

Semester at Sea, Course Syllabus  
Colorado State University, Academic Partner

**Voyage:** Fall 2016  
**Discipline:** Anthropology  
**Course Number and Title:** ANTH 329: Cultural Change  
**Division:** Upper  
**Faculty Name:** Alexander J. Martín  
**Semester Credit Hours:** 3

## **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course explores the reasons and mechanics of human cultural change, as well as cultural persistence or resistance to that change. This topic is of critical importance to understand why our society behaves the way that it does, the social diversity we see around the world today, and the factors playing a role in the evolution of these societies. An important component of this class is not only understanding why societies evolve into different and novel forms, but how we can use empirical data to discern between the different potential explanations for this change. To this end, students will be exposed to some of the leading theories that explain the process of cultural evolution, and we will place special focus on how to use data from the populations we visit during our voyage—as well as from ethnographic, historical, and pre-historical records—to systematically assess why cultures evolved in particular ways. The first part of the course reconstructs basic social structure and how it results from specific human biological, economic, social, or political needs. The second part investigates different alternatives for how and why societies are influenced and re-worked by changes in historical and social-economic contexts, and how these prompt culture and behavior to evolve in particular ways.

## **LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

Throughout the semester we will be working towards achieving various goals. By the end of this course, you will:

1. Understand the basics of social organization both for traditional societies as well as for post-industrial ones. This will provide the foundation of our understanding of cultural change.
2. Understand an institutional approach to the study of populations, including the function different institutions serve, why they vary, and why they change.
3. Understand how human culture re-formulates itself to facilitate institutional needs, and why in some instances it does not.
4. Have a comparative appreciation of cultural variation across the globe.
5. Understand the fundamental structure of globalization, and its increasingly rapid pace.
6. Understand why in some cases culture homogenizes to the forces of globalization, and why in some cases it makes national and local identity and cultural patterns more distinctive and salient.

## **REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS**

**AUTHOR:** Wolf, Eric R.  
**TITLE:** Europe and the People Without History  
**PUBLISHER:** University of California Press, Berkeley

ISBN #: 978-0520268180  
DATE/EDITION: 1982

AUTHOR: Postill, John  
TITLE: Localizing the Internet: An Anthropological Account  
PUBLISHER: Berghahn, New York.  
ISBN #: 978-0857451972  
DATE/EDITION: 2011

## TOPICAL OUTLINE OF COURSE

Depart Hamburg—September 10

### **B1—September 13:**

#### Introduction

TOPICS:

-How does culture fit in with evolution, biology, and social organization?

READINGS: Dunbar 2003; Roberts, et al. 2008.

### **B2—September 15:**

#### The Social Structure of Traditional Societies

TOPICS:

-How do households and communities integrate to form bands, chiefdoms, states, and empires?

READING: Flannery 1972; Marcus 2008.

No Classes—September 16

### **B3—September 18:**

#### The Domestic Unit within the Modern State

TOPICS:

-How were traditional societies transformed by the industrial revolution and the modern state?

READING: Wolf 1982:267-295.

Piraeus—September 19-23

### **B4—September 25:**

#### Production in Traditional Societies

TOPICS:

-Food and craft production:

For the home (DMP 1).

For the State (DMP 2).

READING: Sahlins 1963.

Civitavecchia - September 26-28  
Livorno - September 29-30

### **B5—October 2:**

MOVIE: Documentary on colonial expansion: "Guns, Germs, and Steel" (PBS).

Barcelona—October 3-7

**B6—October 9:**

CLASS DISCUSSION ON PORT VISITS AND READING CHECK

Casablanca—October 10-14

**B7—October 16:**

Production in Modern Societies

TOPICS:

-The global south:

Production in the countryside.

Production in the cities.

-The global north:

Modern agricultural production in the global north.

Manufactured goods in the global north.

-Global division of labor.

