**Human Cultures**

ANTH 151B ~ Spring 2015

Monday, Wednesday, Friday 2:50pm-3:50pm

Julian Science and Math Ctr. Auditorium

Dr. Ama Boakyewa

Email: amaboakyewa@depauw.edu

Office Hours & Location: Asbury Hall 308, Mon & Wed 9:30AM-11:30AM (or by appointment)

Phone: 765-658-4672

**Course Description:** This course will introduce students to the many facets of socio-cultural anthropology. Throughout the course, we will investigate how the issues of social organization, politics, economics, religion, and identity, gender and sexuality are dealt with by a variety of cultural groups. In order to understand how socio-cultural anthropology approaches these topics today, we will study the methods anthropologists employ for understanding the world and how others perceive it. No prior knowledge of anthropology is expected. Assignments are designed to help students develop a basic understanding of the topics and approaches within socio-cultural anthropology.

**Course Learning Objectives:** Upon successful completion of the course, students will be able to:

• Explain culture and why the study of contemporary cultural issues should be holistic and relativistic

• Identify the various ways of constructing kinship, gender, race, political and economic systems and people’s relationship with the environment

• Compare religious and medicinal practices in Western and non-Western societies

• Describe anthropological methods and apply and evaluate these methods by conducting an ethnographic interview and writing up the results

• Conduct library research on a specific human culture in a “progressive cultural study” which seeks to give a deeper understanding of this culture

**Course Format**. Class-time will be structured in seminar format with *class discussion* taking a key role in digesting the readings, films, and lectures. Much of the time lectures will be devoted to the presentation of new material that is not covered in the reading, and to deeper exploration of the reading - you should get class notes from another student if you miss class. Attendance and participation are **key** to your success in understanding course themes and materials.

**Course Requirements**.

1. To prepare for each class by close reading of all required course materials.
2. Participation in structured, in-class discussions & activities.
3. To complete an ethnographic interview and Progressive Cultural Project assignment (see “Grading” below for further details).
4. To take the Midterm and Final exams.

**Required Texts:**

There are five required books for the course (listed below). All other required readings, film links or websites, etc. are available on MOODLE **(MOO)**

1. Spradley, James and David W. McCurdy. *2012. Conformity and Conflict: Readings in Cultural Anthropology,* 14th Ed. New York: Pearson
2. Dettwyler, Katherine. 1994. *Dancing Skeletons: Life and Death in West Africa.* Prospect Heights:Waveland Press
3. Fadiman, Anne. 1997. *The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down: A Hmong Child, Her American Doctors, and the Collision of Two Cultures*. New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux
4. Wolf, Margery. 1992. *A Thrice Told Tale: Feminism, Postmodernism and Ethnographic Responsibility*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
5. Abu-Lughod, Lila. 1993. *Writing Women’s Worlds: Bedouin Stories*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

**CLASSROOM ETIQUETTE:**  **Special note on electronic devices: Cell phones and computers should be turned off and not visible during class. Earphones should also be put away. If I see a phone in the classroom, I will issue an immediate “F” for participation on that day.**

**Grading**: Your grade in this course should reflect how well you have engaged with the course material and issues over the course of the semester. The only way for me to know what you have learned is if you communicate it to me. Even if you have thoroughly read, studied, and understood all the material in the class, you will not receive a good grade if you do not communicate what you have learned through class discussions and written assignments.

Your **100-point course grade** will be determined as follows:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Participation/ Attendance | 10 points |
| Progressive Culture Project: Part 1=10 pts; Part 2= 20 pts | 30 points |
| Ethnographic Interview | 15 points |
| Midterm Exam | 20 points: |
| Final Exam | 20 points |
| **TOTAL** | **100 POINTS** |

**a. Attendance/Participation (20 points):** Attendance is required in the course and will be recorded daily. If you arrive more than 15 minutes late, or leave more than 15 minutes early, you will be counted as absent without a valid excuse. Please communicate that you will be late or must leave early. I will allow **3 excused absences**. If you miss a quiz or scheduled paper due date due to an excused absence, you must bring in written proof before I can schedule a make-up. The proofs required include an official written letter or note from a health care practitioner, legal entity or like sources.

I will have various unannounced exercises to quiz you on the daily assigned readings---they could include minute papers, pop quizzes, reviews, or collaborative group tools. Learning collaborations --- group or pairs activities--- will be a part of your attendance/participation grade. There are no make-ups on the unannounced exercises or activities---if you are out you will lose participation points.

