Course Description
The course will introduce the basic concepts of cultural anthropology by focusing on how its recent developments can contribute to a better understanding of the contemporary world. The world we live in today is a place where cultures and life styles intermingle, where cultural differentiation has replaced cultural differences. More recently, the displacement of peoples (either as refugees or as migrants) and the emergence of global capitalism, have further undermined previously held notions of culture as a homogeneous way of life (the culture of a people settled on a territory). Accordingly, cultural anthropologists today are increasingly concerned with issues of cultural creativity and innovation, and the sites of their research may be as diverse as the rural village, the inner-city neighborhood, the factory-floor, the bank, etc.

Core Concepts
a) Ethnography – whatever the topic or the social group anthropologists study, they all rely on some form of participant observation, i.e., ethnographic fieldwork. In other words, ethnography is at the core of the discipline. What is participant observation? Why do anthropologists use it? What kind of knowledge does such a methodology generate? Moreover, ethnography is not just what anthropologists do when they are doing research, it is also what they write once they are back from the “field”. Hence, ethnography is not only a method, it is also a specific genre of writing. The course will examine the implication of this ambivalence.

b) Culture – In our daily lives, we use the word culture to mean all kinds of different things: individuals are “cultured” because they go to the theater, an ethnic group has its own “culture”, we are all consumers of pop “culture”, then there is a national “culture”, there is “high” culture and “low” culture, Western culture and Eastern culture, liberal culture and conservative culture not to mention political culture, etc. In short the term seems to be used to evoke almost everything under the sun: food and art, aesthetic refinement and common behavior, political choices, social identities, patterns of consumption. How can such a term be the corner stone of a discipline? We will try to unpack its multiple meanings and try to understand its value as a conceptual tool for understanding humans.

Learning Outcomes
On completion of the course students are expected to:

- Have acquired a clear and detailed understanding of Cultural Anthropology’s specific contribution to the study of human diversity;
- Clearly identify and be able to discuss the relevance for interpreting today’s world of the two core concepts of Cultural Anthropology: culture and ethnography;
- Draw upon the concept of culture in the anthropological sense in order to make sense of the local impact of global processes;
- Have acquired the critical skills to analyze contemporary social problems.

Reading Materials
All readings are posted on Sakai.
Final Paper

It will have to be at least 5 pages long, double space, and it will have to be written in standard academic form (see “Guidelines for bibliography and citations” below). Students are strongly encouraged to write their paper either on ethnographic method or on the concept of culture. Students are welcome to do draw from other readings, yet they are required to use the readings discussed in class. By Tuesday, October 25 students should have a general idea of what they will write about and discuss it with me. By Thursday, November 3 students should hand in a brief abstract and a list of standard academic sources you will use. The final draft will be due on Tuesday, November 22.

Guidelines for bibliography and citations

➢ Citations. There are two basic ways to go about it.

• When the citation is a short one (a phase, or a short sentence):

  … Rosaldo argues that the "ethnographer, as a positioned subject grasps certain phenomena better than others" (1989:19) yet it seems to me that …

• If the citation is long, you should set it apart from your text:

  … the question of scarcity when talking about organ transplant is a thorny one.

  The discourse on scarcity conceals the actual existence of "excess" and "wasted" organs that daily end up in hospital dumpsters throughout those parts of the world where the necessary infrastructure is lacking to use them. (Sheper-Hughes:2002:49)

  Indeed, it would seem that …..

Note: if you mention the name of the author you are writing about just before the quote, you may leave the name out:

… Sheper-Hughes argues that the question of scarcity when talking about organ transplant is a false problem.

The discourse on scarcity conceals the actual existence of "excess" and "wasted" organs that daily end up in hospital dumpsters throughout those parts of the world where the necessary infrastructure is lacking to use them. (2002:49)

Indeed, it would seem that …..

➢ Bibliography. At the end of the paper you should list the readings you have been writing about, or you have used.

1. When it is from a collection you reference it like this:


2. If you have referred to a whole book, you should reference it like this:


3. If you have used a chapter from a book by the same author:

**Attendance Policy**

In accordance with the JFRC mission to promote a higher level of academic rigor, all courses adhere to the following absence policy. Prompt attendance, preparation and active participation in course discussions are expected from every student.

