



Basic Course Information

Semester:	Spring 2026	Instructor Name:	Dr. Arturo Marquez Jr.
Course Title & #:	Cultural Anthropology ANTH 102	Email:	arturo.marquezjr@imperial.edu
CRN #:	20268	Webpage (optional):	n/a
Classroom:	412	Office #:	2735
Class Dates:	Feb. 17 – April 17	Office Hours:	By appointment
Class Days:	Thursday and Online	Office Phone #:	760-355-6282
Class Times:	11:20am - 12:45pm	Emergency Contact:	760-355-6144
Units:	3	Class Format/Modality:	Hybrid

Course Description

This course examines how anthropologists study cultures and societies. Cultural anthropologists seek to understand the broad arc of human experience focusing on a set of central issues: how people around the world make their living (subsistence patterns); how they organize themselves socially, politically and economically; how they communicate; how they relate to each other through family and kinship ties; what they believe about the world (belief systems); how they express themselves creatively (expressive culture); how they make distinctions among themselves such as through applying gender, racial and ethnic identity labels; how they have shaped and been shaped by social inequalities such as colonialism; and how they navigate culture change and processes of globalization that affect us all. Ethnographic case studies highlight these similarities and differences, and introduce students to how anthropologists do their work, employ professional anthropological research ethics, and apply their perspectives and skills to understand humans around the globe. (CSU/UC)

Course Prerequisite(s) and/or Corequisite(s)

There are no prerequisites and/or corequisites for this course.

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon course completion, the successful student will have acquired new skills, knowledge, and or attitudes as demonstrated by being able to:

- 1) Define the main goals and aims of cultural anthropology.
- 2) Describe the holistic and comparative approach.
- 3) Explain the difference between ethnocentrism and cultural relativism.
- 4) Demonstrate an understanding of global cultural diversity.
- 5) Explain how Applied Anthropology is used in archaeology, medical anthropology, business, education, an economics.

Course Objectives

Upon satisfactory completion of the course, students will be able to:

- 1) Describe the goals of anthropology and its emphasis on cultural diversity.

- 2) Describe the comparative and holistic perspectives in studying culture as well as ethnocentrism and cultural relativism and the importance of ethnographic studies.
- 3) Summarize the development of theories in cultural anthropology and the ethical issues anthropologists encounter and professional ethical obligations that must be met in the study of and application in cultural groups different from their own.
- 4) Demonstrate knowledge of subsistence strategies from forgers to agriculture and the interconnectedness of economic, political, and sociocultural forces of globalization amongst diverse cultural groups.
- 5) Describe why the family is the core of society and how kinship affects gender roles.
- 6) Describe the multifariousness of supernatural beliefs and its importance in human society globalization.
- 7) Understand how language serves as a basis for communication and cognitive perception.
- 8) Demonstrate an awareness of the antiquity and creative forces of art and cultural change in human history.
- 9) Explain the difference between ethnicity and the concept of race as a cultural construct.
- 10) Recognize how Applied Anthropology is used in CRM studies such as archaeology, as well as in medical anthropology, business, education, and economics.

Textbooks & Other Resources or Links

Perspectives: An Open Invitation to Cultural Anthropology. 2nd Edition. 2020. Edited by Nina Brown, Thomas McIlwraith, and Laura Tubelle de González. American Anthropological Association, Arlington, VA.
Available for download: <https://perspectives.americananthro.org/>

Course Requirements and Instructional Methods

The Department of Education policy states that one (1) credit hour is the amount of student work that reasonably approximates not less than one hour of class time and two (2) hours of out-of-class time per week over the span of a semester. Because this is a three-credit course, students should expect to invest a minimum of nine hours per week.

Students are assessed through a combination of discussion posts, short essays, quizzes, and exams. Active student participation is an important component of the final assessment. The following is a break-down of course requirements:

- **Video Summaries** (40 points): Students will analyze videos on anthropological concepts and produce a report highlighting connections to our course textbook. It is important to watch these videos in their entirety and include quotes from the textbook and timestamps from the videos in each 200-word report. Each video is worth 5 points is due by Wednesday at 11:59pm.
- **Discussion Posts** (40 points): Students will complete 8 discussion posts worth 5 points each based on the course readings for the corresponding week. To ensure maximum points, it is crucial to provide at least one quote from the readings (with page numbers). After publishing the discussion post, students are expected to read through posts and provide a constructive comment worth 1 point each to at least one colleague. Discussion posts must be 150 words minimum and posted by 11:59pm on Friday; comments must be 50 words minimum and posted by Sunday at 11:59pm.

