

SOC120: INTRODUCTION TO ANTHROPOLOGY
St. Louis University in Madrid
Fall 2014 Course Syllabus

Time: Tuesday/Thursday 2:30-3:45 pm **Place:** Padre Rubio Hall 13
Professor: Dr. Mary Prendergast **Contact info:** mprende1@slu.edu
Office hours/location: Tuesdays, 10:30am-12:30 pm, San Ignacio Hall, Room 13
Credits: 3 **Prerequisites:** None

Course description:

What makes us human? How are we different from other primates? How did we shift from gathering wild foods to building towns and temples? Why do some people have multiple wives – or husbands? Should anthropologists be “embedded” in military conflict zones? Should veiling be banned in public spaces? These questions are the stuff of anthropology, the study of the human condition. In this course you will learn the basics of the four main subfields: physical or biological anthropology (the study of our biological diversity and evolution), cultural or social anthropology (the study of our cultural diversity and behavior), linguistic anthropology (the study of how language reflects culture) and archaeology (the study of material culture).

We will select a few topics in each subfield to examine in detail, touching on cultures from around the world. In the first part of the course, you will learn how humans are similar and different to other primates, and how human behavior is biologically and socially conditioned. Next, we will explore the evidence for the evolution of our species, and for three key events in human history: the emergence of anatomically and behaviorally modern humans, the transition to farming & settled life, and the development of cities and so-called “civilization.” We’ll also examine research methods – such as the analysis of bones or the use of ethnographic data – and political controversies in archaeology.

The last part of the course will be spent studying cultural anthropology: namely, how human behavior varies across and within groups, and how aspects of “culture” change over time. By the end of the course you should have a good sense of the similarities and differences in terms of social phenomena – such as marriage, gender roles, taboos and rituals – across a number of cultures from around the world. You will be able to debate the merits of cultural relativism, and apply this logic to some of modern life’s many ethical dilemmas. Finally, you will have an understanding of how globalization and industrialization are affecting cultures around the world in both positive and negative ways.

Student learning objectives:

Knowledge of and sensitivity to other cultures is essential to living and working in an increasingly globalized world. This course offers an introduction to anthropology, broadly defined as the study of the human condition from sociocultural, biological and historical perspectives. The main objective is to deepen students’ understanding of human diversity and the ways in which culture shapes and is shaped by both individual and collective decisions. Students will gain knowledge of anthropology’s main concepts, methods and problems. This course will enable students to undertake further study in anthropology, and also provides a solid foundation for work in international relations, sociology, history and other social sciences.

Requirements:

The subjects covered in this course require careful thought and debate; although the readings will provide essential background to lectures, I do not teach exclusively from the text. In addition to doing the reading prior to class, your attendance and thoughtful participation in class discussions and activities is necessary in order to do well. Since the course covers a large amount of material, it is broken down into 3 exams, two shorter exams and one larger, cumulative final. Exams include material from readings, films, lectures and discussions.

Grading:

Active, meaningful participation in class and attendance (see below): 25%
Unannounced reading quizzes (see below): 10%
Exam 1 (intro + biological anthropology): 20%
Exam 2 (archaeological anthropology): 20%
Final exam (cumulative, but with an emphasis on cultural anthropology): 25%

The grading scale for exams is as follows:

93 and above = A

90-92 = A-

87-89 = B+

83-86 = B

80-82 = B-

77-80 = C+

73-76 = C

70-72 = C-

60-69 = D

0-59 = F

Reading quizzes:

Between six and eight unannounced reading quizzes will be given throughout the semester. These consist of 5 multiple-choice questions on the readings and are worth 10 points. The quizzes will take place at the beginning of class and students who arrive late will not be able to take the quiz. If you are absent on the day of a quiz, *for any reason*, you will receive a 0.

At the end of the term, your two lowest quiz grades will be dropped and the remaining scores averaged. The averages correspond to letter grades as follows:

8-10 = A

7-7.9 = B

6-6.9 = C

5-5.9 = D

<5 = F

Participation grades:

Active, meaningful participation means: 1) attending class regularly; 2) participating in discussions by offering comments that demonstrate understanding of course content; 3) asking questions (and/or answering classmates'/professor's questions) in a way that demonstrates engagement with the material; and 4) being a kind and considerate classmate, which means: not interrupting others; taking your fair share of discussion time; and reacting to your classmates' comments in a respectful way. As a very general guideline, students that regularly attend and actively and meaningfully participate in class receive a participation grade of A. Excellent attendance, but minimal participation, merits a B. Students who are frequently absent, never participate, and/or repeatedly demonstrate inconsiderate behavior, will earn a C or lower.