To be successful in this course coming to class is imperative since class discussions and lectures will not duplicate the readings, but augment them with new information and insights. Students with the highest achievement in college: (1) Read before class, (2) Take excellent notes, (3) Pay attention in class, (4) Actively participate in class discussions, and (5) **ASK QUESTIONS**, for clarification, either in the class or outside class with the professor.

For each reading, answer the following questions in your notes and bring them to class. If you do not know the answers, you will not be able to successfully participate in the class activities. 1. In one or two sentences, what is the author’s main point? 2. How does this reading (author’s approach, main points, key concepts) relate to what we have already read and to current events? 3. What is one question you have after completing this reading?

**b. Progressive Culture Project (30 points)**: Part 1 (10 points) will include a 3-4 page introduction to a Human Cultural group of your choice. I will provide a Human Cultures Index (list of cultures) from the Human Relations Area Files (HRAF) or you might already have a culture you are interested in. This first paper will give you the opportunity to conduct library research on this culture, write it up and briefly share with the class during our “Culture Share” time. This will be a short presentation. I will also give feedback on your papers to assist with how you write up Part 2 (20 points), which will deal with one specific aspect of your culture. This is also of your choice and must be a more detailed account of the culture, e.g. marriage practices, how people make a living, rites of passage, political systems, education, religion, etc. I will have a more detailed list of requirements posted on Moodle and we will discuss it in class. This paper will be 5-6 pages.

**c. Ethnographic Interview Report (20 points)**: This project is designed to provide you with hands-on experience in methods used by anthropologists. Face to face interviews are a good way to learn more about human cultures and cultural practice. For this assignment you will select a cultural practice that you would like to learn more about and interview one person who is involved in the practice. A few examples of possible topics are Japanese cooking, southern Indiana traditions, job experience, ordination to the ministry, life as a tattoo artist, factory or farm worker, athlete or band member, etc., which you then will contextualize and analyze through the lens of anthropology and our course materials. We will have a training session for this project.. The goal of this assignment is to learn more about the lives of humans and cultural practice and how it is integrated (one part is connected to another) with other aspects of culture. You will write a 4-6 page double-spaced report on your findings, including a reflection on the methods. Be prepared to discuss your results in class.

*What questions should I ask?* Write a total of 10 questions that will give you specific information about the cultural practice, such as the who, what, when, where, why and how it is related to other aspects of culture. Limit or avoid yes or no and close-ended questions as these can restrict the amount of data collected. In class, we will go over tips on how to write interview questions. You may need to do some preliminary research on your topic to help you write the questions. It is fine if the questions turn out to not be perfect. Part of this exercise is to reflect back on what did and did not work so it is expected that you may encounter some problems with some of your questions. As long as an honest effort is made in writing the questions and following the tips, you will be fine.

*How should I conduct the interview?* Interviews done in person often reveal additional information not available in written surveys. For this assignment, the interviews MUST be conducted in person and verbally. This means that you should NOT hand a person a survey or questionnaire and ask them to write out the answers, but rather you should verbally ask them the questions and write down their responses. You may do a video interview over Skype or other similar live video medium. If you have access to an audio recorder, you may also want to record the interview given first the person’s permission. Whether you use a recorder or not, you must take hand-written notes. This is an important practice for anyone who does ethnographic interviews. As any seasoned anthropologist will tell you, technology does not always work. Do not waste your interviewee’s or your own time by relying solely on your memory or equipment. Your notes should be hand-written. You do not have to record every word, pause, or gesture of the person, but the notes must contain the person’s complete response to each question.

*Who can I interview?* – You may interview any person who is or has been involved in the cultural practice that you picked.

*How should I write up the report?* The report should be 4-6 pages double-spaced. The first half of the paper should be a summary of your results as it relates to how the cultural practice is integrated with other facets of culture/society. This is NOT a line by line statement of what each person said for each question. Rather, you should summarize and explain the themes in the responses. Focus on a couple of the strongest or most surprising connections rather than try to include all of them. To discover these connections, look through your data for any patterns –such as women generally do a particular practice because of what society considers masculine or feminine. Be sure to include some specific examples from your interviews in your explanation to back up your conclusions. For the second half of your paper, reflect on your methodology. What worked well and why? What problems did you encounter in doing this assignment? How could you solve the problems? Focus on the issues you encountered, both positive and negative. Examples of incomplete explanations or solutions are “because I did/did not get the answers that I expected,” “because I would get longer responses”, “I would write different questions” and similar comments because they are too generic and really say very little about the problem and solution.

**d**. Midterm and Final (20 points each): The exams will be definition and essay-based and comprehensive with a focus on the material covered since the last exam. Make-ups for those who miss the exams will only be allowed in extreme circumstances, and prior arrangements with the instructor and official documentation must be obtained.

