*Syllabus: Introduction to Anthropology ANT 2000-02*

Anthropology is a social science which means that anthropologists study people—what we say and do all over the world and what is common versus varied to the human experience. Anthropologists study all aspects of the human experience—including our human origins, our languages, our pre—history, our cultural worlds, our genetics, and so on. It is a very, very broad field of knowledge. Therefore, most Introduction to Anthropology courses provide students with a wide-ranging survey of different topics and “cultures,” for example studying what is meant by the ethnicity or gender and how they are practiced culturally by different peoples living today and, in some cases, long ago. By comparing and contrasting cross-culturally what peoples do and say we gain insight into what is typical across our species and what is unique to any group of people. Most Introduction to Anthropology devoting a week per topic and chapter in a textbook. To get you to engage with your own cultural assumptions and ideas, this course will involve little lecture and much more in-class activities. Additionally, you will exchange your experiences and ideas with your diverse teammates as this course utilizes team-based learning. This is a Global Learning Foundations course that counts towards your Global Learning graduation requirement.

**Course Objectives: These are split into two types of objectives**

**Knowledge and Understanding Objectives**
- To identify and question your (likely) unstated assumptions about people, human “nature,” human existence and culture. And to improve your understanding of all these.
- Be able to explain where the word “culture” comes from, differentiate its varied meanings and explain why it often confuses people.
- To understand and be able to explain to others at least three ways that people learn to think and behave in patterned ways that may be intelligible to others around them but different from others in the world. And to apply this knowledge to how you think and behave in your own society.
- To understand and be able to explain at least three ways people come to feel belonging with other people and three ways that we also learn to differentiate ourselves from others.
- To "see" your own cultural practices and be able to compare and contrast them to those of other peoples using analytical tools learned in this course.

**Applications of Course Content to the “Real” World: Applied Course Objectives**
- To analyze your cultural discomforts and to expand your cultural comforts across at least one cultural boundary.
- To gain greater ability to creatively cultivate connections with other people, particularly people who are culturally dissimilar from yourself, and to exercise that ability in at least one new way.
- To know and be able to explain to others at least three ways that anthropological knowledge can enhance different occupations.
- To be able to discuss and to explain at least three ways that culture affects how people view and solve problems and apply this knowledge to your own career or career plans.
- To gain experience working in teams and to increase your appreciation of teams.
- To gain experience with and appreciation for active learning through avid participation with your team and class but also by taking individual responsibility for learning and for helping others learn.

**Global Learning Course Outcomes:** Upon completion of this course you will be able to
- To gain or sharpen an awareness of the interrelatedness of local, regional, national and global manifestations of cultural practices and ideas (Global awareness)
To develop the ability to see these practices from multiple perspectives that reflect the interconnectedness of local to global cultural practices (Global Perspective)

To engage and be able to continue to engage in local to global inter-cultural problem solving including creating new ways to solve those problems using cultural tools gained in the class (Global engagement)

Required Text is available at the bookstore; copies on 2-hour reserve at Green Library

(1) Culture as Comfort (Pearson 2013; available in paperback and e-versions for Kindle, Nook). Copies for sale at the FIU bookstore and also on reserve at the Green Library.

(2) Additional Readings, etc.: Non-text required readings as PDFs and other materials such streaming video and audio files will be available through the course website on Blackboard (for access see below). Look for them under the label “Required Preparatory Work” inside the module for each week. Go through the entire list of readings, videos to watch, etc. before coming to class to be prepared for class. Readings, etc. should always be done in the order presented because I think it will enhance your understanding this way. To ensure you do this work, many classes will begin with quizzes on these materials. Warnings about videos: (1) best way to handle them is to click the link, start the video and then pause it for several minutes so that it begins loading and does not stop and start while you wait for it to stream and (2) many of them I have found through youtube and thus start with commercials. Just ignore those or skip them whenever you can. Necessary evil of “free” URLs.

Websites & Software You Will Need to Use and Probably Download:

(1) Blackboard (login via fiu.blackboard.com and check that you can access the course website). Technical problems with the website or your computer? Contact Educational Tech Svs (ETS) at 348-2814/GL150 (MMC) or 305-919-5944 AC1-148 (BBC). Make sure your computer works well with Blackboard (the BEST browser is Firefox and do NOT use Internet Explorer which works horribly). If you have any compatibility problems, get help from the expert not the instructor!!

(2) You will find that most of your required work each week consists of readings in PDF, videos, audio, webpages, etc. They are set to open in NEW tabs on your browser so you don’t get lost when you click on these resources. However, you are going to need to make sure that the computer you use to access these materials has all the software needed to read PDFs (Adobe Acrobat Reader), software for streaming videos and audio (e.g., Real Player or VLC). If your computer does all this now, great. If not, get it.

(3) Internet browser: Not all browsers are the same especially for this course. You should be using either Mozilla Firefox or Google’s Chrome. I prefer Firefox because it allows you to put in a setting to surf the web without leaving data points everywhere. But your choice. Just avoid Microsoft’s Internet Explorer because it will give you problems. You’ll also need to allow pop-ups for many of the websites in order to get to the materials. You can add those exceptions without allowing pop-ups for all websites. Problems? Pose your problem question to your team, the class or call technical help at FIU at 305.348.2814.

