

Cultural Anthropology
ANTH 195-0004 (Spring 2021)
3 credit hours

Dr. Megan Tracy

Class Meeting: Online, Asynchronous

Virtual Office Hours: T/TH 9:30-11 or by appointment

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Course Description and Objectives: The aim of this course is to provide an overview of fundamental issues and concepts in cultural anthropology and for each student to expand his or her understanding of their own social and cultural experiences. As a result of this course, you will develop an appreciation for the complexity and diversity of cultures and societies across the world; acquire an awareness of the various approaches to communication, interpretation and representation across cultures; and develop a critical perspective on our own society and the global issues that affect us all. *Requirements:* This course fulfills requirements in both general education and liberal studies. In the general education program, this course is part of Cluster Four: Social and Cultural Processes—the Global Experience. This course also fulfills the History/Social Sciences Geography core in Interdisciplinary Liberal Studies.

Cluster 4 Learning Objectives: Students completing a Global Experience course in Cluster Four will be able to identify, conceptualize and evaluate:

- Basic global problems
- Global political, social, cultural and economic systems
- The issues involved in analyzing societies different from one's own
- The global forces that shape societies
- Theoretical models used in studying global problems
- The strengths and limitations of alternative solutions to global problems across and within cultures

Course Materials:

- 1) Knauff, Bruce. *The Gebusi: Lives Transformed in a Rainforest World*, Fourth edition. Waveland Press, Inc., 2016. Appears as "**Knauff**" on syllabus. This book is available for rent/purchase from the bookstore or online. There are other editions for this book. You are required to use the current version. If you use an earlier version, you are responsible for any material that may differ and/or be missing from the current version.
- 2) Walsh, Andrew. *Made in Madagascar*, University of Toronto Press. 2012. "**Walsh**" on syllabus. This book is available for rent/purchase from the bookstore or online.
- 3) Additional required readings will also be posted on Canvas.
- 4) Text-based materials will be supplemented with a variety of other media. Questions based on films and film clips, for example, will be included on weekly quizzes.

Course Requirements: You should regularly read some news media (yes, Vice and BuzzFeed "count," but balance this with some other news source, please) to increase your knowledge about issues central to the course (e.g. cultural differences, ethnic conflicts, social stratification, gender issues, etc.).

Graded Assignments:

- 1) Weekly Quizzes 50%. These will cover material from all the course material in that module (assigned readings, lectures, films, etc.). They will be timed (you will have 30 min to complete each one) and close at 5pm each Friday. Your lowest 2 quiz scores will be dropped.
- 2) Individual Field Assignments 10%. These (4) short assignments are designed to give you the opportunity to apply your anthropological insights and skills to the world around you. Complete details will be provided for each one. They will be due on the **Tuesday** of their assigned week.
- 3) Group Collaborations 20%. After each individual field assignment, you will meet with your group members and synthesize your individual contributions into a collaborative assignment. Complete details will be provided for each one. They will be due on the **Sunday** of their assigned week. You will be assigned your group after Week 2.
- 4) Final Un-Essay 20%. In place of a final exam, you will complete an "un-essay," a creative way to interact with course themes and synthesize what you've learned and what you're interested in. Each student will turn in an "un-essay" proposal (12%) and then you will complete the project with your group (8%).

Another way to think about all these assignments is in terms of individual and team-based assignments:

Individual Assignments (72%)

- 15 Weekly Quizzes: 50% (a little under 4% each)
- 4 Individual Field Assignments 10% (about 2.5% each)
- Final Un-Essay Proposal 12%

Team-based Assignments (28%)

- 4 Group Collaborations 20% (5% each)
- Final Un-Essay 8%

Policy regarding late work: Each assignment has a clear deadline. Assignments will drop 5% each day after the deadline.

The best way to prevent missing a deadline is to 1) **prepare and save your work on your hard-drive before submitting it on Canvas** and 2) submit each assignment **well before** the deadline. Canvas can be wonky with an unstable Internet connection so double-check to make sure that your work is actually in the system.

Attendance: This is an asynchronous, online course. Completion of course modules stands in for attendance and attendance will not be a graded component of the course.

