

ANTHROPOLOGY 3332G-650

Sociocultural Anthropological Perspectives on the Lifecourse

COURSE OUTLINE

Winter 2021

Instructor: Dr. Andrew Walsh (he/him)

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Mode of delivery: For 2020/2021 this course will be conducted online, synchronously, using Zoom videoconferencing technology, with discussions to take place weekly during the scheduled synchronous class time. Additional required asynchronous activities will be accessible to students through the course's OWL site.

Synchronous class time: Tuesdays 2:30 p.m. -- 4:30 p.m. EST.

Credit value: 0.5 credit

Calendar Course Description: This course examines how various stages in the human lifecourse are understood and experienced differently in diverse socio-cultural contexts. It begins with a cross-cultural examination of theories of conception and then proceeds similarly through discussions of birth, infancy, childhood, adolescence, adulthood, elderhood, death and the afterlife.

Antirequisites: None.

Prerequisites: Any Arts and Humanities or Social Science 0.5 or 1.0 Essay course.

Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. The decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

Course Syllabus:

This course examines how various stages in the human lifecourse are understood and experienced in different sociocultural contexts. Students in this course will undertake cross-cultural considerations of topics including conception, birth, infancy, childhood, adolescence, parenthood, aging, death and the afterlife. We will complement weekly readings and discussions on particular stages of the lifecourse with a term-long focus on the question of what it means to live a "good life" in different socio-cultural contexts. This will be accomplished through discussions of particular sources and group projects.

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.

Learning Outcomes:

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

- Voice a distinctive perspective on the human lifecourse informed by longstanding and recent insights drawn from research in sociocultural anthropology and related disciplines.
- Appreciate the value and the limitations of a cross-cultural approach to the study of the human lifecourse and human aging.
- Reflect critically on the nature/nurture debate within and outside of academia and communicate knowledgably concerning anthropological contributions to this debate.
- Reflect and communicate critically on complexity of "cross-cultural communication".

Course Materials:

Registered students will be able to access course readings through the "Course Readings" tool on the course's OWL site.

Evaluation:

Grades will be based on 10 quizzes on weekly readings, a midterm evaluation, a research essay, and a final take-home exam, as follows:

10 Quizzes – 1% each (10% total). Students will complete a short quiz every week before class (excepting Week one and Week 12). I will count the top 8 of these quizzes, meaning that students can miss/skip two of them without penalty.

Midterm evaluation – 20%. To be discussed further in class. The midterm will take place during our regularly scheduled class time on **Tuesday, February 23rd**.

Essay/Project – 30%. To be discussed further in class. Initial proposal due on Wednesday, February 10 – failure to submit this proposal by February 25th will result in a 10% deduction from the Essay grade. Project source list due on Wednesday, March 3rd – failure to submit this source list will result in a 10% deduction from the essay grade. There will be two due dates for the final papers. Students who would like to receive full written comments on their final paper should submit it by **Wednesday, April 1st**. Students who submit final papers after April 1st but before **Wednesday April 8th** will not be penalized, but will receive fewer comments. Students who submit final papers after April 8th will be penalized at the rate of 5%/day late. More information will be circulated to the class after the term begins.

Final (take home) evaluation – 20%. Students will have three days to complete a series of short essay questions related to key themes raised throughout the term. The due date for this take-home exam will fall within the April exam period.

Participation – 10%. I expect that students will regularly attend synchronous sessions and will demonstrate their engagement with course material through in-class discussions, participation in forums, and/or direct communication with me, and participation in the "cross-cultural communication" project that is part of the course (more information to come!). Students who meet this expectation will receive a participation grade that is equivalent (in percentage terms) to the grade they receive in the rest of the course. Thus, a student who achieves a final grade of 80% on the assessments indicated above will receive a grade of 8/10 for participation. Students who do not meet the above noted expectations for participation are likely to receive participation grade that is

slightly lower than this baseline, and students who exceed these expectations are likely to receive a participation grade that is slightly higher than this baseline.

All required assignments, papers and take-home exams will 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](https://www.turnitin.com).

In order to pass an essay course, the student must exhibit some minimal level of competence in essay writing and the appropriate level of knowledge of the content of the course. In order to pass this essay course, students must submit all both written assignments and receive a passing grade on at least one of them.

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.

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.

Institutional Statements and Policies

All students should familiarize themselves with Western's current academic policies regarding medical accommodation, accessibility, plagiarism and scholastic offences in [Western's Academic Calendar](#).