If there is a broken link or some similar issue on my part (the instructor), send an email to me at my regular FIU email (mahlers@fiu.edu) right away. If you still do not understand the material you can (1) get assistance from your team members and (2) get assistance from me and/or the TA during office hours or by appointment.

Class Structure: This is not a lecture course though I will present some content each week; it utilizes Team-Based Learning (TBL). Most likely you have never been in a course using TBL so please read carefully: TBL has you prepare for classes by doing preparation work outside of class and applying it inside of class. Do not expect the professor to lecture much; instead most class time will involve applying and enhancing knowledge through in-class team projects. Don’t confuse teams with groups. You will learn the difference; for now, please do not think this will be a class with group projects. To repeat, you are expected to get exposure to the course content prior to class, will be quizzed on your understanding of this content in class, and then you’ll spend most class time applying this information via short in-class projects with your team. You will be assessed for both your individual and team work – see grading below.

Learning is not the same as reading, watching etc. Research shows that it takes most people several exposures
to learn new content. This is the main reason why in this course you start learning material through the required preparation work, then apply the content in class and then you are assessed in different ways. This approach helps knowledge and critical thinking “stick” but it may seem strange to you at first. That’s intended. Taking you outside your educational comfort zone is why you’re in college in the first place and in my class you’ll be outside your cultural comfort zone much if not most of the time. This may be the only anthropology course you take in your entire life, so my goal is that key understandings about human life and human “nature” stay with you for a lifetime – and are not forgotten within six months as is true of most course content.

Contacting Instructor/TA: Need help or have questions? Feel free to stop by during our office hours or write me an email. Please use the Blackboard email tool for most correspondence with Prof. Mahler and the TA (if there is one). Only when you need immediate response (less than 24 hours) should you email us using our regular emails: mahlers@fiu.edu. Finally, don’t forget you have team members as a resource. If you need help with anything, they are as likely to be helpful as anyone else.

Requirements: You are expected to come to every class, arrive on time and come to class having done the work posted online for the week. Additionally, you must participate in class and in your team. You cannot be a slacker because your team will know and they will evaluate your contributions at the end of the semester. As an FIU student, you are always expected to abide by the university’s policies particularly those governing academic honesty and plagiarism as they appear in the FIU Student Handbook (more on that below). I also require that you be ready to have some fun. Learning should be fun…

Assessments, Grading & Tardiness: There are different measures of your performance in this course, many of them individual and some of them team-based. Here are the different measures. As you will read at the end of this segment, you have some power to apply different weights (importance or % of your total grade) to these different measures. Read carefully.

Individual Assessments these sum to 75% of your final grade

- **Individual Readiness Assurance Tests (iRATs) AKA short quizzes (15% of final grade goes to average):** These are short 10-question multiple choice quizzes (see caveat below) on the week’s content that you will take individually in class when the class begins. Quiz dates are indicated in the weekly folders and on your calendar. You receive an individual grade for each iRAT (maximum is 50 points/quiz). Miss an iRAT and you cannot get a make-up – unless your absence is excused (see attendance below). However, I will drop every student’s lowest iRAT score of the semester, so if you miss one and get a zero, it will be dropped. Miss more than one and your iRAT score will suffer. iRATs are not designed to be easy; they are designed to make you think about each possible answer choice before you select the best one. To do well, you will have to study. Your course grade for the iRATs will be curved based on how the class does. That is, your scores will be summed (after your lowest score is dropped), any extra credit you earned will be added to the sum and then the score will be averaged. At that point, Dr M will curve everyone’s grades. So, for example, you might get 25 points out of 50 and think you failed but 25 might be the average for this iRAT and thus you should view your grade as roughly a B. How do you know how you’re doing? Watch the statistics for each RAT (they are provided with each grade). If you are doing above the course mean/median you are in B or A territory depending on how much higher you’re doing; the reverse is true for being below the median.

- **Short Individual Assignments 15% of your final grade (grades for each are averaged and average counts toward this grade).** Each of these will be graded according specific criteria which will be identified on the assignments. The criteria are provided to you in a rubric (see this in Blackboard). Your grades for all assignments will be averaged and that grade will factor into your final semester grade average.

  - Human Nature Worksheet (Week 2): This short assignment asks you to provide your perspective on what you think “human nature” is and where you get your ideas from. You’ll fill this out at the beginning of the class and reflect on it at the end of the course
after you’ve been exposed to many different approaches to human life. (Global Perspective).

- **My Views on Culture** (Week 3): This short assignment asks you to record what YOU think culture is before we study culture in depth. You will be asked to reflect on if your original ideas have shifted during the midterm after seeing so much cross-cultural content (Global Awareness and Global Perspective).

- **Participant Observation** (Week 4): This week you will examine how social space is culturally determined by observing people in elevators and by moving while speaking with others.

- **Planned Pause: My Cultural Ruts** (Week 6): This assignment has you identify two “habits” you obtained culturally from your group. You’ll choose you want to change now that you know more about how “cultural ruts” are acquired, and you’ll explain your strategy for changing this rut. (Global Awareness; Global Engagement).

