World Ethnographies
Anthropology 3212
Fall 2012
Tuesdays and Thursdays 9:30-10:15 am in Ryder Business 140

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Office hours: Tuesday and Thursday 10:15-11am and by appointment  Office: SIPA 332

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course provides an introduction to ethnography (ethno- = Greek for “nation”, used to refer to the study of people or cultures; -graphy = “writing,” used to denote scientific descriptions). Ethnography has long been the principle genre of writing in cultural anthropology and is increasingly used in qualitative sociology, geography and some subfields of history. We will study how ethnographic research is done and the process of converting that research into a meaningful book or essay. Then, we will explore some of the many directions that anthropology has taken, including greater attention to history and cultural change. Finally, we will explore some of the ways in which ethnography can be used to help bring about positive social change. Throughout the course, we will read ethnographies of various styles and from various places (the Solomon Islands, the Brazilian Amazon, Botswana, Egypt, and the United States.) These readings illustrate the breadth and depth of ethnographic writing, and will introduce students to different cultures and societies. Additionally, we will watch films in class that correspond to the ethnographies in terms of location, topic, approach and/or theoretical orientation. This course will enable students to compare cultures and societies; to critically examine the methods, writing styles and formats of ethnographies; and to increase their knowledge of the interrelatedness of local, global and intercultural issues and systems.

LEARNING OUTCOMES (COURSE OBJECTIVES)

1. Students will evaluate what does and does not constitute ethnographic fieldwork and methods using Malinowski’s framework as a standard of comparison.
2. Students will compare and contrast the perspectives of three different ethnographers on a social issue (global perspective).
3. Students will analyze how the ethnographer’s positioning vis-à-vis the studied community affects their data and interpretation (global perspective).
4. Students will answer short-answer and multiple-choice questions on the various ethnographies examined in class with at least 70% accuracy.
5. Students will answer multiple choice questions concerning major turning points in the history of ethnographic methods and data interpretation, with at least 70% accuracy.
6. Working in groups, students will diagram economic forces and actors (including themselves as consumers) involved in a complex system of global trade (global awareness).
7. Students will draft a very basic, 2-page research proposal, identifying a social issue that ethnographic research could be used to address and how they would go about pursuing that research (global engagement).
COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Six Readiness Assessment Tests (RATs)  (Student Learning Outcome #2: Global Perspective)

Every 2-3 weeks, you will take a readiness assessment test (RAT), which will assess whether you have done the readings and understood the main points of the lectures since the previous RAT. Students will be given study guides to fill out as they are reading, and these will help them to do well on the RAT, in-class group activities, and essay exams. I recommend that you note down page numbers as you are filling out the study guide, so that you can quickly go back to the relevant sections to refresh your memory later in the class. You will take the RAT twice, once individually and once in your group. You must be present on RAT days to get credit for the individual RAT. If you miss class, you will still get credit for your team’s RAT, but your team members may give you a bad evaluation when it comes time to evaluate the participation of team members. The lowest of the 6 individual RAT grades will be dropped, so missing one will not negatively affect your grade.

Two short take-home essays (Student Learning Outcome #2 & #3: Global Perspective & Global Engagement)

These essays will test your ability to integrate concepts from the readings, ethnographic films, lectures, and class discussions. The first essay will be 4 pages long, double-spaced, and the second will be 2 pages, double-spaced. Though I will not be grading specifically for grammar, poor writing will get in the way of your argument and most likely lower your grade. FIU’s Center for Excellence in Writing will meet with you for a 50 minute session to help you with your writing, free of charge. You can make an appointment at: http://casgroup.fiu.edu/writingcenter/.

Students must submit all essays to the on-line plagiarism analysis program available at www.turnitin.com. The program is designed to identify acts of plagiarism (copying sections of other people’s work without citing that work; purchasing or using papers from the internet) and of “double-dipping,” or using the same paper for multiple classes. The essay exam questions for this class are very specific to the materials we will cover together, so I would expect plagiarism to be minimal, but this program provides an extra level of assurance that all students are being evaluated equally for their own work. If you are unsure about what does or does not constitute plagiarism, please ask during class or come to speak to me personally about your specific case.

