

ANTH 102: Culture, Society and Diversity
John Felice Rome Center

Spring 2025

Tuesdays & Thursdays | 10:30-11:45

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Office Hours: Thu./Thurs., 12:00-13:00

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, and 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.

Assessment Components

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

Grading

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

59 OR LOWER = F

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” 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 at least *some* of the readings discussed in class.

➔ **DEADLINES** (*NB: students are expected to hand in their work by the dates below; in case they are unable to do so, they should let me know in due time, e.g., at least two days before the relevant dateline*).

- **March 27** students should have a general idea of what they will write about and discuss it with me.
- **April 8** - students should hand in a brief abstract and an annotated bibliography (for each reference a couple of sentences explaining its relevance for your argument/chosen topic) of the of standard academic sources they will use.
- **April 22** - final draft due.



- **GUIDELINES:**

- **Format/Submission** – The abstract, and the annotated bibliography should be typed in Times New Roman, 12 pt. And uploaded on Sakai (<https://loyola.screenstepslive.com/a/1496860-how-do-students-submit-an-assignment>); The final draft, typed in same font, should be double-spaced and also uploaded on Sakai.
- **Style/Content** – Well, since the paper is worth 35% of the course grade you might want to spend some time in thinking about what you want you say and what is the best way to do it. You have time. Hence, first and foremost, know your limits! Do not overreach yourself. Keep it simple. Write short sentences, check your spelling, try to avoid superlatives and repetitions. DO NOT misspell the authors you cite. DO NOT use citations just to fill the page; use them only to support your argument. Use wikipedia all you want (very useful to get your bearings) but DO NOT cite it as source! Only acceptable sources are from peer reviewed journals (accessible through Loyola libraries: <https://libraries.luc.edu> and you can always ask JFRC librarian, Anne Wittrick, or me, for help!).
- **Citations** – There are two basic ways to go about it.

- When the citation is a short one (a phrase, 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 and it should be single-spaced:

“... 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 ”



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- **Bibliography.** At the end of the paper you should list the readings you have used.
 - When it is from a collection:

Sheper-Hughes, Nancy. 2002. "Min(d)ing the Body: On the Trail of Organ-Stealing Rumors". In *Exotic No More: Anthropology on the Front Lines*, edited by Jeremy MacClancy. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press.
 - For a whole book:

Rosaldo, Renato. 1989. *Culture & Truth*. Boston: Beacon Press.
 - If you have used a chapter from a book by the same author:

Rosaldo, Renato. 1989. "Grief and a Headhunter's Rage". In Renato Rosaldo, *Culture & Truth*. Boston: Beacon Press.

→ **Paper Assessment (100 pts.)**

Citations and bibliography (format)	5 pt.
Abstract	10 pts.
Spelling and grammar	10 pts.
Annotated bibliography	15 pts.
Appropriate use of sources	40 pts.
Consistency of argument	40 pts.

- **A note on Participation** – It's worth 15% of the course grade; it may seem not much percentage-wise but is of great value for your course grade. It basically means that if you don't do the readings, don't take notes in class, text your friends during lectures and maybe take a nap to boot, not only you'll do poorly in the course, but your normal level of classroom boredom will reach unbearable levels. Do the readings before class (if you take notes in the process that's plus); if there is something in the readings, you do not understand you say so (it may even be an opportunity to start a class discussion!), if you don't understand something during my lectures, you ask. If you have some comments you feel relevant to the topic at hand, you are welcome to intervene. You don't have to do it all the time, just every once in while it's good enough. Participation does not mean "impress your professor" it simply means to show a reasonable level of engagement with the topics discussed in class.

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

This course meets twice a week, thus a total of 2 absences will be permitted. **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.**

Academic Honesty

Academic integrity is the pursuit of scholarly activity in an open, honest, and responsible manner; it is a guiding principle for all academic activity at Loyola University Chicago, and all members of the University community are expected to act in accordance with this principle.

Failing to meet the following academic integrity standards is a serious violation of personal honesty and the academic ideals that bind the University into a learning community. These standards apply to both individual and group assignments. Individuals working in a group may be held responsible if one of the group members has violated one or more of these standards.

1. Students may not plagiarize; the use of AI is considered plagiarism too and treated as such.
2. Students may not submit the same work for credit for more than one assignment (known as self-plagiarism).
3. Students may not fabricate data.
4. Students may not collude.
5. Students may not cheat.
6. Student may not facilitate academic misconduct.

Please follow the link below to familiarize yourself with Loyola’s Student Handbook:
http://www.luc.edu/academics/catalog/undergrad/reg_academicintegrity.shtml.

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.