- **Comparative Childhoods**: (Week 6 in class). You and your team will fill out a worksheet based on this week’s preparatory material comparing how children are raised in three different cultural contexts (Global awareness; Global perspective).

- **Discomforting Foods**: (Week 13). This week you and your team will coordinate bringing to class foods that are comforting to you and your people—but may be discomforting to others. (Global Awareness and Global Perspective).

- **My Career Connections**: (Week 14). This individual project has you examine how what you’ve learned in class and anthropology can be applied to your own career path (Global Engagement).

- **Exams**: You will have a midterm and a final each worth 15% of your final grade. The final will be somewhat cumulative but emphasize the material covered since the midterm. Exams help ensure that you retain more of the course concepts and key ideas after the course ends.

- **“Beyond My Cultural Comforts” Outside Class Assignment**: 15% of your final grade. You will have one assignment involving more personal challenge, thought and cultural analysis than the short assignments. It is called “Beyond my cultural comforts” and will be assigned at the end of the first month of class. This assignment has you exchange discomforting experiences with a teammate. That teammate will accompany you to something s/he find culturally comfortable but which will be outside your own cultural comforts and you’ll reciprocate with him/her. You will analyze why you felt outside your cultural comforts and what you gained by expanding your cultural horizons. (Global awareness; Global Perspectives; Global Engagement).

**Team-Based Learning Assessments** 25% of final grade

TBL is a very important part of this course and it involves several different activities that you will be graded on. The sum total of all these grades will constitute 30% of your final grade, 10% for each type of assessment:

- **Team Readiness Assurance Tests (tRATs)** (15% of final grade). tRATs are quizzes that involve the same questions you take with the iRATs. You re-do the same questions with your team while your iRATs are scored. Unlike with the iRAT, you must discuss your answers with your teammates (but closed book) and make team decisions about answers. These are graded separately from the iRATs; you receive a team grade for each tRAT. Student team members absent during tRATs will get a zero for this tRAT as with the iRAT. As with the iRATs, each student’s lowest tRAT score will be dropped then summed and then averaged. As with the iRATS, your grade for the tRATs will be curved based on how the class does. Your average grade (after your lowest score is dropped) will be curved against all other teams’ grades. How do you know how you’re doing? Watch the statistics for each RAT. If you are
Doing above the course mean/median you are in B or A territory depending on how much higher you’re doing; the reverse is true for being below the median.

- **Evaluation of Your Team Members (10% of final grade).** During the midterm exam, you will do an ungraded assess the performance of your team members. This is peer evaluation; you will assess them and they will assess you. Each person will get back anonymous feedback from the other team members. Given that this assessment is made in the middle, *any issues teams/team members have with team members should be communicated to problematic team members before or during the midsemester evaluation.* (See below for more on team issues and how to resolve them). Because doing quality peer review is so important, YOU will receive an individual grade for the quality of your peer review at midsemester. At the end of the semester, you will assess your teammates for a grade. Each team member will assess all the others and be assessed by all the others. The average of these grades will be used for your peer review grade. It sounds complicated but it is not…

**Extra Credit Opportunities:** During the semester you will have various opportunities to earn extra credit. To receive extra credit, attend any event which expands your cultural horizons such as attending a religious service that is not your own faith, going to a program on a people/society unfamiliar to you, having a meal of food that is unfamiliar accompanied by someone for whom it is “normal food.” You can also volunteer at a place where you are exposed to ways of life foreign to you. To receive this credit, you must fill out the extra credit form (see Blackboard link) to document not only what you did but your ability to analyze it. Any extra credit points you receive during the semester will be added to your iRAT sum. The maximum extra credit you can receive is 50 points which is equal to one full perfect iRAT. See more detailed information on the left column link in Blackboard. (Global awareness, Global perspective, Global engagement)

**Tardiness:** Assignments received less than one week tardy will lose ½ grade; one week and over = full grade. The only exception to this rule is for documented medical or family emergencies. Bring or email such documentation to your instructor as soon as your need to be tardy begins. Do not expect help with tardiness if you wait weeks after the event.

**Posting & Accuracy of Grades:** Grades are posted in Blackboard. If you detect a mistake, inform the instructor immediately. Do not wait until the last week of the semester to say “One of my grades is wrong!” It may be too late to resolve the problem then. In other words: watch your grades in Blackboard to make sure they are accurate and act quickly if you see a problem.

**General Class Policies**

**Attendance:** You are expected to come to every class, arrive on time and arrive **having done the assigned material by class time.** While this class follows standard FIU policy regarding student absence for sickness, religious observances, etc., the fact that it utilizes Team-Based Learning (TBL) means that individual student absences will likely affect not only your individual performance but also your team’s performance. One effect of absences is that neither individual quizzes (iRATs as explained below) nor team quizzes (tRATs) will have make-ups. If you or your whole team is absent a day these are given, you will not be given a make-up and receive a grade of zero. Only students who are absent due to a medical professional’s substantiated condition (you bring in a doctor’s note) or who are absent for religious observations condoned by FIU policy, will the instructor exclude the lost grade from your final average for the iRATs. Chronic absences for tRATs will be reflected in your peers’ evaluations of you. Attendance will be kept by teams.