**Evaluation on Exams:**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| A 94%+ | B+ 87-89% | C+ 77-79% | D+ 67-69% | F 59-0% |
| A- 90-93% | B 84-86% | C 74-76% | D 64-66% |  |
|  | B- 80-83% | C- 70-73% | D- 60-63% |  |

Grades are not based on effort but on your command of the material, the originality of your work, how closely your work fulfills the requirements of the assignment, and how well-written it is. Your work should follow standard English writing conventions, which means few if any spelling or grammar mistakes; introductory and conclusion paragraphs in papers, thesis statements, and topic sentences in essays. These are standard expectations that you will find at most if not all classes at DePauw and universities across the United States.

It is your responsibility as a student to keep asking questions until you understand the assignment or concepts in the course. I do NOT read minds and can only help you if you ask questions about the material in class and during office hours/appointments. Asking questions and making mistakes are important components of learning. Please come see me in my office for questions related to your scores on assignments or exams. Email or speaking immediately before or after class does not allow for sufficient discussion of questions and concerns.

**Evaluation for written assignments**: I will assign **letter grades** to the written assignments in this course. Written project grades have the following expectations:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| A | Excellent. Assignment exceeds the minimum requirements for the assignment. A well-conceived and well-argued paper with an introduction, thesis statement, body, and conclusion. Sufficient evidence is provided and explained to support the argument. Well written with no spelling or grammatical errors. |
| B | Very Good. Assignment exceeds the minimum requirements for the assignment. A well argued paper with an introduction, thesis statement, body, and conclusion. Evidence to support the argument may be missing or not fully explained in a few places. Fairly well written with few spelling or grammatical errors. |
| C | Fair. Assignment meets the minimum requirements for the assignment, but lacks an argument and/or critical analysis. Sufficient evidence to support the argument is lacking or not explained. Several spelling or grammatical errors. |
| D | Unsatisfactory. Barely meets the minimum requirements for the assignment. Several spelling or grammatical errors. |
| F | Does not meet the minimum requirements for the assignment. Several spelling or grammatical errors... |

**CLASS SCHEDULE—ANTH 151A: 8a-9a**

**SPRING 2015**

***The “CLASS SCHEDULE” of this syllabus is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor in case of bad weather, illnesses or other unforeseen occurrences.***

**Note on Reading sources:**

**CC**=*Conformity and Conflict* (Spradley and McCurdy)

**DS**=*Dancing Skeletons* (Dettwyler)

**Spirit**=*The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down* (Fadiman)

**WWW**=*Writing Women’s Worlds* (Abu-Lughod)

**TTT**=*A Thrice Told Tale* (Wolf)

**MOO**=Readings, sources, websites and films as posted on Moodle

**ANTHROPOLOGY & CULTURE**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Mo Jan 26** | **Introductions** to each other and the topic: What does it mean to be human? What are Human Cultures and why do we need to talk about them? |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **We Jan 28** | MANDATORY **Community Wide Forum** on diversity and difference. REGISTER AT **8:30AM NEAL FIELDHOUSE**. Speakers include:   * Dr. Derald Sue, Professor of Psychology and Education at Columbia University. Dr. Sue has been a pioneer in the field of multicultural psychology and multicultural education. His theories and concepts have paved the way for a generation of younger scholars interested in issues of multicultural psychology. * Sharon Morgan and Tom DeWolf, authors of *Gather at the Table*, winner of the Phillis Wheatley Book Award for Nonfiction/Biography & Memoir. Their book's subtitle is "The Healing Journey of a Daughter of Slavery and a Son of the Slave Trade," and it shares the story of their shared project to better understand the complex history of their families. |
| **Fr Jan 30** | Discussion on Community Wide Forum on diversity and difference |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Mo Feb 2** | Spradley and McCurdy (CC): Ch 1 “Culture and Ethnography” |

**Anthropologists and their Methods, Challenges, Goals and Reflections**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **We Feb 4** | *Looking into the lives of humans:*  Dettwyler (DS) Ch 1, “Return to the Field” & 2, “Of Mosquitoes and Men” p 1-24 |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Fr Feb 6** | Dettwyler (DS) Ch 3, “Female Circumcision” & 4, “Of Worms and Other Parasites”  p 25-48 |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Mo Feb 9** | Wolf (TTT) Ch 1, “Ruminations with a View(point) & 2, “The Hot Spell” p 1-60, |

***Writing up the stories of humans***

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **We Feb 11** | Wolf (TTT) Ch 5, “Writing Ethnography: The Poetics and Politics of Culture” |

