

Prepared by the Department of Social Sciences

Date of Departmental Approval: March 3, 2014

Date approved by Curriculum and Programs: October 1, 2014

Effective: Fall 2014

1. Course Number: ANT211

Course Title: Comparative Cultures

2. Description: This course provides an in-depth examination of selected contemporary societies focusing on their customs, language, values, key social institutions and stratification systems. The various internal and external forces affecting political, economic, religious and social cultural dynamics in different distinct cultures are examined: Students will explore the differing social relationships within the family and the community in selected societies. The course also provides a review of selected anthropological case studies from many world cultures.

3. Student Learning Outcomes:

Upon successful completion of this course, students are able to do the following:

- Appreciate the diversity of cultural practices across the globe, explain the difference between "culture" and "society" and the relevance of this distinction for understanding a very wide range of human experiences;
- Discuss the most important commonalities and differences in conceptions of what it means to become an adult in a culture and the various rites associated with important life courses (births, deaths and marriage)
- Identify and explain the most important factors that keep women in a subordinate status to men and what factors seem most important in explaining the similarities and differences.
- Explain the most important roles of kinship in the organization of cultural societies and how they affect the individual behavior patterns.
- Explain the significance of ethnocentrism and cultural relativism; in the work of different cultural anthropologist
- Discuss the importance of globalization to their life and the lives of tribal peoples around the world.
- Analyze the meanings behind the cultural perception of their society, culture around the world.

4. Credits: 3 credits

5. Satisfies General Education Requirement: Behavioral and Social Sciences

6. Prerequisite: SOC106 or ANT107

7. Semester(s) Offered: Varies

8. Suggested General Guidelines for Evaluation: Students will be evaluated on attendance, and participation in the class. Student will write a comprehensive research projects on selected cultural groups around the world. Sometimes, fieldwork into neighborhood cultural activities and celebration might be relevant. Individual readings on selected cultural articles from various places and group projects presentations, review of articles and short research papers as well as quizzes and exams will

constitute part of the evaluation.

9. General Topical Outline (Optional):

- Anthropology and the study of Culture
- What is Culture? & Characteristics of Culture
- Components of Culture & The process of Cultural Change
- Explanation of Cultural Diversity
- Methods in Cultural Anthropology
- Ethnographic fieldwork & Cross-cultural comparisons
- Doing Fieldwork & Anthropological Research
- Readings on Selected Cultural groups
- Economies and Modes of Production
- Sex and gender roles & Role of women in economic activities
- Social relations, cultural values and individual identities:
- Kinship and Domestic Life & Social Groups and Social Stratification
- Sex, Marriage, Family and cultural practices
- Kinship and Descent & Domestic responsibilities
- Marriage patterns and processes, Child bearing and rearing,
*Son Preference in Africa, India and China; Women status in developed and third world countries;
Cultural Female Circumcision (Genital Mutilation practices)*
- Disease, Illness and Healing & Death
The religious-cultural world of spirits, witchcrafts and death
- Religion and religious world view
- Cosmology, ideology and the supernatural; Sickness, Witchcraft, Magic, Rituals, Social order, social conflict and resolution