Please note that if FIU closes due to weather or another reason, the course will pick up where it left off. I expect, however, that you will access course materials via Blackboard even if the campus is closed so long as there is power. If possible, I will send you special announcements on the main course webpage in Blackboard with instructions should such an event take place.

**Participation:** You must participate in class and in your team. You cannot be a slacker; if you try not only will your grade reflect this, but your team and individual grades will suffer.
Plagiarism/Academic Honesty: As an FIU student, you are always expected to abide by the university’s policies particularly those governing academic honesty and plagiarism as they appear in the FIU Student Handbook. If you are not familiar with how to avoid plagiarism, you will receive some instruction and additional guidelines in this course. In sum, should anything you/your team produces cite any data, research or information that you have not generated and which is not general knowledge then you must cite it appropriately following one of the disciplinary conventions of the academic disciplines represented by the faculty teaching this course. More information about citation formatting will be given to you via Blackboard. Please become completely familiar with bibliographic styles and citation conventions. If you do not cite others’ work adequately you can be accused of plagiarism and FIU takes these accusations very seriously. Several of your written assignments will be submitted using Turnitin.com to check your work for plagiarism. Finally, I reserve the right to alter the syllabus as needed. You will be notified of any changes.

Cell Phones, Computers, etc. Your cell phones, PDAs, MP3 players, computers, etc. may not be used in class during any assessment (quiz, test). Students caught using electronics during assessments will have their test taken away and will be reported to the FIU authorities for suspected cheating. Other cell phone policies will be debated and announced in class early in the term.

Special Needs Students: Please notify the faculty prior to or immediately upon commencement of this course about your accommodation needs as in accordance with FIU policy. You will be accommodated accordingly.

TEAM DYNAMICS ADMONITION:
Within teams it is frequently the case that some members perceive themselves as working harder than others. That is not always true, but some will always feel this way and it can build up resentment. So how should this be handled? Any issues that arise must be addressed first *within the team* where all team members can voice concerns. If this does not resolve a problem, the team as a whole or individual team members can meet with the Teaching Assistant who will seek a resolution. If after these steps, the team or individual feels that things are still not working, the team or individual members can consult Dr. Mahler. *ANY SUCH TEAM ISSUE AIRINGS MUST OCCUR BY MID-WAY THROUGH THE COURSE. IF YOU WAIT UNTIL THE END OF THE SEMESTER, NO ACCOMMODATIONS WILL BE MADE.*

Recall that every team member will evaluate all other members of their team at the end of the semester. That means you will also evaluate how much each member of your team contributed to the team overall and to the team’s performance overall. Be mindful of this as you participate in your team. Poor evaluations are given mostly to free-loaders and to those who miss classes. However, even well-intentioned team members who work hard can cause problems in teams if they are too perfectionistic, domineering, etc. Also remind yourself that working in teams for this course can and should be seen as practice for your career life where more often than not you will be working collaboratively.

*Syllabus Caveat:* Please note that the instructor reserves the right to alter the syllabus due to need and emergent circumstances. Students will be advised about any change made to the syllabus.
Course Schedule by Week:

WEEK 1: Introduction to the Study of Anthropology

**Required Reading: What is Anthropology?**
Read chapter one of the online text below. Don't purchase this text! Just read the free first chapter. It is available through this link to Barnes and Noble's website. Click the book's name below and then click the book's cover where it says "read instantly". You can then use the scrolling arrows to take you to the first chapter. If you cannot access the link for some reason, you can search on Amazon or another website for this book:

*Culture Counts: A Concise Introduction to Cultural Anthropology* by Serena Nanda & Richard L. Warms

**The 4 Fields of Anthropology: Archaeology, Cultural, Linguistic, and Physical**

**Short Video on What is Anthropology?**
Please view [this very short video on anthropology](#) (although it claims anthropology is a humanities; you'll learn more about that soon). Make sure that your computer can load these videos since there will be many to watch during the semester! (By the way, this video like virtually all the others is not produced by your instructor. Most of the videos I use are either from our library or from youtube.)

Week 2: What do you/we think we “know” about Human Nature?

**This Week's Required Work: Different Perspectives on Human Origins & Human Nature**
People have long tried to understand how the world, as we know it, was created and how we fit into that world. Different peoples throughout recorded history have left their own versions of origin stories for us and they, in turn, can and often do shape our own understanding of how the world came to be, how people arrived into this world, what our relationship is to all other creatures in “nature,” and what our role should be vis-a-vis the rest of the world. Below you will find materials to expose you to several key approaches to these fundamental questions about life.

**SOURCE 1:** Listen to this video online lecture (OLL) from Dr. D on why we start the course on Human Nature

**SOURCE 2:** Read these Three Origin Accounts From Different Peoples & Locate their Views on your Human Nature Worksheet For each origin story, identify how it defines the “nature” of the creator and also of the created. Additionally, what themes do you see repeated in the different stories? What might these overlap say about Human Nature?

