

CULTURE AND SOCIAL LIFE

Anth 01:070:101

COURSE INFORMATION

Course Instructor

[Professor Omar Dewachi MD, PhD](#)

Email: omar.dewachi@rutgers.edu

Virtual Office Hour: Monday 10:45AM–12:45PM

Teaching Assistants

Keri Sansevere, PhD <kerisansevere@gmail.com> Head TA

Burcu Pehlivan <bp506@rutgers.edu>

William Downey <wpd21@scarletmail.rutgers.edu>

TAs will announce their office hours in recitation sections

Course and Recitations Schedule:

Lectures: Monday/Thursday 9:15AM-10:35AM

Recitations:

Section 1: Wednesday 2:15Pm-3:35PM (Synchronous) [Downey]

Section 2: Thursday 1055am-12:15PM (Synchronous) [Pehlivan]

Section 3: Wednesday 9:15 AM - 10:35 AM (Synchronous) [Downey]

Section 4: Wednesday 10:55 AM - 12:15 PM (Synchronous) [Pehlivan]

Section 5: Tuesday 12:35 PM - 1:55 PM (Synchronous) [Downey]

Section 6: Asynchronous [Sansevere]

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Welcome to Culture and Social Life!

Anthropology is the study of human organization and meaning-making processes over time and space, past and present. It provides us with a lens to understand various aspects of what makes us human in an increasingly interconnected world. Anthropology is a vastly broad field and entails sub-disciplines such as archeology, biological anthropology, and cultural anthropology. Anthropology allows us to make connections between the micro- and macro- processes that define the lives of individuals and communities across the world.

This course will introduce you to key themes, problems, and methods in Cultural Anthropology. We will examine the development of the field of anthropology as a social science discipline with specific tools to investigate and analyze different aspects of social life. We analyze a number of key themes and concepts such as culture, power, inequality, religion, ritual, sexuality, migration, globalization, arts, media ...etc, and the way anthropologists think and write about them. Central to the craft of the anthropologist is ethnographic research and writing. Unlike many other disciplines interested in human meaning and behavior, anthropologists spend extended periods of time in the field, sometimes years and decades. This gives them an insider point of view to the ways people behave and interact. We will explore how anthropologists conduct fieldwork research and how they reflect on the study of society and culture in the form of ethnographic writing.

Through addressing key themes in cultural anthropology, we will be able to reflect critically on aspects of our daily life and shape our understanding of sameness, difference, and diversity. This course will get you to start thinking like an anthropologist when addressing a social and cultural phenomenon in your own life, and will introduce you to key skills in terms of social science analysis and writings.

COURSE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

1- Department Goals

This course contributes to each of the five learning goals for majors in the Anthropology department (found here:

<https://anthro.rutgers.edu/academics/undergraduate/undergraduate-learning-goals>). In particular, students will become more familiar with fundamental dilemmas in the history of the discipline (goal #1).

2- Core Learning Goals

II: Areas of Inquiry - B: Social Science and History

m. Understand different theories about human culture, social identity, economic entities, political systems, and other forms of social organization.

n. Employ tools of social scientific reasoning to study particular questions or situations, using appropriate assumptions, methods, evidence, and arguments.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Course Website

A Canvas website (<https://tlit.rutgers.edu/canvas>) accompanies this course; there you will find announcements, chapter review materials, quizzes, discussion boards, and other resources. If you have trouble accessing the site, please consult your TA.

All students are responsible for timely attention to email and Canvas postings for this course and therefore should check the Canvas site and their Rutgers email accounts regularly. Dates and assignments may change; all changes will be announced in class or posted on Canvas or both.

[Please use the Rutgers absence report online system rather than emailing the professor or TAs directly about absences.]

**If you miss more than two recitation sections, you are required to see a Dean of Students for assistance in verifying any special circumstances, and to submit documentation of those unusual circumstances to the professor and your TA. The only excused absences are for unusual circumstances—such as medical reasons or a death in the family—and these circumstances must be documented by a physician and/or academic Dean.

Religious holidays

Please notify the professor and your TA during the first two weeks of the semester if you will observe a religious holiday that will prevent you from attending a lecture or recitation section meeting. You may arrange to make up the work missed only if you notify the professor and your TA during the first two weeks of the semester about any expected absence due to a religious holiday.

Lateness

Please come to lectures on time; it is very distracting to your professor, and classmates when students join the zoom meeting late.

E-mail communication with TA and professor

In the subject line of your email message, begin with "101"—e.g., a subject line might read: "101/reading question" or "101/exam question." (Specifying "101" in your email subject line will help to ensure timely responses.)

Online and communication Netiquette

Check the course website for general guidelines for interacting online in our class. Please review and try to follow as much as you can. Watch this video:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FWMk_Zv7nB8

Technology Requirements

You will need a computer with a webcam and microphone and an internet connection for class.

