Miami Dade College

Course Description:

ANT2410 | Introduction to Cultural Anthropology | 3.00 credits

This course focuses on the study of human organization and culture by exploring similarities and differences among a variety of cultures. Students will apply theories and methods developed by anthropologists to understand complex human behaviors revealed in the cultural expression of race, ethnicity, language, economic systems, political systems, families and kinship, marriage, gender, religion, ecology, art, transnational migration, and the globalization of the world system.

Course Competencies:

Competency 1: The student will demonstrate an understanding of the science of anthropology and its historical development by:
1. Defining anthropology
2. Identifying the four fields of anthropology
3. Summarizing the historical development of anthropological investigation
4. Explaining the difference between ethnocentrism and cultural relativism as it relates to the development and practice of anthropology

Competency 2: The student will be able to demonstrate an understanding of anthropological methods by:
1. Describing various ethnographic methods and approaches such as participant observation, interviewing, film, collaborative ethnography, multi-sited ethnography, and applied anthropology
2. Analyzing the products of anthropological research such as ethnographies, ethnology, ethnographic film, photography, and art
3. Explaining the issues raised by the relationship of anthropologists to the people under study
4. Discussing ethical issues in the conduct of anthropological research

Competency 3: The student will be able to demonstrate an understanding of anthropological theories by:
1. Summarizing the historical development and basic tenets of the major explanatory models (theories) in anthropology from the nineteenth century to the present
2. Explaining the difference between ethnocentrism and cultural relativism as it relates to the interpretation of anthropological data
3. Describing the contemporary production of anthropological theories as unique to individual case studies
4. Applying anthropological theories to and developing explanatory models for various ethnographic examples

Competency 4: The student will be able to demonstrate an understanding of the concept of culture by: defining culture.
1. Describing culture as an adaptive response
2. Explaining the relationship between culture and biology
3. Explaining the relationship between culture and society

Competency 5: The student will be able to demonstrate an understanding of anthropological linguistics by:
1. Analyzing the nature of the human capacity for language
2. Explaining the role and use of symbols in human communication
3. Illustrating the difference between historical and descriptive linguistics
4. Describing how language influences the perception of reality

Competency 6: The student will be able to demonstrate an understanding of various subsistence strategies and economic patterns of adaptation by:

1. Describing foraging societies such as hunters, fishers, and gatherers
2. Describing food-producing societies such as pastoralists, horticulturalists, agriculturalists, and industrialists
3. Examining the nature of political economy in the modern world system
4. Evaluating the ethical issues raised by the impact of economic systems reflected in colonialism, development policies, and globalization on Indigenous populations

Competency 7: The student will be able to demonstrate an understanding of political organization by:
1. Defining the concept of power and its application to society
2. Listing various levels of socio-political organization such as bands, tribes, chiefdoms, and states
3. Analyzing various systems of stratification and patterns of social inequality
4. Identifying the various status/role relationships reflected in such aspects of human society as gender, age, race, ethnicity, kinship and class

Competency 8: The student will be able to demonstrate an understanding of human sexuality, gender, marriage customs, post-marital residence patterns, and kinship systems by:
1. Explaining the difference between sex and gender and exploring various ethnographic examples of masculinity, femininity, and third genders
2. Examining several patterns of human sexuality and sexual expression and the cultural categories that circumscribe these practices
3. Describing several patterns of adult initiation, mate selection, marriage, and post-marital residence.
4. Identifying cross-cultural examples of reckoning kin and determining descent and the impact of kinship on life outcomes

Competency 9: The student will be able to demonstrate an understanding of the anthropology of the supernatural by:
1. Distinguishing between religious systems and practices such as magic and prayer
2. Analyzing the relationship between religious belief, ritual, and social organization
3. Exploring religious belief systems' relativity and role using several ethnographic examples
4. Explaining several patterns of possession- shamanism and other forms of cognitive distortion (altered states of reality)

Competency 10: The student will be able to demonstrate an understanding of culture change by:
1. Listing multiple mechanisms of change such as discovery, invention, innovation, diffusion, acculturation, and globalization
2. Analyzing various patterns of change such as additive, alternative, substitutive, and reductive change.
3. Explaining how some types of change can have profound economic, psychological, social, and ecological impact
4. Identifying examples of challenges brought about by globalization, such as cultural pluralism, Indigenous rights, global apartheid, rise of multinational corporations, structural violence, world hunger, pollution, population growth, ethnic resurgence, and terrorism

<u>Learning Outcomes:</u>
- Communicate effectively using listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills
- Solve problems using critical and creative thinking and scientific reasoning
- Demonstrate knowledge of ethical thinking and its application to issues in society