

# Cultural Anthropology (Online Asynchronous)

W23 ANTH 02 50z 00084

Instructor: Ashidhara (Ashi) Das PhD

## Course Description:

This course will be an anthropological adventure; I look forward to introducing different cultures and communities from diverse parts of the world!

This is an online course, and hence, students can log in anytime to do the required weekly course work. Students must have access to a computer, the internet, and an individual email address. A laptop or desktop computer is recommended for successful completion of the course; a tablet or phone may not be adequate for all assignments and tests. Like most De Anza classes, this class will use the Canvas course management system. Information about Canvas and Online Education Orientation can be found in Canvas on the Student Resources page: <https://deanza.instructure.com/courses/3382>. The Student Online Resources hub with extensive information and tips can be found at [deanza.edu/online-ed/students/remotelearning](https://deanza.edu/online-ed/students/remotelearning)

I hope you will enjoy this journey through a plethora of multiple cultures and peoples from different parts of the world! Moreover, you will also learn how anthropology (especially applied anthropology) is an exciting means of employment in the current job market. This is an introductory course which will adopt a multi-faceted, interdisciplinary approach to anthropology and examine the differences between physical anthropology, cultural anthropology, archaeology/prehistory, and linguistic anthropology. Students will also inspect the colonial roots of anthropology, giving due importance to more recent feminine, minority, subaltern, and non-Western anthropological perspectives. Discussing the contrast between ethnocentrism and cultural relativism, students will train in the crucial methodological practice of ethnographic research through fieldwork. Various strategies of subsistence will be examined, analyzing how culture is a form of human adaptation to the local environment. Lastly, the class will compare diverse world societies and survey cultural change, investigating culturally heterogeneous societies, and learning to apply the anthropological analytical lens to current societal issues.

## Student Learning Outcome Statements (SLO):

- Student Learning Outcome: Students will apply a scientific, holistic and a multidisciplinary approach to understand and analyze human behavior.
- Student Learning Outcome: Students will recognize the value of cultural relativism and the validity of each culture as an adaptive strategy to the challenge of physical and social environment.
- Student Learning Outcome: Students will analyze cultural diversity, and explain how they arose and changed. They will also identify underlying similarities between cultures.
- Student Learning Outcome: Students will recognize that humans are not superior to their environment but an integral part of their natural and cultural environment on this planet.

## Course Objectives:

- Course Objective: Recognize the immense scope of the multi-faceted, interdisciplinary approach of anthropology and explain the relationships between its basic areas of inquiry: physical anthropology, cultural anthropology, archaeology/prehistory, and linguistic anthropology.
- Course Objective: Assess the historical development of anthropology as a Western academic discipline and its ties to national colonial projects, giving particular attention to the significant contributions and perspectives of women, minorities, subaltern, and non-Western cultural anthropologists.
- Course Objective: Examine the basic conceptual framework of an anthropological study and identify the crucial distinction between ethnocentrism and the practice of cultural relativism.
- Course Objective: Analyze the key methodological practices of cultural anthropology with its major focus on pursuing ethnographic research through fieldwork.
- Course Objective: Assess how the processes in any cultural system operate by analyzing the integrated, synergistic as well as contradictory nature of all such systems.
- Course Objective: Evaluate the diversity of human cultures by comparing ethnographic information from a variety of world societies.
- Course Objective: Critically evaluate the dynamics of culture change (both voluntary and involuntary) and apply this knowledge to understanding the complexities of culturally heterogeneous societies.
- Course Objective: Appraise how anthropological knowledge and insights can be applied to current societal issues, and then extrapolated to an analytic evaluation of humanity's future.

## About the Instructor:

I have completed a PhD in Cultural Anthropology from the University of California, San Diego. In recent years, I have continued my research in the field of immigrant studies, and I have also taught Cultural Anthropology for more than a decade now. Lastly, I have published a book about the bi-cultural negotiations of white-collar professional working women in the Indian American community in the San Francisco Bay Area: *Desi Dreams: Indian Immigrant Women Build Lives Across Two Worlds*.

Email: [dasashidhara@fhda.edu](mailto:dasashidhara@fhda.edu)

Please note this class uses Canvas. All Readings, Assignments, Quizzes, and Exams will be on Canvas. My Office Hours are on Mondays from 11: AM to 1:00 PM online, but I can meet with you (via Zoom) at any time convenient to you on any day you like (preferably, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, or Friday between 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM). Every student must meet up with me at least once (via Zoom). The meeting will be to check up on the student's progress in class, to discuss any queries/concerns/doubts the student might have, as well as to make a note of the student's progress on the Final Essay Project (as you know, there are four separate Assignments related to the Final Essay Project). I am flexible about when to meet up, hence, students must email me at [dasashidhara@fhda.edu](mailto:dasashidhara@fhda.edu) and set up an appointment whenever convenient to them (please specify the day and time that is most convenient).

