ATH 2150 Comparative Non-Western Cultures
This is an Integrated Writing Course

Instructor: 
Office: 
Office Hours:

E-mail: 
Phone: 

This course introduces the student to the basic concepts, ideas, issues and debates in cultural anthropology, using examples from Asia, Africa, Latin America, Native North America and the Middle East. Cultural anthropology explores the diverse ways in which humans relate to one another, and reveals the cultural milieus, political configurations, ways of speaking and environments which people have used to shape their world. Students will also be challenged to call into question beliefs and behaviors which may seem “natural” or “inevitable” within their own cultures.

Course Learning Outcomes:

- To familiarize students with principles and concepts of cultural anthropology, including the four-field approach.
- To raise students’ awareness of the diversity of human cultural belief and activity among non-Western peoples in a global context.
- Develop knowledge of anthropological theories, research methods and ethics.
- To establish useful and systematic criteria by which students can evaluate gender, marriage and kinship in human and social groups.
- To find productive ways of interpreting and describing political, social economic and religious systems in a global cultural context through writing.

This course also fulfills the Element 3, “Global Traditions” requirement for Wright State University’s Core curriculum:

- It critically describes some of the political, social or economic systems; historical, and cultural or spiritual traditions around the world.
- It demonstrates the diversity of people or traditions in our world in ways that promote effective engagement, both locally and globally.
- It uses political, social, economic, historical, cultural, spiritual or technological knowledge to evaluate contemporary issues.

Remember that this is a writing integrated course. It is a very challenging course that requires your active participation, and willingness to occasionally “go out on a limb” and confront issues that might be unfamiliar to you. You are also required to express your ideas through writing that is to be revised and submitted in a timely way. It is also essential that you arrive punctually, and actively participate in class discussions and workshops.

Writing Integrated Learning Outcomes:

- Monitoring improvement in student writing throughout the semester.
- Using writing as a significant means of inquiry about culture.
- Introducing students to the conventions of writing specific to cultural anthropology.
- Making certain that students meet minimum expectations of the Writing Across the Curriculum program.
Required Texts:

Grading Criteria:

- **Exams 40%**: There will be two exams, a mid-term and a final. The exams will include multiple-choice, and essay questions.
- **Workshops and Participation 10%**: You will be expected to attend all class sessions, asked to be prepared to respond to the topics of the week, and participate in workshops during class time.
- **Weekly Response Papers on Readings 20%**: I will require that you turn in a one-page essay each week in response to questions in Pilot about the essays from Spradley and McCurdy. You will submit these responses via a Pilot dropbox, and I will provide timely feedback on your responses.
- **Discussion Leader Presentation 5%**: You will work in teams to prepare a two page presentation on one of the readings or topics of the week, that will also serve as a launch point for discussion. The group will post their written presentation on a class bulletin board on Pilot. Discussion leaders may turn in their presentation paper in lieu of response papers for the week.
- **Research Paper 25%**: You will be asked to write a brief (six pages, typed, double-spaced and paginated) research essay in stages throughout the semester, on a particular people or aspect of culture using at least 3 scholarly printed books or articles. Anyone not turning in a final paper will automatically receive an “F” for the entire class grade.

Note: All written work in this class will be submitted by Pilot drop boxes, or a print copy. I will not accept e-mail attachments or anything not properly submitted by these two means. Computers and printers are available to students through numerous computer labs throughout Wright State University. Printing services are available at Wright State University computer labs, or at Wright Copy Center, in the Student Union next to Wright-Patterson Credit Union.

Final Grade Scale:

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<th>Percentage</th>
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<td>A</td>
<td>91% and up</td>
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<td>B</td>
<td>81%-90%</td>
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<td>C</td>
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<td>D</td>
<td>61%-70%</td>
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<td>E</td>
<td>Below 60%</td>
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Absence Policy: Attendance is required and expected each day the class is in session. I will take attendance periodically during the semester, and will gauge attendance through participation in group workshops and discussion. I will try to become familiar with each student’s name and face, and will recognize when someone has not been attending on a regular basis. Arriving late will also be noted, and will also result in penalties.

Withdrawing from the Class: Withdrawing from a class is an official process, requested through the registrar’s office and in consultation with your academic advisor. Simply not attending class is not the same as withdrawing, and may result in a failing grade on your transcript. Please consult the registrar’s office or your advisor if you intend to withdraw. Also pay attention to the following deadlines for the spring semester:

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<tr>
<td>xx</td>
<td>Last Day for All Students to Drop a Class Without a Grade</td>
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<td>xx</td>
<td>Last Day for All Students to Drop a Class With a Grade of W</td>
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Curves and Extra Credit: 
Grades are based upon work done on assignment as designed in the beginning of the semester. As a general rule, I do not curve grades. I also do not assign extra credit assignments.

