

## Anthropology 1025F-650

### Introduction to Sociocultural Anthropology

Summer 2019: May 6 – June 16

**Distance Studies**

### COURSE OUTLINE

Credit value: 0.5

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**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.

**Prerequisites:** None.

**Antirequisites:** Anthropology 1020 (or the former 1020E).

#### Course Syllabus:

What are the differences across cultures, social practices and belief systems? Despite all the differences we find among people from around 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 with the rich and broad scope of anthropological work, students will develop the ability to recognize, understand, respect and engage with cultural differences in the fascinatingly 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 in-person exam (on campus or at an official exam centre) at the end of the course on June 22, 2019.

## 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 (hard copy and electronic version 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 – 30%**

Since the course is offered online, forum posting is the only way to evaluate your level of engagement. You are required to submit **two posts per week** on the “Discussion Forum” on OWL. The posts can be original contributions on each topic, or critical responses to other people’s contributions. In total, you should submit **twelve** posts 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 forums are locked and closed at each Sunday midnight. Late submissions will NOT be accepted. If you choose to post more than two comments each week, your best 12 marks will be picked to calculate your final participation grade. Each of your posts will be evaluated based on a scale of 0-3. You will receive grades and feedback regularly through OWL. If your contributions show deep thinking and engagement with the reading materials, and are well-organized paragraphs, you will get higher marks. The purpose of these online discussions is to make the learning process interactive and collaborative. Please keep your posts and responses respectful.

### **Quiz – 10%**

There will be one quiz around the midpoint of the course available on OWL. The quiz is worth 10% of your final grade. The quiz will consist of multiple-choice questions directly related to the course readings and supplementary materials. The quiz will be open for students to complete at any time from Thursday, May 23 to Sunday, May 26. Students will not be able to submit a quiz after the closing date. Accommodations will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

**Quiz must be completed by 11:55 pm on Sunday, May 26, 2019**

### **Reflection Papers – 20%**

You will write one reflection paper (1000-1200 words, double-spaced, 12-point font) 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.

**Paper must be submitted by 11:55 pm on Sunday, June 2, 2019**

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 licence 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 Sunday, June 16, 2019, by 11:55 pm**

### **Final Exam – 30%**

The final exam will take place on campus or at another official Exam Centre on **June 22, 2019, at 2:00 pm**. 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 5 days after an assignment's due date or a missed quiz or test. Please see your academic counselor 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 be no 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.

### *Support Services*

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to [Mental Health@Western](#) for a complete list of options about how to obtain help. 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](#).

## Weekly Course Schedule

### **Week 1 (May 6 -- 12) Culture and Doing Fieldwork**

Robbins et al., Chapter 1-2, pp. 2-56

Hann, Mark

2018 Senegalese Football's Impossible Dream, *Anthropology News.*, accessed July 24, 2018.

### **Week 2 (May 13 -- 19) The Meaning of Progress and Development**

Robbins et al., Chapter 3, pp. 58-91

Haldane, Hillary and David Crawford

2010 What Lula Lacks: Grappling with the Discourse of Autism at Home and in the Field. *Anthropology Today* 26(3): 24-26.

### **Week 3 (May 20 -- 26) Constructing Realities**

Robbins et al., Chapter 4, pp. 92-126

American Anthropological Association, AAA Style Guide

*Please also read through the "AAA Style Guide" in the "Course Readings" section as we will talk about the citation format of your written assignments.*

**Due: Quiz**

### **Week 4 (May 27 -- June 2) Constructing Families, Social Relationships and Identities**

Robbins et al., Chapter 5-6, pp. 128-185

**Due: Reflection Paper**

### **Week 5 (June 3 -- 9) Social Hierarchies**

Robbins et al., Chapter 7, pp. 186-219

Pennesi, Karen

2016 "They Can Learn to Say My Name": Redistributing Responsibility for Integrating Immigrants to Canada. *Anthropologica* 58: 46-59.

*This week we will also talk about the detailed instructions of the "Story Behind the Photo" Assignment.*

### **Week 6 (June 10 -- 16) Globalization, Neoliberalism, and the Nation-State**

Robbins et al. Chapter 8, pp. 220-252

Turton, David

2004 Lip-plates and "the People Who Take Photographs": Uneasy Encounters Between Mursi and Tourists in Southern Ethiopia. *Anthropology Today* 20(3):3-8.

**Due: "Story Behind the Photo"**