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# *Introduction to Anthropology: Cultural*

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ANTHR 2 SYLLABUS

**"The world in which you were born is just one model of reality.  
Other cultures are not failed attempts at being you: they are  
unique manifestations of the human spirit."**

**-- Wade Davis**

Office Hours: M-Th most afternoons 12:30 until 2:30 or 3pm AND BY APPOINTMENT

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**ANTHR2 (Catalog Description):** Presents a cross-cultural, comparative study of contemporary human behavior with emphasis on the effects of globalization on contemporary cultures. Topics investigated include cultural patterns, language, subsistence, economics, religion, kinship, values and norms, sex and gender, marriage, cultural change, and migration.

**Section 60048 Days MTWTH Times 09:00AM-12:25PM Units 3.00 Room 401**

Meets 1/5-1/29. Holiday 1/19. (15 meetings)

Students are expected to work 2 hours outside of class for every hour in class. Students are expected to write 4,000 – 12,000 words for the class.

*...my Aunt Rebeca asks, 'Rutie, pero dime, what is anthropology?' While I hesitate, she confidently exclaims, 'The study of people? And their customs, right?'*

*Right. People and their customs. Exactly. Así de fácil. Can't refute that. Somehow, out of that legacy, born of the European colonial impulse to know others in order to lambast them, better manage them, or exalt them, anthropologists have made a vast intellectual cornucopia. At the anthropological table, to which another leaf is always being added, there is room for studies of Greek death laments, the fate of socialist ideals in Hungary and Nicaragua, Haitian voodoo in Brooklyn, the market for Balinese art, the abortion debate among women in West Fargo, North Dakota, the reading groups of Mayan intellectuals, the proverbs of a Hindi guru, the Bedouin sense of honor, the jokes Native Americans tell about the white man, the plight of Chicana cannery workers, the utopia of Walt Disney, and even, I hope, the story of my family's car accident on the Belt Parkway shortly after our arrival in the United States from Cuba...*

*Anthropology, to give my Aunt Rebeca a grandiose reply, is the most fascinating, bizarre, disturbing, and necessary form of witnessing left to us at the end of the twentieth century...*

Ruth Behar, 1996. *The Vulnerable Observer: Anthropology That Breaks Your Heart* (pg. 4-5)

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## Course Objectives

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Like Cabrillo College itself, this course seeks to honor the core values of “**academic freedom, critical and independent thinking, and respect for all people and cultures.**” This class provides opportunities to develop and practice skills in all of Cabrillo’s “Core Four” competencies:

**Communication** - reading, writing, listening, speaking and/or conversing

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**Critical Thinking and Information Competency** - analysis, computation, research, problem solving

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**Global Awareness** - an appreciation of scientific processes, global systems and civics, and artistic variety

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**Personal Responsibility and Professional Development** - self-management and self-awareness, social and physical wellness, workplace skills

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## Learning Outcomes

1. Critically assess culture as the distinguishing phenomenon of human life and evaluate the relationship between culture and human behavior.
2. Synthesize the dynamics of culture change with regard to kinship, language, subsistence patterns, economics, and religion and analyze the affect of globalization on contemporary cultures.
3. Compare and contrast specific cultures' gender roles, social organization, or ideology.
4. Write essays and papers that demonstrate an understanding of cultural dynamics, ethnocentrism, and cultural relativism.

## STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

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### *Class Participation/Attendance:*

I expect student participation in class discussions, and I encourage everyone to freely ask questions, provide feedback, and otherwise contribute to our in-class coursework. I also expect students to attend all lectures on time, **having completed required readings before coming to class**. Attendance, effort, and participation will account for a substantial portion of your grade. More than 1 absence will result in point loss, as will excessive and recurrent tardiness. I will hold you responsible for all course material, including course videos (most of which are not in the library, and must be viewed in class)--so get good notes from other students (NOT me) if you miss class!

### *Common Courtesy and Common Sense*

Students frequently discover that not everyone shares their personal beliefs, experiences, and convictions. Respect for many points of view is required in this class. Disagreements are healthy and help us to learn, but students must maintain a respectful attitude and courteous conversation at all times. My goal as an instructor is not to convince you to hold a particular opinion on controversial issues, but to encourage you to think critically and with an open mind about the facts, evidence, ideas and theories presented in class.

