

BRIDGE
Cultural Anthropology
MISS/SOC 4183

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This module is an upper division survey of the cultures of our world with a special look at non-western societies. The course will provide tools for more effective intercultural communications as well as giving us a mirror in which to see our own cultural groups more clearly.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Cultural Anthropology is designed to help students:

1. Explore the nature and facets of human culture.
2. Discover the diversity of peoples, places and cultures that make up this global village.
3. Learn about their own culture by studying other cultures.
4. Evaluate theories which anthropologists have developed about the whys and hows of human behavior and cultural evolution.
5. Acquire some basic anthropological research skills (i.e., observation and interviewing)
6. Look at some ways in which cultural anthropology can help us to understand our behavior and exert some influence over our future.

TEXTBOOK

Kottak, Conrad Phillip. *Mirror for Humanity*, fourth edition. McGraw-Hill Higher Education, 2005.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

The class meets for five sessions. Attendance for each session is important. In the event of an *emergency* situation where class is missed, a makeup assignment will be provided by the professor at the student's request. Makeup assignments should be completed within two weeks following the end of the module. The grade for the module will be lowered one letter grade for each session missed unless make-up assignments are completed.

ASSIGNMENTS

1. Prior to first night of class, read or view *Fiddler on the Roof* and write review/analysis (due week 1)

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- The script is available through the Metropolitan Library system.
 - The video is also available in the Metropolitan Library system and at most local video rental locations.
 - Two copies of the video are available through the Office of Adult Studies for a *24 hour* check out period.
 - The SNU library has a copy of *Fiddler on the Roof* on DVD
2. Textbook readings with written responses as noted below
 3. Oral artifact presentation (due week 2)
 4. Oral and written presentations of cross-cultural experience (due week 3)
 5. Letter to grandma (due week 4)
 6. Summary/integrative paper (due week 1 of following module)

GRADING

Fiddler on the Roof assignment: 100 points

Artifact: 50 points

Becoming a foreigner: 100 points

Letter to grandma: 50 points

Summary/integrative paper: 100 points

Required readings and written responses: 20 points per week

Weekly attendance (note "Attendance Policy" section)

Letter grades will be assigned following this grade scale:

A 96%-100%

A- 90%-95%

B+ 86%-89%

B 83%-85%

B- 80%-82%

C+ 76%-79%

C 73%-75%

C- 70%-72%

D+ 66%-69%

D 63%-65%

D- 60%-62%

F 59% & below

DISABILITY STATEMENT

If you need assistance with a learning, physical or psychological disability that may affect your academic progress, you are encouraged to contact the SNU Office of Professional Studies at 491-6332 and to talk with the professor of this course.

ASSIGNMENT SCHEDULE

Week 1 (Prior to first class session):

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View or read: *Fiddler on the Roof* (Scripts and/or video must be obtained by student. The script is available through the Metropolitan Library System. The video is available through the Metropolitan library system and/or at most local video rental locations. Two copies are available for 24 hour check out through the Office of Adult Studies.)

Read: Chapter 1 (pages 1-21) the textbook

Complete: Worksheet on *Fiddler on the Roof*

Week 2:

Read and respond: Read chapters 2, 3 and 4 of textbook and write half page response (see guidelines below)

Present Orally: Artifact (see explanation below)

Week 3:

Read and respond: Read chapters 5, 6 and 7 of textbook and write half page response

Complete: Written report of cross-cultural experience

Present: Oral report of cross-cultural experience

Week 4:

Read and respond: Read chapters 8, 9 and 10 of textbook and write half page response

Write letter to grandma: Your grandmother or someone else in your family has asked why you are taking a course in cultural anthropology. Make a case to that person as to why cultural anthropology is a good subject for you to take.

Week 5:

Read and respond: Read chapters 11, 12, and 13 of textbook and write half page response

IN-CLASS ACTIVITY SCHEDULE

The instructor reserves the right to modify this tentative weekly activity schedule without prior notice to students. For further information, check out course web pages:

<http://home.snu.edu/~hculbert.fs/anthro.htm>

Week 1

Course overview including review of syllabus

Textbook material discussion

Introduction to the study of culture with a PowerPoint presentation

Cultural Bingo

Case study: "Lily Liu's baptism"

Small Group Discussion of *Fiddler on the Roof*

Week 2

Textbook material discussion

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Case study: "Onions and wives"
Artifact presentation
Video: NBC Today series on Papua New Guinea

Week 3

Textbook material
Video: "Going International – Beyond Culture Shock"
Case study: "The Neighborhood celebration"
Presentation of students' cross-cultural experiences

Week 4

Textbook material discussion
Gulliver's Travels scenario
Case study: "Obi's death"
Video: "Mexican Family Celebrations"

Week 5

Textbook material discussion
Bwanda Fusa game
Video: "Language and communication"
Case study: "Peacemaker or patsy?"

