ANTHROPOLOGY 101, Sections 008, 009, 010, 011
INTRODUCTION TO CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY

Fall 2009

Professor Marc Edelman
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Weekly schedule:

Wednesdays and Fridays 9:10-10:00AM, lecture meeting for all students in all sections, Room 1036 Hunter North
Section 008 discussion section: Tuesdays 9:10-10:00AM, Room 1036 Hunter North
Section 009 discussion section: Tuesdays 10:10-11:00AM, Room 732 Hunter North
Section 010 discussion section: Wednesdays 11:10-12:00N, Room 732 Hunter North
Section 011 discussion section: Fridays 10:10-11:00AM, Room 732 Hunter North

Students are expected to attend all classes and their discussion section, since these frequently cover material not in the readings; examinations will also include questions about the films that will be shown during class periods. **At the beginning of the semester (and again after several weeks), students should read and carefully consider the attached page, “How to Succeed in This Course” (If you are having difficulty, also consult “If You Are Not Succeeding in this Course”).**

Students should read *The New York Times* and other media to increase their general knowledge about issues central to this course (e.g., development and underdevelopment, ethnic conflict, cultural differences, social stratification, gender issues, indigenous peoples’ rights, etc.). This syllabus may be modified during the semester.

**This course has three main objectives:** (1) to provide an overview of key topics in cultural anthropology; (2) to encourage critical thinking about key anthropological and social scientific debates, past and present; and (3) to analyze explanations for, and causes of cross-cultural similarities and differences. We will attempt to understand both the universal process through which human beings constitute themselves through culture, and the great diversity of cultural forms that result. In the past, anthropologists usually studied distant and “foreign” peoples, the more different from “us” the better. We will look at this “we/they” dichotomy in the context of today’s increasingly interconnected world and explore what happens when anthropological tools are used not only to look at the “other,” but in the analysis of our own complex, diverse society.

**Requirements** include:
active participation in lecture class, section and Blackboard discussions          10%
two in-class examinations                 40%
one final examination                     30%
a brief writing assignment (which will be described on a separate sheet) 10%
Public Anthropology Website activities and writing assignment (more information below). 10%
Class participation will be judged by level of preparation, engagement in class and in Blackboard discussion groups, and generosity to other students. Students should complete all assigned reading on a particular topic before the first meeting of the week in which that topic is discussed. Each student will be part of a Blackboard discussion board or group based on the first letter of her/his last (family) name. If your last/family name begins with “S,” you will participate in the discussion group that includes “S.” Beginning with week II (that is, by September 8) each student will submit two questions about the upcoming week’s reading to the designated Blackboard discussion board by 9:00 pm on the day before the first lecture class of the week. By 10:00 pm on the same day, each student will also respond to one question posed by another participant in the same discussion board (more information below).

TEXTBOOKS AND REQUIRED READINGS

Shakespeare & Co. Bookstore (939 Lexington Avenue, between 68th and 69th Streets (or on the web at http://www.shakeandco.com/) has ordered the following textbook:


The Public Anthropology Community Action Website has the following book available for download ($10.00) (https://www.publicanthropology.net/index.php):


Additional required readings are available through the Hunter Library’s electronic reserve (ERES) web page (more information below) and links in this syllabus.

A NOTE ABOUT COMPUTERS ON CAMPUS AND ON-LINE BOOK PURCHASES:

Many readers value independent, “brick-and-mortar,” neighborhood bookstores because they generate local jobs, are pleasant places to browse, and may feature distinctive services (discounts, alternative magazines and books from small publishers, used books, and readings by local authors). On-line booksellers may offer other advantages (shopping ease, greater selection, convenience); on-line book prices (and shipping charges) vary widely. If you order your textbook for this course (or other books) via the Internet, you may do so at Shakespeare’s site http://www.shakeandco.com/ or you may consult the following sites, which will do an automatic comparison of prices at large numbers of on-line stores: http://www.bookfinder4u.com/ Or http://www.bestbookbuys.com/. If you order books through Amazon, please consider going to its site through the CUNY Graduate Center’s virtual bookshop http://www.gc.cuny.edu/bookshop/. Amazon purchases via this portal generate funds that support the CUNY library system. Computers for student use are on the 10th floor of Hunter North, in the library, and at other locations around the College.
A NOTE ABOUT WEB-BASED LEARNING RESOURCES AND E-MAIL:

In addition to the links to web-based required readings listed on this syllabus, the course makes use of three web-based resources: (1) a Blackboard web site (BB), (2) a Hunter Library Electronic Reserves (ERES) site, and (3) the Public Anthropology Communication Action Website based at the University of Hawaii. Students registered in this course may access all sites from any computer with an Internet connection.

