ANTH 298E:
Anthropological Approaches to Sustainable Development

2017
Summer Session I
University of Maryland

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This is an ON-LINE COURSE. You MUST have reliable access to the Internet. Students will interact and be assessed on their participation in the on-line environment of Canvas (www.elms.umd.edu).

Course Description

This course is an introduction to anthropological approaches to sustainable development. The material will cover an overview of the history of sustainable development, major development and environmental theories, and development strategies as they relate to an anthropological concern for an integrated, holistic, comparative, and humane approach to sustainable development.

We will examine the relationship between social well-being and the conservation of natural resources, and we will take a critical approach to common assumptions about this relationship. We will also look at practical applications of an anthropological approach to project methodology. The overall aim of this course is to engender a more context-based and culturally aware approach to sustainable development.

Learning Objectives:
1. Be able to critically evaluate various assumptions about and approaches to sustainable development.
2. Understand the importance of local context in sustainable development.
3. Recognize the subjective nature of sustainable development (as well as your own culturally informed assumptions regarding it).
4. Understand basic sustainable development and anthropological discourse (how to speak the language).
5. Understand basic theoretical approaches to sustainable development.
6. Learn about some of the strategies employed by development anthropologists.
7. Be able to apply an anthropological approach to the study of sustainable development.
Online Course Structure

The course is divided into six topics, and each topic is sub-divided into modules (e.g., Topic 1 includes Module 1.1 and Module 1.2). All of the course content and assignments are organized into these modules on the course website on ELMS.

Each module will include the following elements:

1. **Lectures**: This is the information that you would normally receive in a class lecture setting. The material may include PowerPoints, a podcast, films, links to websites, etc. All lecture material can be found within its module on ELMS.

2. **Readings**: The readings will include uploaded files as well as chapters from the assigned book (listed below). Readings that have been uploaded can be found within their associated modules.

3. **Discussion Board**: Organized discussions for each topic will be held on the discussion board within ELMS. These will be conducted in the style of an in-class discussion with pre-assigned questions. Each topic will have a discussion thread, which can be accessed on ELMS under “Discussions.”

4. **Assignments**: These include homework assignments, discussion board responses to assigned questions, a final project, and a final exam. Details on these are listed below.

**Assignment Due Dates**: Due dates are listed on the course calendar and on the schedule at the end of this syllabus. In order to complete the homework and discussion assignments by the due date, you must first view the module’s lecture material and complete the reading, so plan accordingly. Homework is due throughout the week and there is a discussion post due every Friday. The course moves rapidly and late assignments will be penalized, so try not to fall behind.

**Internet or Technology Issues**: You must have reliable access to the internet and you should have a backup source (coffee shop, library, friend’s house) in case you lose connectivity or the ability to use your primary computer. For ELMS-related issues visit https://www.elms.umd.edu/page/help, or call 301-405-1500 or 877-399-4090.

**Readings**

Many of the readings for this course will be articles and individual book chapters in PDF format. These will all be posted on ELMS. The only text that you will need to buy is the following, which can be bought cheaply through Amazon or other online retailers:

Assignments

All assignments are listed with their due dates on the course calendar and on the schedule at the end of this syllabus. You are responsible for knowing what is due and when. Assignments can be found under “Assignments” on ELMS, and each module contains links to its associated assignments.

A. Homework Questions:
Each homework question corresponds with the lecture and reading in its associated module. You must view the lecture content and complete the readings before you can answer the homework question. Some questions may be hypothetical with no objective right or wrong answer. Instead, your response will be graded on the effort and thought put into it, your demonstrated logic, and your use of sources (e.g. the readings, lecture materials, and anything you might have found on your own). I will not grade you based on whether or not I agree with you, so feel free to answer honestly about your own opinions. For each Homework Question, please write a summary of what you discovered in no more than 1-2 paragraphs.

