

ANTHROPOLOGY 410: Issues in Anthropology Spring 2004

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Mahar Hall, Room 310

Office Hours: Monday 12:30 – 1:30; Wednesday 1 – 2:30

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Required textbooks: Feder, K. *Frauds, Myths, and Mysteries: Science and Pseudoscience in Archaeology*. 4th edition. 2002.

Denzin, N. and Y. Lincoln. *Collecting and Interpreting Qualitative Materials*. 2nd edition. 2003.

Lavenda, R. and E. Schultz. *Core Concepts in Cultural Anthropology*. 2nd edition. 2003.

Description: Anthropology 410, Issues in Anthropology, is a seminar course. Ideally, then, it will be characterized by a high degree of active participation by students. Formal lectures will be limited in frequency and length so that there is ample time for discussion. As a “capstone” course, the seminar is designed to allow students to demonstrate the knowledge and skills that they have acquired during their general and anthropological undergraduate experience. As seniors, students will be expected to perform at the appropriate level of intellectual maturity in both written and oral work. You should be motivated to finish this undergraduate program by doing your very best work. The course standards of performance will be higher than normal, but within the reach of a competent senior anthropology minor or major. Attendance at all class meetings should be a priority for everyone. Those with special problems in this regard should see/inform the instructor ASAP. Since weather may be an issue with our class meetings, and since we only meet once a week, please do check on my web site (referenced above, then check the 410 tabs for news) if we miss a class meeting or if you are unable to make it to class. Any news or announcements will be posted there.

Requirements: Your performance in this course will be evaluated on the basis of (1) a short statement of intent (abstract) describing your research project (10%), (2) an oral presentation during the semester discussing the status of project at that time (30%), (3) the final research paper (30%), and (4) a written, in-class competency exam (30%). Additional assignments may be given that will be noted but not graded. Your active participation in this course is a minimal expectation. Poor participation (non sequitor or inane comments) or lack of participation *can harm you* and particularly good participation *can help you*, so keep that in mind. Criteria regarding the oral presentation and final paper evaluation are attached. Competency exam questions with a description of how the questions will be chosen, length required, etc. are also attached.

Course Schedule:

26-30 Jan

Introduction to Course

Topic: Humanity – The Beginnings of Recognized Human Behavior

**What IS recognized human behavior? (language, violence, meat-eating, tool making, bipedalism, etc.)*

**How is this problem approached/researched?*

[Reading assignment for next class: Journal article re: paleoanthropology]

2-6 Feb

Topic: Journal readings discussion – Issues in Palaeoanthro today

**Lab science (DNA) –versus – Field science (Fossils)*

**Many hominids living contemporaneously*

**Neanderthals video – biases in interpretation*

[Reading assignment for next class: Feder book, focusing on 204-240]

- 9-13 Feb** **Topic:** Archaeology – Feder reading discussion
**Tiwanaku as personal example*
**Van Daniken hypothesis example of bad science, no science*
[Reading assignment for next class: Lavenda and Schultz, Chapters 1 - 4]
- 16-20 Feb** **Topic:** Culture: Interpretation and Representation of Culture
**What is culture?*
 Discuss Projects
[Reading assignment for next class: Denzin and Lincoln, Intro and Chapter 1]
- 23-27 Feb** *****Statement of Project Due on Wednesday 25 Feb*****
Topic: Fieldwork – humanity versus natural science debate
**Examples of fieldwork models of the past and today*
[Reading assignment for next class: Lavenda and Schultz, Chapter 6; D and L, Chapters 6, 10, 15]
- 1-5 March** **Topic:** Do Sexually Egalitarian Societies Exist?
• *Ideal versus real*
• *Noble savage revisited?*
- 8-12 March** Student presentations: Progress report on research
- 15-19 March** Spring Recess: No classes
- 22-26 March** Student presentations: Progress report on research
- 29 March- 2 April** Student presentations: Progress report on research
 Interim Review
 [Reading assignment for next class: L and S, Chapters 5, 11; D and L, Chapters 11, 16, 17]
- 5-9 April** **Topic:** Psychic unity of mankind – are we “all the same”?
*Naïve concept or dangerous notion?
*Modernism and Development: inevitable, to be avoided/celebrated? Why or why not?
[Reading assignment for next class: Re-read Feder, Chapter 12]
- 12-16 April** **Topic:** Applied Anthro – Forensic Anthro/ Applied Archaeology/Development projects, etc.
• *NAGPRA: Should Native American remains be interred or studied?*
**Kennewick Man*
[Reading assignment for next class: handout]
- 19-23 April** **Topic:** Concept of Race and the Approach from Cultural versus Biological versus Forensic Anthropologists
**Should this concept be abandoned?*
**Is it ever useful?*
**What does it mean? Social or biological reality?*
[Reading assignment for next class: D and L, Chapters 12 – 14]
- 25-30 April** Problems with Interpretation and Representation
Student Input on their own experience with this with their projects

[Reading assignment for next class: L and S, Chapter 12; D and L

2-7 May

Topic: Anthropology in the 21st century: Future visions

10-14 May

Finals: Hand in Final Projects and Competency Exam on Wednesday 12 May, from 2 – 4 PM in 307 Mahar