Anthropology 1002  
Spring 2013  

Introduction to Socio-Cultural Anthropology  
Wednesday & Friday 12:45pm-1:35pm  
1957 E St., Room 113  

Prof. Atiya Ahmad  
Office Hours Wednesday & Friday 3-4pm  
2112 G St., Room 102  
ahmada@gwu.edu

Course Description  
This course provides an introduction to socio-cultural anthropology. We begin by examining early anthropological works focusing on how they defined and understood the society, culture, ethnography, fieldwork, religion and economic relations. From here we move on to consider the global relations through which anthropology and anthropological objects emerged, and the political and economic processes underpinning these relations. We then turn our attention to anthropological writings focusing on contemporary issues, including gender and sexuality, colonialism and postcolonialism, globalization and transnationalism, human rights and social justice.

This course is designed to introduce you to the diversity of human cultural practices and how to ‘think like an anthropologist’. In addition to case studies from the Trobriand Islands, Egypt, the Caribbean and Indonesia, we will also spend time interrogating North American and European cultures.

Learning Goals  
By the end of this class, students will be able to:

- Understand the human capacity to create culture and social organization
- Demonstrate an appreciation for the diversity, commonality and interconnections of social grouping in different spatial and historical contexts
- Show how different aspects of social life, such as economy, religion, and politics, are interrelated
- Use broad anthropological concepts such as culture, society, structure, power, and process to interrogate social categories such as race, gender and class
- Use anthropological concepts to understand their own social worlds and cultural locations, perspectives and biases

This course will contribute to student’s development of:

- Critical thinking skills, where critical thinking is defined as analyzing and engaging with the concepts that underlie an argument
- The ability to demonstrate critical thinking through written communication skills, which will be evaluated in the short paper, quizzes, and exams; oral
communication skills will be evaluated through ‘class participation,’ though oral skills will not necessarily be a primary focus

- Cross-cultural and transnational perspectives, through which students critically analyze cultural difference as a fundamental aspect of human nature, and how these differences are produced through historical and ongoing global interrelations

Books Required:
- Margaret Mead. 2001 [1935]. *Sex & Temperament in Three Primitive Societies*

* available as article on blackboard

Articles:
* Available on main class Blackboard and marked with an asterisk in schedule

Grading:          Due Date:
Class/Section Participation 20%       ND
Short Paper 25%        February 20
Mid-Term Exam 25%      March 22
Final Exam 30%        TBD

Class Policies
Attendance: attending all lectures and discussion sessions is a primary component leading to excellence in this course. Your participation grade will be assessed based on 1) your presence in class and in your section, and 2) the quality of your participation during section meetings. Your active participation is crucial not only to your own learning, but to those of your peers and to your instructor and teaching assistants. Participation doesn’t necessarily mean speaking a great deal in section. The ability to listen attentively, respond thoughtfully to others’ comments and ask questions—including not being afraid to say ‘I don’t understand’—are productive to section discussion and our collective learning. Attendance is therefore required and failure to show up to class or section without a valid excuse or proper documentation (e.g. physician’s note) will adversely affect your final grade. If you
miss more than two sections without proper documentation, the class instructor and teaching assistants reserve the right to drop you from the class.

No topics are off-limits during class discussion, however, please be respectful and judicious in your phrasing of comments and in your responses to your peers’ comments.

Extensions: No extensions will be given for assignments or exams. If you are late with an assignment you will be penalized a part grade for each day it is late (e.g. go from an A to A- or A- to B+). If you fail to attend a class exam you will be assigned a failing grade for the exam. The only valid excuse for missing an exam or being late on assignments (e.g. paper) is a personal medical or family emergency. Students must contact me and present an excuse in writing from a professional in order to be allowed to make up work and avoid penalties. Computer failure, travel plans, and work are not acceptable excuses.

Communication and Questions: If you have a question, please contact your teaching assistant first. Your professor and teaching assistants reserve the right not to respond to email questions sent less than 36 hours before a paper or assignment is due, or an exam is scheduled. Please send your questions ahead of time to ensure we have the time to respond to them appropriately.