READING: Wolf 1982:310-383

**B8—October 18:**

Culture and Political Change in Traditional Societies

TOPICS:

-Hierarchical organization and taxation.

-The rise of political economies: The Teotihuacan example.

**B9—October 20:**

Culture and Political Change in Modern Societies

TOPICS:

-Dictatorships, democracies, theocracies, and bureaucracies.

Dakar—October 21-24

**B10—October 26:**

MOVIE: Documentary on culture and warfare.

**B11—October 28:**

Culture and Warfare (part 1)

TOPICS:

-Ancient warfare: Practical, guerilla, not ritualized.

-Modern warfare: Impractical tactics, formal battles, highly ritualized.

READINGS: Keeley 1996, chapters 2 and 3.

No Classes—October 28

**B12—October 31:**

Culture and Warfare (part 2)

TOPICS:

-The question of causes and change.  
READINGS: Keeley 1996, chapters 8 and 9.  
PODCAST: The Good Show, part 3: A story of WWI (RadioLab).

Salvador—November 1-6

**B13—November 8:**

CLASS DISCUSSION ON PORT VISITS AND READING CHECK

**B14—November 10:**

Religion and Culture in Traditional Societies

TOPICS:

- Early shamanism.
  - The origin of institutionalized religion.
  - Religious authority in supra-local societies: Justifying authority and the social order.
  - The growth and independence of religious institutions.
- READINGS: Trigger 2003:409-521, 670-672; Natchez religion and the death of Tattooed Serpent.

**B15—November 12:**

Religion and Culture in Modern Societies

TOPICS:

- Religious institutions today
  - The usefulness of religious behavior.
- READINGS: Norenzayan and Shariff 2008.

Port of Spain—November 13-14

**B16—November 16:**

Kinship and Culture Change (part 1)

TOPICS:

- Types of kinship.
  - Factors affecting kinship structure.
- READINGS: Frechione and Scaglione 1981; Stone 1992.

**B17—November 18:**

Kinship and Culture Change (part 2)

TOPICS:

- Kinship in the modern world: Why kinship structures vary from one nation to the next.
- READINGS: Gelfand, et al. 2011.

No Classes—November 18

**B18—November 21:**

CLASS DISCUSSION ON PORT VISITS AND READING CHECK

Callao—November 22-26

**B19—November 27:**

Demography and Culture

TOPICS:

-City life and the culture of poverty.

READINGS: Bourgois 1995; Lyon-Callo and Hyatt 2003.

**B20—November 30:**

Nationalism and cultural change

TOPICS:

- The formation and persistence of identity.

READINGS: Blanc, et al. 1995; Wolf 2001:\*excerpt\*

Guayaquil—December 1-4

**December 1, Field Class:** Townships in Guayaquil

**B21—December 6:**

Globalization and culture

TOPICS:

-The re-creation of identity.

READINGS: Bordi 2006; Ehrenreich and Hochschild 2012; Gupta and Ferguson 1992

**B22—December 9:**

Tourism and cultural change

TOPICS:

-Cultural appropriation.

-Culture as commodity.

READINGS: Brennan 2001; Bruner 2001; Stronza 2001

Puntarenas—December 9-13

**B23—December 15:**

Culture and the Internet

TOPICS:

-Digital identities and culture.

READINGS: Postill 2011

**B24—December 17:**

CLASS DISCUSSION ON PORT VISITS AND READING CHECK

Study Day—December 18

**B25—December 20; A Day Finals**

FIELD CLASS ASSIGNMENTS DUE

San Diego—December 22

## FIELD WORK

**Remember that Field Class attendance is mandatory for all students enrolled in this course. Do not book individual travel plans or a Semester at Sea sponsored trip on the day of your field class.** Field Classes constitute at least 20% of the contact hours for each course, and will be developed and led by the instructor.

