**Master Syllabus – Anthropology 111: *Introduction to Cultural Anthropology***

**Application for Cluster 4B**

**The Social World: Humanity and Society/The Nature of US Society**

|  |
| --- |
| **University Studies Learning Objectives for The Nature of U.S. Society**   1. Explain: a) the development of US culture and sub-culture from different perspectives; b) US social and cultural domains in relationship to other regions of the world; or c) the different facets of citizenship in the United States. 2. Locate, analyze, summarize, paraphrase and synthesize material from a variety of sources. 3. Evaluate arguments made in support of different perspectives on US society. |

**COURSE OVERVIEW**

This course offers students the opportunity to discover how an anthropological perspective helps us ask – and answer – important questions about how and why people live and think the way they do. That is, students will gain a deeper understanding of their own and other cultures around the globe as well as develop the ability to analyze complex relations of power in their own and other societies.

Given that we live in a multicultural society and a world that is becoming increasingly interconnected, it is extremely important for students to be able to understand and respect ways of life that are different from their own. It is also essential that students are able to understand and critically reflect on the often deeply held assumptions, views, and cultural habits prevalent in their own society. Furthermore, as our society as well as the wider world is characterized by systemic differences in power along the lines of race and ethnicity, class, and gender, students need to be able to recognize and hopefully find ways to change entrenched patterns of inequality.

The range of possible assignments include: summaries and critical assessments of readings; class discussions and presentations; short research papers based on primary research; tests & quizzes; take-home essays.

**LEARNING OUTCOMES**

***Course-Specific Learning Outcomes***

The course aims to help students develop basic skills and insights in three areas:

Discipline-specific perspectives:

1. understanding how an anthropological perspective helps us ask – and answer – important questions about how and why people live and think the way they do
2. understanding and respecting different ways of life around the globe
3. understanding and critically reflecting on the views and cultural habits prevalent in the US
4. analyzing complex relations of power along the lines of race/ethnicity, gender, and class in the US, other societies, and globally

Basic analytic and research skills:

1. reading social scientific texts carefully and critically
2. creating clear and concise written summaries of key points/essential arguments of scholarly work
3. developing thoughtful, well-argued, and professionally presented arguments that integrate information from secondary and/or primary sources
4. effectively communicating ideas – orally and in writing - to others

***Informational literacy:***

1. finding relevant sources of information (including scholarly books and articles, current news source & popular media, on-line sources)
2. understanding difference between peer reviewed/non-peer-reviewed; popular/scholarly material; primary/secondary sources
3. critically assessing credibility of various kinds of sources
4. understanding principals of intellectual integrity and how to avoid plagiarism
5. using proper format for in-text citations and bibliography

***University Studies Learning Outcomes***

1. understanding and respecting different ways of life around the globe
2. understanding and critically reflecting on the views and cultural habits prevalent in the US
3. analyzing complex relations of power along the lines of race/ethnicity, gender, and class in the US, other societies, and globally
4. reading social scientific texts carefully and critically
5. creating clear and concise written summaries of key points/essential arguments of scholarly work
6. developing thoughtful, well-argued, and professionally presented arguments that integrate information from secondary and/or primary sources

**EXAMPLES OF TEXTS AND/OR ASSIGNED READINGS**

***BOOKS***

Spradley & McCurdy, *Conformity and Conflict: Readings in Cultural Anthropology*

Stack, *All Our Kin: Strategies for Survival in a Black Community*

Dettwyler, *Dancing Skeletons*

Ehrenreich, *Nickle and Diming*

Miller, *Cultural Anthropology in a Globalizing World*

Simonelli, *Crossing Between Worlds: The Navajo of Canyon de Chelly*

Schultz, *Cultural Anthropology: A Perspective on the Human Condition*

Fernea, *Guests of the Sheik: An Ethnography of an Iraqi Village*

Bageant, *Deer Hunting with Jesus: Dispatches from America’s Class War*

Danticat, *The Farming of Bones*

***ARTICLES***

Kilbride*, African Polygyny: Family Values and Contemporary Changes*

Nanda, *Arranging a Marriage in India*

Nagangast, *Women, Minorities, Indigenous People: Universals and Cultural Relativism*

Miner, *Nacarima*

Wright, *One Drop of Blood*

Wellman, *Red and Black in White America*

Hernton, *Chattanooga Black Boy*

***FILMS***

*All Dressed in White*

*A Veiled Revolution*

*Becoming a Woman in Okrika*

*A Wife Among Wives*

*A Day Will Come: Tradition and Change in Pakistani Marriages*

*At the Edge of Conquest*

*Bridging the Culture Gap*

*The Shape of Water*

*Rabbit Proof Fence*

**EXAMPLE ASSIGNMENTS (or comparable exercises)**

**Class Assignments:** a series of short 1-2 page summaries and critical assessment of class readings due throughout the course. One of the assignments should require finding and summarizing relevant secondary articles.

