

**ANTH 102: Culture, Society and Diversity**  
**John Felice Rome Center**

Fall 2026

Tuesdays & Thursdays | 10:30-11:45

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Office Hours: Thu./Thurs., 12:00-13:00

**Course Description**

The course will introduce the basic concepts of cultural anthropology by focusing on how its recent developments can contribute to a better understanding of the contemporary world.

The world we live in today is a place where cultures and life styles intermingle, and cultural differentiation has replaced cultural differences.

More recently, the displacement of peoples (either as refugees or as migrants) and the emergence of global capitalism, have further undermined previously held notions of culture as a homogeneous way of life (the culture of a people settled on a territory).

Accordingly, cultural anthropologists today are increasingly concerned with issues of cultural creativity and innovation, and the sites of their research may be as diverse as the rural village, the inner-city neighborhood, the factory-floor, the bank, etc.

**Core Concepts**

- a) Ethnography – whatever the topic or the social group anthropologists study, they all rely on some form of participant observation, i.e., ethnographic fieldwork. In other words, ethnography is at the core of the discipline. What is participant observation? Why do anthropologists use it? What kind of knowledge does such a methodology generate? Moreover, ethnography is not just what anthropologists do when they are doing research, it is also what they write once they are back from the “field”. Hence, ethnography is not only a method, it is also a specific genre of writing. The course will examine the implication of this ambivalence.
- b) Culture – In our daily lives, we use the word culture to mean all kinds of different things: individuals are “cultured” because they go to the theater, an ethnic group has its own “culture”, we are all consumers of pop “culture”, then there is a national “culture”, there is “high” culture and “low” culture, Western culture and Eastern culture, liberal culture and conservative culture not to mention political culture, etc. In short the term seems to be used to evoke almost everything under the sun: food and art, aesthetic refinement and common behavior, political choices, social identities, patterns of consumption. How can such a term be the corner stone of a discipline? We will try to unpack its multiple meanings and try to understand its value as a conceptual tool for understanding humans.

**Learning Outcomes**

On completion of the course students are expected to:

- Demonstrate the knowledge needed to analyze culture, society and their variations
- Grasp how the central concepts of cultural anthropology such as cultural relativism, ethnocentrism, and reflexivity can help to understand socio-cultural diversity
- Be aware of the ethical dimensions of research involving human beings
- Understand how cultural anthropologists use the concepts of culture and society

## Reading Materials

All readings are posted on Sakai.

## Assessment Components

- |                 |     |
|-----------------|-----|
| • Participation | 15% |
| • Midterm Exam  | 25% |
| • Paper         | 35% |
| • Final Exam    | 25% |

## Grading

94-100	A	77-79	C+
90-93	A-	74-76	C
87-89	B+	70-73	C-
84-86	B	67-69	D+
80-83	B-	60-66	D

**59 OR LOWER = F**

## FINAL PAPER

It will have to be **at least 5 pages long**, double space, and it will have to be written in standard academic form (see “Guidelines” below). Students are strongly encouraged to write their paper either on ethnographic method or on the concept of culture. Students are welcome to write their paper on a topic of their choosing, yet they are required to use at least two of the readings discussed in class.

➔ **DEADLINES** (*NB: students are expected to hand in their work by the dates below; in case they are unable to do so, they should let me know in due time, e.g., at least two days before the relevant dateline*).

- **October 29** students should have a general idea of what they will write about and discuss it with me.
- **November 11** - students should hand in a brief abstract and an annotated bibliography (for each reference a couple of sentences explaining its relevance for your argument/chosen topic) of the of standard academic sources they will use.
- **December 1** - final draft due.



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- **GUIDELINES:**

- **Format/Submission** – The abstract, and the annotated bibliography should be typed in Times New Roman, 12 pt. And uploaded on Sakai (<https://loyola.screenstepslive.com/a/1496860-how-do-students-submit-an-assignment>); The final draft, typed in same font, should be double-spaced and also uploaded on Sakai.
- **Style/Content** – Well, since the paper is worth 35% of the course grade you might want to spend some time in thinking about what you want you say and what is the best way to do it. You have time. Hence, first and foremost, know your limits! Do not overreach yourself. Keep it simple. Write short sentences, check your spelling, try to avoid superlatives and repetitions. DO NOT misspell the authors you cite. DO NOT use citations just to fill the page; use them only to support your argument.
- **Sources (where to look?)** – Use Wikipedia all you want (very useful to get your bearings) but DO NOT cite it as source! Only acceptable primary sources are from academic publications. A very good source is *The Routledge Encyclopedia of Social and Cultural Anthropology*, available through Loyola Libraries: <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/luc/detail.action?docID=465404>. *The Open Encyclopedia of Anthropology*: <https://www.anthroencyclopedia.com>, is an online encyclopedia which gets constantly updated; another online resource is *Global Social Theory*: <https://globalsocialtheory.org> though not specifically devoted to anthropology it discusses issues pretty much at the center of current anthropological debates (Anthropocene, Critical Race Theory, Decoloniality, Migration, etc.). Loyola Libraries' *Research Guide for Anthropology's Databases*: <https://libguides.luc.edu/c.php?g=49849&p=320923>, is where you can find you articles. Among the databases listed, there are two which are that I find very useful:
  - AnthroSource;
  - Oxford Bibliographies Online: Anthropology.



