Dr. Kirsten Scheid
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Office Hours: Mondays 4:30-5:30, Tuesdays, 3:30-4:30, Thursdays 11:30-12:30

Course Description:
This course provides an introduction to effective ways of learning about and living with other cultures. Our materials are film, case studies, and debates. Students will acquire basic concepts in the comparative study of culture, methods of observing and interpreting other cultural practices, a sense of how knowledge about other cultures is constructed, and tools to develop a critical awareness of their own cultural conventions. It fulfills the freshmen Humanities requirement.

Textbooks:
- Course Packet at the University Bookstore.

*Dr. Scheid (rhymes with “side”). Call Dr. Scheid “Professor,” or “Ustaz(a),” or even “Dr. Kirsten” but NEVER “Miss”! We’ll talk in class about why symbols count and why using that one will count against you in college classes.*
Units:

1) How can we study people? – Exploring the concept of culture and the method of ethnography.
4) What’s gender? Who can be a family member? How do we form families and why? – Studying gendered social roles and family-making
5) How does the world come together? – Interconnectedness and the use of Anthropology as a way to understand your life in the larger world.

Student Learning Outcomes

At the end of this course students will be able to:

• demonstrate proficiency in basic anthropological concepts and terminology.

• use the concept of culture in a precise and sophisticated fashion

• think critically about the relationship between culture and nature, power and history

• evaluate contrasting arguments about the causes of human behavior

• recognize areas in which anthropological knowledge can be applied, especially in the Arab world.

• appreciate and cultivate the virtue of being slow to judge

• write a concise, articulate argument applying anthropology to their own lives.

Course Format and Requirements:

The course is seminar style in format consisting of open-ended lectures, classroom discussions, in-class activities, and films. Come exam time, you are responsible for assignments, readings, lectures, and classroom activities.

You will be evaluated on the basis of 1 quiz (10%), 1 mid-term (10%), 2 essays (10% each = 20%) as well as 7 paragraph components leading into the second essay (5% each = 35%), a final exam (20%), and class participation (5%). Pop quizzes may be introduced if students are falling behind with the reading.
What’s Expected of Students for Class:

• **Read** the assigned material. That’s obvious.
  - But also, **bring the reading to class** because it facilitates informed discussion. If you don’t bring your reading I will ask you to leave class and **you will be recorded as absent. NO TEXT = NO PRESENCE**

• The **Quiz** will be objective and cover the concepts and cases we have studied so far by using “memory” and “understanding” questions.

• The **Mid-Term** will be partly objective and partly subjective, focusing on “analysis” type questions. There will, in addition, be a very few short answers that ask you to apply a concept.

• **Essay #1** will ask you to apply the concepts from economic anthropology to your own experiences. It will be biographical and reflexive.

• **Essay #2** will ask you to apply your ability to analyze and evaluate representations of culture to the ethnography, *In Search of Respect*, and a Hollywood film of your choice.

• The **Final Exam** will be comprehensive and use subjective questions, consisting of short essays that require you to analyze, apply, and evaluate different anthropological tools.

Classroom participation is an important part of your grade; therefore, regular attendance is necessary. Your active participation will be evaluated as part of your final grade in terms of:

• arriving on time (more than 5 minutes late = ABSENT)
• bringing your readings (failing to bring your texts = ABSENT and YOU HAVE TO LEAVE)
• being there for any pop quizzes (no make-ups allowed)
• sharing your ideas based on assigned texts and course concepts
• listening attentively and respectfully to others in class
• taking notes on lectures, discussions, and presentations
• not even appearing to own a cellular phone or other electronic device
• not eating in class
Practicalities and tips:

