sunday, November 18, 2018 by 11:55 pm

Late papers will receive a 3% penalty per day (including weekends and holidays). The paper will not be accepted after one week past the due date deadline.

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is

subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>).

"Story Behind the Photo" Assignment – 10%

Every photo has a story behind it! You will take a photo of a person, a thing, a place or an event and write a short essay (500-600 words) about why you find the content of this photo interesting from an anthropological point of view. The purpose of this assignment is to encourage you to observe the seemingly mundane everyday life from an anthropological perspective. So be creative! More detailed instructions for this assignment and a sample essay will be posted on OWL well in advance of the due date. Your photo will only be used for the purpose of this assignment.

"Story Behind the Photo" - due Thursday, December 6, 2018 by 11:55 pm

Final Exam – 30%

The final exam will take place on campus or at another official exam centre during the designated exam period for this course. Use of electronic devices will not be allowed during the final exam. The final exam is cumulative for the course and may include multiple choice questions, short answer, and essay questions.

Course Specific Statements and Policies:

Statement on Seeking Special Accommodations:

No accommodations will be granted retroactively more than 10 days after an assignment's due date or a missed quiz or test. Please see your academic counsellor immediately if you will be seeking accommodations based on medical or compassionate grounds.

Contact Information and Office Hours

If you have any questions, comments, or concerns, please contact me anytime by email. I will try to respond to your message as promptly as possible, but please give at least 24 hours for a response. Since this is an online course, there will not be regular office hours. However, I will be available for consultation via Skype. Please email me to set up an appointment for a Skype session. In case many of you need in-person consultations, especially before the final exam, I will be available to hold extra office hours during the week before the exam.

Statement on Plagiarism:

Students must write their assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing. It is also a scholastic offence to submit the same work for credit in more than one course. Plagiarism is a major scholastic offence.

Writing Support Centre:

Students who need to enhance writing skills may seek guidance from the [Writing Support Centre](#).

Institutional Statements and Policies

All students should familiarize themselves with Western's current academic policies regarding accessibility, plagiarism and scholastic offences, and medical accommodation. [These policies are outlined with links to the full policies on the Anthropology website.](#)