### *Reading checks and class discussions*

Reading checks are short-answer and/or short-essays that ask students to tie port experiences directly to course content, both allowing students to reflect on how those experiences connect to the cultural processes learned in class, as well allowing the instructor to make sure students are keeping up with the readings, understand the material, and connecting it to real-world examples. Likewise, periods of class discussion have been designated so that we can talk about the different places we visit and how they relate to particular cultural processes learned in class.

### *Field class and assignment – Guayaquil, Ecuador – December 1, 2016*

The field class will allow you to interact with students from one of Guayaquil's Universities as we jointly visit several locations in the *suburbios* ("young towns" or *favelas*) that ring the city. This will give you the opportunity to see first-hand how many of the processes of cultural change covered in class affect the inhabitants of these neighborhoods, but give you a chance to interact with *Guayaquileños* whose studies directly focus on issues of social planning, urban growth, and economic and environmental sustainability, as they attempt to tackle many of the challenges that result from rapid globalization. (A possible alternate trip will focus on Supranationalism vs. Devolution in Europe: Focus on Spain.)

## METHODS OF EVALUATION

- |   |            |
|---|------------|
| 1) <u>Reading checks (20% each)</u> ..... | <b>80%</b> |
| 2) <u>Field Class Assignment</u> .....    | <b>20%</b> |

### *Reading checks*

Because this is an upper division course, readings are crucial to the success of the class. There will be a total of four short-answer/short-essay reading checks asking you to tie port experiences directly to course content, allowing you to demonstrate your knowledge of the material and reflect on how the cultural processes learned in class connect to the real-life examples you come across during our voyage.

### *Field Class Assignment (Townships of Guayaquil, December 1<sup>st</sup>)*

For the field class assignment you will use information gained from our visit to the Guayaquil *suburbios* (townships) to either support or reject a proposed mechanism for cultural change through standard essay format. The field class assignment will constitute 20% of the grade.

## GRADING SCALE

The following Grading Scale is utilized for student evaluation:

A+	97% and above	Excellent
A	93-96%	Excellent
A-	90-92%	Good
B+	87-89%	Good
B	83-86%	Good
B-	80-82%	Satisfactory
C+	77-79%	Satisfactory
C*	70-76%	Satisfactory
D*	60-69%	Poor, but passing
F	59% and below	Failure

\*C-, D+ and D- grades are not assigned at CSU. Pass/Fail is not an option for Semester at Sea coursework.

Handing in exercises late will result in losing 10% for each day.

## ATTENDANCE/ENGAGEMENT IN THE ACADEMIC PROGRAM

Attendance in all Semester at Sea classes is mandatory. Students must inform their instructors prior to any unanticipated absence and take the initiative to make up missed work in a timely fashion.

## UNION SEMINARS

Faculty members on the Fall 2016 Voyage will present on various academic topics during the evening Union Seminars, held during sea days. These topics will present relevant cultural information in various disciplines, depending on the location on the itinerary. Students are encouraged to attend at least one of these sessions, relevant to the academic topic of this course.

## LEARNING ACCOMMODATIONS

Semester at Sea provides academic accommodations for students with diagnosed learning disabilities, in accordance with ADA guidelines. Students who will need accommodations in a class, should contact ISE to discuss their individual needs. Any accommodation must be discussed in a timely manner prior to implementation. A memo from the student's home institution verifying the accommodations received on their home campus is required before any accommodation is provided on the ship. Students must submit this verification of accommodations pre-voyage as soon as possible, but no later than July 19, 2016 to [academic@isevoyages.org](mailto:academic@isevoyages.org).

## STUDENT CONDUCT CODE

The foundation of a university is truth and knowledge, each of which relies in a fundamental manner upon academic integrity and is diminished significantly by academic misconduct. Academic integrity is conceptualized as doing and taking credit for one's own work. A pervasive attitude promoting academic integrity enhances the sense of community and adds value to the educational process. All within the University are affected by the cooperative commitment to academic integrity. All Semester at Sea courses adhere to this Academic Integrity Policy and Student Conduct Code.