WEEKLY READINGS: WEEKS TWO THROUGH FIVE

Write a one page or less response to the textbook reading for the week. Here's some "starter" questions:

- What did I learn? What do I know now that I didn't know before?
- What did I feel as I read?
- Did you wind up sharing any of this with someone else?
- Did it challenge some assumptions you held?
- Did it confirm something you have been thinking about for a while?
- Was there a phrase that grabbed your attention and has remained impressed in your mind?
- How did this week's reading relate to and build on the previous week's reading?

ONE-TIME ASSIGNMENTS/PROJECTS

- **FIDDLER ON THE ROOF INSTRUCTIONS** (due week 1)

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Part 1

Write your responses to the following 15 questions:

1. “Fiddler on the Roof” is a musical based on Sholom Aleichem’s stories. In the opening scene, Tevye discusses the traditions of his community. He says, “Tradition. Without our tradition, our lives would be as shaky as--- as a fiddler on the roof.” Explain what Tevye means by this statement.
2. What is the role of Yente in the society? Why was marriage for a young woman so important?
3. Explain the implications of the proper “match”. What did it mean to the family for a daughter to have a proper match? What does the custom of matchmaker say about the role of women in this society?
4. Evaluate the Tevye’s dream. What does this dream sequence tell you about the superstitions of the culture?
5. Discuss the ceremony of the wedding scene. What customs or traditions did you observe taking place during the wedding scene? What do you think were their significance?
6. What role did religion play in the traditions and customs of this time?
7. Describe the family hierarchy represented in this story.
8. What is the significance of the discussion (in song) between Tevye and Golde regarding their love for one another?

Tevye: Golde, I’m asking you a question — Do you love me?

Golde: You’re a fool

Tevye: I know — But do you love me?

Golde: Do I love you? For twenty- five years I’ve washed your clothes, cooked your meals, cleaned your house, given you children, milked the cow. After twenty- five years, why talk about love right now?

Tevye: Golde, the first time I met you was on your wedding day. I was scared.

Golde: I was shy.

Tevye: But my father and my mother said we’d learn to love each other. And now I’m asking, Golde, do you love me?

Golde: I’m your wife.

Tevye: I know -- But do you love me?

Golde: Do I love him? For twenty-five years I’ve lived with him, fought with him, starved with him. Twenty-five years my bed is his. If that’s not love, what is?

Tevye: Then you love me?

Golde: I suppose I do.

Tevye: And I suppose I love you, too.

Tevye and Golde: It doesn’t change a thing. But even so, after twenty-five years, it’s nice to know.

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9. Tevye asks Chava if she knows “what this means, marrying outside the faith?” What does it mean to Tevye for one of his daughters to marry “outside the faith?”
10. Upon learning of Chava’s and Fyedka’s relationship, Tevye says, “Can I deny everything I believe in? On the other hand, can I deny my own child? On the other hand, how can I turn my back on my faith, my people? If I try to bend that far, I will break. On the other hand....there is no other hand.” What is your response to this statement? What issues are represented here? How has the tradition of the time impacted Tevye’s position?
11. Define community as it relates to your own life experience. Explain the impact your community had on you in your youth. What impact does your community have on you and the lifestyle you choose for yourself today?
12. What cultural factors have influenced your opinions, choices, and ideas concerning marriage?
13. Are there any superstitions that influenced your family of origin? Perhaps influenced is too strong of a word..... are there any superstitions with which your family was familiar and seriously, or nor so seriously, believed in? Are there superstitions to which you still give recognition?
14. Does a family hierarchy exist in your current family? Explain. Did a family hierarchy exist in your family of origin? Explain.
15. What are the religious influences of your culture. Give general cultural examples as well as specific personal examples.

Small Group Discussion – For oral use in class

1. Begin your group with each person sharing his or her overall impressions of *Fiddler on the Roof*.
2. What were your impressions of how “tradition” influenced the community.
3. What are your personal reactions to the concept of the use of a “Yenta” in society? Discuss the positive and the negative implications. Compare the positive and negative to the tradition of our cultural practices in terms of marriage.
4. Discuss the religious overtones found in the video. What impact has religion played on the life choices you have made in your own life? How do you see religion impacting our culture in general? Have you seen changes in this area of cultural development historically?
5. Discuss your family of origin in terms of family hierarchy. What is your current family’s hierarchy. What role does the culture in which we live play in the family?

