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Spring, 2009
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Anthropology of Multicultural America ANTH 110

Course Description and Requirements

In this course an anthropological perspective stressing culture and ethnographic fieldwork will be used to analyze kinship, economic, political, and religious institutions in the US. The major purpose of the course will be to understand our complex culture by immersing ourselves through reading, lectures, and film in diverse aspects of American culture.

Students will be responsible for careful and critical consideration of the material covered in class and in the required readings. The final grade will be the average of the grades on three exams (two mid-terms and a final, 100 points each) and a short paper (50 points) (See “Paper Instructions”). Students will be evaluated in terms of their familiarity with the material covered in the course, their creative use of course material, and their ability to express their knowledge and ideas clearly.

Paper Instructions. You will be required to write one short paper (3-5 pages, double-spaced). The paper should be a discussion of a scholarly anthropological article (not a book review) that you have found that relates to one of the topics of the course.¹ You must submit the title, author, date of publication, name of the journal in which the article appears, volume and pages and topic of the course to which the article relates by March 24. The papers are due in class on April 16th. Late papers will be penalized (one third of a letter grade for each day late).

Your papers should demonstrate that you are familiar with the relevant course material, that you understand the readings and that you can identify their salient points and themes. Include in your papers a discussion of how the author(s) substantiate their points. You must observe conventional rules in the social sciences with regards to citations and references.² This means that you must cite sources (including page numbers) for any ideas that you take from someone else when you quote (that is, use **exactly** the words of the author) or paraphrase (that is, put the idea into your own words). When you proofread your paper, check for common errors (such as “it’s” instead of its, sexist language, correct use of there and their, than and then) and also that you have made it clear that an idea presented is yours and not someone else’s. It is often helpful to read your paper out loud to see how it sounds or have a friend read it.

¹ A scholarly article is one that appears in a journal that has an editorial board of academics. Scholarly articles always have references or bibliographies. Articles in newspapers and popular magazines (such as *Time* or *Newsweek*) are **not** scholarly articles. You can find appropriate articles by looking in online indexes such as AnthroSource or Academic Index (check scholarly “peer reviewed” journals). You may also find appropriate articles in the bibliographies of the required readings. The articles you select should be by anthropologists or in anthropology journals.

² See the Sprague Library Home Page for suggestions as to how to write research papers, citation styles, and avoiding plagiarism. See also the Homepage of the Department of Anthropology for MSU’s Writing Center’s “Academic Integrity and Plagiarism: A Student Guide.”

Attendance is required. Students who miss more than three classes will be penalized. Students who miss an exam and wish to take a makeup must notify the instructor by the time of the exam and have documentation of an excused absence according to MSU policy.

If you have a documented disability, please let me know so that we can discuss ways I might assist you.

Required Reading

Kottak, C. and K. Kozaitis, *On Being Different: Diversity and Multiculturalism in the North American Mainstream*. (Third Edition) Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2007. (K&K)

Stack, C. *Call to Home: African Americans Reclaim the South*. Boston: Basic Books, 1996. (CS)

Watanabe, Yasushi. *The American Family: Across the Class Divide*. London: Pluto Press, 2005. (YW)

Selected articles on electronic reserve (through Blackboard) and/or videos at Sprague Library.

Please check for announcements on Blackboard at least once a week and also check your Montclair State email regularly.

Readings are due on the date to the left. If there are two dates, reading is due on the first of the two dates. Unless otherwise indicated, videos and movies will be shown in class.

Jan 20 Inauguration 2009 (University Hall Conference Center)

Be prepared to discuss one of themes that you think were important in what was said by the President and/or other speakers.

Jan 22 The Anthropological Perspective

& 27 K&K, Preface and Ch.1

CS, Preface

YW, Introduction

Jan 29 Culture and the Myth of the Melting Pot

K&K, Ch. 2 & Pp. 45-50 in Ch. 4

Feb 3 The Cultural Construction of Biology: Age and Body

K&K, Chs.11 & 12

Feb 5 The Cultural Construction of Race (Video, "Race: Power of an Illusion: The

& 10 Difference between Us")

K&K, Chs. 7 & 8

Feb 12 The American Economy: Industrial Capitalism

& 17 K&K, Chs 13 & 14

CS, Chs.1- 3

Feb 19 Occupational Segregation

K&K pp. 158-165

Feb 24 First mid-term exam (tentative)

- Feb 26 **Language and Class**
K&K, Chs.15
- Mar 3 **Globalization & Economic Restructuring: De-Industrialization, Downsizing, and**
& 5 **Casualization** (Video, “Sweating for a T Shirt”)
K&K, Ch. 3
- Mar 10 **The Cultural Construction of Kinship, Gender and Sexuality**
K&K, Chs. 9 &10
- Mar 12 **Families, Domestic Groups, and Networks** (Video, “My American Girls”)
& 24 CS, Chs. 4 & 5
K&K, Ch. 16
- March 24th Title, etc. of article due**
- Mar 26 **“The Yankee Family” & “The Irish Family”**
& 31 YW, Chs. 2 &3
- Apr 2 **Second mid-term exam** (tentative)
- Apr 7 **Anthropology and Politics**
- Apr 9 **Power and Powerlessness: Nation-States, Ethnicity, Culture and Power**
K&K, Ch. 5
- Apr 14 **Influencing the State**
& 16 CS, Chs. 6-8
K & K, Ch. 4
- April 16th Paper due**
- Apr 21 **Diverse Forms of Resistance and Accommodation** (“Farmingville”)
& 23 K & K, Ch. 3
- Apr 28 **Religion**
K & K, Ch. 6
- April 30 **Conclusion: The Individual Embedded: Family, Community, Nation, and World**
CS, Afterword
YW, Ch. 4