Student privacy: All course materials posted to Canvas or other course site are private; by federal law, any materials that identify specific students (via their name, voice, or image) must not be shared with anyone not enrolled in this class. This includes but is not limited to excerpting or clipping parts of course materials and videos. Video recordings of class meetings that include audio or visual information from other students are private and must not be shared. Live Video Conference Meetings (e.g. WebEx or Zoom) that include audio or visual information from other students must be viewed privately and not shared with others in your household. *In addition, all materials created by your professor can only be shared with my explicit permission.*

Honor Code: You are expected to follow the Honor Code for all of your assignments. See: <http://www.jmu.edu/honor/code.shtml#TheHonorCode>.

Grading System: Your overall grade will be determined according to the following scale:

94-100 = A	87-89 = B+	77-79 = C+	67-69 = D+
90-93 = A-	84-86 = B	74-76 = C	64-66 = D
	80-83=B-	70-73 = C-	60-63 = D-
			59 or below F

Registrar's Deadlines: Students are responsible for registering for classes and for verifying their class schedules on [MyMadison](#). The deadline for adding a Spring Semester class through MyMadison without instructor and academic unit head signatures is January 29, 2021. Between Jan 30th and Feb 8th, Instructor and Academic Unit Head signatures are required to add a class for Spring Semester 2021. *No exceptions will be made to these deadlines.*

Inclement Weather and/or other cancellations: <http://www.jmu.edu/JMUpolicy/1309.shtml> for JMU policy. For information about official closings, call the JMU Weather Line (540) 433-5300 or go to JMU's homepage.

Disability and Other Accommodations: JMU abides by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act, which mandate reasonable accommodations be provided for students with documented disabilities. If you have not already done so, you will need to register with the Office of Disability Services, the designated office on campus to provide services for students with disabilities. The office is located in the Student Success Center, 1202, and you may call (540) 568-6705 for more information.

I am happy to meet with students to discuss ways of expanding access in the classroom that are not only mandated by law. Please feel free to make an appointment with me to discuss.

Any student who has difficulty accessing sufficient food, or who lacks a safe and stable place to live, access to a stable and high-speed internet connection, and believes this may affect their performance in the course is urged to contact the Dean of Students for support. Furthermore, please notify me if you are comfortable in doing so. This will enable me to provide any resources that I may possess.

Religious Accommodations: All faculty are required to give reasonable and appropriate accommodations to students requesting them on grounds of religious observation. The faculty member determines what accommodations are appropriate for his/her course. Students should notify the faculty by no later than the end of the Drop-Add period the first week of the semester of potential scheduled absences and determine with the instructor if mutually acceptable alternative methods exist for completing the missed classroom time, lab or activity. Contact the [Office of Equal Opportunity](#) at (540) 568-6991 if you have additional questions.

Course Schedule of Readings

Please note that additional materials and links will be added into Course Modules. The schedule may be changed at my discretion and with appropriate notice.

Week 1 Introduction to class/ What is anthropology

- Assigned blog post: Rutherford, Danilyn (2020) "What is Anthropology" *Sapiens*, May 26, 2020

Week 2 What is culture

- Assigned Reading: Bohannon, Laura (1966) "Shakespeare in the Bush." *Natural History* 75: 28-33.
- Assigned Reading: Walsh, Introduction pp xv-xxx
- Assigned Film: *Cannibal Tours* (1988) dir. Dennis O'Rourke
- Assigned blog post: Theobald, Simon (2017) "Ethnographers vs 'Tourists'" *The Familiar Strange*, June 22, 2017

Week 3 Fieldwork (and Ethics)

- Assigned Reading: Knauff, Introduction and Chapter 1 pp 1-28
- Assigned blog post: Mendenhall, Emily (2020) "How an Iowa Summer Resort Region Became a Covid-19 Hot Spot" *Vox*, Aug 8, 2020
- Assigned Film: *Number Our Days* (1976) dir. Myerhoff and Littman

UNIT 2: Political and Economic Systems

Week 4 Subsistence and Exchange

- Assigned Reading: Knauff, Ch 2, pp 29-46
- Assigned blog post: Cohen, Jeffrey (2020) "Indigenous Mexicans turn inward to survive COVID-19, barricading villages and growing their own food" *The Conversation*, August 11, 2020
- Assigned Film: "Onka's Big Moka" (1974) dir. Charlie Nairn
- Assigned blog post: D'Aloia, Alex (2019) "Collecting Relationships: The Phenomenon of Ooshies" *The Familiar Strange*, November 18, 2019