Statement on Academic Dishonesty: Academic dishonesty encompasses any activity that seeks to gain credit for work one has not done, provides assistance to others seeking to gain such credit, or deliberately damages or destroys the work of others. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to:

- **Plagiarism** - misrepresenting another's ideas, phrases, discourse, or works as one's own - Academic information and ideas are produced and owned by individuals. Using such products without giving credit constitutes stealing. This includes using information directly from the web, or representing papers available on the web as your own work.

- **Cheating** - the act, or attempted act, of giving or obtaining aid and/or information by illicit means in meeting any academic requirements, including examinations.

- **Fabrication** - intentional and unauthorized falsification or invention of any information or citation in an academic sense in any academic exercise. Any falsification of information or of sources of information is not acceptable, including: copying from another, using unauthorized materials during a test or experiment, unauthorized collaboration with another student, use of materials written by others without giving credit, submission of the same paper to two or more instructors without prior approval, failure to acknowledge assistance by tutors and others.

The penalty for engaging in any of these forms of dishonesty in relation to this class at minimum will be a grade of "0" on the assignment and may result in failure in the course or disciplinary action.

Students with Disabilities: If you feel that you may need a reasonable accommodation(s) for equal access in this course due to a disability, I will be happy to accommodate you—provided that you first contact the Office of Disability Services, E186 Student Union, in order to arrange to have your needs evaluated.

E-mail: disability_services@wright.edu, or Telephone: (937) 775-5680 FaxTTY: (937) 775-5844

**SCHEDULE:** “Robbins” refers to chapters in *Cultural Anthropology: A Problem-Based Approach*, and page numbers refer to readings in Spradley and McCurdy *Conformity and Conflict*.

**Week 1** Culture and Meaning: Doing Ethnographic Fieldwork.
*Homework for Thursday:* Robbins, Chapter 1; “Ethnography and Culture” (pp. 6-12).
Introduction: The Five Fields; The Four Questions
Discussion of the four fields; Ethnography and Culture.

**Week 2** Language, Thought and Reality
*Homework for Tuesday:* Robbins, Chapter 4; “Conversational Style”; “Whorf Revisited” (pp 61-68; 49-56).
Language Workshop; Language and Culture
Discussion of Language, Gender and Culture

**Week 3** Cultural Constructions of Reality: Worldview
*Homework:* “Taraka’s Ghost,” “Mother’s Love” (pp; 260-265;155-164).
Spirit Possession in Zanzibar.
Discussion: Worldview and Culture. **DRAFT RESEARCH PAPER PROPOSAL DUE**

**Week 4** The Cultural Construction of Identity; Gender.
Identity and Gender; The Hijras; Discussion of Identity & Gender; Reference Librarian Visit.

Week 5 Kinship—Relations by Blood
Homework: Robbins, Chapter 5; “Uterine Families” (179-184).
Kinship Workshop
Kinship and Family; Discussion of readings; FINAL RESEARCH PROPOSAL DUE.

Week 6: Kinship—Relations by marriage
Consanguinity and Affinity; Bridewealth; Woman Marriage.
Discussion of Marriage; Discussion; What is a Scholarly Book/Article?

Week 7: Culture and the Individual
No Readings or response due
Midterm Exam
Culture and the Individual

Week 8- The Cultural Construction of Religion, Belief and Ritual.
Homework: “Baseball Magic” (266-274).
Religion workshop.
Religion and Ritual. BIBLIOGRAPHY AND SAMPLE SCHOLARLY ARTICLE/CHAPTER.

Week 9: The Meaning of Progress.
Homework for Thursday: Robbins, Chapter 2; “The Hunters” (73-86)
Workshop on Progress
Forms of Social Change; Discussion of the Meaning of Progress. RESEARCH PAPER DRAFT 1 DUE.

Week 10: The Cultural Construction of Social Hierarchy.
Social Hierarchy; Integrative theory.
Exploitative theory; Cultural Capital; Discussion;

Week 11: The Cultural Construction of Violent Conflict.
Homework: Robbins Chapter 8; “Manipulating Meaning” (57-60)
Violence
Kohistan and the Great Plains; Discussion

Week 12: The Cultural Construction of the Nation-State and Ethnicity.
Homework: Robbins Chapter 3; “The Road to Refugee Resettlement” (316-344)
Ethnicity; Nation-State;
Rwanda and Burundi. RESEARCH PAPER DRAFT 2 DUE

Week 13 Race and Class.
Race and Class in the United States
Cultural capital & cultural reproduction.