- a. Jewish, Christian and Muslim Origin Story *The Bible - Genesis*  
- b. The *Popol Vuh* — Origin Story of the Maya  
- c. Origin Story Common among *Chinese*  
- d. The *Yoruba* people of contemporary Nigeria

**SOURCE 3:** Studying Food Foragers -- If there is a Human Nature it must have developed during hundreds of thousands of years as foragers
**Week 3: The Concept of Culture**

**Required Preparatory Work for this Week:**
Do this first:
1. **BEFORE** beginning any of the readings below that are required for this week, open up this worksheet, fill out the first question and save the worksheet to your computer. Proceed to the readings below. When you finish those readings, fill out the remainder of your worksheet. Then upload an electronic copy to Turnitin using the link below AND also print a copy to bring with you to class this week.

Preparatory Work (will be on this week’s quiz):
2. Read Culture as Comfort (your “text”) Chapter One on where the word and concept of “culture” comes from.
   - Be prepared to match phenomena from everyday life into different meanings of culture.
3. Read through this article on how scientists are “culturizing” hamburgers
   - Does this article affect your understanding of the relationship between “culture” and “nature”? On different meanings to “culture”?
4. Who do we (humans) admit into the culture club? Are we the only species who is cultural or are there other species? Deciding this question requires a working definition of culture, but what would that be? Defining culture means determining what criteria should define belonging and not belonging to the “Culture Club”. What do YOU think defines a cultural species versus one lacking culture? To get you thinking about this important topic do the work below in the order listed:
   - Listen to or read this short National Public Radio story about “culture” among whooping cranes. Be prepared to argue for and against their conclusions about culture in this species of cranes. How do they define “culture” and do cranes fit it?
   - Read this short Scientific American article on the behavior a small group of chimpanzees exhibited toward one of their members who died. Be prepared to debate in your teams whether the behavior described in this article constitutes culture.
   - Read carefully the first two pages of an article by evolutionary anthropologists discussing the question — Do animals have culture?

5. Watch this short video OLL on how the term “culture” is applied to many different situations and meanings:

**Week 4: Cultural Differences in Everyday Life — (Mis)Communication**

**Course Work for this Week:**
This week we will be examining one of the most obvious ways that people differ from one another—communication. Communication includes language but is much broader than that. In fact, this week we will focus more on how we communicate **without** the spoken word but through our body language. Our body language often communicates both our unstated assumptions about the world and our role in it, as well as how we really feel (versus how we wish to present ourselves to others). You have material to cover for this week and a little bit of research to do as well (see assignment provided separately below).

People, even those who speak the same language, are incredibly diverse. Watch these two short videos (HINT: start each video, pause it for a few minutes then play it so that it plays continuously instead of stopping to buffer):

1. Many accents (variation within the same language—English (WARNING: video contains expletives). (There is another animated & updated version which I know is better but it’s not as good—at least to me). Share others on the class bulletin board! Here is an optional video showing regional accents in Colombia)
2. Cross-cultural variations in common gestures and their meanings presented by English zoologist and controversial sociobiologist, Desmond Morris. ( Ditto above for good videos on gestures.)

The question that you should be asking is -- “How do we become so diverse culturally?” That question we’ll begin to answer next week.

Now let’s look at “body language”. We typically ignore this because we’re so good at it. Let’s make us more aware this week:

1. Watch *The Secrets of Body Language* (90 minutes). Learn these cues and you’ll have great skills in life! We’ll be applying them in class too. Question to ask as you watch the video: How much of the content is culturally specific? How much is universal (true for all people) That’s a classic social science question you always need to keep in mind.
2. Anthropologists “answer” this question by studying topics cross-culturally. Read this example of how body language varies by gender cross culturally by the anthropologists Maltz & Borker to see how much variation is cultural over universal.

Finally, we communicate through spoken and body language but also through our use of space—how we position our bodies relative to others.

1. Question to ponder for class and as you go into your research assignment for this week: How might we communicate culturally particular ideas about the relationship between ourselves and others through our use of space?
Week 5: How we learn culture Part 1

**Course Part II: HOW WE LEARN CULTURE, BECOME "US"**

These weeks of the course you will study how infants and young children learn cultural practices and ideas. You'll find out that we all learn culture so early in life that we do not recall these processes and therefore we just get along with our group(s) as if they were not just our ways of being human, but as if they were "normal" for all people. But they are normal for us and this is why we feel comfortable with people who share these same ideas and actions. This is why we learn culture as comfort...

