

## **INTRODUCTION TO CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY**

**ANTH 120 Sections 01 & 41 Fall 2010**  
**3 Credits Sussex County Community College**

Section 01: Tuesday & Thursday 1:40 p.m.-2:55 p.m.  
Section 41: Monday 6:30 p.m.-9:10 p.m.  
Class-Room: E-129

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Office Hours: Mondays 4:30–6:30 pm, Wednesdays 12:15-1:30 pm, Thursdays 12:15-1:30 pm & By Mutual Arrangement

Welcome to Cultural Anthropology, the queen of the social sciences! Cultural Anthropology is alone among the social sciences in utilizing a holistic, cross-cultural perspective as its starting point for inquiry about human actions and ideas across time and space. If you go to a four-year college, this course will probably help fulfill a “diversity” or “global” graduation requirement. This is so because the primary subject matter of anthropology is the study of people across and within cultures, ethnic groups, “races,” millennia, and geographic regions. Our framework is rooted in the concept of evolution – that humans and the social structures they create change and that these changes are responses, broadly speaking, to environmental conditions. Our approach is also comparative and cross-cultural. Anthropologists study people in the field. One of our first steps will be to distance ourselves from normative understandings of the world and learn to see the strange as familiar and the familiar as strange.

### **COURSE COMPETENCIES**

At the conclusion of this course, students should demonstrate the ability to:

1. Describe the field methodologies and ethics of cultural anthropologists.
2. Describe cultures other than their own.
3. Explain the generalizations anthropologists use about global cultural diversity, including the cultural diversity of linguistic traditions, gender roles, sexual orientations, family structures, modes of kinship, and systems of religious beliefs.
4. Critically discuss power and inequality among, between, and within cultures.
5. Identify some of the intersections among, between, and within ethnicities, subcultures, “races,” socioeconomic classes, affinity or interest groups, genders, religions, age grades, and sexual orientations.

Prerequisite: None.

Last Day for “W” Withdrawal: September X, 2010

### **STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS IN THIS COURSE**

1. Choose an **ethnography** during the first week in class. If you are unsure about which one, choose one at random: For example, choose the ethnography whose author is closest to your in alphabetical order. Once you have the ethnography familiarize yourself with the table of contents, read the preface and acknowledgements, and as much as the ethnography as possible before September 21st. Doing this will set you up to successfully complete as many **Ethnography Exercises** as possible. These exercises can be a significant part of the final grade.
2. With the Omohundro text, focus on the notes that will be distributed for each chapter and on the BIG QUESTIONS posed for each chapter in this syllabus. Exams will focus on the BIG QUESTIONS and how they relate to “Parts I, II, III,” the videos, and your **ethnography**. “Parts I, II, III” are the mini-ethnographies presented in each of the Omohundro chapters.
3. Regarding due dates: They are serious, don’t miss them. If you anticipate printer or computer problems, deal with them ahead of time.
4. Read the Course Competencies (above) carefully since they will serve as a basis for the Final Exam.

### **1**

### **Required Text**

John T. Omohundro (2008) Thinking Like an Anthropologist: A Practical Introduction to Cultural Anthropology. New York: McGraw-Hill.

### **Optional Ethnography Texts (All Students Must Choose One)**

Chiñas, Beverly Newbold (1993) La Zandunga: Of Fieldwork and Friendship in Southern Mexico. Prospect Hgts, IL: Waveland.

Crocker, William and Jean Crocker (2004) The Canela: Kinship, Ritual, and Sex in an Amazonian Tribe. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

Nanda, Serena (1999) The Hijras of India: Neither Man Nor Woman. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

Wormsley, William (1993) The White Man Will Eat You!: An Anthropologist Among the Imponngu of New Guinea. New

York: Harcourt.

## **Course Policies**

### ***Ground Rules***

When students are answering questions or providing commentary we will all endeavor to not interrupt whomever is speaking and to not demean or devalue others' experiences. We will avoid using language that is offensive and that makes others feel uncomfortable. Should any student feel offended or uncomfortable about class proceedings, the student should immediately inform the instructor after class-time. All personal and class discussions with students are held by the instructor in the very strictest confidence.