Electronic device policy:

Use of laptops, tablets, mobile phones or other electronic devices is not allowed during class. Using these devices will negatively affect your participation grade.

Attendance Policy:

Repeated unjustified absences or extreme tardiness will affect your class participation grade. *Students who arrive at class more than 15 minutes late will be marked tardy. Two tardies equals one absence.* The participation component of your grade will be decreased by one full letter for every three unjustified absences beyond the add/drop date. A student with 10 or more unjustified absences will fail the course.

Examples of absences that will not be excused:

- An email to your prof stating that you are sick and cannot attend class
- Taking off an extra day for a long traveling weekend

Examples of absences that will be excused:

- Signed/stamped justification that you visited a doctor
- A print-out of documents showing that your flight back from Paris was cancelled
- An email from a professor or Student Life indicating you are on a required class field trip

Exam policy:

There are three exams in this course. Please note the exam dates (see below) and ensure that you can be present for all of them. The date of the final exam cannot be changed. Makeups will only be scheduled with approval of the Academic Dean. If an exam is missed due to an adequately documented family or medical emergency, a makeup may be given. Otherwise, a grade of F will be given for a missed exam.

Policy Statement on Academic Integrity:

The University is a community of learning, whose effectiveness requires an environment of mutual trust and integrity. As members of this community, students, faculty, and staff members share the responsibility to maintain this environment. Academic dishonesty violates it. Although not all forms of academic dishonesty can be listed here, it can be said in general that soliciting, receiving, or providing any unauthorized assistance in the completion of any work submitted toward academic credit is dishonest. It not only violates the mutual trust necessary between faculty and students but also undermines the validity of the University's evaluation of students and takes unfair advantage of fellow students. Further, it is the responsibility of any student who observes such dishonest conduct to call it to the attention of a faculty member or administrator.

Examples of academic dishonesty would be copying from another student, copying from a book or class notes during a closed-book exam, submitting materials authored by or editorially revised by another person but presented as the student's own work, copying a passage or text directly from a published source without appropriately citing or recognizing that source, taking a test or doing an assignment or other academic work for another student, tampering with another student's work, securing or supplying in advance a copy of an examination without the knowledge or consent of the instructor, and colluding with another student or students to engage in an act of academic dishonesty. Where there is clear indication of such dishonesty, a faculty member or administrator has the responsibility to apply appropriate sanctions. Investigations of violations will be conducted in accord with standards and procedures of the school or college through which the course or research is offered. Recommendations of sanctions to be imposed will be made to the dean of the school or college in which the student is enrolled. Possible sanctions for a violation of academic integrity include, but are not limited to, disciplinary probation, suspension, and dismissal from the University. The complete SLU Academic Honesty Policy can be found at the following link:
http://spain.slu.edu/academics/academic_advising/docs/Academic_integrity.pdf

Academic Accommodation:

In recognition that people learn in a variety of ways and that learning is influenced by multiple factors (e.g., prior experience, study skills, learning disability), resources to support student success are available on campus. Students who think they might benefit from these resources can find out more about:

Course-level support (e.g., faculty member, departmental resources, etc.) by asking your course instructor.

University-level support (e.g., tutoring/writing services, Disability Services) by visiting the Academic Dean's Office or at http://spain.slu.edu/academics/learning_resources.html.

Students who believe that, due to a disability, they could benefit from academic accommodations are encouraged to contact Disability Services at +34 915 54 58 58, ext. 204, send an e-mail to counselingcenter-madrid@slu.edu, or visit the Counseling Office (San Ignacio Hall). Confidentiality will be observed in all inquiries. Course instructors support student accommodation requests when an approved letter from Disability Services has been received and when students discuss these accommodations with the instructor after receipt of the approved letter.

Policy Statement on Student Work:

Saint Louis University - Madrid Campus is committed to excellent and innovative educational practices. In order to maintain quality academic offerings and to conform to relevant accreditation requirements, we regularly assess our teaching, services, and programs for evidence of student learning outcomes achievement. For this purpose we keep on file anonymized representative examples of student work from all courses and programs such as: assignments, papers, exams, portfolios, and results from student surveys, focus groups, and reflective exercises. Thus, copies of your exams, presentation and written work for this course may be kept on file for institutional research, assessment and accreditation purposes. If you prefer that Saint Louis University-Madrid Campus does not keep your work on file, you will need to communicate your decision in writing to your professor.