## Anthropology 2 Syllabus

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Classroom etiquette regarding portable electronic devices is not unlike takeoff and landing on an airplane – they should be turned off and stowed away. Cell phones and pagers should be **OFF** at all times (an exception may be made for caretakers who can keep their phones/pagers on vibrate for emergency situations, provided the instructor is notified ahead of time). You should have nothing in your ears other than hearing aid devices if needed.

You may use a recorder for lectures, as long as it is unobtrusive (though in my experience, paying attention and taking notes during lecture is more useful). Calculators, PDAs, and laptop computers are permitted during lectures provided they aren't making much noise. Other behavioral norms are expected to minimize classroom disruptions and avoid disturbing your fellow students. Arrive on time for class. Do not begin packing your things and preparing to leave until the instructor has indicated class is actually finished. Do not interrupt the instructor or your classmates while they are speaking, but by all means **DO** raise your hand when you have a question or comment. Basically, use a little common sense, try to imagine what is likely to annoy your instructor, and then avoid doing those things if you wish to remain in class.

### *Special Accommodations:*

Many of you may need special accommodations, whether due to disabilities, language difficulties, or other conditions. I am very willing to work with you in order to help create a more positive learning experience. However, I do need some advance notice in order to accommodate students with special needs; if you have special needs, please inform me of your situation within the first three days of class.

### *Academic Honesty:*

Students are expected to exercise academic honesty and integrity. All sources used must be properly documented. Cheating or plagiarism will result in point loss and disciplinary action, possibly including a failing grade for the class and/or recommendation for dismissal. To learn about what plagiarism means and how to avoid it, please see the description at: <http://www.cabrillo.edu/~sholt/MITPlagiarism.pdf> or [http://www.plagiarism.org/learning\\_center/what\\_is\\_plagiarism.html](http://www.plagiarism.org/learning_center/what_is_plagiarism.html) and review the links provided by the Cabrillo College Library at <http://libwww.cabrillo.edu/depts/libraryinstruction.html>.

### *Required Text:*

Fadiman, A. (1997). *The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down: A Hmong Child, Her American Doctors, and the Collision of Two Cultures*. New York: Farrar, Strauss and Giroux.  
Monaghan, J. & Just, P. (2000). *Social & Cultural Anthropology: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.  
Thomas, E. M. (2006). *The Old Way: A Story of the First People*. New York: Sarah Chrichton Books.

**Additional required readings will be assigned and distributed in class or available as PDFs on the password-protected portion of the website.**

# Anthropology 2 Syllabus

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## **Grading & Assignments**

Letter Grade or P/NP (students must request P/NP option in writing in the first week of class).

You will be responsible for:

- in-class participatory and writing exercises (150 points total)
  - two midterm essay assignments (50 points each, 100 points total)
  - a kinship diagram or alternative project (50 points)
  - a final project, including a proposal (25 points), the project itself (150 points), and a presentation (25 points)
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**500 total points**

A brief overview of the assignments is provided below. Further details about these assignments will be provided in class and on the website.

### **First Midterm Essay Assignment**

- **Nacirema:** Describe a routine or common event from your everyday life that would seem extraordinary to someone from a different culture or subculture.
- **AND** Answer a few brief essay questions.

### **Visual Investigations of Culture: Kin Diagram or Alternative Project**

- Create a kin diagram of your family (see tutorial at <http://www.umanitoba.ca/faculties/arts/anthropology/tutor/fundamentals/fund1.html>) and answer questions in writing. **OR**
- Create a map of your community with drawings or photos, labeling key features according to instructions.

### **Second Midterm Essay Assignment**

- Either:
  - **Linguistics:** Practice participant-observation to make an ethnographic description of a communication event, focusing on either body language or (sub)culture specific dialect and vocabulary. **OR**
  - **Economics:** Choose any product that is available to you as a consumer. Try to find out how the price you pay is established, where and by whom the product is made. Make a detailed record your efforts and results.
- **AND** Answer a few brief essay questions.