- For all classes meeting once a week, students cannot incur more than one unexcused absence.
- For all classes meeting twice a week, students cannot incur more than two unexcused absences.
- For all classes meeting three times a week, students cannot incur more than two unexcused absences.

This course meets twice a week, thus a total of 2 unexcused absences will be permitted. **Unexcused absences beyond these will result in 1% lowering of the final course grade, for every absence after the “approved limit”.** The collective health of the JFRC is everyone’s responsibility. **DO NOT ATTEND CLASS IF YOU ARE ILL.**

**Assessment Components**

- Participation 15%
- Midterm Exam 25%
- Paper 35%
- Final Exam 25%

**Grading**

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

**Academic Honesty**

Plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty are unacceptable at the JFRC and will be dealt with in accordance with Loyola University Chicago’s guidelines. Please familiarize yourself with Loyola’s standards here: [http://www.luc.edu/academics/catalog/undergrad/req_academicintegrity.shtml](http://www.luc.edu/academics/catalog/undergrad/req_academicintegrity.shtml). You are responsible to comply with the LUC Student Handbook.

**Late or Missed Assignments**

Late or missed assignments will not be accepted for grading without the authorization of the instructor.

**Accessibility Accommodations**

Students registered with the Student Accessibility Center requiring academic accommodations should contact the Office of the Dean at the John Felice Rome Center, the first week of classes.
# Course Schedule

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<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Assignments/Readings</th>
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<td><strong>Week One</strong></td>
<td><strong>General introduction to the course</strong></td>
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<td>Fieldwork (I): What is it?</td>
<td>Monaghan &amp; Just Ch. 1 - pp. 13-33</td>
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<td><strong>Week Two</strong></td>
<td>Documentary: Malinowski</td>
<td>Rosaldo: “Erosion of Classic Norms…”</td>
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<td>Fieldwork (II): Whose knowledge?</td>
<td>(Sakai)</td>
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<td>Sheper-Hughes, “Ire in Ireland…”</td>
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<td>(Sakai)</td>
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<td><strong>Week Three</strong></td>
<td><strong>Culture</strong></td>
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<td>Documentary on F. Boas</td>
<td>Monaghan &amp; Just, Ch. 2 - pp. 34-52</td>
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<td>Interpreting Culture</td>
<td>Geertz “Thick Description”</td>
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<td><strong>Week Four</strong></td>
<td><strong>Language</strong></td>
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<td>Language of Intimacy</td>
<td>Eller “Language and Social Relations”</td>
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<td>Tannen “Rapport-Talk and Report-Talk”</td>
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<td><strong>Week Five</strong></td>
<td><strong>Society</strong></td>
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<td>What is it?…and what does it mean?</td>
<td>Monaghan &amp; Just, Ch. 3 - pp. 53-74</td>
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<td>Things you can do with norms: gender and space</td>
<td>E. Guano “Respectable Ladies” (Sakai)</td>
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<td><strong>Week Six</strong></td>
<td><strong>Review</strong></td>
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<td><em>Mid-term</em></td>
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<td><em>Break (Oct. 14-18)</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Week Seven</strong></td>
<td><strong>Where are we at? Class Assessment</strong></td>
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<td>Documentary: Margaret Mead</td>
<td>Eller “Kinship and Non-kin”</td>
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Week Eight

Kinship & Belonging
It takes all kinds: documentary “Without Fathers and Husbands”

Week Nine

Beliefs
Monaghan & Just, Ch.7
De Martino: extracts form Magic: A Theory from the South

Coping with the Unknown
De Martino: extracts form Magic: A Theory from the South

Week Ten

Power
Eller: “Politics & Social Order”
Weatherford: “The Founding Indian Fathers”

America’s Indian Democracy

Week Eleven

Values & “Things”
Bourgois: “Understanding Innercity Poverty”

From Rags to Riches

Week Twelve

Flows
Marcus: “Collaborative Imaginaries”
Tsing: “Natural Resources and Capitalist Frontiers”

Understanding/Representing the Global Frontiers on the Move

Week Thirteen

Review
Final!