

Introduction to Cultural Anthropology

Lecturer	Dr. Jessica Piekielek
Institution	Southern Oregon University
Email	piekielj@sou.edu
Class time	Morning

Course Description:

Introduces the major concepts and methods of cultural anthropology that are used to understand the diversity of contemporary people and cultures. Encourages students to foster cultural humility and curiosity. Introduces students to accessible anthropological methods, such as participant observation and informal interviews, that students can use in wide a range of personal and professional areas to better understand diverse perspectives. Supports students in deepening their cultural exchange with peers in Summer School through assignments tailored for a multi-national student body. Engages key ideas and practical techniques in cultural anthropology to cultivate thoughtful, well-informed, engaged world citizens.

Materials/Text:

This class uses all open-resource, online sources, including excerpts from OER textbooks ([Perspectives: An Open Invitation to Cultural Anthropology](#) and [The Art of Being Human](#)) and articles by scholars written for a general audience, such as found in [Sapiens, Anthropology Magazine](#) and [The Conversation](#).

Requirements:

No prerequisites.

Schedule:

Introduction to Cultural Anthropology Schedule

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
7/6	7/7	7/8	7/9
Orientation	Introduction to Anthropology and Human Diversity	Culture	Methods in Cultural Anthropology
7/13	7/14	7/15	7/16
Language	Subsistence, Foodways Assignment #1 due	Family & Marriage	Gender & Sexuality
7/20	7/21	7/22	7/23
Health & the Body	Economics Assignment #2 due	Material Culture	Politics
7/27	7/28	7/29	7/30
Race & Ethnicity	Globalization; Migrations Assignment #3 due	Students' Choice	Final class discussion and written reflection

Assignments:

Students will complete three assignments in which they practice cultural anthropology methods- participant

observation, informal interviews, and collection of visual data (such as photos or sketches)- and report their findings and reflections on practicing the assigned method. Many after class cultural activities will be potential opportunities to practice anthropological methods, so assignments will complement students' participation in planned cultural activities.

Evaluation:

Student Work	Criteria	Percent of Total Grade
Assignments	Assignments will be evaluated based on completion of all components, connections to course sources and key ideas in anthropology, and self-assessment and reflection on method practiced.	20% each
Attendance & participation	Participation is thoughtful preparation for and engagement in class activities, such as pair conversations, small group exercises, survey/polls, informal sharing of assignment highlights, and/or short written responses. Grades are based on attendance, preparation, and engagement.	25%
Final in-class reflection	Reflection will be evaluated based on completion of all components, connections to course sources and key ideas in anthropology, and self-assessment and reflection on lessons and methods learned.	15%

Grading Scale

A+	A	B+	B	C+	C	D+	D	F
95 – 100	90 – 94.99	85 – 89.99	80 – 84.99	75 – 79.99	70 – 74.99	65 – 69.99	60 – 64.99	0 – 59.99