Technology: Electronic media brought to class should only be used for curricular activities (e.g. taking notes) and not for extra-curricular activities (i.e. emailing, checking Facebook, online purchases, browsing the Internet). If your instructor or teaching assistants discover that you are using electronic media for extra-curricular activity you will automatically be penalized by having two percent marks deducted from your overall grade. Please ensure ringers are switched off and/or that your device does not make any sound.

Religious Holidays: please contact me two weeks in advance if you are going to miss class due to religious holidays not recognized by GWU’s academic calendar.

**Academic Integrity**

All students must practice academic integrity. This means doing your own work, and when you use *the words and ideas of others in any written work, you must*: 1) identify direct quotations with quotation marks; and 2) indicate the source of ideas that are not your own by using social sciences notation form. If you have any questions at all about what this means, you should speak to your TAs or the instructor. Plagiarism, and all breaches of academic integrity (for example, the sale of lecture-notes from this class, or the use of content from the internet as though it was your own), will be severely dealt with in accordance with the University’s policies and procedures. For more information on The George Washington University’s policies on academic integrity, consult: [http://www.gwu.edu/~ntegrity/code.html](http://www.gwu.edu/~ntegrity/code.html)

**SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM**

**DISABILITY SUPPORT SERVICES (DSS)**
Any student who may need an accommodation based on the potential impact of a disability should contact the Disability Support Services office at 202-994-8250 in the Marvin Center, Suite 242, to establish eligibility and to coordinate reasonable accommodations. For additional information please refer to:

http://gwired.gwu.edu/dss/

UNIVERSITY COUNSELING CENTER (UCC) 202-994-5300

The University Counseling Center (UCC) offers 24/7 assistance and referral to address students’ personal, social, career, and study skills problems. Services for students include:
- crisis and emergency mental health consultations
- confidential assessment, counseling services (individual and small group), and referrals

http://gwired.gwu.edu/counsel/CounselingServices/AcademicSupportServices

Class Schedule and Readings:

Week 1- Introduction to Socio-Cultural Anthropology: What Does Anthropology Do?
January 16  Introduction: syllabus
January 18  In-class film ‘Babakiueria’ and assignment
            start reading *James Frazer, sections I-IV

Week 2- Sympathetic Magic and Society
January 23  *James Frazer, sections I-IV
January 25  *Emile Durkheim, Ch. 1 pp. 25-46, and Ch. 7 pp. 162-174

Week 3- Gifting, Circulation and Exchange
January 30  Marcel Mauss, first half of the book
February 1  Marcel Mauss, second half of the book

Week 4- Ethnography and Fieldwork
February 6  Bronislaw Malinowski, Introduction and section I
February 8  Bronislaw Malinowski, section II, section III, and section XXII

Week 5- Structuralism and Symbols
February 13 *Claude Levi-Strauss, ‘The Structural Analysis of Myth’
February 15 *Claude Levi-Strauss, ‘The Structural Analysis of Myth’

Week 6- Culture and Hermeneutics
February 20 *Clifford Geertz, ‘Thick Description’
Reminder: short paper due at the beginning of class
February 22- *Clifford Geertz, ‘Deep Play: Notes on the Balinese Cockfight’

Week 7- Sex & Gender, and Public Anthropology
   February 27- Margaret Mead, introduction, and skim part 1
   March 1- Margaret Mead, conclusion & part 4, and skim part 2 & 3

Week 8- Ideology and Agency
   March 6- Lila Abu-Lughod, first half of the book
   March 8- Lila Abu-Lughod, second half of the book

Week 9- SPRING BREAK

Week 10- Review and Exam
   March 20- In-class review session
   March 22- In-class exam

Week 11- Political Economy and Colonialism
   March 27- Sidney Mintz, first half of the book
   March 29- Sidney Mintz, second half of the book

Week 12- Western Hegemony, Modernity and Development
   April 3- Amitav Ghosh, first half of the book
   April 5- Amitav Ghosh, second half of the book

Week 13- Postcolonialism and Re-visiting Development
   April 10- Anna Tsing, first half of the book
   April 12- Anna Tsing, second half of the book

Week 14- Anthropology in the World: Human Rights, Humanitarianism, and Medical Anthropology
   April 17- Paul Farmer, first half of the book
   April 19- Paul Farmer, second half of the book

Week 15- Wrap-up
   April 24- TBD
   April 26- Review and wrap-up