**ANTH 1150 World Cultures Through Film**

**Summer 2013**

**“*Believing, with Max Weber, that man is an animal suspended in webs of significance he himself has spun, I take culture to be those webs, and the analysis of it to be therefore not an experimental science in search of law but an interpretive one in search of meaning*.”**

**– Clifford Geertz**

**Instructor Information**

**Instructor: Andrew Nelson**

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**(Virtual) Office Hours:** Sundays 3-5 PM

**Course Description**

Anthropology is a discipline which concerns itself with understanding the human experience across time and space. With a discerning eye, anthropologists utilize a holistic perspective to understand seemingly universal cultural patterns such as language, kinship, subsistence, religion, and political organization which structure human societies. At the same time, the discipline is inherently comparative, as each human society - whether simple or complex - expresses these patterns in its own unique way. Sight is arguably the most powerful of the human senses. Viewing these diverse and exciting cultural expressions through film, therefore, is a powerful learning tool for students of anthropology. We hope that you will enjoy these films, and that they will spark in you a desire to understand the substantial, meaningful human lives that humans lead around the world.

**World Cultures Through Film is an *almost* entirely Internet-based course. This includes the films you will review, lessons you will learn, discussions you will engage in and quizzes you will take. There are also required readings from the book, which is listed below.**

**Required reading material:**

*The Challenge of Human Diversity: Mirrors, Bridges, and Chasms*, **Third Edition.** Dwight Middleton.

Available at The University Bookstore or on the web at: [http://www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com/) [www.coursesmart.com](http://www.coursesmart.com/) [http://half.com](http://half.com/)

It is your responsibility to ensure you have the necessary equipment to access and complete this online course, and we recommend you use a reliable server. Public WiFi sites and free services like Juno tend to "kick you off" frequently. This causes many problems for test takers. A DSL or cable service is recommended for faster service.

**Course Overview:**

Through the use of ethnographic and documentary film, lecture and discussions, this course will illustrate the lifeways, values, and beliefs of human societies throughout the world. This survey includes examples from native North America, the Caribbean, Latin America, Asia, Africa, Europe, Melanesia, Australia, and modern North America.

The goal of the course is to provide you with a knowledge and appreciation of the variety and diversity of societies throughout the world including:

* Band Level/Tribal
* Agricultural/Peasant
* Industrial/Early Modern
* Information/Modern societies

The course objective is for students to gain a better understanding of the human experience by utilizing an anthropological perspective.

The course does not pretend to provide a complete description of each society encountered or to answer every question about how such a society operates.

The focus will be on:

* expanding horizons
* seeing the inter-connectedness of human-kind
* reviewing the differences between and among groups.

**We will explore the interaction between the economic, political, cultural, and social factors that contribute to both stability and change in human societies.**

This course may create more questions than answers. You will probe and try to understand, but likely not dictate precise answers, as culture is always changing. Ultimately, though, you will all leave the course asking better questions and having better answers.

* You can *not* succeed in this course without self-discipline and a willingness to explore new areas of enquiry.
* You must also be willing to integrate and synthesize material, not just remember facts.

Films are available from your computer.

* When the time comes you will be prompted in a lesson to view a film.
* Click on the link and follow the directions.

\* A few students may need to use caution in viewing some films. There are portrayals of killing animals for food, initiation rituals that involve bodily scarring, female circumcision, the handling of snakes, a murdered body, etc. If you are faint of heart you may need to look away from the screen briefly.

All films are also available in the UNT Media Library (Chilton 111) and the UNT System Center Library in Dallas.

UNT Media Library hours are:

* M-Th. -- 7:45 AM to 10 PM
* Friday -- 7:45 AM to 6 PM
* Saturday -- 1:00 to 6 PM
* Sunday – 1:00 to 6PM

UNT System Center Library in Dallas hours are:

* M to Th. -- 8:30 AM to 10 PM
* Friday -- 8:30 AM to 6 PM
* Saturday -- 9:00 AM to 5 PM
* Sunday - Closed

It is intended that the course will:

* Increase your knowledge about aspects of specific cultures from a variety of regions of the world.
* Demonstrate how culture is a unifying concept throughout the world.
* Expand your understanding of the forms of human adaptation and the complexity of human societies.
* Demonstrate the inter-connectedness of human experience among and between societies.

**\*\*\*PLEASE REFER TO THE CLASS SCHEDULE FOR READING ASSIGNMENTS, LESSONS, FORUM DISCUSSIONS, FILM REVIEW AND QUIZ DATES.\*\*\***

**Assignments and Grade Distribution:**

You will be asked to complete several different types of work for this course, including quizzes, film reviews, forum discussions, and a course evaluation.

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| --- | --- |
| Assignment | Points |
| 5 Quizzes (20 points each) | 100 |
| 11 (first one optional) Film Reviews (10 points each) | 100 |
| 5 Discussions (5 points each) | 25 |
| Total | 225 |

**1. Quizzes** -- Maximum of 20 points each

Quizzes will consist of true/false and multiple choice questions.