- **Quizzes (40 points):** Students will complete 8 quizzes worth 5 points each that assesses their engagement with the textbook and videos. Quizzes will be comprised of multiple-choice questions and short essay responses in which it is crucial to provide quotes, concrete examples, and page numbers from the textbook. Without quotes and page numbers, short essay responses will not earn available points. Quizzes are due on Sunday at 11:59pm.
- **Ethnographic Research Project:**
 - Ethnographic Journal (30 points): Students will conduct ethnographic research in the Imperial Valley on a topic is of personal interest. Once a fieldsite for ethnographic research has been identified, students will visit this fieldside at least three (3) separate times and complete a journal entry after each visit detailing their observations and participation. Templates for journal entries are available on Canvas; each journal entry must be at least 2 pages (double space).
 - Informal Interview (20 points): Students will conduct an informal interview with someone who is familiar with their fieldsite. Students are encouraged to begin exploring who they might be able to interview early into their fieldwork with the aim to gain new insights on their research problem and questions. This assignment consists in part 1 – context and part 2 – content, each worth 10 points, totalling at least 4 pages (double space).
 - Visual Anthropology (10 points): Students will produce images and/or video to highlight an important aspect in their research worth 5 points. For an additional 10 points, students will write a 2-page report highlighting the significance of this image/video to their project.
 - Presentations (10 points): Students will present on their Ethnographic Research Project. The presentation must begin with a brief discussion of their research problem and questions, followed by key insights from their participant-observation, informal interview, and visual data, and end with areas students would like to investigate further provided the opportunity. Presentations are scheduled for Thursday April 12th.
- **Final Exam (35 points):** A Final will be administered to assess student comprehension of course content. The Final Exam will be available on Canvas and is due on Sunday April 12th.

Course Grading Based on Course Objectives

There is a total of 225 points possible in this course. Points earned will be calculated into percentages which correspond to the following final letter grade:

Percentage (Canvas)	Letter Grade
100% - 90%	A
89% - 80%	B
79% - 70%	C
69% - 60%	D
59% - below	F

Academic Honesty (Artificial Intelligence -AI)

IVC values critical thinking and communication skills and considers academic integrity essential to learning. Using AI tools as a replacement for your own thinking, writing, or quantitative reasoning goes against both our mission and academic honesty policy and will be considered academic dishonesty, or plagiarism unless you have been instructed to do so by your instructor. In case of any uncertainty regarding the ethical use of AI tools, students are encouraged to reach out to their instructors for clarification.



Accessibility Statement

Imperial Valley College is committed to providing an accessible learning experience for all students, regardless of course modality. Every effort has been made to ensure that this course complies with all state and federal accessibility regulations, including Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations. However, if you encounter any content that is not accessible, please contact your instructor or the area dean for assistance. If you have specific accommodations through **DSPS**, contact them for additional assistance.

We are here to support you and ensure that you have equal access to all course materials.

Course Policies

Attendance is crucial. If you foresee missing a class meeting, please inform the instructor.

Late work is accepted *only if* the instructor is informed with a detailed justification. If you experience any difficulty that impedes your ability to submit work by a due date, please inform the instructor as soon as possible. Meeting with the instructor during office hours is ideal to address these situations. Make-up exams may be allowed at the instructor's discretion. If you foresee a time conflict or any other difficulty, please inform the instructor as soon as possible. Make-up exams will be scheduled at the end of the semester during finals week.

In order to achieve our course objectives, it is important to foster an engaged learning environment that is respectful and welcoming of everyone in class. Please refrain from any activity that may impede on others' learning and participation. To this end, please be mindful of how you utilize your digital devices during our class meetings. Laptop computers, cell phones, and other such devices may be used *only* to consult readings, notes, and related course material. If you need to take a call or answer a text message, please step outside to prevent disrupting class discussions and activities. Students using their devices for non-course related purposes will be asked to refrain from using them in future class meetings. If these devices hinder active class participation and engaged learning, the instructor may prohibit their use for the rest of the semester.

Plagiarism is a serious offense and will result in adverse consequences. Plagiarism is presenting someone else's work as one's own without citing the original source. It is crucial students understand the seriousness of plagiarism. Please do not copy and paste work from online sources or our textbook. Students are encouraged to reference their sources but always in a way that highlights their original ideas and clearly cites their sources. If you are unsure about IVC's plagiarism policy, please contact the instructor or refer to IVC's student services.

Other Course Information

The instructor may modify the syllabus as necessary to ensure the learning objectives are met. If there are any modifications to the syllabus, students will be notified via email within 24 hours.

Office hours are available in-person in room #2735 or via Zoom on Monday and Wednesday from 3:00-5:00pm. If you have a time conflict, please email the instructor to discuss alternate days or times. Students are encouraged to contact the instructor to discuss questions or concerns. Office hours are an additional resource in your professional trajectory at IVC. The instructor is *always* open to dialogue and is committed to your success. Students are encouraged to view office hours as an opportunity to receive one-to-one guidance on specific assignments, quizzes, or upcoming exams. Moreover, use office hours to discuss the many merits of



anthropology as a major, or to discuss ways anthropology can contribute to your professional development beyond IVC.