Information about how to register for the CUNY portal and BB is at http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/icit/trc/gaweek/bbStudentHelp.shtml Once you have done this, you may log on to BB at https://portal.cuny.edu/portal/site/cuny/index.jsp The log-in link is in the orange banner, at the lower left part of your screen.

Information about ERES is at: http://library.wexler.hunter.cuny.edu/eres.htm Required readings listed on the syllabus (other than those in the textbook) are available through ERES or are directly accessible from links in the syllabus.

The Public Anthropology Community Action Website (PACAW) is at: https://www.publicanthropology.net/index.php We will use this site to download the book Why a Public Anthropology? Why Now?, to write brief op-ed opinion articles, and for peer evaluation of other students’ articles.

MORE DETAIL ON WEB-BASED RESOURCES IN THIS COURSE

The syllabus is available on the BB site under “Course Information.” This section will also contain FAQs about the examinations, as well some brief multiple choice testing tips. The “Assignments” section contains information about the writing requirement for the course. Beginning in week II, students will also participate in a “Discussion Board” (under “Communications”) where each week they will submit two questions and respond to one question about the readings, lectures and class discussions (see above, under “Requirements”). The “Online Gradebook” will be used to report grades for each examination and assignment.

Blackboard allows the instructor to email individual students or the entire group, but it only uses Hunter email addresses that students receive automatically when enrolling at the College. It is important that you activate your Hunter email address and check it frequently or that you set it to forward messages to an account that you check frequently.

PLEASE NOTE THAT THE INSTRUCTOR CANNOT RESOLVE TECHNICAL PROBLEMS WITH ERES OR BB. FOR PROBLEMS WITH ERES, CALL THE LIBRARY AT 212 772-4176 OR 772-4160 OR EMAIL eyan@hunter.cuny.edu OR ddonabed@hunter.cuny.edu FOR PROBLEMS WITH BB, CONTACT INSTRUCTIONAL COMPUTING AT 212 772-4946 OR 212 650-3275 OR EMAIL bb@hunter.cuny.edu
The **Public Anthropology Community Action Website** encourages students to consider ethical and political issues that make anthropology relevant in today’s world. We will spend two and a half weeks of the semester working on PACAW activities, including reading, writing short professional-style opinion articles, and anonymously evaluating articles written by other students. According to PACAW, “The goal is to give students the experience of writing for a larger audience, beyond the classroom, beyond their school, in a way that attracts attention and serious consideration. It allows them to not only understand how democracy works through discussions in the public sphere but effectively participate in the process.”

**A NOTE ABOUT THE USE OF PowerPoint IN THIS COURSE:**

Microsoft’s PowerPoint® program has some wonderful features. A university lecturer can write unfamiliar terms on a slide and not subject students to his rusty handwriting. He can present a graph, an illustration, or an outline of key concepts. PowerPoint also has some awful effects, however. Its users tend to simplify complex ideas into easily digested bullet points. Its sophisticated graphics often mask unsophisticated content. Audiences sometimes absorb less information from a PowerPoint slide than they do from a roadside billboard. As a student, you will need to LISTEN to what is being said in addition to looking at or copying down what appears on the screen. And since it is impossible to anticipate students’ questions or comments and prepare appropriate slides with responses, the instructor is likely to handwrite some words and phrases on an old-fashioned overhead projector or an even more old-fashioned chalkboard (not a blackboard, which in this age of technological marvels now means something else—see above). So we will use PowerPoint, but we will do so in a deliberately low-tech way.