**Required Work for this Week:**

1. Ask and answer these question before you start the work for this week: How do people learn culture? How early in life do we begin learning?
2. Start your understanding of how we learn culture by watching this 20 minute Ted Talk video and thinking about how it affects your responses to the questions above.
3. Read this short segment on "socialization" from a sociology textbook. This is similar to what most students in introductory courses in sociology and even anthropology study. How similar to or different is it from the approach taken in Culture as Comfort?
4. Read Chapters Two and Three in Culture as Comfort. How does this perspective on learning culture differ from the "socialization" one? Why is learning culture about feeling comfort?
5. Watch these additional short research videos on infants learning how to recognize the order of the world around them (categorical thinking)—visually and linguistically:
   - How newborns see the world and faces in particular
   - How infants' brains work to distinguish words from the string of language they listen to

The researchers who do the research covered in the two videos above are not anthropologists. They are psychologists and linguists who are trying to understand the *universal ways that people learn* anthropologists, while interested in commonalities to our species, tend to emphasize how we differ. So below in the "For More" section I have added a couple of (not required) short videos on infant-caregiver interactions from outside the U.S. It is important to study learning culture ("enculturation") cross-culturally because so much of the information researchers use to develop their models is based on studies of WEIRD (Western, Educated, Industrialized, Rich and Democratic) people. We know culture affects perception, so to really understand what is universal, we need to find commonalities across as many peoples as possible. How might researchers have to adapt their studies for people outside WEIRD societies, however?

Week 6: How we learn culture Part 2

**Required & Recommended Preparatory Work for this Week:**

*Part I: These multimedia pieces (generally) challenge your cultural assumptions about the way the way "is." We will be doing exercises in class based on them.*

- **Video on How Our Brains, Model Space** so powerfully we cannot understand when data does not fit our models. A question you should ask yourself is: Would this custom work equally well for people who do not grow up in structures with parallel walls and floors/ceilings? What about people who grow up in rounded homes?
- **Radio Lab program oncologies as Cultural not "Natural" categories:** Even the ways we see color is organized by culture. People see the colors they have learned to see (even if they can perceive the same color spectrum). And (starting around minute 9) peoples have varying numbers of colors in their languages, but they add color terms in a very specific order. That's universal! [Download podcast here](#) if you don't want to stream

*Part II: While all people may learn culture in similar ways (this is still being studied intensively), WHAT we learn and HOW we learn it varies tremendously. Spend some time comparing and contrasting these THREE different ways to raise children:

**Raising Children in Face-to-Face Societies**

1. Diamond: [Raising Children among Food Foragers (note this article goes on for several pages so read it all)]
2. Childhood Scene In an Amazonian "Tribal" People (the Yanomamo in Venezuela) circa 1971 (**MUST BE LOGGED IN TO FIU LIBRARY TO VIEW**)
3. Childcare in a Turkish Village

**NOT Required but highly recommended:** Watch streaming videos on Preschool Study comparing China, Japan and U.S. (we will be discussing these in class)
Week 7: Culturally Integrating into Groups; Learning to Belong

Required Preparatory Work for this Week:

This week focuses on the very human way we incorporate people into social groups and help them feel belonging—cultural comfort.

READ or LISTEN:

- Culture as Comfort: All of Chapter 4 and part of Chapter 5 (through the top paragraph on p. 83)
- Belonging among the Ju/(H)ansi Food Foragers (think about belonging within a face-to-face society; see also the first video below)

Rituals: Below are a Selection of Short Rituals* from Different Peoples and for Different Purposes:

For each ritual, identify (1) how the ritual cultivates belonging, (2) among whom, and (3) how it transitions initiates from one social status to another. Also pay attention to elements that are similar in the rituals (social scientists look for patterns within the rich variety of cultural practices and you should too). Then we try to explain these patterns and you should also:

- Ju/(H)ansi rite of passage into adulthood ritual (FIU streaming video 15 min; make sure to be on campus or use library website and sign in for off-campus access)
- Egyptian rite of passage into personhood ritual (Version One - short and written) and Version Two (FIU streaming video 30 min — see above)
- Global rite of passage into group membership—sometimes to personhood, sometimes to adulthood: To circumcise sons or not?

These are videos and articles of rituals in the "ethnographic present" so keep this in mind as you watch them. Some of the films, in particular, are quite old (note their release dates) but nonetheless serve to show the wide variety of rituals marking important human events. The rituals you view are likely to have changed, or may even have disappeared, in the time since these films were recorded.

Week 8: Ties that Bind Us Culturally – Rituals

Required Preparatory Work for this Week:

This week focuses on rituals, but the rituals we will study this week differ from those of the other week in at least one or more fundamental ways. Additionally, this week we pay attention primarily to rituals familiar to people in the U.S. Why? Because it is always important to keep in mind that we are as cultural as anyone else. If we gaze at other peoples as odd, strange, or exotic, they may very well view us this way too...So it is time to "see" the water you normally swim in and ignore. We will spend time on ritual-based exercises on these rituals this week in class, so get ready for a very interesting dive into your own odd practices.

READ or LISTEN:

Rituals I: The Rituals that Build Belonging (and Comfort) for U.S.

The rituals you are to read below are common in the U.S. and should be very familiar to you. They also are grouped together because they share something(s). As you learn about them in a more anthropological way, think about how they relate to the lessons from Culture as Comfort. What do they share? How do they relate to Culture as Comfort? Studying "our" rituals also should further your understanding of the fact that we all do culture. It's not just something other odd, "exotic" or strange peoples do.

Kottak Ritual at McDonalds

(Yes it's outdated in content but the key idea is still major: apply them to today's McD's or BK or Wendy's or Pollo Tropical...)