Week 5 Ritual and Religion

- Assigned Reading: Knauff, Ch 5 pp 79-91
- Assigned Reading: Meigs, Anna (1988) "Food as a Cultural Construction" *Food and Foodways*, 2 pp 341-357
- Assigned Film: "In pursuit of the Siberian Shaman" (2006) dir. Anya Bernstein

Week 6 Power, agency, cultural relativism

- Assigned Reading: Walsh Ch 1 pp 1-22
- Assigned Reading: Mason, Jessica (2016) "Wake up, Russia! Political activism and the reanimation of agency" *Anthropology Today*, 32(5) pp 13-17
- Assigned film: "They Call Me Muslim" (2006) dir. Diana Ferrero

Unit 3: Constructions of Identity and Personhood

Week 7 Language

- Assigned Reading: Deutscher, Guy (2010) "Does Your Language Shape How You Think?" *New York Times Magazine*, August 29, 2010, MM42
- Assigned Reading: Hill, Jane (1998) "Language, race, and white public space." *American Anthropologist* 100.3 (1998): 680–689.
- Assigned Blog: Thorpe, David (2015) "Who Sounds Gay" *New York Times*, June 23, 2015

Week 8 Race and Ethnicity

- Assigned Reading: Fish, Jefferson (1995): "Mixed Blood" *Psychology Today*
- Assigned Reading: Marks, Jonathan (1994) "Black, White, Other: Racial categories are cultural constructs masquerading as biology" *Natural History* 103(12), pp32-35
- Assigned Reading: Reese, Ashanté (2017) "We will not perish: we're going to keep flourishing": Race, Food Access and Geographies of Self-Reliance

Week 9 Sex/Gender

- Assigned Reading Bearman, Molly (2016) "Between Male and Female." *Sapiens*, 24 Jun 2016.
- Assigned Reading Schultz, Jaime (2016). "So what if some female Olympians have high testosterone?," *The Conversation*, 15 Aug 2016"
- Assigned Reading Walsh, Ch2, pp23-48
- Assigned Reading Wentzel, Emily, Forthcoming, "Being a Good Mexican Man by Embracing 'erectile dysfunction'" *Global Perspectives on Gender*

Week 10 Kinship/Descent/Family/Marriage

- Assigned Online kinship tutorial
- Assigned Reading: Knauft, Ch 4 65-78
- Assigned Blog: Kleinfield, N. R. (2011) "Baby Makes Four, and Complications" *The New York Times*, June 19, 2011

Unit 4: Globalization

Week 11 Globalization, globalism, and the environment

- Assigned Reading Steger, Manfred (2003) "Globalization: a contested concept" *In Globalization: A Very Short Introduction*, pp1-9
- Assigned Reading Walsh, Ch 3, pp49-73

Week 12 Globalization, Value, and Material culture

- Assigned Reading Walsh, Ch 4 and Conclusion, pp 74-112
- Assigned Reading Watson, James (2000) "China's Big Mac Attack" *Foreign Affairs* 79(3) pp120-134
- Assigned Film: *Gringo Trails* (2013) dir. Pegi Vail

Week 13 Nationalism and Migration

- Assigned Film: *Sent Away Boys* (2016) dir. Harjant Gill
- Assigned Reading: Leinaweaver, Jessaca (2011) "Kinship Paths to and From the New Europe: A Unified Analysis of Peruvian Adoption and Migration." *Journal of Latin American and Caribbean Anthropology* pp380-400

- Assigned Blog: McGranahan (2015) "What is a Family? Refugee DNA and the Possible Truths of Kinship" *Somatosphere*

Week 14 Social stratification and Racialization

- Assigned Video: Benjamin, Ruha, *Are Robots Racist?* (Based on her recent book *Race after Technology: Abolitionist Tools for the New Jim Code*, 2019)
- Assigned Blog: Gravlee, Lance (2020) "It's about racism, not race, when coronavirus hits communities of color hard" *Tampa Bay Times*
- Assigned Blog: Moran-Thomas (2020) "How a Popular Medical Device Encodes Racial Bias" *Boston Review*
- Assigned Film: *Exit Zero* (2017) dir. Chris Boebel and Chris Walley

Week 15 Applying Anthropology

- Assigned Reading: Bell, Genevieve (2011) "Unpacking Cars: Doing University Anthropology at Intel" *AnthroNotes* 32(2):1-6
- Assigned Blog: Wood, Graeme (2013) "Anthropology, Inc" *The Atlantic* March 2013