Readings:

The main textbook is a general introduction to anthropology, here referred to as WOH: Kottak, Conrad. *Window on Humanity*. New York: McGraw-Hill. Available at campus bookstore. Approximately half of the book will be used in this course. If you do not wish to buy it, it will be on reserve at the campus library as well. Other required readings are posted on Blackboard.

Important registrar dates (see SLU academic calendar for further information):

Sep 15: Last Day to Drop a Class Without a Grade of W and/or to Add a Class

Sep 30: Last Day to Choose Audit (AU) or Pass/No Pass (P/NP) options

Oct 30: Last Day to Drop a Class and Receive a Grade of W

Nov 6: Registration begins for Spring Semester

Course Outline (subject to change):

Date	Topic	Reading/Assignment Due
UNIT 1: AN INTRODUCTION TO ANTHROPOLOGY		
Tues Sept 2	Introduction to course	
Thurs Sept 4	Making a living in anthropology	"This is anthropology in Florida"
Tues Sept 9	What is culture & how do we study it?	WOH Ch. 2
Thurs Sept 11	Nature/nurture: a case study	Buss, "What Women Want" & "Men Want Something Else" (2 PDFs)
UNIT 2: BIOLOGICAL (PHYSICAL) ANTHROPOLOGY		
Tues Sept 16	<i>Film: Chimpanzees</i>	Read film handout
Thurs Sept 18	Humans as primates	Goodall, "Mind of the Chimpanzee" Stanford, "Got Culture?"
Tues Sept 23	Where did we come from?	WOH Ch. 6
Thurs Sept 25	Origins of modern humans	WOH Ch. 7
Tues Sept 30	<i>Film: The Incredible Human Journey</i>	Film handout + NYTimes, "DNA turning human story into a tell-all"
Thurs Oct 2	Are we still evolving?	NOVA, "Are we still evolving?" + be prepared to discuss film + DNA article.
Tues Oct 7	EXAM 1	-
UNIT 3: ARCHAEOLOGY; OR, THE ANTHROPOLOGY OF "STUFF"		
Thurs Oct 9	Are we what we throw away?	Macaulay, <i>Motel of the Mysteries</i> AND BRING 10 PIECES OF GARBAGE
Tues Oct 14	Disease, death and bones	Diamond, "The Worst Mistake..."
Thurs Oct 16	<i>Film: Guns, Germs & Steel</i>	Film handout
Tues Oct 21	Settle down: village origins	WOH Ch. 8
Thurs Oct 23	Birth & collapse of civilization	WOH Ch. 9
Tues Oct 28	Ethnoarchaeology	Yellen, "Bushmen"

Thurs Oct 30	Politics of the past	Arnold, "Past as Propaganda" NYT, "Hussein's Babylon"
Tues Nov 4	EXAM 2	-
UNIT 4: CULTURAL (SOCIAL) ANTHROPOLOGY		
Thurs Nov 6	Ethnography & ethics	WOH Ch. 3 pages 51-65 (5 th Ed); or pp. 47-48 and 58-66 (4 th Ed) Sterk, "Tricking and Tripping"
Tues Nov 11	<i>Film: Secrets of the Tribe</i>	Johnston, "Secrets of the Tribe;" Mann, "Anthropological Warfare"; "AAA Code of Ethics"; and film handout
Thurs Nov 13	Ethnocentrism & relativism	Miner, "Body Ritual among the..." Economist – The War of French Dressing
Tues Nov 18	Kinship & families I	WOH Ch. 13
Thurs Nov 20	Kinship & families II	Scheper-Hughes, "Death w/o weeping" Fong, "China's One-Child Policy..."
Tues Nov 25	Gender & sexuality	WOH Ch. 14
Thurs Nov 27	Beliefs I	Old Testament excerpts Harris, "The Abominable Pig"
Tues Dec 2	Beliefs II	WOH Ch. 15 pp. 348-359 (5 th Ed); or pp. 336-346 (4 th Ed) Gmelch, "Baseball Magic"
Thurs Dec 4	Linguistic anthropology	WOH Ch. 10, <i>skip sections entitled "nonhuman primate communication" and "the structure of language"</i> Rickford, Suite for Ebony & Phonics
Tues Dec 9	Applying anthropology to the "real world"	McFate, "Anthropology and Counterinsurgency" USA Today; 2007 AAA statement
Thurs Dec 11	Summary and review session	Optional extra credit assignment due
Friday Dec 19	FINAL EXAM 12:00-2:00 PM	