Sports are full of rituals. Watch this short ethnographic video on rituals in baseball and think about why. Then compare that effort against an anthropologist's more developed approach: Gmelch Ritual (and superstition) in Baseball

Recommended: Katz Ritual in the Operating Room

Rituals II: Rituals that Do Something Different -- What Do They Do?

The following rituals are not quite common in the U.S. but may or may not be familiar to you. They also relate to an important lesson or two from Culture as Comfort but different from the rituals above. As you learn about them, think about what they have in common and how they relate to an upcoming important ritual you will not be able to avoid very soon...

Sadie Hawkins Day -- classic example is girls asking boys to dance (some funny youtube videos on this one)

Ramadan -- the celebration of the holiest month of the Muslim calendar and the ritual that marks its ending -- Eid al-Fitr 2013 2012

Lent -- the celebration of the holiest month of the Christian calendar and one ritual that marks its beginning (another is Ash Wednesday) -- Mardis Gras/Fat Tuesday

April Fools Day -- Why bother with such a strange "holiday"? What does it mean?

Rituals III: Career Connection with Rituals

Applying Your Anthropological Understanding of Rituals to Careers in:

- Marketing: Studying Rituals of U.S. Consumers (Think about Ritual at McDonalds here too)
- Safety Design (you saw this already): How does the new Delta Airlines video use Culture as Comfort principles? (If you don't get it, watch the old video)
Week 9: Midterm Exam

Course Part III: ANALYZING HOW AS WE CREATE "US" WE ALSO CREATE "OTHERS"

In the 2nd part of the course we focused on how we learn to belong socially with other people through the process of learning cultural practices with particular people(s). In sum, we’ve learned about the “ties that bind” people.

In this section of the course we learn the opposite — about the “lines that divide” people and peoples. By now you should know that any group of people has diversity within it (such as males and females) and that group’s cultural practices distinguish “us” from “them”. This section of the course examines these fundamental processes among peoples for a few types of lines that divide — gender, sexuality/sexual orientation, ethnicity, and two more that the class will choose.

Week 10: Lines that Divide All Peoples – Gender

Required Preparatory Work for this Week:

Attached Files: 
Messner 1990 Boyhood Sports & Masculinities.pdf (13.618 MB)

This week we will focus both on the concept of gender (as compared to sex) and also how we learn gender in childhood. Gender is so important as an internal marker of difference within societies that it is believed to be the first such “line that divides” children learn. Make sure to familiarize yourself with the THREE KEY LESSONS this week (as enumerated below).

1. What is gender and why distinguish it from sex? How do we acquire our gender lenses in childhood? What are ways, cross-culturally common and different, for us to do gender throughout life? Principle Lesson #1: We Learn to DO gender.

Read Culture as Comfort Chap 5, pps. 83 to bottom of p. 91

Doing masculinity in Mongolia — Listen and watch for how sport is used to define masculinity and nation. How does this work in the U.S. and other countries? When you have finished, read this scholar’s association of sport in the U.S. with learning masculinity: Messner 1990 Boyhood Sports & Masculinities.pdf

2. Are there just two gender categories (male and female) cross-culturally or do some peoples recognize more gender categories? If so, why? Principle Lesson #2: Gender is not biological, it’s cultural. And with shifting cultural, the mind wishes the world to be clearly categorized but reality is more complex. (We want to see the world in black (one gender) and white (the opposite gender) but in reality, gender is shades of gray.)

Why We Need More than Three Genders -- Blog post by Prof. Barbara J. King, anthropologist

3. Gender and social hierarchies: Do men always dominate or are there truly gender egalitarian societies? Principle Lesson #3: Gender is a universal line that divides all peoples but is it always the basis for inequality?

Friedel “Society and Sex Roles”

How does this author explain gender differences, hierarchies? Compare against Culture as Comfort (and also against Freakonomics podcast in optional materials below).

Week 11: Lines that Divide All Peoples – Sex and Sexuality

Required Preparatory Work for this Week:

This week we focus on one of the most incredible human dilemmas: the biological flexibility versus sociocultural rigidity surrounding sexuality. Unlike virtually all other animals, we humans do not have periods of fertility that match sexual activity. Biologically, people can have sex at any time; we are not limited by our biology. Yet, around the world peoples highly regulate sexuality—who can have sex with whom, when, how, etc. Social norms are a great source of social science interest. We will explore this quandary this week. There are many readings this week, but read them to open your eyes to the issues and not to study for a quiz or test (although, of course, you should take the material seriously).

This is a huge area of research and scholarship so this week will will explore only three major questions that arise and should be addressed cross-culturally:

1. Sexuality: What is the Range Cross-Culturally and What Human Universals Exist?

   The key question to think about is in the title above — cultural variations in sexuality as well as universals.

   Materials to Cover for this Section:

   Gray & Wolfe “Anthropological Approaches to Human Sexuality”

2. Homosexuality: Within or Beyond “Normal”?

   The key questions to think about here include: How “abnormal” is homosexuality across species and peoples? Why is it categorized as “abnormal” when it is? Who categorizes whom and how does that affect working with affected populations? Finally, how might your “Culture as Comfort” knowledge affect how you understand the huge conflicts over homosexuality?