Notice of Reporting Obligations for Responsible Campus Partners

As an instructor, I am a Responsible Campus Partner (“RCP”) under Loyola’s Comprehensive Policy and Procedures for Addressing Discrimination, Sexual Misconduct, and Retaliation (available at www.luc.edu/equity). While my goal is for you to be able to engage fully and authentically with our course material through class discussions and written work, I also want to be transparent that as a RCP, I am must notify the Office for Equity & Compliance (“OEC”)/Title IX Coordinator when I have any information about conduct that reasonably may constitute Title IX Sex-Based Discrimination. Title IX Sex-Based Discrimination includes any of the following conduct, when the conduct was within the University’s education program or activity:

- Discrimination or discriminatory harassment on the basis of sex (including sex stereotypes, sex characteristics, gender identity, sexual orientation, and Pregnancy or Related Conditions),
- Sexual harassment (including quid pro quo and hostile environment sexual harassment),
- Sexual assault,
- Dating and/or domestic violence, and/or
- Stalking

As the University’s Title IX office, the OEC coordinates the University’s response to reports and complaints of sexual misconduct (as well as discrimination of any kind) to ensure students’ rights are protected.

As an instructor, I also have an obligation under Illinois law to report disclosures of or suspected instances of child abuse or neglect (<https://www.luc.edu/hr/legal-notices/mandatedreportingofchildabuseandneglect/>).

The University maintains such reporting requirements to ensure that any student who experiences sexual/gender-based violence receives accurate information about available resources and support. Such reports will not generate a report to law enforcement (no student will ever be forced to file a report with the police). Additionally, the University’s resources and supports are available to all students even if a student chooses that they do not want any other action taken. If you have any questions about this policy, you are encouraged to contact the OEC at equity@luc.edu or 773-508-7766.

If you ever wish to speak with a confidential resource regarding gender-based violence, I encourage you to call The Line at 773-494-3810. The Line is staffed by confidential advocates from 8:30am-5pm M-F and 24 hours on the weekend when school is in session. Advocates can provide support, talk through your options (medical, legal, LUC reporting, safety planning, etc.), and connect you with resources as needed -- without generating a report or record with the OEC. More information about The Line can be found at luc.edu/wellness.



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Course Schedule

Date	Activity	Assignments/Readings
Week 1		
	General introduction to the course	
Jan. 21	Adichie “The danger of a single story” (19’17”, 2009)	
Jan. 23	Fieldwork (I): What is it? <i>A Year in the Field</i> (33’, 2020)	Monaghan & Just: “A Dispute in Donggo”
Week 2		
	Ethnography	
Jan. 28	Fieldwork in the Streets	Bourgeois: “Understanding Innercity Poverty”
Jan. 30	Knowledge for Whom?	Sheper-Hughes, “Ire in Ireland...”
Week 3		
	Culture	
Feb. 4		Monaghan & Just: “Bee Larvae and Onion Soup”
Feb. 6	Interpreting Culture	Geertz “Thick Description”
Week 4		
	Language	
Feb. 11	<i>Languages Lost and Found</i> (28’, 2011)	Light: “Language”
Feb. 13	Language of Intimacy	Abu-Lughod: “Honor and the Sentiments of Loss”
Week 5		
	Society	
Feb. 18	What is it?...and what does it mean?	Monaghan & Just: “A Brief Encounter”
Feb. 20	Things you can do with norms: gender and space	Guano: “Respectable Ladies”
Week 6		
	Kinship and Belonging	
Feb. 25	<i>Without Fathers or Husbands</i> (26’, 2001)	Monaghan & Just: “Fernando seeks a wife”
Feb. 27	Trace your own kinship!	
Week 7		
March 4	Review	
March 6	Mid-term	
	Break (March 7-16)	



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Week 8

Mar. 18 **Where are we at? Class Assessment**

Mar. 20 *Herskovits at the Heart of Blackness* (60', 2009)

Week 9 Beliefs

Mar. 25 Monaghan & Just: "A Drought in Bima"

Mar. 27 Coping with crisis De Martino: extracts from *Magic* **Deadline!**

Week 10 Power/Identity

Apr. 1 McDowell: "Political Anthropology"

Mar. 3 Beliso-De Jesús: "The Jungle Academy"

Week 11 Values & "Things"

Apr. 8 Lyon: "Economy"; **Deadline!**

Apr. 10 Walsh; "The Grift"

Week 12 Global Flows

Apr. 15 World101xInterview with Heath Cabot (36'59", 2016) Marcus: "Collaborative Imaginaries"

Apr. 17 (self)Knowledge as violence? Appadurai: "Dead Certainty"

Week 13 Anthropology for the Times

Apr. 22 TBA; **Deadline!**

Apr. 24 **Review**

Week 14

TBA ***Final!***