Four major in-class group activities and various smaller ones  (Student Learning Outcome #1: Global Awareness)

The class is a team-based learning course and will demand a high degree of participation from students. In turn, students’ knowledge and critical thinking skills will be alternately challenged and reinforced by other students. In addition to the structured activities, I expect each of you to participate regularly in class by asking/answering questions, analyzing key issues, constructively debating topics, taking part in class activities, etc. Questions and unsure ideas are very welcome, as they show engagement with the material. Major group activities often take more than one class period and are therefore listed on the syllabus. Minor group activities will be scheduled throughout the semester and typically take less than half a class period and will be scheduled to correspond
with lectures on similar topics. Students will only get credit for the team activities they participated in. If students miss class, they can complete the team activity on their own and receive credit.

**Grades:**

Students will collectively set the percentage of the course grade that will be determined by scores in each of the major performance areas (Individual Performance, Team Performance, and Team Maintenance) during the first class meeting. Grade weights will be set for the class using the following procedures:

1. Each team will set preliminary weights and select a member to meet with other teams’ representatives.
2. Team representatives will meet in the center of the room and develop a consensus (i.e. every representative has to be in agreement) about the grade weights for the class as a whole.
3. The only limitations on your grade weight decisions will be that a minimum of 10% of the total grade must be assigned to each major performance area.

**Grade Weights:**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Weights and Percentages</th>
<th>Within Area</th>
<th>of Total</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Individual performance…</td>
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<td>6 Individual Readiness Assurance Tests (lowest grade dropped)……50%</td>
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<td>Individual Essay Exam 1………………….……………………30%</td>
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<td>Individual Essay Exam 2………………….……………………20%</td>
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<td>2. Team Performance……………</td>
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<td>Team Readiness Assurance Tests (total of 6)……………….60%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Four major group activities (20% each) and various smaller ones (20% together)………….40%</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Team Maintenance (evaluated by peers)……………</td>
<td>100%……………</td>
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**Team Maintenance:**

Each individual will rate the contributions of all of the other members of their teams three times during the semester. Individual Team Maintenance scores will be the average of the points they receive from the members of their team. Average participation is 85% or a B. Assuming arbitrarily that 1) average participation is worth 8.5 points, and 2) that there are five members in a team, an example of this procedure would be as follows:

Each individual must assign an average of 8.5 points per member, so for a team of 5 people, 8.5 x 4 = 34 points to the other 4 members in their team (you will not grade yourself). Please do not assign fractions of a point, only whole numbers. This means that each rater would have to give at least one score of 9 or higher – with a maximum of 16 – and one score of 8 or lower with a minimum of 0.
**Determination of Final Grades:**

The final grades will be determined by 1) computing a raw total score for each performance area; and 2) multiplying the raw scores by the weight that was determined by the class on the first day. Once the weighted score is determined, students will be assigned a grade: 94% and above is an A; 90-93% is an A-; 87-89% is a B+; 84-86% is a B; 80-83% is a B-, and so on.

**REQUIRED MATERIALS: (any edition of the books is fine)**

Note: do not wait until a book is assigned to obtain a copy. By the time the final two books are assigned, the bookstore will have returned the books it has ordered for this class. Books are also available for 2 hour loan at the Green Library course reserves. I will teach this class in the spring semester and reuse at least 3 of the books, so you will be able to sell them back to the bookstore at the end of the semester if you wish.

   **NOTE: copies of this book are available through Miami-Dade and Broward public libraries.**
5. Additional readings to download, available on Blackboard.

***NOTE: The Bookstore has one book listed for this class that you DO NOT NEED – Paul Rabinow’s. *Reflections on Fieldwork in Morocco.*

**DUE DATES AND WEEKLY READINGS**

**UNIT 1: INTRODUCTION TO ETHNOGRAPHIC RESEARCH. METHODS, AND WRITING**

**Week 1 (Aug. 21-3):**

Introductions and Review of Course Objectives and Expectations. Introduction to Team Based Learning. Introduction to ethnography and fieldwork.