### **Final Project Assignment**

- Propose an in-depth research project on a specific culture (other than the !Kung Bushmen or Hmong) or one of the topical themes from the course. Write a paper about your topic based on independent library research, with at least four outside references. Give a brief presentation related to your research project in class.

Note: *Thanks and acknowledgement are due to Heather Claussen, Allan Lönnerberg and Kristin Wilson for providing segments of this syllabus or assignment descriptions, plus help and encouragement in preparing for the course.*

## Anthropology 2 Course and Assignment Schedule (subject to change)

Changes will be announced in class and posted on the website.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Reading/Assignments Due</b>
1/5	<b>WHAT IS ANTHROPOLOGY?</b>	
1/6	<b>ANTHROPOLOGY, CULTURE, AND ETHNOGRAPHY</b>	Monaghan & Just: Intro., Ch 1 & 2 Thomas: Ch 1&2 "Body Ritual Among the Nacirema" and/or "The Mysterious Fall of the Nacirema" (pdf/website/handout)
1/7	<b>FINDING YOUR PLACE</b>	Monaghan & Just: Ch 3 Thomas: Ch 3, 4 & 5
1/8	<b>NOT JUST LIP SERVICE</b>	Monaghan & Just: Ch. 4 & 5 Thomas: Ch 6 "Fighting For Our Lives" (pdf/handout) <b>FINAL PROJECT TOPIC PROPOSALS DUE</b>
1/12	<b>YOU ARE WHAT YOU EAT?</b>	Monaghan & Just: Ch 6 Thomas: Ch 7-11 "Understanding Eskimo Science" (pdf/handout - optional) <b>FIRST MIDTERM ESSAYS DUE</b> (Nacirema, plus short essay questions)
1/13	<b>FAMILY AND IDENTITY</b>	Monaghan & Just: Ch 8 Thomas: Ch 12 "How Many Fathers Are Best for a Child?" (pdf/handout - optional) <b>POTLUCK WITH BRIEF STORY TO TELL</b>
1/14	<b>MEN, WOMEN, AND OTHER OPTIONS</b>	"The Berdache Tradition" and "A World Full of Women" (pdf/handout)
1/15	<b>GROWING PAINS AND LIFE HISTORIES</b>	Thomas: Ch 13 "The Initiation of a Maasai Warrior" and "Where Fat is a Mark of Beauty" (pdf/handouts)
1/20	<b>EXCHANGE SYSTEMS, POLITICS, AND SOCIAL STRATIFICATION</b>	Thomas: Chapters 14-16 Fadiman: Ch 1-3 <b>VISUAL INVESTIGATIONS OF CULTURE DUE</b>
1/21	<b>EXCHANGE SYSTEMS, POLITICS, AND SOCIAL STRATIFICATION</b>	Fadiman: Ch 4-9 "Too Many Bananas, Not Enough Pineapples..." (pdf/handout)
1/22	<b>BELIEF SYSTEMS, RITUAL, MAGIC, AND RELIGION</b>	Monaghan & Just: Ch. 7, Afterword Thomas: Chapter 17 & 18 "The Adaptive Value of Religious Ritual" (pdf/handout)
1/26	<b>BELIEF SYSTEMS, RITUAL, MAGIC, AND RELIGION</b>	Thomas: Chapter 19 Fadiman: Ch 10-14 "Baseball Magic" (pdf/handout - optional) <b>SECOND MIDTERM ESSAYS DUE</b> (Economics or Linguistics, plus short essay questions)
1/27	<b>RACE AND ETHNICITY</b>	Fadiman: Ch 15-17 "Understanding Race" website ( <a href="http://www.understandingrace.org">http://www.understandingrace.org</a> )
1/28	<b>CULTURE CHANGE, COLONIALISM, AND GLOBALIZATION</b>	Thomas: Chapter 20 Fadiman: Ch 18 & 19 "The Price of Progress" (pdf/handout) "Why Can't People Feed Themselves?" (pdf/handout - optional)
1/29	<b>CLASS PRESENTATIONS &amp; FINAL ESSAYS DUE</b>	<b>FINAL PROJECTS DUE</b>