- I can be reached by email, ks28@aub.edu.lb. Allow up to 24 hours for me to respond.
- You are expected to have your Moodle and AUB email accounts activated. Important information regarding the course will be posted regularly to the class’s Moodle site.
- It is imperative that you check your AUB email account daily. You are responsible for any information sent to you there by me.
- I take attendance daily and note all absences. However, you may be absent 3 times without your participation grade being affected. You don’t even have to tell me why you were absent (and I’d rather you didn’t).
- More than 7 absences by March 31 will lead to your dismissal from this course. AUTOMATICALLY.
- If due to illness, you could not attend a class or exam session, you must IMMEDIATELY send a doctor’s report from AUB-MC. External doctors don’t count. And all other reasons for not showing up are none of my business, period.
- All written assignments must be uploaded as Microsoft Word documents on Moodle on specified dates. They must be double-spaced with one inch margins all around. Your name and the page number must appear in the upper-right corner of every page (in the “header”). Part of your grade for written assignments will have to do with your documents’ presentation. Proofread and edit them for obvious typos, misspellings, and basic errors in grammar, usage and punctuation before submission.
- Your submissions will be checked automatically for plagiarism. You must take the Online Plagiarism Tutorial before handing in your first essay.
- It is your duty to ensure that your assignment uploads before the deadline. Please note that AUB’s internet is sometimes slow; if you postpone submitting to the last minute *you* take a great risk that may affect your grade because I will not blame the internet.
- Submitting your essay late will lower your grade 3 % points per day late: i.e. from 80/100 to 77/100 for the first 24-hours late, 74/100 for the second 24 hours late, and so on.
- Always keep a copy of your assignments!
- In case class is postponed due to circumstances outside the university, it is your responsibility to check Moodle for any updated information and to complete your assignments as noted on the calendar.
- For questions not addressed in class, experience difficulties keeping up, or to pursue a class discussion further, you should see me during office hours (see info on first page of syllabus) or schedule an appointment.
Reading, Writing, Note Taking, and Speaking Skills

- This course is not recommended for students currently enrolled in ENGL 102. It works best for students who have completed ENGL 203.

- Note that this reading-intensive course, as reading-intensive as an entry-level course would typically be in a good American or European college. Expect weekly 30 to 60 dense, delicious pages. Keep a strict, organized reading routine throughout the semester in order to cope with this load. (Starting the readings the day before class won’t work, trust me).

- Annotate the text as you read and come to class with a clear idea of its plan or structure, of the argumentative strategies it employs, and a handful of key words and specific passages in mind for discussion. I have included a sample Discussion Preparation Guide in the Course Packet – filling this out will usually not be required in this course, but doing so could greatly enhance your grasp of the material and recall for use later.

- A valuable resource for methodological tips and guidelines on how to engage anthropological readings can be found in the Student Guide to Reading and Writing in Social Anthropology (SGRWSA) published by Harvard’s Anthropology department for their undergraduate students, esp. pp. 13-18. (This document is included in the Course Packet).

- If you find reading takes you a long time, you are probably using the word-by-word approach (or you are multitasking, i.e. watching an episode or using FB while reading). Shut your laptop and read the guides for improving your skimming and scanning skills in the Course Packet.

- Your essays should be well written. If you have concerns about your writing style, go to the Writing Center in West Hall (ext. 3157) and they will help you with your essay before you submit it. I return poorly edited essays without grading them and count resubmissions as late.

A 2011 study of 2300 students at 25 selective American colleges found 45% students "did not demonstrate any significant improvement in learning" in their first two years at college, and 36% "did not demonstrate any significant improvement in learning" by graduation.

https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2011/01/18/study_finds_large_numbers_of_college_students_don_t_learn_much

The reason? The AAUP notes: “Students and faculties develop informal ‘treaties’ wherein faculty offer low expectations in exchange for glowing course evaluations; administrators concentrate on building upscale dorms and gyms; parents get the degrees they want for their children. Long-term goals, the territory of no one in particular—whether democratic citizenship or global competitiveness—have little traction compared to short-term incentives: obtaining tenure and other professional benefits, lifting specific institutions in the rankings, or obtaining workforce credentials with the least amount of pain. In other words, everyone games the system.”

http://www.aaup.org/article/academics-adrift#.VqOj0VN95sM

The solution? There is a direct relation between intensive reading (more than 40 pages/week), rigorous writing (more than 20 pages a semester), studying primarily alone, and gaining more from your college classes. See Richard Arum and Joseph Roksa, Academically Adrift, U Chicago Press, 2011.
**Academic Integrity Policy:**

- Formulating your own response to ideas presented in texts or class is a fundamental component of the learning process. It also provides the main medium by which your instructor can evaluate your skills acquisition and intervene where necessary to ensure your success. Therefore, your resorting to copying others’ words or thoughts demonstrates a breakdown in the learning process.

- AUB offers an on-line tutorial that explains exactly what plagiarism involves and how to avoid committing it. **You are required to take this tutorial and pass its test BEFORE you submit Essay #1 (March 8).** Once you have taken it you will be held responsible for your commitment to academic integrity.

- I deal with plagiarism severely. By this I mean, I will give you a “0” for the assignment. I will also report you to the Student Disciplinary Affairs Committee, which can request a Dean’s Warning or more, depending on their assessment of the gravity of the offence (I’m on that committee; in fact, I’m the Chair.).

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**A final question for lasting consideration:**

Are other cultures really different, or do we just imagine them that way?

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