* The quizzes will be conducted online, must be taken at the times specified, and will cover lessons and readings only, not the films.
* Each student may log on at any time during the designated period by clicking on "Quizzes" on the Course content tab.
* You will then receive 20 questions that are computer-generated from a pool of questions.
* Each student will receive a separate group of questions.
* Once you begin the quiz, you will have 30 minutes to complete it. (You can only login once)
* The quizzes are not cumulative i.e., the final quiz will only test material from Topic VI.
* Quizzes are as follows: Quiz I=Lessons 1-4; Quiz II=Lessons 5&6; Quiz III=Lessons 7&8; Quiz IV=Lessons 9&10; and Quiz V=Lessons 11&12.
* **There are no make-up quizzes without a doctor's written verification.**

**2. Film Reviews** -- Maximum of 10 points each

* You must write (papers must be typed, spell checked, and delivered through link on the home page) a 400-500 word review of 11 films.
* **Do not zip your files and it is preferable not to use Microsoft Vista.**
* There are a total of 11 Film Reviews **- Film Review I is optional.**
* All Film Reviews must be turned in by 12:00pm on Sunday evenings.
* To write a Review, type and save your Review using your word processing program, then click on the "Turnitin" Icon you wish to complete*;* upload and submit. It will then be available for grading.
* **LATE PAPERS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.**
* Plagiarizing someone else's paper, internet, or other sources will result in 0 on the assignment.
* A format for reviews and a sample paper will be noted in the assignment section of Lesson 1.
* **See "Things to look for when viewing films" and "How to write film reviews" below for instructions.**

\*Please note: students who are retaking the course from a previous semester may not resubmit previous semester's work. Doing so will automatically mark the submission as plagiarized and will result in zero credit.

**3. Film Discussion/Forums** -- Maximum of 5 points each

You must join in discussion/forums, on the specified dates, for Weeks 3, 4, 5, 7, and 8.

* The 5 Films for discussion are indicated at the end of each course lesson (under assignment tab).
* Go to the "Discussion" area and click on specific film to complete this assignment.
* Please complete these discussions in the forum for your film, not in the main forum.
* This is a participation grade so the more you read other posts and post yourself, the higher your grade. I recommend that you aim for at least three meaningful posts.

**Interacting with peers**

This course facilitates travel to places we may never go and interaction with people we may never meet. Some of their practices may seem strange, foreign, or even wrong. These discussion forums, therefore, are ideal places to exercise **cultural relativism,** that is, being open-minded and non-judgmental towards the subjects you study. This principle also applies towards your fellow classmates.

* **When interacting with your peers on discussion forums, you will be expected to treat one another in a respectful, courteous, and professional manner.**
* You might discover that learning from your peers can be especially enlightening!

**4. Core Course Evaluation - Extra Credit -- 5 points --** This is an assessment required by the association that accredits UNT. (This is NOT the same as the SETE.) They are interested to know whether students learn certain things in certain courses. There are no right or wrong answers on the assessment. But, in order to get the points you must fill it out seriously. Please be honest in your assessment. Go to the tool where you have taken quizzes to complete, during the specified dates.

**Grading Scale** --

* A -- 202 to 225
* B -- 201 to 178
* C -- 177 to 154
* D -- 153 to 130
* F -- 0 to 129

You may check your scores for **each assignment** by clicking on My Grades. The final score and grade will be shown in My Grades. If you have questions regarding the determination of your grade for a specific Film Review, please refer to the comments in the Grade Mark tab of Turnitin.com. If you are still unclear, please contact your TA.

**Things to look for when viewing films:**

1. Look for patterns of behavior, values, and beliefs and other indices of what ties the society together.
2. Look for examples of the "type" of society reviewed in the film.
3. How is this group of people different from the peoples portrayed in previous films?
4. Are there indications of more or less individuation, personal relationships, impact of institutions, relationship to environment, etc.?
5. Are there indications of culture change? Are stresses and strains occurring that may tend to produce imperatives for change?
6. What are the dominant symbols, values, and beliefs evident among this group of people?

**How to write film reviews (not all suggestions apply to every film):**

1. Describe the major points of the film.
2. What is the film about?
3. Where does the group live...etc.?
4. What are their families like...etc.?
5. What are the roles of males and females, etc.?
6. **Use concepts from readings and lectures to amplify and explain what you see in the films. This is critical for A and B grades**
7. Indicate what basic characteristics of this type of society (from the lessons) are illustrated in this film.
8. Very briefly indicate how you felt about the film. Did you like it or not and why?
9. What effect did the film have on your view of the world and your place in it?
10. Write concise reviews that stay on the point and don't use unnecessary verbiage to convey simple thoughts.
11. These are formal reviews. Do not make comments without good reasoning.
12. These are only suggestions.  Some films will vary in what is portrayed and you can write about.  But always use concepts from the readings and lectures to help you make points.

**Do keep a copy of all reviews submitted in case one is lost. This is your responsibility!**

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