- **Citations** – There are two basic ways to go about it.
  - When the citation is a short one (a phrase, or a short sentence):

“... Rosaldo argues that the "ethnographer, as a positioned subject grasps certain phenomena better than others" (1989:19), yet it seems to me that ...”
  - If the citation is long, you should set it apart from your text and it should be single-spaced:

“... the question of scarcity when talking about organ transplant is a thorny one.

The discourse on scarcity conceals the actual existence of "excess" and "wasted" organs that daily end up in hospital dumpsters throughout those parts of the world where the necessary infrastructure is lacking to use them. (Sheper-Hughes: 2002:49)

Indeed, it would seem that .....”

**Note:** if you mention the name of the author you are writing about just before the quote, you may leave the name out:

“... Sheper-Hughes argues that the question of scarcity when talking about organ transplant is a false problem.

The discourse on scarcity conceals the actual existence of "excess" and "wasted" organs that daily end up in hospital dumpsters throughout those parts of the world where the necessary infrastructure is lacking to use them. (2002:49)

Indeed, it would seem that .....”
- **Bibliography.** At the end of the paper you should list the readings you have used.
  - When it is from a collection:

Sheper-Hughes, Nancy. 2002. "Min(d)ing the Body: On the Trail of Organ-Stealing Rumors". In *Exotic No More: Anthropology on the Front Lines*, edited by Jeremy MacClancy. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press.
  - For a whole book:

Rosaldo, Renato. 1989. *Culture & Truth*. Boston: Beacon Press.
  - If you have used a chapter from a book by the same author:

Rosaldo, Renato. 1989. "Grief and a Headhunter's Rage". In Renato Rosaldo, *Culture & Truth*. Boston: Beacon Press.

→ **Paper Assessment (100 pts.)**

Citations and bibliography (format)	5 pt.
Abstract	10 pts.
Spelling and grammar	10 pts.
Annotated bibliography	15 pts.
Appropriate use of sources	40 pts.
Consistency of argument	40 pts.

→ **A note on Participation** – It’s worth 15% of the course grade; it may seem not much percentage-wise but is of great value for your course grade. It basically means that if you don’t do the readings, don’t take notes in class, text your friends during lectures and maybe take a nap to boot, not only you’ll do poorly in the course, but your normal level of classroom boredom will reach unbearable levels. Do the readings before class (if you take notes in the process that’s plus); if there is something in the readings, you do not understand you say so (it may even be an opportunity to start a class discussion!), if you don’t understand something during my lectures, you ask. If you have some comments you feel relevant to the topic at hand, you are welcome to intervene. You don’t have to do it all the time, just every once in while it’s good enough. Participation does not mean “impress your professor” it simply means to show a reasonable level of engagement with the topics discussed in class.

**Attendance Policy**

In accordance with the Rome Center mission to promote a higher level of academic rigor, and in compliance with full-time student visa status, all courses adhere to the following attendance policy.

Prompt attendance, preparation and active participation in course discussions are expected from every student and synonymous with academic success. Attendance is mandatory at every class meeting for each course. Lateness or leaving class early will impact the course grade at the professor’s discretion. All absences, including medical absences, will be treated the same, unless they are documented long-term conditions or emergencies. Such situations will be evaluated case-by-case by the Academic Affairs office.

**Once-a-week classes:**

- After 1 absence, a 2% final grade reduction will be applied for each missed class.
- Missing 3 classes or more will result in an automatic failure (F).

**Twice-a-week classes:**

- After 2 absences, a 2% final grade reduction will be applied for each missed class.
- Missing 6 classes or more will result in an automatic failure (F).

**Three-times-a week classes:**

- After 2 absences, a 2% final grade reduction will be applied for each missed class.
- Missing 6 classes or more will result in an automatic failure (F).

