



**ANTHROPOLOGY 2351.71W  
WORLD CULTURES: PERSPECTIVES FROM ANTHROPOLOGY  
COURSE SYLLABUS**

**SPRING 2013**

**Instructor:** Laura Claire Jarvis, MA  
**Class Time:** Tuesday 7:30-10pm  
**Office Hours:** Immediately before or after class; email me for an appointment  
**Office:** None. Contact via email  
**University Email Address:**

**COURSE INFORMATION**

**Required Textbook:**

Conrad Phillip Kottak, *Cultural Anthropology: Appreciating Cultural Diversity*, 15<sup>th</sup> Edition.

**Course Description:**

This course undertakes the study of culture and society from a cross-cultural perspective. It provides an introduction to the major concepts, research methods, and theoretical frameworks of cultural anthropology. Topics focus on marriage and family practices, gender roles and identities, subsistence strategies, political and economic systems, and religion. The course will help students to better understand variations in behaviors and beliefs cross-culturally while also providing important insights into U.S. culture.

**Student Learning Outcomes:**

1. Students will be able to explain what is meant by the concept of culture as well as to identify and explain some of the other concepts critical to the cross cultural study of human behavior.
2. Students will be able to identify the major approaches and research methods of cultural anthropology.
3. Students will be able to identify and explain some of the similarities and differences in social organization, religious beliefs and values, gender ideology, etc. across cultures and hence begin to address the question of what makes us human.
4. Students will be able to explain how anthropological ideas can be applied to better understand everyday life and to help solve problems.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

**Course Format:**

Each 2.5-hour class meeting will be a blend of lecture, discussion, videos, and in-class activities. We will take a five-minute break approximately halfway through each class. Attendance is required, and students should have each week's reading assignments and

homework completed before the beginning of class.

### **Grading**

Attendance and Participation	5%
In-class Quizzes	10%
Homework Assignments	20%
Exam #1	20%
Exam #2	20%
Final Exam	25%

NOTE: The weighting assigned to each component is not intended to reduce the instructor's discretion in assigning final grades. For example, improved performance over the course of the semester may serve to mitigate the effect of earlier, less satisfactory work.

## **COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES**

### **Course Specific Procedures:**

Attendance and Participation: Attendance is required, and roll sheets may be passed. While "participation" is sometimes difficult in a class of this size, students are expected to take part in classroom discussion and in-class activities. Perfect attendance without participation is not sufficient to meet this criterion. **Participation means being present in mind as well as body!**

Missed Class Attendance: Absences are excused only in advance of missing a class for a debilitating and/or contagious illness, a death in the family, or religious observance. Written documentation (e.g., by healthcare provider, funeral director) must be presented to the instructor upon your return in order to make up any missed work. If you fail to notify me in advance of your absence and/or to provide the necessary documentation upon your return, you will not be permitted to make up the work. Missed assignments or exams receive a grade of 0 (zero), not F (50%).

Whether your absence is excused or unexcused, you are responsible for the material you missed in class. I do not share my lecture notes; you will need to get notes from a classmate. Because most of the videos are not available for out-of-class viewing either through TAMU-Commerce or Navarro College, I will provide a blank copy of the relevant quiz if you miss a video (but not the answers!) if you request it.

Quizzes: There will be twelve (12) quizzes given during the course of the semester, i.e., approximately one every week. Most often these will take the form of questions to be answered while watching a film or listening to a lecture. Quizzes will only become difficult if it becomes apparent that a number of students are not preparing adequately for class ahead of time! The lowest quiz grade will be dropped; this may be a zero in the case of an unexcused absence.

Homework Assignments: There will be a brief homework assignment almost every week, each of which will be explained and discussed in class. After the first couple of weeks, these will be e-mailed to you rather than making paper copies for everyone. Most of the homework assignments will require about one hour of your time, over and above the assigned readings. These are due at the beginning of class on the due date, and they must be turned in even if you intend to be absent if you wish to receive credit. The lowest homework grade will also be

dropped. Homework assignments must be typed/computer; there is not time for me to decipher handwriting and return graded assignments to you in a timely manner. (Exception: If you are asked to turn in observational notes along with your typed conclusions, the notes do not have to be typed.) Unless otherwise indicated, they must be written as formal assignments (complete sentences, corrected/ proofread spelling, no abbreviations such as “b/w,” “ppl,” “LOL,” etc.). These assignments are graded with a  $\sqrt{+}$ ,  $\sqrt{}$ , or  $\sqrt{-}$ .

**Late Assignments:** Assignments which are turned in late will receive a full letter-grade penalty for each day that they are late (the “clock” begins at the start of class). Student with excused absences must make arrangements with the instructor to turn in late assignments in a timely manner; we will agree on a “grace period” before the penalty kicks in. If the absence is unexcused, the assignment must be turned in on time or the late penalty will be applied.

Excuses related to computer/printer problems are not acceptable for late assignments. Assignments must be turned in as hard copy; they may not be e-mailed to the instructor without express, prior permission, or in the case of absence.

**Exams:** The exams will be objective in format, and may include items such as multiple-choice, matching, true/false, and the like. The exams will cover material from course textbooks, lectures (including films), and activities; and are cumulative, although weighted toward material covered since the previous exam.