**University Studies Learning Goals:**

1. understanding and respecting different ways of life around the globe
2. understanding and critically reflecting on the views and cultural habits prevalent in the US
3. analyzing complex relations of power along the lines of race/ethnicity, gender, and class in the US, other societies, and globally
4. reading social scientific texts carefully and critically
5. creating clear and concise written summaries of key points/essential arguments of scholarly work

**Assessment Criteria:**

1. timely completion
2. accuracy and completeness with regard to main points/arguments of the reading
3. indication of thoughtful/critical reading of text

**Example:**

1. What are some American norms for interacting with other people? Break a cultural norm that we have for how to carry on a conversation. (Don’t break the law or get yourself in too much trouble!) Briefly describe (1 page typed) what you did, what norm you broke, and what kinds of reactions you got from the people around you.

OR -

Briefly (1 page typed) describe an incident of cultural misunderstanding you have experienced or a situation where you accidentally broke a cultural norm. There are lots of misunderstandings every day between people. In choosing your example, make sure the reason for the misunderstanding was **cultural**. Explain the following: what happened and who was involved; what were the different cultural understandings of the people involved; was the misunderstanding resolved; how could it have been avoided; etc.?

1. After reading *Shakespeare in the Bush* (S&M) describe where the interpretations of the story differed between the Kung and the American. Discuss at least 2 specific points of difference.
2. Read *Conversation Style: Talking on the job* (S&M). What are the main differences in styles of communication that Tannen discusses and how do they affect social relationships. What kinds of stylistic differences between people (by gender, age, status, etc.) have you noticed in a work or school setting you are familiar with.

**Take-home Essays:**  In a short essay, reflect on key questions addressed in the course drawing on readings and discussions.

**University Studies Learning Goals:**

1. understanding and respecting different ways of life around the globe
2. understanding and critically reflecting on the views and cultural habits prevalent in the US
3. analyzing complex relations of power along the lines of race/ethnicity, gender, and class in the US, other societies, and globally
4. reading social scientific texts carefully and critically
5. developing thoughtful, well-argued, and professionally presented arguments that integrate information from secondary and/or primary sources

**Assessment Criteria**

1. timely and full completion of assignment
2. logical, interesting and clearly presented argument
3. thoughtful and clear use of readings, course concepts, and primary data in development of analysis
4. clearly written and professional presentation

**SAMPLE COURSE SCHEDULE**

**CULTURE AND MEANING**

What is "culture"? How does it shape who we are, what we think about the world, and how we communicate with one another?

Wed 9/5 Introductions

Film: *All Dressed in White*

Fri 9/7 What do you want to wear on your wedding day? And why?

Reading: S&M*:*  *Culture and Ethnography*

S&M #1: *Ethnography and Culture*

Sarah introduces herself in English; shared e-mail introductions

Mon 9/10 Fieldwork: how do anthropologists find out about the world?

Reading: Dettwyler, *Dancing Skeletons,* Chp. 1

Stack, *All Our Kin,* Chp. 1

S&M #4: Sterk, *Fieldwork on Prostitution in the Era of AIDS*

S&M #*5: Lessons from the Field*

Wed 9/12 Clothes and Bodies: What do women wear in the US? And why?

Reading: S&M #8: *Body Art as Visual Language*

Fri 9/14 Clothes and Bodies: What do men wear around campus and why?

Campus Observation Reports due

[summary of *Symbolizing Roles* due in English]

Mon 9/17 Clothes and Bodies: Why do some women veil their bodies?

Film: *A Veiled Revolution*

Wed 9/19 Reading: S&M #20: *Symbolizing Roles: Behind the Veil*

**RITUALS – CONNECTIONS AND TRANSFORMATIONS**

What are cultural rituals? How do they shape the rhythms of our lives, our ideas of who we are, and the connections we have with others ?