Depending on the nature of the assignment or exam, the faculty member may require a written declaration of the following honor pledge: "I have not given, received, or used any unauthorized assistance on this exam/assignment."

### Reading List (Electronic Course Materials)

Blanc, Cristina Szanton, Linda Basch, and Nina Glick Schiller

1995 Transnationalism, Nation-States, and Culture. *Current Anthropology*.

Bordi, Ivonne Vizcarra

2006 The "Authentic" Taco and Peasant Women: Nostalgic Consumption in the Era of Globalization. *Culture & Agriculture* 28.

Bourgois, Philippe

1995 From Jibaro to Crack Dealer: Confronting the Restructuring of Capitalism in El Barrio. *Anthropological Theory: An Introductory History*. p.

Brennan, Denise

2001 Tourism in Transnational Places: Dominican Sex Workers and German Sex Tourists Imagine One Another. *Identities Global Studies in Culture and Power* 7.

Bruner, Edward M

2001 The Maasai and the Lion King: Authenticity, Nationalism, and Globalization in African Tourism. *American Ethnologist* 28.

Dunbar, R.I.M.

2003 The Social Brain: Mind, Language, and Society in Evolutionary Perspective. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 32.

Ehrenreich, Barbara, and Arlie Russell Hochschild

2012 Global Women in the New Economy. *In Conformity and Conflict: Readings in Cultural Anthropology*, 14th Ed. J. Spradley and D.W. McCurdy, eds. Pp. 325-333. Boston: Pearson.

Flannery, Kent V.

1972 The Origins of the Village as a Settlement Type in Mesoamerica and the Near East: A Comparative Study. *In Man, Settlement and Urbanism*. P.J. Ucko, R. Tringham, and G.W. Dimbleby, eds. Pp. 23-53. London: Duckworth.

Frechione, John, and Richard Scaglione

1981 Intensity of Cultivation and Kin Group Discreteness among Tropical Shifting Cultivators. *Cross-Cultural Research* 16.

Gelfand, M.J., et al.

2011 Differences between Tight and Loose Cultures: A 33-Nation Study. *Science* 332.

Gupta, Akhil, and James Ferguson

1992 Beyond "Culture": Space, Identity, and the Politics of Difference. *Cultural Anthropology* 7.

Keeley, Lawrence H.

1996 *War before Civilization: The Myth of the Peaceful Savage*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.



- Lyon-Callo, Vincent, and Susan Brin Hyatt  
2003 The Neoliberal State and the Depoliticization of Poverty: Activist Anthropology and "Ethnography from Below". *Urban Anthropology and Studies of Cultural Systems and World Economic Development*.
- Marcus, Joyce  
2008 The Archaeological Evidence for Social Evolution. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 37.
- Norenzayan, Ara, and Azim F. Shariff  
2008 The Origin and Evolution of Religious Prosociality. *Science* 322.
- Postill, John  
2011 *Localizing the Internet: An Anthropological Account*: Berghahn Books.
- Roberts, Sam G.B., et al.  
2008 Individual Differences and Personal Social Network Size and Structure. *Personality and Individual Differences* 44.
- Sahlins, Marshall  
1963 Poor Man, Rich Man, Big Man, Chief: Political Types in Melanesia and Polynesia. *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 5.
- Stone, Glenn Davis  
1992 Social Distance, Spatial Relations, and Agricultural Production among the Kofyar of Namu District, Plateau State, Nigeria. *Journal of Anthropological Archaeology* 11.
- Stronza, Amanda  
2001 *Anthropology of Tourism: Forging New Ground for Ecotourism and Other Alternatives*. *Annual review of anthropology*.
- Trigger, Bruce G.  
2003 *Understanding Early Civilizations: A Comparative Study*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Wolf, Eric R.  
1982 *Europe and the People without History*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Wolf, Martin  
2001 Will the Nation-State Survive Globalization? *Foreign Affairs*-New York 80.