Make-up exams are offered only to students with written documentation of a debilitating illness or death in the family. You must notify me before you miss the exam. You must also make up the exam at the earliest possible date – as soon as you are well or return to campus. Failure to make up the exam promptly will result in the imposition of normal penalties for late work, i.e., 10 points per day will be deducted from your exam grade. If you experience an extended illness, please speak with your academic advisor about appropriate action. S/he and I will make arrangements to meet your needs.

NO make-up exams are given to accommodate students’ travel plans. It is your responsibility to plan your trips around official university holidays and around your coursework, not the other way around. Under NO circumstances will the final exam be offered early. If you become ill, or experience an unavoidable conflict, you will receive a grade of “I” (Incomplete) for the course and will be expected to take the exam within a month after the fall semester begins.

## Other Policies/Expectations

### Extra Credit

Extra credit will not be offered to individual students; it may at the instructor’s discretion be offered at specific times to the entire class.

**Plagiarism and Academic Misconduct:** Plagiarism, cheating, and any other form of academic misconduct will not be tolerated. If you have any doubt about whether a particular activity constitutes academic dishonesty, please consult with the instructor before taking a risk. Penalties for academic misconduct may range from a grade of zero on a particular assignment to being dropped from the class. Please note that signing someone else’s name to the roll sheet in order to give the appearance that he/she was present is a form of academic dishonesty, and it will be treated as such.

Miscellaneous:

- Cell phones, pagers, Blackberries, iPods, etc. are to be turned off when class begins; and again when the break is over. This applies also to any other kind of electronic device except for laptop computers, if they are being used for note-taking. If laptops become more of a distraction than a learning tool, the instructor reserves the right to require that you no longer use them.
  
- Given the time of day at which this course is offered, I expect that some of you will occasionally be eating your dinner in class! Eating and drinking in class are fine, as long as you clean up after yourself and don't distract others with your activity.

**University Specific Procedures:**

*ADA Statement*

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

**Office of Student Disability Resources and Services**  
**Texas A&M University-Commerce**  
**Gee Library 132**  
**Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835**  
**Fax (903) 468-8148**

HYPERLINK "mailto:StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu" [StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu](mailto:StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu)

HYPERLINK

"http://web.tamuc.edu/studentLife/campusServices/studentDisabilityResourcesAndServices/" [Student Disability Resources & Services](http://web.tamuc.edu/studentLife/campusServices/studentDisabilityResourcesAndServices/)

*Student Conduct*

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. (See *Code of Student Conduct* from *Student Guide Handbook*).

**COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR**  
(subject to change if advance notice is given)

\*Readings are to be read in advance of the class period indicated

- Jan. 15    Introductions  
            Review syllabus and course requirements  
            Lecture: Understanding Anthropology
- Jan. 22    Lecture: Understanding and Studying Culture  
            \*Read: Kottak, Chapter 1: What is Anthropology  
                    Kottak, Chapter 2: Culture  
            Provided article: Body Ritual Among the Nacirema
- Jan. 29              Lecture: Theory, Evidence, Methods, and Fieldwork  
            Read: Chapter 3: Method and Theory in Cultural Anthropology  
            Provided reading: "Tricking and Tripping"
- Feb. 5              Lecture: Learning to be an Individual / Gender and Sexuality  
            Read: Chapter 9: Gender  
            Provided Readings: From Brettell and Sargent, *Gender in Cross-Cultural Perspective*
- Feb. 12    Lecture: Kinship, Families, and Raising Children  
            Read: Chapter 10: Kinship  
                    Chapter 11: Marriage  
            Provided Reading: "How Many Fathers are Best for a Child?"
- Feb. 19    Language and Communication  
            Read: Chapter 5  
            Provided Reading: A Cultural Approach to Male-Female Miscommunication
- Feb. 26    Exam 1  
            Lecture: Drug Enforcement and Urban Issues
- Mar. 5              Race and Ethnicity  
            Read: Chapter 6: Ethnicity and Race  
            Provided Readings: "Race without Color," "White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack," & "Inventing Hispanics"
- Mar. 12    Political Systems and Social Control  
            Read: Chapter 8: Political Systems  
            Provided Reading: "The Kpelle Moot"
- Mar. 19    SPRING BREAK - NO CLASS

- Mar. 26 Criminal Anthropology: How Anthropologists Look at Crime and Crime Cross-Culturally  
Provided Reading: "Crack in Spanish Harlem," "Law, Custom, and Crimes against Women," "The Cultural Defense"
- Apr. 2 Forensic Anthropology and Military Anthropology  
Provided Readings: "Army Enlists Anthropologists in War Zones," "Contemporary Warfare in the New Guinea Highlands"
- Apr. 9 EXAM 2  
Discussion from April 2
- Apr. 16 Religion and the Supernatural  
Read: Chapter 12: Religion, Chapter 15  
Provided Readings: "Do Muslim Women Really Need Saving?"
- Apr. 23 Colonialism, the Origin of Globalization  
Read: Chapter 14: The World System and Colonialism
- Apr. 30 Modern Issues, and Applying Anthropology  
Read: Chapter 15: Global Issues Today,  
Chapter 4: Applied Anthropology
- May 7 Final Exam