Week 14 Contemporary Globalization.
Homework: Review Robbins, Chapter 3 “Cocaine & the Economic Deterioration”; “Malawi versus the World
Final Exam: xxx in our regular classroom

Note: the final exam period is part of our regular academic calendar. You are required to take the final exam at its designated date and time. There will be no exceptions made to accommodate jobs, family vacations or any other scheduling conflicts with the exam.
Comparative Non-Western Cultures Research Paper
ATH 2150
You will be asked to write a brief (six page maximum, typed, double-spaced and paginated) research essay in stages throughout the semester, on a particular people or aspect of culture using at least 3 scholarly printed books or articles.

There are several steps to the process by which you will write this paper. **This means that you must plan ahead:**

- A one page, typed, double-spaced draft research proposal is due on xx, and a graded final proposal is due via Pilot on xx. In this proposal, you will discuss the setting of your paper (what area of the world, people or cultural activity, event or situation will form the basis of your research?), and the anthropological problem that you will confront (what might we learn from this example about being human in all of its diversity?).
- You must turn in a hard copy of a working bibliography and hand in a photocopy of a sample scholarly article or book chapter on xx. You must copy the whole article or 1 entire book chapter to demonstrate its usefulness. Do not hand me a book, or reference to an article or book.
- You will prepare a first draft for xx. Remember that the better the draft, the more I and your peers can help you. A second draft is due xx. So try to come up with a complete and somewhat polished draft early on.
- The final paper is due via Pilot on xx.

**Final Grading Criteria**
This set of grading criteria is based on the philosophy that writing is a process; that better writing comes with time and with practice. Therefore, grading is based on your improvement from one draft to the next well as on your final product.

A The essay is of outstanding quality in almost all respects. With few exceptions, there is significant revision from first to final draft.
B The essay is analytical and clearly focused, but needs work in at least one major area.
C The essay retains the promise of an original, well supported purpose, but falls short in a number of ways.
D The paper needs substantial revision in terms of one of the major areas of purpose/point, focus, organization or analysis.

- The writer has not simply summarized information about others’ research, but has come up with an original argument confronting a major issue described in either (1) the Robbins textbook, or (2) the class itself.
- The writer has a shown competence in research, and in choosing appropriate books and articles to support his/her research. The writer demonstrates an understanding of the books or articles, and includes proper citations.
- It takes an original, fresh approach to the subject that makes the reader say, “Oh, I never thought of it that way before” Being original is not the same as being “quirky”.
- The essay is well-focused, and all paragraphs work toward furthering the main point.
- The body of the piece is well organized with smooth transitions. The sentences build on each other such that thoughts are developed from the beginning of the essay to the end.
- The prose is clear, detailed and engaging, and characterized by precise word choice, syntax and grammar.

F The essay is unacceptable because
- It contains plagiarized material, or otherwise violates Wright State University’s code of academic honesty.
- It shows a complete misunderstanding of the material with which it deals.
- It fails in an assignment, which calls for such, to present the materials in the form of an argument.
- Its grammar, usage, spelling, punctuation or structure fails to meet basic communication requirements of standard written English.
- It lacks a bibliography and/or in-text citations.
Discussion Leaders (5%)

You will work in teams of three to four people, and develop a discussion topic related to the week’s reading or case study. This will be an assignment that includes preparing material for in-class discussion, and a written reflection **Due the week after** the class discussion that will be posted on Pilot. There are three things that I hope that you will accomplish:

1) Provide some brief constructive critical commentaries about the readings. Were they difficult? Is there advice that you, as a fellow student, can give to other students about how to understand them? Where do they fit within the larger scheme of the course, as far as you are able to discern? There is no need to summarize the readings, since everyone presumably read them.

2) The second, and most challenging aspect, is to generate topics for discussion, by suggesting ways in which the cultural concepts or ideas expressed relate back to our own lives. Can you think of experiences that we, as students and citizens, have experienced similar things in our own culture? Or, does what is described represent something radically different from what members of the class have experienced? If so, how might it be different? How can we “get our minds around” such different and unfamiliar topics?

3) The week after the discussion, the discussion leaders **as a group** will prepare a written reflection on our class discussion, and the things that other students said in response to the leaders’ topic. This written response will be posted on Pilot, so that other students can read it.

It is important to remember that although the discussion leaders are making a short presentation, they are not lecturing. The presenting part need take only about five minutes maximum (but extra time is allowable). Other students in class are responsible for completing the week’s readings, and contributing to the class discussion. A really effective discussion is one which “jump starts” the conversation, and leads to other students building on the ideas presented. Thus, the leaders are counting on other students to make them look good—and hopefully when it is the other students’ turn, they will return the favor by contributing to the conversation.

The papers that were prepared by teams should represent a collaborative work that is about 2-3 pages, typed, double spaced. If you are working alone, about two pages should suffice. If you feel that you need more space, that is OK—but unnecessary. The paper should be a reflection on what happened in class, and what we learned through our discussion about culture as it relates to the topic of the reading.

**Discussion leaders do not have to turn in a weekly response paper on the Tuesday of the week that they are discussing.**