### **Academic Integrity**

Plagiarism and other forms of academic misconduct are unacceptable at the the Rome Center and will be dealt with in accordance with Loyola University Chicago's guidelines. Please familiarize yourself with Loyola's standards here: <https://catalog.luc.edu/academic-standards-regulations/undergraduate/>. You are responsible to comply with the LUC University Catalog.

### **Late or Missed Assignments & Exam Policy**

Late or missed assignments will not be accepted for grading without the authorization of the instructor. ***As per the JFRC academic policies, students who miss any scheduled exam or quiz, including a final exam at the assigned hours will not be permitted to sit for a make-up examination without approval of the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs. Permission is given rarely and only for grave reason; travel is not considered a grave reason. Make-up exams will only be given for documented absences.***

### **Accessibility Accommodations**

Students registered with the Student Accessibility Center (SAC) requiring academic accommodations should contact the Academic Affairs office at the John Felice Rome Center during the first week of classes.

### **Statement on Title IX**

The Rome Center follows Loyola's [Comprehensive Policy and Procedures for Addressing Discrimination, Sexual Misconduct, Retaliation](#) and will comply with those as indicated and instructed.



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## Course Schedule

Date	Activity	Assignments/Readings
<b>Week 1</b>	<b>General introduction</b>	
Tue 09/01	Adichie "The danger of a single story" (19'17", 2009)	
Thu 09/03	Where and When?: A Little bit of History	Wolf "Anthropology among the powers"
<b>Week 2</b>	<b>Ethnography</b>	
Tue 09/08	Fieldwork: What is it? <i>A Year in the Field</i> (33', 2020)	Monaghan & Just: "A Dispute in Donggo"
Thu 09/10	Knowledge for Whom?	Sheper-Hughes, "Ire in Ireland..."
<b>Week 3</b>	<b>Culture</b>	
Tue 09/15		Monaghan & Just: "Bee Larvae and Onion Soup"
Thu 09/17	Interpreting Culture	Geertz: "Thick Description"
<b>Week 4</b>	<b>Language</b>	
Tue 09/22	Bonaire's Talen: Languages of Bonaire (30', 2020)	Light: "Language"
Thu 09/24	Language of Intimacy	Abu-Lughod: "Honor and the Sentiments of Loss"
<b>Week 5</b>	<b>Society</b>	
Tue 09/29	What is it?	Monaghan & Just: "A Brief Encounter"
Thu 10/01	Things you can do with norms: gender and space	Guano: "Respectable Ladies"
<b>Week 6</b>		
Tue 10/06	<b>Review</b>	
Thu 10/08	<b>Mid-term</b>	
<b>Break (Oct 9-18)</b>		



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<b>Week 7</b>	<b>Where are we at?</b>	
Tue 10/20	<i>Herskovits at the Heart of Blackness</i> (60', 2009)	
	<b>Kinship and Belonging</b>	
Thu 10/22	<i>Without Fathers or Husbands</i> (26', 2001)	Carsten: "Kinship"
Fri 10/23	Nature/Culture	Tjørnhøj-Thomsen: "Kinning Animals"
<b>Week 8</b>	<b>Beliefs</b>	
Tue 10/27	Coping with Crisis "Mad Masters" (28', 1955)	Monaghan & Just: "A Drought in Bima"
Thu 10/29		De Martino: extracts from <i>Magic</i> ; <b><u>Deadline!</u></b>
<b>Week 9</b>	<b>Power/Identity</b>	
Tue 11/03		McDowell: "Political Anthropology"
Thu 11/05	<i>WORLD101x Interviews - Donna Auston</i> (32'41", 2017)	Beliso-De Jesús: "The Jungle Academy"
<b>Week 10</b>	<b>Values &amp; Affect</b>	
Tue 11/10	<i>WORLD101x Interviews - Sarah Besky</i> (23'08", 2017)	Lyon: "Economics"
Thu 11/12	Underground Economy	Bourgois: "From Jíbaro to Crack Dealer"; <b><u>Deadline!</u></b>
<b>Week 11</b>	<b>Globalization</b>	
Tue 11/17		
Thu 11/19	One World Many Worlds	Griffith: "Globalization"
<b>Week 12</b>		
Tue 11/24	Confronting the global	Ong: "The Production of Possession"
<hr/> <b>Thanksgiving Break (Nov 26-29)</b> <hr/>		
<b>Week 13</b>	<b>Anthropology for the Times</b>	
Tue 12/01	Ethnography in a globalized world Interview with George Marcus (45'34", 2015)	Marcus: "Collaborative Imaginaries" <b><u>Deadline!</u></b>
Thu 12/03	<b>Review</b>	
<b>TTBA (Dec 7-10)</b>	<b>Final!</b>	