   Additional Materials to Cover for this Section:

   Evidence for homosexuality in animals (i.e. that it might be biological not cultural) – “Can Animals Be Gay?”

   Arguments for & against homosexuality as a sin or an abomination (i.e. that it is cultural/moral not biological)— Video 1 (Christian Pastor) Video 2 (Christian-produced “Documentary”) Webpage with Biblical passages about homosexuality Video 3: (Christian Pastor)

   Applying anthropological understandings of sexuality to a particular group of people: “Living on the Down Low”
Week 12: Lines that Divide all Societies – Ethnicity

Required Preparatory Work for this Week:

Ethnicity is as complex and probably more complex than race as one of the many different lines that divide societies. Why? We'll address that this week. So what is ethnicity and how does it differ from race? And how do we learn ethnicity, do ethnicity and so on? These are questions we'll work on this week too.

1. What is ethnicity? Is it biological, sociocultural, or what? What does scholarship say about ethnicity versus what everyday people think about race?
   a. To enhance your understanding of these very common social categories— but which are often confused—you are to do the individual assignment below.
   b. Read this short, famous text on Being "100% American.pdf"

2. Has ethnicity always existed in the human experience—that is, is it one of the lines that divides all societies or not?
3. What relationships is there between "ethnocentrism" and ethnicity?
4. How do people learn ethnicity as an important human social category?
   a. Instead of reading or watching about this, you are going to apply your understanding of learning culture to your own ethnicity(ies). [See this week's short assignment for details.]

5. Is ethnicity always the same or does a person's ethnic identity shift over time and/or based on social context?
   a. You will address this question in your own short assignment for this week.
   b. Study the "evolution" of the "Hispanic" category in the U.S. using these materials:
      i. Rumbaut: "Pigments of Our Imagination: Latinos in the U.S. Census"
         (NOT required but more thorough history of the appearance of the Hispanic category on the U.S. census for those interested)

6. How does the social category ethnicity intersect with other important social categories such as gender, sexuality, race, nationality? (i.e. intersectionality)
7. How does ethnicity operate as a major categorical equality — a line that divides a society? Let's look at an example very close to home by a professor from CSS -- Stepick and Stepick 2009 Interethnic Relations & Conflicts in South Florida.pdf

Week 13: The Anthropology of Food

This Week's Required Preparatory Materials

In order to answer these questions, familiarize yourself with these few materials:

Video: Fun 11 minute video on the "agricultural revolution" when food foragers began to cultivate the earth and why. Delivered tongue-in-cheek by John Greene in his youtube channel Crash Course (in human history)

The "Paleo Diet" controversy: Is this dietfad or fact? Should we eat like food foragers (presumably) did to be healthier today as the Diet promoters argue or have we continued to evolve so that food foragers diets might not be best for us?

Optional: Excellent Scientific American article on the controversy and Ted Talk by paleoarchaeologist on the controversy

Magazine article about how the food industry uses knowledge about our cravings for salty, fatty and sweet foods owing to our forager food past when those were scarce. But now they are common and many food companies load them into foods to get us to eat more. What are the consequences? Read to find out.

This week of class students bring in “comfort foods” from their own cultural backgrounds while the instructor brings in “discomforting foods” – foods that are eaten by peoples in the world but are not considered desirable in the U.S. We then have a feast of these comforting and discomforting foods.
Week 15: What do I do with Anthropology and Anthropological knowledge?

Anthropology & Careers

This week is devoted to making an explicit connection between this course, anthropology in general, and many different career paths you might take. We will have several guest speakers as well as people from the department to help you plot out a major or minor in this area.

This Course: The overarching theme of this course is to understand how you became the cultural being you are so that you can go through your life doing culture more mindfully. Most people have little to no idea about how they learned their cultural ideas and practices, but you do. Hopefully this will enhance your life as well as your ability to enhance others' lives as well -- including your relations with children.

- This week, then, finish Culture as Comfort by reading Chapter 6. This chapter also links the book's ideas to practical applications for life and career.

Anthropology and Your Career: When you graduate from college you will be an elite member of society, one of only about 1/3 of adults who are college-educated. Anthropology can and should be useful to you in your life but also in your professional career whatever that may be. Below are a couple of very simple readings that highlight the value of anthropological insights on cultural differences to jobs in the non-profit and business areas.

Select one or more career stories by anthropologists working in different jobs and think about how anthropology informs their work.

Non Profits (grew by 25% in past few years so big area for employment, but...)

- Nonprofit watchdog organizations will start requiring that they prove results in 2015. How do they do that? Research! Program Evaluation will keep you engaged and employed.

Business:

- Want to sell products outside your cultural comforts? Learn what Gillette learned about selling men's razors in India. Another example is how Campbell's Soup figures out flavors to sell.

For additional career-related information and ideas, see the Career Connections link on the left column in Blackboard. Check out all the ways that understanding people's cultural practices and ideas enhances your career options. When you have found something of interest, do the final individual assignment for this course. If you complete it, you will get an automatic A for your grade....