Fri 9/21 Daily Rhythms: eating, washing, and playing baseball

Reading: Miner, *Nacarima*

S&M #28: *Baseball Magic*

Assignment: START Scavenger Hunt

Mon 9/24 Ritual Exchanges: giving presents at home and in the Kalahari

Reading: S&M #3: *Eating Christmas in the Kalahari*

S&M #15: *Reciprocity and the Power of Giving*

Wed 9/26 Life transition rituals: coming of age in the Niger Delta

Film: *Becoming a Woman in Okrika*

[Descriptive version of cultural ritual paper due for English

Discuss how to substantiate analysis w/ evidence in English]

Fri 9/28 Life transition rituals: coming of age in the US

Mon 10/1 Creating New Rituals: dealing with the memories of Vietnam

Reading: *Run for the Wall*

Wed 10/3 Language and Interaction Rituals: Communicating within cultures

Reading: S&M #9: Conversation Style: Talking on the Job

S&M #7: *How to Ask for a Drink*

Fri 10/5 Language and Interaction Rituals: Communicating across culturesS&M # 9: *Conversation Style: Talking on the Job*

Reading: S&M #3: *Shakespeare in the Bush*

Film: *Bridging the Culture Gap*

Mon 10/8 **Columbus Day - No Classes**

Tues 10/9 Taking Stock: So what is culture anyway?

**FAMILY CONNECTIONS**

Everybody has a family - but we know not all families look and work the same way. We will explore what "families" look like in the various subcultures of our own society as well as in different parts of the world. The specific questions we will focus on are 1) how are children taken care of in different cultures; and 2) what are people's expectations and practices around marriage.

Wed 10/10 What's a family? Reading: All Our Kin, Chps. 2 & 3

Reading: S&M #23: *Uterine Families and the Women's Community* (Discuss in ANT; time management in ENG w/Sarah )

*All Our Kin,* Chps. 4 & 5

Fri 10/12 Who takes care of the kids?

Reading:  *All Our Kin,* Chps 6 & 7

Mon 10/15 What do "mothers" and "fathers" do?

Reading: *All Our Kin,* Chp. 8

Wed 10/17 What's marriage all about - sex, love, money, or survival?

Film: *A Wife Among Wives*

Reading*: Kilbride, African Polygyny: Family Values and Contemporary Changes*

Fri 10/19 Who can you marry? How many marriage partners can you have?

Reading: S&M #18: *Life without Fathers or Husbands*

S&M #19: *Uterine Families and the Women’s Community*

Mon 10/22 How do you find a marriage partner - arranged marriage?

Film: *A Day Will Come: Tradition and Change in Pakistani Marriages*

Reading: S&M #17: *Family and Kinship in Village India*

Nanda, *Arranging a Marriage in India*

Wed 10/24 How do you find a marriage partner - individual choice?

[Discussion of compare/contrast analysis in ENG - use ANT Midterm as case example]

**RACE AND ETHNICITY**

Many things shape our ideas about who we are: what we do for a living, our gender, our families, where we live, what kinds of hobbies we have, our politics, etc. etc. In this unit we will explore how race and ethnicity shape identities and experiences of people in different societies.

Fri 10/26 What is "race?"

Reading: Wright, *One Drop of Blood*

Mon 10/29 What does "race" mean in the US?

Reading: Wellman, *Red and Black in White America*

Hernton, *Chattanooga Black Boy*

Wed 10/31 What's the difference between "race" and "ethnicity" anyway?

Film: *None of the Above*

Fri 11/2 What do "race" and "ethnicity" mean elsewhere?

Reading: S&M #23, *Mixed Blood*

Film: *Rabbit Proof Fence*

Mon 11/5 Categories and Counting: different national definitions

Wed 11/7 What happens with transnational migration?

Reading: S&M #31: *The Road to Refugee Resettlement*

**CULTURAL RELATIVISM VS UNIVERSAL HUMAN RIGHTS**

By now we have established that cultures can differ in fundamental ways from each other and that practices highly valued in some cultures may be considered morally wrong, illegal, or offensive in others. We will explore the question of whether there are universal standards by which we may judge particular cultural practices as good, bad, or better? If so, who is allowed to judge whom?

[Content and theoretical framework from this unit provides the basis for the Research paper in ENG.]

Student project topics for ENG will be addressed in discussions in ANT ]

Library orientation in English

Fri 11/9 Parameters of the Debate

Reading: Nagangast, *Women, Minorities, Indigenous People: Universals and Cultural Relativism* RELATED TOPICS for English paper: freedom of religion - peyote use, sweat lodges in prison, alternate marriage forms - gay marriage, polygyny

Mon 11/12 Assignment: Find article on current human rights issue

Wed 11/14 Minority Rights/Majority Rule: the law vs. cultural diversity

Reading: S&M 24: *Cross-Cultural Law: The Case of the Gypsy Offender*

RELATED TOPICS [plastic surgery, extreme "make-overs", sex-change operations]