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- **ARTIFACT PRESENTATION** (due week 2)

Bring to class a personal artifact that has cultural significance to you (a man-made object, often from the past). Be prepared to share five minutes of the story behind the artifact: its origin, symbolism and significance. Describe how it has represents your heritage, belief system, worldview, family practices, customs and or traditions.

- **CROSS-CULTURAL EXPERIENCE** (due week 3)

Select **one** of the following with the interview being the fall-back option:

Becoming a foreigner: One way of accomplishing this is to attend a worship event with a group ethnically different from your own. Anglos, for example, could visit a Black, Hispanic or Korean church. Or you may visit a service in an Islamic mosque, Buddhist temple or Jewish synagogue. You may go together in a small group. This experience can also happen in venues other than a religious setting.

In a written report of about two pages, describe your experience, feelings, and observations. The educational value of this assignment lies not in the worship experience, but in the cross-cultural event. Note: This assignment has to be completed within the time frame of this module. It cannot be something you experienced last year.

Interview. Conduct an extended interview with a non-U.S. citizen or at least someone who immigrated to this country as a young person or an adult. Ask them about issues such travel, food, language, family, concepts of time and economics. You can also ask such questions as:

1. What has the interviewee been most surprised about your (interviewer) culture?
2. How does the interviewee think he or she has been most misunderstood by members of your (interviewer) culture?
3. A funny, humorous or embarrassing incident involving either the target language or culture
4. Greatest cross-cultural disappointment or disillusionment
5. Most important advice they would give to people headed for cross-cultural service
6. Specific ways life has been richer because of cross-cultural experience

Your report can be written as questions-and-answers or it can be done like a newspaper or magazine article

Your oral presentation should be a report of the information you share in your paper. **DO NOT**, however, simply read your paper aloud. The report should be an extemporaneous presentation of how you felt as a “foreigner” and be about 3 minutes long.

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- **WRITE LETTER TO GRANDMA: “How will Cultural Anthropology benefit me?”** (due week 4)

Your grandmother or someone else in your family has asked why you are taking a course in cultural anthropology. Make a case to that person as to why cultural anthropology is a good subject for you to take. Don't just make this an essay. Have a real person in your mind and write an authentic-sounding letter to them. Try to get that person to see that you are excited about this course. Help them understand how this course is relevant to you.

Before you write the letter, take time to collect your ideas and even outline your argument a bit. Try to think of some illustrations that will help enlighten the person to whom you are writing. Mention the things that you are reading and the projects you are doing and how they are already being helpful to you.

The letter should be at least 800 words long.

- **SUMMARY/INTEGRATIVE PAPER** (due week after end of module)

Your paper should be organized as follows:

1. *Introduction* -- brief introductory statements including a forecast (or thesis statement) of what the reader can expect to find in your paper. (Suggested length: 1 page or less)
2. *Why study cultural anthropology?* (Suggested length: 1 ½ pages) Present a rationale for the study of culture from the perspective of anthropology. You may -- but are not required to -- use concepts such as:
 - The relationship of human belief and human behavior
 - The integration of the study of culture and theology
 - The concept of personhood from a cultural perspectiveYou will likely have other insights from the textbooks and from library research to add to these.
3. *Concepts and topics.* (Suggested length: 6 pages total) Select four (4) of the topics from the “Topic Options” list.

Research each topic enough (in the library and on the internet) so that you can provide:

- a. A definition or explanation of the particular topic
- b. An in-depth relating of the topic to the development of a culture
- c. Some specific examples (personal or observed)

Topic options (select 4)

1. Symbolism and Communication
2. Worldviews
3. Religious beliefs and practices

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4. Social groups, Kinships and Associations
 5. Political organization
 6. Education
 7. Economic organization
 8. Expressive culture (artistic expression)
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4. *How has culture influenced your personal development?* (Suggested length: 1 page)
Reflect on the elements of the culture in which you live and how they have impacted your lifestyle, your belief systems, your daily choices, your long-term goals, your sense of well-being and other aspects of life.
 5. *Conclusion* -- summary and closing reflections

The paper should include at least two documented quotes from the textbook or cultural anthropology research sources.