Financial Aid

Your Grades Matter! In order to continue to receive financial aid, you must meet the Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) requirement. Making SAP means that you are maintaining a 2.0 GPA, you have successfully completed 67% of your coursework, and you will graduate on time. If you do not maintain SAP, you may lose your financial aid. If you have questions, please contact financial aid at finaid@imperial.edu.

IVC Student Resources

IVC wants you to be successful in all aspects of your education. For help, resources, services, and an explanation of policies, visit <http://www.imperial.edu/studentresources> or click the heart icon in Canvas. For any technology issues, please contact the instructor and submit a ticket using the following link: <https://www.imperial.edu/education-technology.html/>

There is support for you here at IVC. If you require further support, please do not hesitate to contact the Disability and Support Project & Services (DSPS) to learn more: <https://www.imperial.edu/students/dsps/>

Anticipated Class Schedule/Calendar

Date or Week	Topic, Readings	Assignments, Due Dates, Exams
Week 1 February 19	<p style="text-align: center;">Studying Cultural Lifeworlds</p> <p><u>Readings</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapters 1 - Introduction to Anthropology • Chapter 2 - The Culture Concept <p><u>Videos</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ethnography: Ellen Isaacs at TEDxBroadway • Daniel Miller: Digital Anthropology 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Video Summary 1 • Discussion Post 1 • Quiz 1
Week 2 February 26	<p style="text-align: center;">Ethnographic Research Methods</p> <p><u>Readings</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 3 - Doing Fieldwork • Chapter 13 - The History of Anthropological Ideas <p><u>Videos</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning by Living Together – Ethnographic Fieldwork in the Thai Highlands • Strangers Abroad: Off the Veranda <p><u>Fieldwork</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research Fieldsite (self-organized) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Video Summary 2 • Discussion Post 2 • Quiz 2
Week 3 March 5	<p style="text-align: center;">Language in Globalized Societies</p> <p><u>Readings</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 4 - Language • Chapter 12 - Globalization <p><u>Videos</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Heart Broken in Half <p><u>Fieldwork</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exploratory Fieldwork (self-organized) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Video Summary 3 • Discussion Post 3 • Quiz 3



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Date or Week	Topic, Readings	Assignments, Due Dates, Exams
Week 4 March 12	<p style="text-align: center;">Culture in Everyday Life</p> <p><u>Readings</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 5 - Subsistence • Chapter 6 – Economics • Chapter 14 - Culture and Sustainability <p><u>Videos</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Lives of the Amish in the US • The Nuer <p><u>Fieldwork</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exploratory Fieldwork (self-organized) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ethnographic Journal entry 1 • Video Summary 4 • Discussion Post 4 • Quiz 4
Week 5 March 19	<p style="text-align: center;">Culture, Politics, Family</p> <p><u>Readings</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 7 - Political Anthropology • Chapter 8 - Family and Marriage <p><u>Videos</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Man Called 'Bee': Studying the Yanomamo • Toda – An Ethnographic Documentary Film <p><u>Fieldwork</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exploratory Fieldwork (self-organized) • Informal Interview 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ethnographic Journal entry 2 • Video Summary 5 • Discussion Post 5 • Quiz 5
Week 6 March 26	<p style="text-align: center;">Intersectionality</p> <p><u>Readings</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 9 - Race and Ethnicity • Chapter 10 - Gender and Sexuality <p><u>Videos</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indigenous in Plain Sight • How Sperm Got all the Credit in the Fertilization Story <p><u>Fieldwork</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exploratory Fieldwork (self-organized) • Visual Anthropology 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ethnographic Journal entry 3 • Video Summary 6 • Discussion Post 6 • Quiz 6
Week 7 April 2	<p style="text-align: center;">Belief and Meaning</p> <p><u>Readings</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 11 - Religion • Chapter 17 - Health and Medicine <p><u>Videos</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Day of the Dead (Mexico) • Tibetan Book of the Dead 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informal Interview • Video Summary 7 • Discussion Post 7 • Quiz 7



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Date or Week	Topic, Readings	Assignments, Due Dates, Exams
April 6 - 12	Spring Break	
Week 8 April 16	<p style="text-align: center;">Anthropology Beyond</p> <p><u>Readings</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Chapter 15 - Performance• Chapter 18 - Seeing Like an Anthropologist <p><u>Videos</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Last Nomads of Borneo• Curious About Cuba: The Great Museums of Havana	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Visual Anthropology• Video Summary 8• Discussion Post 8• Quiz 8• Final Presentations• Final Exam

*****Subject to change without prior notice*****