To register for the course, please go to the De Anza College Website:  
<http://www.deanza.fhda.edu>

Please note: You will not be able to log in to Canvas until the first day of the quarter.

### Drop, Inactive, and Absence:

- Students must enter the Canvas course website in the first week of class. Students must notify me if they will be unable to do so for a legitimate reason. Students can request that their place be held, if possible. As a rule, students who do not show up on the Canvas course website at all, may be dropped.
- Students must complete the Introduction Assignment in Week One, or they will be automatically dropped from this course. In addition, each student must have logged in for at least one hour per Week. All “no show” students shall be dropped from the course by the end of the second week of class
- Please double check your enrollment status. If you assumed that you got dropped for not showing, you will be responsible for all fees.

Students are responsible for officially Withdrawing from this course if they no longer wish to be enrolled. Non-attendance does not release the student from this responsibility, students are responsible for dropping the course if they do not want to continue with it.

To reiterate, regular active participation is expected of all students enrolled in the course. Students not actively participating in the course may be Dropped from the course. Students who know they will be absent or not actively participating in a course should notify me of the reason. Notification in no way relieves the student of responsibility for completing and submitting missed work. In order to be fair to all the students in the class, I reserve the right to Drop any and all students who do not complete their assignments and/or quizzes, projects, exams etc. on time. In addition, if a student does not pay the full amount of tuition fee due, then the student will be Dropped from all courses for which they registered.

### Readings:

Primary Textbook (Free Textbook) :

Brown, Nina, Thomas McIlwraith, Laura Tubelle de González. *Perspectives: An Open Invitation to Cultural Anthropology*. American Anthropological Association. 2020.

<http://perspectives.americananthro.org/Chapters/Perspectives.pdf>

### Optional Supplementary Readings:

Boellstorff, Tom. *Coming of Age in Second Life: an Anthropologist Explores the Virtually Human*. Princeton University Press, 2008. (Library has this edition; GN 307.65 .B64 2008).

Chavez, Leo R. *Shadowed Lives: Undocumented Immigrants in American Society*. 3rd. ed., Wadsworth, 2013.

English-Lueck, J.A. *Cultures@SiliconValley*. Stanford University Press, 2002.

Evans. *Cultural Anthropology*. Lumens Learning Candela Libre Texts.file:///home/chronos/u-72ec69c2df05e5369742633c40956a7616e67ab5/MyFiles/Downloads/Full%20(1).pdf

Kuhn, Thomas. *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*. The University of Chicago Press, 1962. 2nd. Edition 1970.

McGee, Heather. *The Sum of US*. Profile Books Ltd; Export/Airside edition (April 15, 2021)

Mead, Margaret. *Coming of Age in Samoa : a Psychological Study of Primitive Youth for Western Civilization*. (Originally published by W. Morrow and Company, 1928). Perennial Classics, 2001

[https://archive.org/.../comingofageinsam00mead/comingofageinsam00mead\\_djvu.txt](https://archive.org/.../comingofageinsam00mead/comingofageinsam00mead_djvu.txt)

Nanda, Serena and Richard L. Warms. *Cultural Anthropology*. Sage Publications, 12th. Edition, 2019/Cengage Advantage Books: *Culture Counts: A Concise Introduction to Cultural Anthropology*. 11th Edition, 2017.

Vincent, Joan ed. *Anthropology of Politics: A Reader in Ethnography, Theory, and Critique*. Blackwell Publishers, 2002.

## Videos:

Carlton International Media. China: *The Dragon's Ascent-Family Values: Chinese Family in Transition*. 2000.

Novogratz, Jacqueline. "Escape from Poverty." *TED Talk*, 2009.  
<http://www.oercommons.org/courses/free-online-anthropology-videos-and-video-clips/view>.

## Requirements:

1. Please read the weekly notes and the relevant chapter in the textbook. Look at the Slides/Power-point Lectures for the Week.
2. Do the homework/assignments.
3. Take the scheduled online quizzes/examinations.
4. Students will take the Final Exam/Quiz (Multiple Choice) online accompanied by a 800-1000 word essay on a Cultural Anthropological Topic (choice of topics provided).

## Weekly Assignments:

A Short Essay, OR a Discussion Topic (with one original posting and separate responses to at least two classmates), OR, a multiple answer choice Quiz.

Midterm Essays: Two Rough Drafts of Final Essay

Final Project Essay: Students will be required to write a 800-1000 word comprehensive essay in which they will choose one of the topics given (choice of topics provided) (please submit the final version in Finals Week). They will also be required to make a short presentation on this topic.

(All students must provide academic references, published texts, books, articles, primary sources etc. as evidence presented in order to support the student-thesis).