### ***Excused Absences***

Students qualifying for excused absences will discuss a plan for completing course requirements with the instructor. There are four types of excused absences granted only when following proper procedures: 1) Religious Observance -- Students are required to inform the instructor **prior** to the dates they anticipate missing class because of a **religious observance**. 2) Intercollegiate Athletic Competition -- Students are required to inform the instructor if they anticipate missing class because they are **competing in an SCCC intercollegiate athletic event**. 3) Medical -- If a student must claim a medical excuse for an absence, they must submit a **written excuse** from a physician or a physician's assistant that **clearly** indicates the **name and contact number(s) of the medical doctor** that supervised their, **or their child's**, treatment. 4) Bereavement -- Students must arrange for the SCCC Counseling Office to contact the instructor regarding excused absences for **bereavement**.

### ***Attendance Requirement***

Attendance and participation are an integral part of this course. Regardless of performance on exams and research, more than **four** Class Session\* absences (or their equivalent) will limit the Final Grade to no more than a C+ and more than **six** Class Session absences will result in an F for the course. Late arrivals, partial absences, sleeping, inattentiveness, cell phone usage will be prorated absences at the discretion of the instructor. Students are urged to periodically check their absence record with the instructor since, for example, you may be counted as absent if you use your cell phone in class. [\*One class session is 75 minutes.]

## **Grading: Evaluation Assignments & Exams, Final Grades & Earning Grades**

Students will receive letter grades for assignments and exams. Letter grades are averaged based on their relative value (see below) to determine the final grade. If more than 100% of exercises and exams are submitted, the lower grades will be dropped. All assignments and exams must be **typed and double-spaced** in the appropriate format. NO electronic submissions will be accepted. Assignments and exams submitted late, after the due date, will NOT be assigned a grade. Instead, late assignments and exams are reviewed at the end of the semester to make a decision, if necessary, on borderline grades. There are three ways to earn grades: 1) Ethnography Exercises, 2) Margaret Mead Film Festival Essays, 3) Exams.

### **1) Ethnography Exercises: 10% each for a maximum of 30%**

Exercises from the Omohundro text assigned for this semester are noted below. All **ethnography** exercises are due on December 6 or 7, 2010. [See Course Schedule.] There is significant time set aside in the Course Schedule to compensate for your time spent reading the ethnography. Students may submit any **three (3) exercises**. We will have In-Class Discussions during the semester that will orient students to successfully complete the exercises and to inform students on how each exercise will be graded. Exercises are based on the **ethnography** you are reading and each exercise is worth 10% of the final grade.

<b><u>Ch-Exercise</u></b>	<b><u>Due Date</u></b>
Chapter 2-Ex1	December 7
Chapter 3-Ex1	December 7
Chapter 4-Ex1	December 7
Chapter 6-Ex1	December 7
Chapter 9-Ex3	December 7
Chapter 10-Ex5	December 7

**2) Margaret Mead Film Festival: 10% each for a maximum of 20%**

Attend one or two or a series of entries to the Margaret Mead Film Festival at the American Museum of Natural History, West 77<sup>th</sup> St., Manhattan from November 11-14, 2010 and complete separate assignment for each as outlined below. There is significant time set aside in the Course Schedule to compensate for your time spent at the film festival. For details on the Film Festival go to: [www.amnh.org/programs/mead/](http://www.amnh.org/programs/mead/) All submissions must be hard-copy, typed and double-spaced. Write your assignment in an Essay Format. Essays due on **November 23, 2010**.

1. Give your essay a unique title related to the title of the film and write an introductory paragraph describing **two** ideas, themes, or concepts presented in the film (2 pt).
2. Briefly describe how each idea/theme/concept relates to either the Omohundro text (any chapter, **use citations**) (3 pts).
3. Briefly describe how these ideas/themes/concepts relate to your personal situation or life experience (3 pts).
4. Provide a brief commentary of the film being sure to state both positive and negative points (3 pts).
5. Briefly summarize your main points and state what you believe is the most important aspect of your essay (2 pt).
6. Postscript: Write a postscript on the observation you have on the people attending the festival (2 pts).

**3) Exams: 25% each for a maximum of 75%**

There are **three** take-home essay exams as noted in the course schedule. Exams consist of from 3 to 5 critical essay questions that ask you to integrate information from more than one source. Essay questions are based on information from the text (especially “Parts I, II III” as noted), the **ethnography** you are reading, and videos shown in class. Exams will have explanations on how each question will be graded. There are no make-up exams.