**HUNTER COLLEGE POLICY ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

The Hunter College Senate requires that the following statement be included on all syllabi:

“Hunter College regards acts of academic dishonesty (e.g., plagiarism, cheating on examinations, obtaining unfair advantage, and falsification of records and official documents) as serious offenses against the values of intellectual honesty. The College is committed to enforcing the CUNY Policy on Academic Integrity and will pursue cases of academic dishonesty according to the Hunter College Academic Integrity Procedures.”
COURSE LECTURE SCHEDULE AND REQUIRED READINGS

NOTE: THIS SCHEDULE LISTS LECTURES, NOT DISCUSSION SECTION MEETINGS
(For weekly discussion section schedule, see page 1 of this syllabus).

Week I (Fri. Aug. 28): Course Introduction-- The Scope of Anthropology
3.  Read pp. 1-4 and 9-10 of this syllabus.

How we learn—or don’t learn (recommended readings and video viewing):

Week II (Wed. Sept. 2 & Fri. Sept. 4): Ethnography, Ethics, Interpretation and Objectivity

Week III (Wed. Sept. 9 & Fri. Sept. 11): Debates about Culture and Cultural Relativism
ONE -PAGE PAPER ASSIGNMENT TO BE DISTRIBUTED.
1.  Kottak, Mirror for Humanity, chap. 3 (“Culture”).
Week IV (Wed. Sept. 16, NO CLASS ON Fri. Sept. 18)
Human Variation, Race, and Ethnicity (II): Is “Ethnicity” like “Race”?
1. Kottak, Mirror for Humanity, chap. 4.

Week V (Wed. Sept. 23, Fri. Sept. 25)
Human Variation, Race, and Ethnicity (I): Biologizing Difference, Naturalizing “Race”
ONE-PAGE PAPER DRAFTS DUE IN DISCUSSION SECTION MEETING.

Week VI (Wed. Sept. 30, Fri. Oct. 2)
Final draft of one-page paper due in discussion section meetings.
Human Variation, Race, and Ethnicity (III): Health, Medicine and Forensics
http://raceandgenomics.ssrc.org/Kaufman/

NOTE: The SSRC website contains a link to a Talking Glossary of Genetic Terms See also the glossary at http://www.understandingrace.org/resources/glossary.html

Week VIII (NO CLASS ON WED. OCT. 14, CUNY Follows Monday Schedule.
EXAMINATION #1 ON FRIDAY OCT. 16.

OPEN STUDENT ACCOUNT ON PUBLIC ANTHROPOLOGY WEBSITE; DOWNLOAD BOOK, *Why a Public Anthropology? Why Now?*

4. Elfyn, Menna. “‘Untranslatable Words: ‘Glas,’” from OpenDemocracy.net (ERES)
Week XI (Wed. Nov. 4, Fri. Nov. 6): Public Anthropology website activities
BEGIN DRAFTING SHORT ARTICLES FOR PUBLIC ANTHROPOLOGY WEBSITE
2. Background information on the Yanomami case on Public Anthropology website

Week XII (Wed. Nov. 11, Fri. Nov. 13): Public Anthropology website activities (II)
2. finish Borofsky, Why a Public Anthropology? Why Now?

Week XIII (Wed. Nov. 18, Fri. Nov. 20): Ritual, Religion and the Supernatural
FINISH PUBLIC ANTHROPOLOGY WEBSITE ACTIVITIES BY FRI., NOV. 18

Week XIV (Wed. Nov. 25, NO CLASS on Fri. Nov. 27.)
EXAMINATION # 2 ON WEDNESDAY.

Week XV (Wed. Dec. 2, Fri. Dec. 4): From Foraging to Industrialism, From Bands to States

FRIDAY DECEMBER 11 IS THE LAST LECTURE CLASS. THIS CLASS SESSION WILL BE USED TO REVIEW FOR THE FINAL EXAMINATION-- BRING YOUR QUESTIONS!

FINAL EXAM DATE AND TIME: Monday, December 21, 9:00-11:00am.
HOW TO SUCCEED IN THIS COURSE

Much recent research indicates that students who tend to succeed in college:

1. study together in small cooperative groups,
2. come to every class having completed all assigned reading,
3. ask questions and contribute observations in class,
4. are required to write frequently and extensively,
5. arrive on time and do not drift anonymously in and out of the classroom,
6. take extensive notes on assigned readings, classroom discussions and lectures.

