Anth 3900.001/5700.12 Culture and Society of the Pacific

Description
This course will be a blend of academic and experiential learning through a faculty-led study abroad program in Fiji. The beginning of the course will take place before departing for Fiji. We will use Blackboard Learn modules to explore island geology (which impacts resources and lifestyles on the islands), the peopling of the Pacific, and indigenous island societies in the Western Pacific with particular emphasis in Fiji. We then look at the transformation wrought in these societies by Western contact, missionary influence and colonial incorporation. Finally, in country, we will examine how Fijians and Indo-Fijians are dealing with the problems of modernization and finding their own niche in the global system.

General Course Objectives
1. To develop an awareness of the diversity of the peoples and cultures of the Western Pacific region.
2. To develop in students an open-minded objectivity in realizing not just other ways of doing things, but other possibilities of ways to make sense of the human condition.
3. To develop scholarly critical thinking skills, and effective means of organizing and presenting them.

Anth 4770.009/5700.13 Culture and Development in Fiji

Description
The Culture and Development in Fiji will combine classroom work with experiential learning gained through student ethnographic experiences with local development actors. It will be a blend of academic preparation led by both UNT faculty and their Fijian counterparts, with workshops jointly attended by UNT and local students, travel to significant cultural and environmental heritage sites, and six days of volunteer internship with selected local (Fijian) non-governmental organizations. Coursework will include research-related activities surrounding Pacific island culture, community engagement within international development and globalization, and the role of anthropological perspectives. We will emphasize how global processes and organizational cultures influence the interactions of macro-level policies and local realities.

Course Objectives
1. To develop an awareness of the current situation of the people of Fiji
2. Acquire an overview of theory and practice within applied international development
3. Learn how practicing developmental workers gather, analyze, and present their work
4. To understand the constraints and everyday practices of non-governmental organizations working in communities abroad.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS
Readings

Peoples and Cultures
Blackboard lesson - Introduction to the Pacific
Blackboard lesson - Western Pacific
Blackboard lesson - Eastern Pacific
Culture and Development in Fiji


Youtube documentary on Fiji’s squatter settlements: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nkTJ220Bb-Q

Student Evaluation

- Pre-trip participation 10% of grade
- Daily journal during trip and class participation 25% of grade
- Oral presentation in-country 10% of grade
- In country activities 30% of grade
- NGO/development ethnography 25% of grade

Please realize that our goal as instructors is not just to grade, evaluate, and test, but to help you gain a valuable life perspective to carry outside the class, into whatever you do.

Pre-trip: This will include 2 MANDATORY meetings, at a time to be announced. We’ll cover readings, logistics, culture, and language training. In addition, you’ll have to independently research a contemporary issue/ topic for an “in-country presentation.”

In-country Presentations: Two of you, working together, will have to research ahead of time, and then present to our group a 5-10 minute presentation on topics related to contemporary issues.
Presentation: The role of women in Fijian society (Navala)
Bridget and Orsolya

Presentation: Disaster Relief and Food Security in Fiji (Cyclone Winston) (Navala)
Lynn and Carla

Presentation: Squatter settlements and Landlessness in Fiji (Suva)
Ashlyn and Chaney

Presentation: Contemporary Issues in Fijian Education (Suva)
Jodi and Amanda

Presentation: Community-based “eco” tourism in Fiji (Namatakula)
Lisa and Lauren

Presentation: climate change in the Pacific (Namatakula)
Sarah and Caitlin

Daily Journal: We want you guys to write/type at least 200 words per day (graduate students – 250 words) about what you did, what you saw, who you met, and what you learned that day, for every day you’re there…even travel days. The best fieldnotes are both descriptive and analytical, but realize that your analyses will change as your initial assumptions become challenged as you learn. We’ll collect these after we get back (and of course we’ll return them to you).

NGO/development ethnography: We want you to focus on your NGO activity that you learned through your participant observation and informal interviews while there. For instance, what was your NGO’s mission? Their history/how did they get started? Their funding sources? Their challenges? The focus of their activities (programs/events)? What are their plans for their plans for the future and/or future projects? What is their organizational structure like (hierarchy of employees)? Finally, add a reflection on your experiences of this component of the trip and what we should do differently next time. 5-6 single-spaced pages for undergraduates, 6-8 single-spaced pages for graduates. Due date: Aug. 21st (everyone will get an incomplete and we will do grade changes after the 21st)

Student Behavior in the field: Fiji is a developing country, that ranks 88th on the scale of human development (out of 187 countries). It ranks generally high in health and education (the average adult has 9.9 years of school), but low in income (average annual per capita income is $7,200 a year; infant mortality rates are average, at 20 deaths per 1000 births). Literacy is estimated at 94% among both men and women.

We anticipate no problems in country. DESPITE THIS, your safety on this trip absolutely depends on your ability to listen to the instructors, respect the rules laid out, and respect the rules and laws of the host country. You will need to act responsibly.

We will absolutely not tolerate any behavior that puts you, another student, or the program in jeopardy. Any behavior that interferes with other students' opportunity to learn is also unacceptable. You will be sent home immediately.

Safety in the Field: Suva is an urban environment, and so bears similar risk to any developing country capital city. Students will be advised as necessity of following the program rules, adhering to nightly
curfews, and common sense ways to stay safe. Please feel free to talk to either of us about anything you might be experiencing or feeling during the trip.

**Here are some tips:**
Some neighborhoods are bad. We’ll tell you these. Stay out. Safety in numbers!
Petty theft happens, including from hotel rooms. Hide your valuables.
The ocean can be dangerous.
Jellyfish sting and sharks bite.
Waterfalls can be slippery.
Mosquitoes bite and carry bad stuff.
Water is not drinkable everywhere.