***Hearing human stories from the source***

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Fr Feb 13** | Lila Abu-Lughod, Writing Women’s Worlds (WWW) Preface xi-xvii, Introduction 1-25 |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Mo Feb 16** | **IN-CLASS MOVIE**: *Moolaade* by Ousmane Sembene 2004 on female genital cutting in Mali  Abu-Lughod (WWW) Introduction p 25-42 |
| **We Feb 18** | **IN-CLASS MOVIE**: *Moolaade (*Continued)  Spradley, et al (CC )“Do Muslim Women Really Need Saving?” p 208-216 |
| **Fr Feb 20** | Re-cap and discussion for the week |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Mo Feb 23** | Abu-Lughod (WWW) Ch 1 “Patrilineality” p 45-85 |
|  |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **We Feb 25** | Abu-Lughod (WWW) Ch 2 “Polygyny” p 87-125 |
| **Fr Feb 27** | Discussion |

***Men tell their stories, too***

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Mo Mar 2** | Barry S. Hewlett, “The Cultural Nexus of Aka Father-Infant Bonding” in Caroline B. Brettell & Carolyn F. Sargent (Eds.) 2013. *Gender in Cross-Cultural Perspective,* 6th Edition. New York: Pearson p. 42-50 **(MOO)**  David D. Gilmore, “My Encounter with Machismo in Spain,” in Brettell et al, p 163-174 **(MOO)** |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **We Mar 4** | **REVIEW FOR MIDTERM** |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Fr Mar 6** | **MIDTERM** |

**FAMILY AND KINSHIP**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Mo Mar 9** | Spradley and McCurdy (CC) “Kinship and Family” p 151-154  Spradley and McCurdy (CC) “Family and Kinship in Village India” p 165-171 |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Fr Mar 13** | **Methods Training for Progressive Culture Project and Ethnographic Interview** |

**Identity Through Rites of Passage**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Mo Mar 16** | Kristina Jacobsen-Bia, “Radmilla’s Voice: Music Genre, Blood Quantum and Belonging on the Navajo Nation,” *Cultural Anthropology* (2011) Vol. 29, Issue 2 p 385-410 (MOO)  Film Clip: Birth, Death and Marriage (rites of passage) |
| **We Mar 18** | **Film:** *Kindaalda: a Navajo rite of passage* |
| **Fr Mar 20** | Discussion Day |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Mar 23- Mar 27** | **SPRING BREAK** |

**Economics and Making a Living**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Mo Mar 30** | **PART 1: PROGRESSIVE CULTURAL PROJECT DUE**  Spradley and McCurdy (CC) “Economic Systems” p 115-118  Spradley and McCurdy (CC) “Reciprocity and the Power of Giving” p 119-124 |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **We Apr 1** | Spradley and McCurdy (CC) “ Poverty, Office Work and the Crack Alternative” p 125-135 |

**To Race or Not?**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Fr Apr 3** | What is race? Where did it come from? Do we need it? What does it do? Do we need to get rid of it?  A Short History on race in America |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Mo Apr 6** | Spradley and McCurdy (CC) “Mixed Blood” p 217-226  Video: A Case from Brazil---Black in Latin America by Henry Louis Gates, PBS |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **We Apr 8** | American Anthropological Association (AAA) S*tatement on Race*, available at:<http://www.aaanet.org/stmts/racepp.htm>    **Film** **Clip**: TedTalks—Nina Jablonski on the color of skin deeply |
| **Fr Apr 10** | Recap |

**Religion, Health and Culture: A Hmong Family in the United States**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Mo Apr 13** | **ETHNOGRAPHIC INTERVIEW DUE**  Anne Fadiman (Spirit) *The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down*, preface vii-ix, Ch 1,2,3 p 3-31 |
| **We Apr 15** | Spirit Ch 4,5,6 p 32-77 |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Fr Apr 17** | Spirit Ch 7,8,9 p 78-118 |
| **Mo Apr 20** | Spirit Ch 10,11,12 p 119-170 |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **We Apr 22** | Spirit Ch 13, 14 15 p 171-224 |
| **Fr Apr 24** | Spirit Ch 16, 17, 18, 19 p 225-288 |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Mo Apr 27** | **Discussion of Spirit** |
| **We Apr 29** | **Discussion of Spirit** |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Fr May 1** | **Discussion of Spirit** |
| **Mo May 4** | **REVIEW FOR FINAL** |
| **We May 6** | **REVIEW FOR FINAL** |
|  | **FINAL EXAM DATE TO BE ANNOUNCED** |
|  |  |