Since you are in college because you want to get an education and earn a degree, I imagine that you want to succeed. Get to know other students in the class to study, to prepare for exams and, if you miss a class, to borrow notes. Get their phone numbers and emails. If you have any difficulty with written or spoken English-- and especially if English is not the language you speak and write best-- get to know (and get the phone number of) at least one fellow student who is a proficient, native speaker of English.

In order to do well in this course, you must take notes in class and on your reading. This also keeps you engaged while in class. Whether in class, at home or in the library, always try to write down the major points of what you just heard or read. Outline the argument or key ideas. Think about why the instructor or author thought it worth making those points and about how they may relate to other issues discussed in class or in the reading. When you encounter unfamiliar words, look them up and/or consult the instructor. Finally, write down your own thoughts or criticisms. When you do this, you will notice that making sense of, and remembering, what you read and hear will be much easier. You will also sharpen your own capacity for critical thinking. To avoid anonymity and to make learning an effective, active process of dialogue, you must participate actively in class. This means that you must ask when you have a question, even if you are not accustomed to speaking in front of others.

7. Raise questions.
8. Clarify points.
10. Share your knowledge, insights, and experiences.

Feel free to challenge the views of the instructor or other students. In order to do so effectively, please follow three basic rules:

11. Be courteous. Do not interrupt, but wait until the speaker has finished making his/her point. Make a note of what you want to say, so that you don’t forget it.
12. Be logical when you argue. Base what you have to say on evidence from the readings, lectures or your own knowledge.
13. Be tolerant of how others express themselves. Your fellow students may speak English differently than you or have opinions that you don’t share. You may still learn a lot from them. By creating a comfortable space for them to share their ideas, you also make it easier for you to express yourself.

I strongly urge you to see me during office hours or at another mutually convenient time to discuss any questions or problems. Students who don’t seek help when they need it have only themselves to blame if they don’t do well.

Finally, even if you are taking this course to fulfill a distribution requirement rather than for your major, try to enjoy it and do well. The only way to do so is to engage enthusiastically in learning for learning’s sake.

An Ibo (an ethnic group in Nigeria) proverb reads:

_Not to know is bad, not to wish to know is worse, not to hope is unthinkable, not to care is unforgivable._
IF YOU ARE NOT SUCCEEDING IN THIS COURSE

In every large course, some students get into serious difficulty. The reasons may range from taking on too many courses (or courses that are more demanding than anticipated), too many work or family responsibilities, learning or physical disabilities, major illness, emotional crises, language problems, emergencies, poor study habits, or lack of interest.

If, for any reason, you think that you might be in academic trouble in this course, it is extremely important that you take the following steps:

1. Consult the instructor immediately about how you are doing and what your options might be. Do not wait to do this. Do not be shy about doing this. Sometimes it is possible to catch up and do well.

2. If necessary, withdraw from the course before Monday, October 26. Otherwise you may receive a WU (withdrawal unauthorized) or an F grade on your transcript. This may cause you problems later in life (for example, when applying for a job or to a graduate or professional school).

3. If the deadline to withdraw has passed and you are not doing well in the course, you may be able to exercise the C/NC (credit/no credit option), if you complete all of the course work. This will give you a grade of either “credit” (passing) or “no credit” on your transcript. “No credit” is better than “F” or “WU.” To exercise the C/NC option you must sign the form and have the instructor sign the form before the date of the final exam.

Hunter College has the following resources available for students who are experiencing academic or other difficulties:

Advising Services: East Building, room 1119, tel. 212 772-4882, AdvisingServices@hunter.cuny.edu

Reading/Writing Center: Thomas Hunter Hall, Room 416, tel. 212 772-4212, http://rwc.hunter.cuny.edu/

Counseling Services: East Building, room 1123, tel. 212 772-4931, PersonalCounseling@hunter.cuny.edu

Center for Student Achievement (workshops on test-taking, time management, effective study practices), West Building, room 417 cfsa@hunter.cuny.edu

Office of Accessibility (for students with learning or physical disabilities): East Building, room 1124, tel. 212 772-4857, AccessABILITY@hunter.cuny.edu

These offices are staffed by highly trained professionals who are there to help you. If you are in trouble of any kind, it is imperative that you contact the appropriate office and receive assistance.