Please visit the [Rutgers Student Tech Guide](#) page for resources available to all students. If you do not have the appropriate technology for financial reasons, please email Dean of Students deanofstudents@echo.rutgers.edu for assistance.

Financial Hardship

If you are facing other financial hardships, please visit the Office of Financial Aid at [https://financialaid.rutgers.edu/.](https://financialaid.rutgers.edu/)"

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND STUDENTS EVALUATION

1- Course Structure

Lectures: Each week covers one of the main modules of the course through two lectures. **The Monday lecture** will introduce the students to the main frameworks and concepts that are pertinent to the theme under question. Students are required to read the book chapter from the textbook and complete the InQuisitive Assignment prior to coming to class (see below). The Thursday lecture/discussion will focus on the ethnographic application of that week's theme. During our Thursdays meeting we will focus on examining the ethnographic text more closely through open discussion and in-class activities.

Vocabulary Matching Assignment (NOT GRADED): To move from one module to the next, the students are required to complete the Vocabulary Matching quizz. This

assignment is not graded; however, it will allow you to move from one module to the other -through opening the next module for studying. In other words, finishing this assignment will open the next Module on your Canvas website.

Recitations: Teaching assistants run the recitations. They provide an important space in which to discuss the reading and lectures, raise questions, and clarify uncertainty. They also allow you to demonstrate your engagement with the course materials – a form of participation which contributes substantially to your grade in the course. At a minimal level, students should attend all the recitations and listen politely to the TA and their peers.

2- Course Evaluation

Attendance and Participation (15%): Come to class prepared and have done the InQuizative Quiz (see below). Be prepared and engaged with your participation in lectures and recitations. Attendance will also be examined from the numerous in class activities and assignments. Absence without formal excuse will impact your grade.

InQuizative 15%: InQuizative is a personalized students' adaptive learning tool. It allows you to test and refine your knowledge of assigned chapters in this class. It will allow you to come to class prepared and make learning concepts and themes more fun and enjoyable. InQuizative will allow you to work on the questions until you get your desired grade. **Each student must complete the InQuizative assignment for each chapter every week prior to Monday's Lectures.** More details about how to use For more information on what is and how to use InQuizative check out the below short videos: [LINK]

<https://wnorton.com/inquizitive>

[How to Register for InQuizative with Canvas](#)

<https://ncia.wnorton.com/111366>

Vocabulary Matching Quiz (not graded): Each week students are required to Complete the vocabulary matching quiz to unlock next week's teaching module. This is not graded exercise, however, is necessary for reviewing class material.

Annotated Questions and Responses (10%): Before each recitation section, students are responsible for posting one question about that week's lecture and/or readings and respond to one question posed by one of your peers. Questions can be about concepts or vocabulary that you don't understand, or topics you would like to explore further in class or recitation discussion. **By annotated**, it is meant that each question should refer to a specific passage or set of passages (from the readings, films, or lectures) and that

you should explain your interest in the question in two or more sentences. These questions and responses are due by midnight the evening before sections, to be posted on your section Discussion Forums on Canvas. These will count for 10% of your final grade. You will receive one point for each question and response per class, graded on a pass/fail basis.

Three Fieldwork Journal entries 30%

Each student is required to submit three fieldwork journal entries throughout the semester. Each assignment will explore one central skill of ethnographic fieldwork research: Observation, participant observation, and interview skills. Details for each assignment will be provided on Canvas.

Final: Book Report 30%

Each student is expected to write one proper book report of an ethnography in any field. Book reviews usually address the scope and contribution of a specific work, allowing you to get a “quick fix” on its contents. The book review should run between 1500 and 2000 words and should offer a concise summary of the book, highlighting chapter content, outlining the main argument (and derivative arguments), and unpacking the different methodological and disciplinary approaches used in the analysis of the problem. Students are encouraged to highlight the structure of the argument (i.e. its logical articulation, assumptions, and kinds of evidence presented), as well as how successful the author was in applying different disciplinary tools in the analysis of the health/healthcare problem. The assignment will evaluate your ability to succinctly summarize and identify key points and methods clearly and link them to our class.

Assignment due after end of classes.

