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Culture

ANT 641 Section 001
Spring 2014, Lecture
Dr. Matthew Wolfgram

Office Hours and Contact Information

Matthew Wolfgram

Email: mwolfgram@ua.edu

Office Hour: Ten hoor 25c T/TH 12:30-1:30 pm; or by appointment. I can’t talk after class.

Office Phone: 205-348-1955

Prerequisites

LA Course Catalog Prerequisites

No prerequisites or none listed.

There are no prerequisites for graduate students in the Department of Anthropology. Graduate students in other departments may enroll with the instructor’s permission.

Course Description

http://syllabi.ua.edu/osm/unit/Dept%3AANT/node/94530?class=20141010455
The course reviews past and contemporary theories and approaches used in cultural anthropology. Through a chronological examination of theoretical works, the class explores: the various ways the concept of “culture” has been defined and used; how each approach responds to the limitations and critiques of previous approaches; and the lasting legacy of each approach.

**Student Learning Outcomes**

1. Know the theories and approaches adopted by cultural anthropologists.
2. Be able to distinguish among the definitions of culture adopted by the various theoretical approaches.
3. Become more skilled at reading, comprehending, and analyzing scholarly anthropological texts.
4. Demonstrate their ability to use anthropological terms and concepts effectively in their writing.
5. Develop their own teaching skills by leading classroom discussions and articulating their understanding of class topics in class presentations.

**Required Texts**

[UA Supply Store Textbook Information]

Textbook data from the Supply Store not found for this course.

There are three monographs for the course marked in the schedule with an asterisk (*), which you are responsible for obtaining. All other readings are posted on the course eLearning site. Please note that this is a course in anthropological theory: there is a lot of reading and it is often challenging. All students are required to read all the assigned texts below (although on weeks with heavy readings I will prioritize them). The instructor will end each class by advising the students on how to approach the readings for the next class.

**Outline of Topics**

**SCHEDULE**

1/9: Introduction to culture
1/14: 18th century foundations: Enlightenment and romanticism (Instructor presentation)

Rousseau, *Second Discourse on Social Inequality.*

1/16: 19th century foundations: Cultural evolutionism (2 presentations)


1/21: Origins of culture: Emile Durkheim


1/23: Origins of culture: Marcel Mauss


1/28: Origins of culture: Karl Marx and Frederick Engels


1/30: Origins of culture: Sigmund Freud


2/4: Psychoanalytical approaches


2/6: Historical particularism: Franz Boas


2/11: Class canceled

2/13: Historical particularism: The Boasians


2/18: Functionalism


2/20: Structural Functionalism (2 presentations)


2/25: Structuralism


2/27: Neo-Durkheimian Synthesis


Distribution of take-home exam due 3/6

3/4: Culture and personality

3/6: Neo-Evolutionism


3/11: Cultural ecology


3/13: Interpretive anthropology


3/18: The Manchester school


3/20: Marxist anthropology (2 presentations)

Karl Mark, Capital (Part I)


4/1: Global political economy


4/3: Practice Theory


4/8: Cultures of capitalism


4/10: Class Canceled

4/15: Capitalism and the circulation of culture


4/17: Anthropology and Colonialism


4/22: Post-positivism in culture theory and feminist anthropology (2 presentations)


4/24: Evolutionary approaches


Distribution of take-home exam due TBA

Exams and Assignments

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

10%, class participation: Besides reading and being prepared and attending and participating in class, for Tuesday class students should write a brief paragraph that poses their thoughts and questions about the readings. Submit your responses to the eLearning discussion portal for each class by 5pm of the prior day, after which all students should read and consider their peers’ submissions. Students presenting that day are exempt from this exercise. Students are permitted to miss two submissions, after which the student will forfeit 5% of their grade up to a total of 10%.

http://syllabi.ua.edu/osm/unit/Dept%40AANT/node/94530?class=20141010455
40%, 4 class presentations (10% each): Students in this class are responsible for leading four class discussions. We will set up the schedule for these on the first day of class. The professor will provide separate guidelines and scoring rubric for the presentations.

25%, take home midterm exam and 30% take home final exam: See schedule below for the due dates and the dates of distribution for these exams.