**i COURSE SCHEDULE i****Section 01****Section 41**

<i>Week 1:</i>		
<u>Tuesday-Thursday September 7-9</u>	<u>x</u>	<u>Monday September 13</u>

--Course Introduction, Assigning Ethnographies

--The BIG Anthropological QUESTIONS – Omohundro Introduction Chapter Pp. 1-23

<i>Week 2:</i>		
<u>Tuesday-Thursday September 14-16</u>	<u>x</u>	<u>Monday September 20</u>

--**Video:** “What Do Anthropologists Do?” (AAA-DVD)  
[http://anthropology.si.edu/video\\_interviews.html](http://anthropology.si.edu/video_interviews.html)

--What is Culture? – Omohundro Chap. 1

<i>Week 3:</i>		
<u>Tuesday-Thursday September 21-23</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>Monday September 27</u>

--In-Class Ethnography Exercises Discussion

--BIG QUESTION #1: How Do I Learn About Cultures? – Omohundro Chap. 2:

## “Heavy Meddle, Parts I, II, III”

Week 4:

<u>Tuesday-Thursday September 28-30</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>Monday October 4</u>
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--BIG QUESTION #2: What Is The Context For Cultural Ideas? -- Omohundro Chap. 3:  
“Everything Relates To Potatoes, Parts I, II, III”

Week 5:

<u>Tuesday-Thursday October 5-7</u>	<u>x</u>	<u>Monday October 11</u>
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--BIG QUESTION #3: How Do Cultures Differ Across Space And Place? – Omohundro  
Chap. 4 “Big Parties, Parts I, II, III”

--First Exam Distributed (Oct. 11 & 12)

Week 6:

<u>Tuesday-Thursday October 12-14</u>	<u>x</u>	<u>Monday October 18</u>
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--First Exam Distributed (Oct. 11 & 12)

--No Class (Oct. 14 & 18)

Week 7:

<u>Tuesday-Thursday October 19-21</u>	<u>x</u>	<u>Monday October 25</u>
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--First Exam Due (Oct. **19 21** & 25)

--BIG QUESTION #4: How Do Cultures Differ Across Time/Through Their History? –  
Omohundro Chap. 5: “A Chicken-and-Egg Story, Parts 1, II, III”

--Video: “Family Across The Sea”

Week 8:

<u>Tuesday-Thursday October 26-28</u>	<u>x</u>	<u>Monday November 1</u>
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--BIG QUESTION #5: How Do Human Biology, Culture and the Environment Interact? –  
Omohundro Chap. 6: “It’s Me Stomach, Miss, Parts I, II, III”

--BIG QUESTION #6: How is Power Generated, Reproduced and Exercised? – Omohundro  
Chap. 7: “Pollution Is Also A People Problem, Parts I, II, III”

Week 9:

<u>Tuesday-Thursday November 2-4</u>	<u>x</u>	<u>Monday November 8</u>
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--Video: “Mickey Mouse Goes To Haiti”

--Second Exam Distributed (Nov. 4 & 8)

Week 10:

<u>Tuesday-Thursday November 9-11</u>	<u>x</u>	<u>Monday November 15</u>
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--BIG QUESTION #7: How Do We Communicate Meaning? – Omohundro Chap. 8:  
“What An Oil Spill Means, Parts I, II, III”

--Second Exam Due (Nov. 9 & 15)

--Video: “Ongka’s Big Moka” (Sec. 41: Nov. 15)

--No Class (Nov. 11)

*Week 11:*

<u>Tuesday-Thursday November 16-18</u>	<u>x</u>	<u>Monday November 22</u>
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--Video: “Ongka’s Big Moka” (Sec. 01: Nov. 16)

--No Class (Nov. 18 & 22)

*Week 12:*

<u>Tuesday-Tuesday November 23-30*</u>	<u>x</u>	<u>Monday November 29</u>
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\*Thanksgiving Nov. 25

--BIG QUESTION #8: How Reflexivity Teaches Us About Ourselves/Others? -Omohundro  
Chap. 9: “Taking Tiger Mountain, Parts I, II, III”

--Margaret Mead Assignment Due (Nov. 23 & 29)

--In-Class Ethnography Exercises Discussion (Nov. 29 & 30)

*Week 13:*

<u>Thursday-Tuesday December 2-7</u>	<u>x</u>	<u>Monday December 6</u>
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--Video: “Coming Of Age”

--Ethnography Exercises Due (Dec. 6 & 7)

*Week 14:*

<u>Thursday-Tuesday December 9-14</u>	<u>x</u>	<u>Monday December 13</u>
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--BIG QUESTION #9: Am I Judging This? – Omohundro Chap. 10  
“Green Peas, Part I, II, III”

--Final Exam Distributed (Dec. 13 & 14)

*Week 15:*

<u>Thursday-Tuesday December 16-21</u>	<u>X</u>	<u>Monday December 20</u>
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--Final Exam Due (Dec. 20 & 21)

