

Tennessee Consortium for International Studies
Introduction to Cultural Anthropology
South Africa 2010

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Catalog Course Description:

An introduction to the field of cultural anthropology focusing on the description and analysis of geographically diverse social groups and their learned traditions. Culture consists of the abstract values, beliefs, and impressions of the world that lie behind the behavior and attitudes and ideals of a society.

*Students will learn an overview of the principles of cultural anthropology while engaging in a study abroad opportunity. Student will learn that cultural relativism and participant observation are two hallmarks of anthropological fieldwork and will utilize these skills for the entire duration of the course in South Africa.

*This course includes the discussion of controversial/sensitive topics such as evolution, race, sex, gender issues, politics, health, and others. An atmosphere of professionalism will be maintained during ALL discussion of human similarities and differences; inflammatory or inappropriate language will not be tolerated.

Entry Level Standards

Students must be able to read and write at a college level.

Required Materials

Haviland, W. Cultural Anthropology, 11th edition, 2005.

Two loose-leaf notebooks. One for note taking and another for fieldwork/journal entries.

POLICIES

Syllabus policy:

All of the information that students need to be successful in this course is clearly outlined in this syllabus. Students are expected to read it over and refer to it often. Please contact the instructor if any expectations/assignments are unclear as soon as possible.

Reading Policy:

Students are responsible for following Relevant course readings on material not covered in the texts will be handed out to students. Students are responsible for reading all such materials.

Course Schedule Policy:

Due to the dynamic nature of the study abroad experience the instructor reserves the right to make changes to the schedule as he sees fit including changing topics, assigned readings, changing due dates, etc.

Academic Honesty: All students are expected to generate their own written work. Academic misconduct committed either directly or indirectly by an individual or group is subject to disciplinary action. In addition to other possible disciplinary sanctions that may be imposed as a result of academic misconduct, the instructor has the authority to assign either (1) an F or zero for the assignment or (2) an F for the course.

Prohibited activities:

- Academic misconduct
- Disrespecting a fellow student/instructor
- Disrespecting our South African hosts, colleagues, and/or informants
- Engaging in any activity that jeopardizes the welfare of you or any other person while traveling with a TnCIS program

Student Evaluation:

1. Class Participation: 200 points

Students have an unparalleled opportunity to learn about cultural anthropology while experiencing another culture firsthand. Students will be expected to engage themselves and fellow classmates throughout this experience.

2. Final Exam: 100 points

Students will take a written, essay-based final exam at the conclusion of the trip.

3. Fieldwork Notes: 150 points

While in South Africa, students will keep a log of their fieldwork experiences. Students will be expected to utilize appropriate ethnographic methods while maintaining their notes. These notes will be checked on a weekly basis.

4. Written statement on apartheid: 50 points

The socio-political institution of apartheid obviously shaped South African culture for many decades (and continues to do so even in the post-apartheid era). Students will discuss this subject in class, read pertinent articles, visit relevant sites or museums and compose a 3-4 page reaction statement on apartheid and post-apartheid South Africa.

TOTAL: 500 points

Grading Scale:

Total: 500 points

A: 90-100% (450-500 pts)

B+: 85-89% (425-449 pts)

B: 80-85% (400-424 pts)

C+: 75-79% (375-399 pts)

C: 70-74% (350-374 pts)

D: 60-69% (300-349 pts)

F: 59% and below (299 and below)

Upon successful completion of this course, the student should be able to:

1. Understand the different subdisciplines of anthropology and how culture is defined
2. Learn how cultures are studied and compared.
3. Understand the role of colonialism and the race concept
4. Within a cultural context, understand the importance of language and communication.
5. Understand the process of enculturation.
6. Understand the wide variety of methods people use to adapt to a variety of environments.
7. Understand the basic forms of economic and exchange systems of nonindustrial societies.
8. From a cross cultural perspective, understand the concept of marriage.
9. Define a descent group.
10. Understand how order is maintained in societies.
11. Understand/describe political organization.
12. Understand the difference between religion and magic and how they are integrated in societies.
13. Define art anthropologically and its function in a society.
14. Discuss why cultures change.

Tentative Course Schedule

Topic

Week 1 (May 11 – 16)

Intro to Anthropology; Culture Concept	H1, 2
Evolution and Race	H3
Language; Personality	H4-5
Subsistence Strategies	H6

Week 2 (May 17 – 23)

Economic Systems; Political Systems	H7, 12
Sex and Marriage	H8, 9
Kinship and Descent; Gender Issues	H10
Religion; Magic, Witchcraft, and Sorcery	H13

Week 3 (May 24 – 29)

Poverty; Rural and Urban Poor	H11
Body Modification; The Arts	H14
Medical Anthropology; HIV/AIDS	H15
Culture Change	H16

H = Haviland's textbook