B. Participation on Discussion Board:
The discussion board serves as our virtual classroom and it is where you will interact with your fellow students and me. Imagine the discussion board as the classroom and model your posts on the way that you would participate in a normal classroom discussion. I will post Discussion Questions, which will serve to initiate the discussions. However, the discussion board is not simply a venue for you to post your response to the assigned question. Rather, these threads should be open forums where you can respond directly to other students’ posts in discussing the question. So in your posts you will be writing your response to the assigned question but you should also be responding to the previous posts. (For example, do you agree or disagree and why? Can you follow up on another student’s post by providing further insight or evidence?)

Discussion Instructions: Discussion Questions will be posted as the first post in the thread. Post your responses in the appropriate thread on the Discussion Board. The threads will be open by the date listed on the schedule. You will have 3 or 4 DAYS to submit at least one post. You must submit your required response by the date listed on the course schedule. However, you are not limited to one post and I encourage you to post as often as you like. Students who are very active in these discussions will receive extra credit. Threads will remain open for the entire semester, so even if we’ve moved onto a new thread, you will be able to continue any discussions that you find interesting.

Discussion Etiquette: In each thread, please only post responses that are relevant to that discussion question. There will be a general class discussion forum where you can post anything you like, within reason. Only posts on the Discussion Question threads will factor into your grade. Do not post any disparaging remarks about other students. You can disagree and argue against his/her point, but if it becomes personal I will remove the post and points may be subtracted from your discussion grade.
C. Final Project:
You will critique a case study of an actual sustainable development project and then you will create a proposal for your own sustainable development project using information from the case study (how you would approach the project you just critiqued). Be sure to use what you have learned in this class. I want to see that you understand the theory, methodology, and concepts, and that you can apply what you have learned to a real life situation. Of course, this is an introductory course so I am not expecting you to be able to write a professional level proposal, but this exercise should demonstrate what you have learned. Additional information on this project will be posted on ELMS under “Assignments.” Format: 4-6 pages, double-spaced. Be sure to cite sources within the paper and list all sources in a bibliography. Citing sources is very important!

D. Final Exam:
This will be a comprehensive final exam covering all of the class material. I will be looking to see that you understand the concepts, theories, and methods that we went over. The exam will be available to take on ELMS from 12:00am to 11:59pm on July 7. You may take the test anytime within those 24 hours, but once begun you will have exactly two hours to complete and submit the exam. I will post more info on the exam on ELMS under “Assignments.”

Due Dates and Late Assignments:
All due dates are by 11:59pm Eastern Standard Time (UMD College Park time) on the date listed on the Course Schedule. Everything submitted after the due date will be considered late and will be penalized. Homework and Discussion Board posts submitted late will lose 1 point a day (out of 10 points). Final Projects submitted late will lose 5 points a day (out of 100 points). The Final Exam is automatically inaccessible after July 7th. Once started you will have 2 hours to complete the exam, and 5 points will be deducted for every half hour late (out of 100 points). If there is any reason why you cannot complete the exam on this date, or within the 2-hour limit please let me know as soon as possible. Nothing can be submitted after 5:00pm EST on July 10th.

Grading

25% Homework Questions
25% Participation on Discussion Board
25% Final Project
25% Final Exam

90 – 100 = A
80 – 89 = B
70 – 79 = C
60 – 69 = D
59 and below = F
Communication
The easiest way to get in touch with me is through email (melissa.stevens7@gmail.com). I check my mail several times a day, but I check it less over the weekend. I will not be on campus, but if you need a face-to-face meeting we can arrange that over Skype. If you would like to get in touch with your fellow students, you can message specific students or the entire class through ELMS.