Assignments Summary

- 1- Complete **InQuisitive** quiz before class on **Monday**
- 2- Complete **the Vocabulary Matching Quiz** to open next week's module
- 3- Complete **Three** fieldwork exercises throughout the course
- 4- Submit **annotated questions** posted Weekly on Canvas Forum Discussion due the day prior to your recitation section meeting
- 5- Final Book report due in December after end of classes

Course Materials

We will be using a core textbook and reader for class. They will be available as a bundle at the campus bookstore or can be bought through W.W. Norton Press's website:

<https://digital.wwnorton.com/essculturalanthro3>

- 1- *Essentials of Cultural Anthropology: 3rd Edition*. Kenneth J. Guest. 2020. W.W. Norton & Company. * [An online version of this book is available through the Press's Website and Rutgers B&N Bookstore]
- 2- *Cultural Anthropology: A Reader for a Global Age*. Kenneth J. Guest. 2018. W.W. Norton & Company. * [There is no online copy of this reader. New paperback copies available through the bookstore and online. Also there are numerous online sites that sells used copies]

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1 Introduction:

9/3 - In class online Activities

Week 2: Anthropology in A Global Age

9/7 *EoCA* Chapter 1

9/10 *Reader* - Jason De León, from *The Land of Open Graves*, Edith Turner, "There are No Peripheries to Humanity", Nancy Scheper-Hughes, "Mind(ing) the Body: On the Trail of Organ-Stealing Rumors"

Week 3 Culture

9/14 *EoCA* Chapter 2

9/17 *Reader* Horace Miner, Body Ritual among the Nacirema, Lila Abu-Lughod, Do Muslim Women Really Need Saving?, Lucas Bessire, from *Behold the Black Caiman*

Week 4 Ethnography and fieldwork [modes of knowing, local knowledge, thick description]

9/21 *EoCA* Chapter 3

9/24 *Reader*, Barbara Myerhoff, from *Number Our Days*, Sienna Craig, Portrait of a Himalayan Healer

***ASSIGNMENT DUE: Field Journal Assignment #1**

Week 5: Language

9/28 *EoCA* Chapter 4

10/1 *Reader*, Laura Bohannan, Shakespeare in the Bush, Laura Ahearn, Literacy, Power, and Agency: Love Letters and Development in Nepal,

Week 6 Race and Racism

10/5 *EoCA* Chapter 5

10/8 *Reader*, Karen Brodtkin Sacks, How Did Jews Become White Folks?, Keisha-Khan Perry, "If We Didn't Have Water": Black Women's Struggle for Urban Land Rights in Brazil, Yarimar Bonilla and Jonathan Rosa, #Ferguson: Digital Protest, Hashtag Ethnography, and the Racial Politics of Social Media in the United States

Week 7 Ethnicity and Nationalism

10/12 *EoCA* Chapter 6

10/15: *Reader*, Paul Farmer, "Landmine Boy" and Stupid Deaths, Audra Simpson, from *Mohawk Interruptus*

Week 8: Gender

10/19 *EoCA* Chapter 7

10/22 *Reader*, Evelyn Blackwood, Tombois in West Sumatra, Emily Martin, The Egg and the Sperm

Week 9 Sexuality

10/26 *EoCA* Chapter 8

10/29 *Reader*, Bobby Benedicto, from Under Bright Lights: Gay Manila and the Global Scene, Deborah Gould, Life During Wartime: Emotions and the Development of ACT UP

***ASSIGNMENT DUE: Field Journal Assignment #2**

Week 10 Kinship, Family, and Marriage

11/2 *EoCA* Chapter 9

11/5 *Reader*. Melvyn Goldstein, When Brothers Share a Wife; Dana-Ain Davis, The Troubling Case of Nadya Suleman; Donna Haraway, Staying with the Trouble: Making Kin in Chthulucene.

Week 11 Global Economy

11/9 *EoCA* Chapter 10

11/12 *Reader*, Elizabeth Dunn, from Privatizing Poland: Baby Food, Big Business, and the Remaking of Labor, Julie Y. Chu, The Attraction of Numbers: Accounting for Ritual Expenditures in Fuzhou, China, Gillian Tett, from Fools Gold: The Inside Story of J.P. Morgan

Week 12 Politics and Power

11/16 *EoCA* Chapter 12

11/19 *Reader*, Margaret Mead, Warfare is Only an Invention—Not a Biological Necessity, Carolyn Nordstrom, from *Shadows of War*, Melissa Checker, from *Polluted Promises*

***ASSIGNMENT DUE: Field Journal Assignment #3**

Week 13 Environment and Sustainability

11/23 EoCA Chapter 11

11/26 [NO CLASSES] Thanksgiving Break

Week 14 Religion

11/30 EoCA Chapter 13

12/3 Baseball Magic, George Gmelch

From Wall Street to Halal Street, Daromir Rudnyckyj, Liminal Youth Among Fuzhou Chinese Undocumented Workers, Kenneth Guest

Week 15 Health and Illness

12/7 EoCA Chapter 14

12/10 Life and Time of Magda A, Didier Fassin, Frederic Le Marcis, and Todd Lethata, Valuing Deaf Worlds in Urban India, Michael Friedner

FINAL ASSIGNMENT DUE:

ALTERNATIVE MODULE

Week 16 Art and Media

EoCA Chapter 15

Reader, Brent Luvaas, Designer Vandalism: Indonesian Indie Fashion and the Cultural Practice of Cut 'n' Paste, Aimee Cox, The BlackLight Project, Aimee Cox, The BlackLight Project