AND

Final Multiple Choice Answer Exam (online)

Students should not hesitate to email, text, or call the instructor with any questions or concerns they might have about any of the assignments/quizzes/projects/exams/presentations etc.

Grades:

Weekly Essays OR Discussions OR Quizzes (25%) Midterms (Rough Drafts of Final Project) (15%). Final Project Essay (35%).

Grading Scale

95-100=A, 90-94=A-, 87-89=B+, 84-86=B, 80-83=B-, 76-79=C+, 70-75=C, 0-69=no pass

Late work:

Students are requested to write to the instructor in case they cannot submit their work on time. Decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis, but as a rule, a whole grade point will be dropped as a penalty for turning in late work.

Extra credit:

One Extra Credit assignment is available in Week Eleven.

Classroom Etiquette:

Usual College policies (such as rules concerning academic integrity, accommodations etc.) will apply. Students are requested to maintain courteous and professional behavior in their interactions with their classmates and the instructor and cooperate with them in order to further civil and productive in-person as well as online discussions.

Academic Honesty:

Students are advised to go to [www.plagiarism.org/](http://www.plagiarism.org/) in order to make sure they know exactly what constitutes plagiarism and how to avoid it.

### Student Success Center:

Join the SSC Resources Canvas site to see content and learning skills links. Also, see the [Online Tutoring](#) page for information about NetTutor (via Canvas) or Smarthinking (via MyPortal). SmartThinking tutors can also help with personal statements for transfer to four year colleges: [website:deanza.edu/studentsuccess/onlinetutoring/](http://website:deanza.edu/studentsuccess/onlinetutoring/)

### Note to Students with Disabilities:

If you have a disability-related need for reasonable academic accommodations or services in this course, provide (name of Instructor) with a Test Accommodation Verification Form (also known as a TAV form) from Disability Support Services (DSS) or the Educational Diagnostic Center (EDC).

Students are expected to give five days' notice of the need for accommodations. Students with disabilities can obtain a TAV form from their DSS counselor (864-8753 DSS main number) or EDC advisor (864-8839 EDC main number).

Contact for those who want to request Disability Support Programs and Services:

Stacey Shears, Ed.D.

Division Dean for Disability Support Programs and Services

De Anza College

Advanced Technology Center, Suite 209,

21250 Stevens Creek Blvd.,

Cupertino, CA 95014

Tel: 408-864-8954

Fax: 408-864-8415

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, De Anza College is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities to students with documented disabilities (e.g. mental health, attentional, learning, chronic health, sensory, or physical issues).

### Psychological Services:

Psychological services are available to help students, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. Many problems of everyday living can be resolved through talking with friends, family or someone we trust. However, there are times when seeking assistance outside one's familiar environment can be helpful. Psychological Services is offering free Zoom appointments to all registered De Anza students. Typically, students are offered 10 free sessions throughout their enrollment at De Anza. However, due to the increased stress during the COVID-19 pandemic, the department's goal is to offer students additional counseling sessions, subject to availability. They offer individual (1-on-1) therapy, as well as group therapy. Their department is open M-Th: 8:30-5 and F: 8:30-2. For information on how to make an appointment, please visit the Psychological Services webpages at:

<https://www.deanza.edu/psychologicalservices/index.html>

Thank you, and I hope you enjoy learning to view the world through the anthropological lens!

Ashidhara Das

### Works Cited:

Boellstorff, Tom. *Coming of Age in Second Life: an Anthropologist Explores the Virtually Human*. Princeton University Press, 2008. (Library has this edition; GN 307.65 .B64 2008).

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Das, Ashidhara. *Desi Dreams: Indian Immigrant Women Lives Across Two Worlds*. Primus Publishers, 2013.

English-Lueck, J.A. *Cultures@SiliconValley*. Stanford University Press, 2002.

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Leonard, Karen. "Book Review: Ashidhara Das. 2012. *Desi Dreams: Indian Immigrant Women Build Lives Across Two Worlds*" *Contributions to Indian Sociology*, vol. 48, no. 2, 2014, pp. 304–305., doi:10.1177/0069966714525296.

McGee, Heather. *The Sum of Us: What Racism Costs Everyone and How we can Prosper Together*. Profile Books Ltd; Export/Airside. April 15, 2021.

Mead, Margaret. *Coming of Age in Samoa : a Psychological Study of Primitive Youth for Western Civilization*. Perennial Classics, 2001.

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Oxford English Dictionary <https://www.oxforddictionaries.com>.

Rosaldo, Renato. *Culture and Truth: The Remaking of Social Analysis: with a New Introduction*. Beacon Press, 1993.

Vincent, Joan ed. *Anthropology of Politics: A Reader in Ethnography, Theory, and Critique*. Blackwell Publishers, 2002.