University Policies
Policies relevant to Undergraduate Courses are found here: http://ugst.umd.edu/courserelatedpolicies.html. Topics that are addressed in these various policies include academic integrity, student and instructor conduct, accessibility and accommodations, attendance and excused absences, grades and appeals, copyright and intellectual property.
COURSE SCHEDULE

Topic 1: The Anthropological Approach to Sustainable Development
Subjects to be covered:
- Introduction to anthropology and the “culture” concept
- Understanding cultural context
- Cultural relativism vs. ethnocentrism
- Emic/Etic perspective in development

Tuesday, May 30: Welcome
- Lecture: Introduction to ANTH 298E
- Discussion: Student Introductions (Thread is in General Class Forum)

Wednesday, May 31: Module 1.1
- Lecture 1.1
- Reading 1.1 (Nolan 2002: Ch.1)
- Homework Question 1.1
- Discussion Question 1 (thread opens)

Friday, June 2: Module 1.2
- Lecture 1.2
- Reading 1.2 (Earle and Simonelli 2005: Introduction)
- Homework Question 1.2
- Discussion Question 1 (due today)

Topic 2: Defining “Sustainable Development”
Subjects to be covered:
- The social construction of the core concepts
- Problematizing “sustainable” & “development”
- Power and ideology: Whose definition of sustainable development?

Tuesday, June 6: Module 2.1
- Lecture 2.1
- Reading 2.1 (Fricker 2006)
- Homework Question 2.1
- Discussion Question 2 (thread opens)

Thursday, June 8: Module 2.2
- Lecture 2.2
- Reading 2.2 (Cochrane Ch. 1-2)
- Homework Question 2.2

Friday, June 9: Module 2.2
- Discussion Question 2 (due today)
**Topic 3: History of Sustainable Development**

Subjects to be covered:
- The “First World” and “Third World” distinction
- Going beyond economic indicators
- Bretton Woods Agreement, Brundtland Report, Agenda 21, MDGs
- The “Big Players” (World Bank, IMF, USAID, UN, NGOs)
- UN Sustainable Development Goals

Monday, June 12: Module 3.1
- Lecture 3.1
- Reading 3.1 (Cochrane Ch. 3)
- Homework Question 3.1
- No Discussion on this Topic (No Discussion Question 3)

**Topic 4: Introduction to Development Theories**

Subjects to be covered:
- Modernization Theory
- Dependency Theory
- Economic Neoliberalism
- Populist Theories

Wednesday, June 14: Module 4.1
- Lecture 4.1
- Reading 4.1 (Little 2005)
- Homework Question 4.1
- Discussion Question 4 (thread opens)

Friday, June 16: Module 4.2
- Lecture 4.2
- Reading 4.2 (Cochrane Ch. 4)
- Homework Question 4.2
- Discussion Question 4 (due today)

**Topic 5: Introduction to Theories of the Environment**

Subjects to be covered:
- Protectionist Paradigm (Malthus and Hardin)
- Cultural Ecology
- Ecosystems Approach
- Political Ecology

Tuesday, June 20: Module 5.1
- Lecture 5.1
- Reading 5.1 (McGuire 2005)
- Homework Question 5.1
- Discussion Question 5 (thread opens)
Thursday, June 22: Module 5.2
- Discussion Question 5 (closes Jan. 18)
- Lecture 5.2
- Reading 5.2 (Cochrane Ch. 5)
- Homework Question 5.2

Friday, June 23: Module 5.2
- Discussion Question 5 (due today)

**Topic 6: Development Strategies: Applying Anthropological Methods**
Subjects to be covered:
- Stakeholder Analysis
- Ethnographic methods
- Appreciative Inquiry
- Participatory Action Research

Tuesday, June 27: Module 6.1
- Lecture 6.1
- Reading 6.1 (IISD webpages)
- Homework Question 6.1
- Discussion Question 6 (thread opens)

Thursday, June 29: Module 6.2
- Lecture 6.2
- Reading 6.2 (Cochrane Ch. 6-7)
- Homework Question 6.2

Friday, June 30: Module 6.2
- Discussion Question 6 (due today)

**Final Project and Final Exam**

Thursday, July 6
- Final Project due

Friday, July 7
- Final Exam