Fri 11/16 Infanticide, abortion, and infant mortality

Reading: Dettwyler, chps. 13, 14

RELATED TOPICS - [Genetic testing & abortion, society-wide rights to food and health care, distribution of resources in society]

Discussion of advising and choices of major; interview of upperclass student

Evening Film showing w/ Sarah - in the dorms w/ pizza

Mon 11/19 Human Rights Debate on Female Genital Surgery: tradition vs. the right to bodily integrity

Reading: S&M #16: *Mother's Love: Death without Weeping*

Wed 11/21 Reading: Human Rights reports due

Fri 11/23 **Thanksgiving Break**

**POWER AND INEQUALITIES**

What is the nature of inequities between nations, communities, individuals? How are these inequities created and sustained and well as challenged and changed?

Mon 11/26 Hunger and Underdevelopment - the case of Africa

Reading: Dettwyler, chps. 1-3

Wed 11/28 Reading: Dettwyler, chps. 4-7

Fri 11/30 Reading: Dettwyler, chps. 8, 9

[Peer review of Anthro Paper #2 in English class]

Mon 12/3 Reading: Dettwyler, chps. 10, 11, 12

S&M #37: *Medical Anthropology: Improving Nutrition in Malawi*

Wed 12/5 Working and being poor in the US

Reading: Ehrenreich, *Nickle and Diming*

Fri 12/7 Resisting domination - native populations in Brazil

Film: *At the Edge of Conquest*

Mon 12/10 Reading: S&M # 36: *The Kayapo Resistance*

Wed 12/12 Reading: S&M #37: *Medical Anthropology: Improving Nutrition in Malawi*

Fri 12/14 Using Anthropology to make a difference

**Learning Communities**

***ENG 101 & ANT 111, Introduction to Cultural Anthropology***

**Nancy Benson, Andrea Klimt, & Sarah Girrell**

**The courses are connected in terms of meta-themes.**

The Anthro course has incorporated questions from English about assessing text and author both in topics of discussion and selection of texts. The texts now include: ethnographies and anthropological analyses, novels written by authors "of" the culture, feature films, documentary films, and first-person oral history narratives. Discussion will address: who is the author, what is her/his relationship to the subject, how do they know what they say they know, where are they situated in society, what are they trying to convey, how effective are they.

The English course draws on the content of the Anthro course on culture and cultural relativism, interviewing & participant observation, and readings & materials in the different genres. The research paper draws on ANT unit on Cultural Relativism. Discussion of genres, author's position, effectiveness, etc. draw on readings for ANT (novel vs. ethnography, film vs. book, oral history, etc.) and explore how the written text is part of on-going social relationships. The questions of relationship between author and text; position of author in society; relationship of differently situated (in place and time) readers to the text are thus central to the course.

**Several of the assignments are connected across the 2 courses.**

* Short summary and reflection of social science article*.* Takes article (*Behind the Veil*) read for Anthro and assignment is for English.
* Compare and contrast analysis: Midterm is for Anthro; provides case example of how to do this kind of writing assignment for English
* Descriptive writing: for English describes a cultural ritual; for Anthro uses the description and develops a cultural analysis for first major paper. Discuss how to use evidence from description to corroborate argument of analysis.
* Peer review in English of 2nd major paper for Anthro;
* Anthro uses chapter in English textbook on interviewing and observation; English uses this writing assignment as example of using interview and observation material
* Unit on Cultural Relativism and Human Rights in Anthro provides content and framework for research paper in English
* Novel by African writer, *Things Fall Apart* and *Whale Rider* film shown in Anthro, *Whale Rider* novel read in English - allows for comparative discussion of different genres and situated authors
* Cross-cultural simulation game BAFA BAFA - uses triple period Eng, Anthro, and Bio. Provides discussion material for both classes. Includes pizza lunch
* Topics selected for ENG research projects on Cultural Relativism adds to cases for discussion in Cultural Relativism unit in Anthro

**Both classes incorporate attention to the students adjustment to college life.**

* Moving in - welcome e-mail note from Sarah, meet up while moving in
* Out-of-class meeting at the Library with Sarah - tour, study places, discussion time
* E-mail support by Sarah on adapting to college life issues
* Scavenger Hunt; teams of students 1) each team solves 1 practical problems facing college students & 2) interviews a junior or senior about their college career. Report back to the class. Facilitated by Sarah
* In-class session with Sarah on Study Skills and adapting to college life (In English)
* In-class session on choosing classes and advising (in Anthro)
* Out of class showing of *Whale Rider* (with Sarah? With refreshments?)
* Go observe a UMD sports or other campus event for Anthro class assignment on cultural ritual (optional)