Social and cultural anthropology

2012/2013

Instructor: David Lopilato

**The syllabus includes:**

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**I. Course Description**

Social and cultural anthropology is an exploration of fundamental anthropological concepts, methods, and theories used to interpret tradition and modern cultures. Emphasis is placed on the component of cultural systems and the investigation of the impact of globalization on changing cultures worldwide.

Anthropologists seek an understanding of humankind in all its diversity. This understanding is reached through the study of societies and cultures and the exploration of the general principles of social and cultural life. Social and cultural anthropology places special emphasis on comparative perspectives that challenge cultural assumptions. Many anthropologists explore problems and issues associated with the complexity of modern societies in local, regional and global contexts.

The IB social and cultural anthropology course offers an opportunity for students to become acquainted

with anthropological perspectives and ways of thinking, and to develop critical, reflexive knowledge. Social and cultural anthropology contributes a distinctive approach to intercultural awareness and understanding, which embodies the essence of an IB education. Anthropology fosters the development of citizens who are globally aware and ethically sensitive.

**II. Common Course Student Learning Outcomes**

This course is designed to:

1. encourage the systematic and critical study of: human experience and behaviour; physical, economic and social environments; and the history and development of social and cultural institutions

2. develop in the student the capacity to identify, to analyze critically and to evaluate theories, concept and arguments about the nature and activities of the individual and society

3. enable the student to collect, describe and analyze data used in studies of society, to test hypotheses, and to interpret complex data and source material

4. promote the appreciation of the way in which learning is relevant to both the culture in which the student lives, and the culture of other societies

5. develop an awareness in the student that human attitudes and opinions are widely diverse and that a study of society requires an appreciation of such diversity

6. enable the student to recognize that the content and methodologies of the subjects in group 3 are contestable and that their study requires the toleration of uncertainty.

7. explore principles of social and cultural life and characteristics of societies and cultures

8. develop an awareness of historical, scientific and social contexts within which social and cultural anthropology has developed

9. develop in the student a capacity to recognize preconceptions and assumptions of their own social and cultural environments

10. develop an awareness of relationships between local, regional and global processes and issues.

Upon completion of the course, the student will be able to:

1. Analyze sociocultural systems by dividing them into their subsystem components (economic, familial, ecological, etc.)
2. Employ ethnographic techniques to describe and analyze contemporary social systems.
3. Identify and analyze the multi-level and shifting basis of ethnicity.
4. Recognize ethnocentrism and ethnic stereotyping and be able to use cultural relativism to explain cultural traits.
5. Recognize the impact of global forces on cultural systems around the world.

**III Required Readings**

1. The Dobe Ju/’hoansi (4th Edition) by Richard Lee.

2. *Learning Capitalist Culture Deep in the heart of Tejas* (2nd Edition) by Douglas Foley

3. Anthropology Reader

4. Other handouts

Please note: read the chapters of *Dobe Ju/’hoansi* and *Learning Capitalistic Culture* as they are assigned each week. We are not discussing the chapters in the order in which they appear in the book.

**IV. Course requirements and grading criteria**

IB Requirements

***Internal assessment***

**Two** compulsory activities to be internally assessed by the teacher and externally

moderated by the IB.

• A one-hour observation followed by a written report of 600–700 words.

• A critique of the initial report of 700–800 words.

**20%**

***External assessment***

**Paper 1 (1 hour)**

**Three** compulsory questions based on an unseen text, covering aspects drawn from the

whole syllabus.

**30%**

**Paper 2 (2 hours)**

Tenquestions based on Anthropological concepts of the syllabus. Students choose **two** questions to be answered in essay form.

**50%**

Class Requirements

* The Internal Assessment (discussed above) and steps towards the Internal Assessment will count as course grades

In addition, the course grade will be based on:

* + The Anthropological journal
  + Participation in Discussions\*
  + Assignments (designed to help understand concepts)\*\*
  + Individual Projects (designed to explore cultural concepts in a personal and/or more in-depth manner) \*\*
  + Individual Presentations (1Individual project per quarter shared with class)\*\*
  + Group Projects (designed to practice the methods of Anthropology (interview and observation) \*\*
  + Critique Assessments (essay style) modeled after Paper 1\*\*
  + Concept Assessments (essay style) - modeled after Paper 2\*\*

\*Active participation is very important in this class. You are expected to participate in class discussions. In the case of a legitimate reason for not participating (e.g. excused absence or limited class time), there will be opportunities to share in an on-line discussion. The online contributions must meet the word and content requirements for each discussion (see individual instructions). Anything shared online may be shared or discussed during subsequent classes.

\*\* make-up assessment and paper extensions must be approved by the teacher and arranged in advance.  
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**V. Course Schedule**

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| ***Units*** | ***Units*** |
| 1 Introduction | 10. Cultural Categorization |
| 2. Methodology and Evaluation | 12. Age Set |
| 3. Subsistence | 13. Age Grade |
| 4. Kinship and Family | 14. Gender |
| 5. Marriage and Sexuality | 15. Ethnicity and Race |
| 6. Politics and Economics | 16. Economic Stratification |
| 7. Morals and Ethics | 17. Globalization |
| 8. Religion | 18. Art and Expression |
| 9. Systems of Knowledge | 19. Bringing Anthropology up-to-date |
| 10. Contact and Change | 20 Review |
| 11. Language | Paper 1 May 20th  Paper 2 May 21st |