**Readings:**


Week 2 (Aug 28-30)

Readings:


Week 3 (Sept. 4-6)

Tuesday, Sept. 4 – Readiness Assessment Test (RAT) #1 on two Malinowski chapters, Conklin chapter, Carrier chapter, Rosaldo chapter and in-class material from Weeks 1 & 2

Readings: Nisa, pp. 1-92. (Introduction and chapters 1-3)

Week 4 (Sept. 11-13):

***Tuesday: IN CLASS FILM: Daughter from Danang. Directed by Gail Dolgin and Vicente Franco*** (If you miss the film, you can access it through Netflix or Amazon Instant Video. Viewing the film is necessary for completing Major Group Project #1 on Thursday.)

Thursday: Major Group Project #1: Was Heidi’s trip to Vietnam fieldwork?

Readings:

1. Nisa, pp. 95-179 (chapters 4-8)
2. Chapter that gives an update on the !Kung from Holly Peters-Golden’s Culture Sketches (on Blackboard) FILL OUT WORKSHEET ON Blackboard – due Tues, Sept. 18

Week 5 (Sept. 18-20):

TUESDAY, Sept. 18 -- Readiness Assessment Test #2 on 1-179 of Nisa, the Peters-Golden chapter and in-class material from Weeks 3 & 4.

***Tues and Thurs: Major Group Project #2: The !Kung today*** MAKE SURE YOU HAVE THE KUNG UPDATE WORKSHEET (POSTED ON BLACKBOARD) DONE BY THE BEGINNING OF CLASS ON TUESDAY.
**Readings for Week 5:**


**UNIT 2: GLOBALIZATION AND CHANGING MEANINGS OF THE VEIL IN MUSLIM COUNTRIES**

Week 6 (Sept. 25-27):

- Tuesday: FIRST EVALUATION OF TEAM MEMBERS and discussion of rubric for Essay 1 (due Oct 11)
- Thursday: in-class film *Persopolis* (exerpt) and discussion

**Readings:** *Young and Defiant in Iran*, Preface, Introduction and chapters 1-3

Week 7 (Oct 2-4):

- **TUESDAY, Oct. 9:** RAT #3 on *Veiled Sentiments* excerpt, *The Politics of Piety* excerpt, *Young and Defiant in Tehran* (Intro–Chapter 3), and class materials from past two weeks.
- Thursday: Major Team activity #3 on Globalization/Westernization

**Readings:** *Young and Defiant in Tehran*, chapter 4 – end of book.

Week 8 (Oct. 9-11):

- **Tuesday:** You Tube video on Bedouin poetry competitions and NPR interview segment. [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ak3z559iJxc](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ak3z559iJxc)
- Thursday: ESSAY 1 on Gender and Veiling due at the beginning of class

**Thursday film:** *The Angel Returns: Changing the Tradition of Female Circumcision* (2002): Fatusch Productions (New York, NY). (available on the 5th floor of Green Library if you miss it)

UNIT 3: Anthropology of the Disturbing and the Role of Ethnography in Social Change

Week 9 (Oct. 16-18)

Readings: Introduction and Chapters 1-3 of *In Search of Respect*

Week 10 (Oct 23-25):

**Tuesday:** RAT #4 on second half of *Young and Defiant*, Appiah article, and Intro-Chapter 3 of *In Search of Respect*

**Thursday:** TEAM EVALUATIONS #2

**Readings:** Chapters 4 & 5 of *In Search of Respect*

Week 11 (Oct 30-Nov 1):

**Readings:** Chapters 6-Epilogue of *In Search of Respect*

Week 12 (Nov 6-8):

**Tuesday:** RAT #5 on chap 4-Epilogue *Search of Respect*, and class material Weeks 10-11

**Readings:** *With These Hands*, pp. xvii – xxii and 1-90 (Preface and chapters 1-3)


Thursday: Short films From the Coalition of Immokalee Workers (CIW).

Week 13 (Nov 13-15):

**Readings:** *With These Hands*, pp. 90-180 and 323-326 (chapters 4-6 and “The Space between These Hands”)

Week 14 (Nov. 20):

**Tuesday, Nov.20** IRAT/TRAT #6. Covers readings and class material from Weeks 12-3

Week 15 (Nov. 27-29)

Tuesday and Thursday: **MAJOR GROUP ACTIVITY #4** on power and the food system.

Thursday: Team Evaluations #3 and class evaluations. Optional presentations on final paper.

**Tuesday, December 4:** Essay exam #2 due 11:59pm to turnitin.com ONLY