Grading Policy

GRADING SCALE:

100-90% A; 89-80% B; 79-70% C; 69-60% D; 59-0% F.

Policy on Missed Exams & Coursework

All work for the course should be submitted by the scheduled due date. You should approach the instructor before the due date if you have reasonable and compelling grounds to request an extension. A modest penalty will be assigned for unexcused late work.

Attendance Policy

The students in this class are required to attend all the scheduled classes. Please be on time and have your cell phones off. Students should see the instructor after class or during office hours if they anticipate one or more absences.

Emergency Contact Information

UA's primary communication tool for sending out information is through its web site at www.ua.edu. In the event of an emergency, students should consult this site for further directions. Additional course information will be posted using Blackboard Learn.

Severe Weather Guidelines

The guiding principle at The University of Alabama is to promote the personal safety of our students, faculty and staff during severe weather events. It is impossible to develop policies which anticipate every weather-related emergency. These guidelines are intended to provide additional assistance for responding to severe
weather on campus.

UA is a residential campus with many students living on or near campus. In general classes will remain in session until the National Weather Service issues safety warnings for the city of Tuscaloosa. Clearly, some students and faculty commute from adjacent counties. These counties may experience weather related problems not encountered in Tuscaloosa. Individuals should follow the advice of the National Weather Service for that area taking the necessary precautions to ensure personal safety. Whenever the National Weather Service and the Emergency Management Agency issue a warning, people in the path of the storm (tornado or severe thunderstorm) should take immediate life saving actions.

When West Alabama is under a severe weather advisory, conditions can change rapidly. It is imperative to get to where you can receive information from the National Weather Service and to follow the instructions provided. Personal safety should dictate the actions that faculty, staff and students take.

The Office of University Relations will disseminate the latest information regarding conditions on campus in the following ways:

- Weather advisory posted on the UA homepage
- Weather advisory sent out through UA Alerts to faculty, staff and students
- Weather advisory broadcast over WVUA at 90.7 FM
- Weather advisory broadcast over Alabama Public Radio (WUAL) at 91.5 FM
- Weather advisory broadcast over WVUA-TV/WUOA-TV, and on the website at http://wvuatv.com/content/weather. WVUA-TV Home Team Weather provides a free service you can subscribe to which allows you to receive weather warnings for Tuscaloosa via e-mail or cell phone.
  Check http://wvuatv.com/content/free_email_weather_alerts for more details and to sign up for weather alerts.

In the case of a tornado warning (tornado has been sighted or detected by radar; sirens activated), all university activities are automatically suspended, including all classes and laboratories. If you are in a building, please move immediately to the lowest level and toward the center of the building away from windows (interior classrooms, offices, or corridors) and remain there until the tornado warning has expired. Classes in session when the tornado warning is issued can resume immediately after the warning has expired at the discretion of the instructor. Classes that have not yet begun will resume 30 minutes after the tornado warning has expired provided at least half of the class period remains.

Disability Statement

If you are registered with the Office of Disability Services, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible to discuss any course accommodations that may be necessary.

If you have a disability, but have not contacted the Office of Disability Services, please call (205) 348-4285 (Voice) or (205) 348-3081 (TTY) or visit 133-B Martha Parham Hall East to register for services. Students who
may need course adaptations because of a disability are welcome to make an appointment to see me
during office hours. Students with disabilities must be registered with the Office of Disability Services, 133-B
Martha Parham Hall East, before receiving academic adjustments.

Policy on Academic Misconduct

All students in attendance at The University of Alabama are expected to be honorable and to observe
standards of conduct appropriate to a community of scholars. The University of Alabama expects from its
students a higher standard of conduct than the minimum required to avoid discipline. At the beginning of
each semester and on examinations and projects, the professor, department, or division may require that
each student sign the following Academic Honor Pledge: “I promise or affirm that I will not at any time be
involved with cheating, plagiarism, fabrication, or misrepresentation while enrolled as a student at The
University of Alabama. I have read the Academic Honor Code, which explains disciplinary procedure
resulting from the aforementioned. I understand that violation of this code will result in penalties as severe
as indefinite suspension from the University.”

See the Code of Student Conduct for more information.