Anthropology 4415/6415 – Anthropology and Human Rights  
Tuesdays 5:30-8:30  
322 Manning Hall  
Spring 2013

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Phone 678-3328  
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Office Hours: By Appointment

COURSE OVERVIEW
The tension between respect for local cultures and "universal rights" is a pressing concern within human rights activism. In the past decade, anthropologists have been increasingly involved in these discussions, which have often involved situating their understandings of cultural relativism within a broader framework of social justice. This course is framed by four ways of thinking about the relationship between culture and rights – culture versus rights, right to culture, rights as culture, and culture as analytic to rights.

Readings in this course will allow students to explore the contributions of anthropology to the theoretical and practical concerns of human rights work. The term begins by reading a number of key human rights documents and articles on the progression of human rights debates and thinking within the discipline of anthropology, particularly around the concepts of relativism and culture. Students will then be asked to relate their understandings of human rights to the historical and cultural dimensions of a theme – women’s rights, health and human rights, and Indigenous rights. Each theme will be explored through a series of case studies. We will address such questions as the nature of humanity, historical conceptions of the individual, colonialism and imperialism, the limits of relativism, and the relationship between human rights in theory and in practice.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS
Attendance: Attendance is mandatory. You may have one unexcused absence without penalty, but you will lose 2 points on your final grade for every unexcused absence thereafter. You must also be on time for class. If you are more than 5 minutes late, you will be recorded as late. Three late notations equal one absence. Please keep the instructor informed if you have an emergency during the semester that will require you to be late or miss a class.

Discussion: This class is discussion-based and the success of our discussions depends on all of us. Regular attendance and engagement with the class materials is essential.

Discussion Etiquette: You are not expected to always agree with the readings, lectures, films, or ideas of your colleagues. However, students are expected to be courteous and respectful of one another. We should listen to what is being said rather than who is saying it. Responses should not be personalized, and differences in opinion are not to be taken personally. Remember that we will be talking about ideas and learning from one another. Students should take notes on class discussions; these discussions are likely to appear on exams.

Assignments: The assignments in this course are designed to prompt students to critically think through and process course materials, facilitate class discussion, expand students’ knowledge of human rights and anthropology beyond what is taught in the classroom, and appeal to a wide range of learning styles. Since this is a blended graduate/undergraduate course, the reading and written assignments will be slightly different for the two groups. The initials GS= Graduate and UG =
Undergraduate Students are denoted on the syllabus to indicate which students it applies to. Assignments include: weekly reading responses (All), exams (UG), presentations (All), thematic essays (GS) and a research paper (GS).

**READINGS**
Readings for this course come from a combination of texts, book chapters, and journal articles. Students can expect to read between 70-125 pages (UGs closer to 70; HS/GS closer to 125) each week. Students are expected to have completed all required readings prior to coming to class on the day they are assigned on the syllabus. Recommended readings are assigned to provide students additional background and contextual information on a given issue and will often inform in-class lectures. The syllabus includes a reading schedule.

*Required Texts* (available at the University of Memphis Campus Bookstore & Tiger Bookstore):

*Other required & recommended readings*
- Book chapters, articles, and UNHCR documents, and web-based resources are available electronically on E-courseware.

**Films:** Some of the films we will view are rentable, while others are not. Consequently, there is no guarantee that films will be available to students outside of class. Some of the films may be rated “R” and, given the subject of this course, contain sensitive content. Exams and writing assignments will be based in part on films seen in class. It is the students’ responsibility to attend class and understand the content of the films. All films listed on the course schedule are tentative; specific titles and viewing dates are subject to change.

**Guest Speakers:** Over the course of the semester we will have the privilege of hosting guest speakers who will share their insights and experiences in the human rights arena. It is the students’ responsibility to attend class (be on time), take notes, and engage in a respectful exchange with our guests.

**WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS AND PRESENTATIONS**

**ALL Students – Reading Responses and Discussion Board**
To facilitate our discussions, students are required to prepare a response to the readings and discussion questions for each class in which readings are assigned. Your responses should summarize and critique key arguments in the week’s readings, and pose two questions related to the reading that would help generate class discussion. You are encouraged to discuss some or all of the following points as they relate to each week’s readings.
- **Contexts** – what cultural, social, political factors/ideas inform a particular human rights issue/theme/case study?
- **Actors & Actions** – who is doing what? Governments, community groups, NGOs, UN, etc. How do they relate to each other (or not)?
- **Instruments & Interpretation** – What HR instruments are involved? What aspects of those instruments are being drawn on? How are they interpreted and by whom?
Enforcement & Intervention – How are human rights being enforced? How have human rights actors intervened?

Change, Resolution, & Impact – What changes, resolutions, and impact are emerging from enforcement and intervention efforts?

Anthropology & Anthropologists’ roles – what is the role of anthropology and anthropologists?

NOTE: Strong reading responses & questions put a given week’s readings in conversation with past readings and/or other course material.

Each student should turn in weekly reading responses 7 times during the course of the semester (Jan 29th and then 6 other times that you will sign up for). Reading responses should be 1.5-2 single spaced pages (approx. 700-800 words). You should post your 2 questions on the E-Courseware Discussion Board. Weekly reading responses should be submitted via E-courseware dropbox by 2 pm on Mondays) and questions should be posted on the E-courseware discussion board by 2 pm on Mondays. Before class, all students should take the time to review and comment on other students’ questions on the E-courseware discussion board.

Each response is worth 50 points (350 total points for the semester). 10 points will automatically be deducted from late submissions.

UG - Take-home Exams
There will be 2 take home exams. Exam questions will be handed out in class and students will have 1 week to complete and submit their answers (Each exam is worth 200 points). Due dates for take home exams are March 28th and April 30th. I WILL NOT ACCEPT LATE EXAMS

UG - NGO Case Study Presentations – Students will choose an NGO that does work in one of the foci of the course (women’s rights, health and human rights, or Indigenous rights). Students will research the NGO using online resources, academic literature, and/or talking with someone at the organization and formally report back to the class. Presentations can be in any format you choose, but Presentations should last 10 minutes. You are required to turn in an annotated presentation bibliography. This assignment is worth 200 points (100 for presentation; 100 for annotated bibliography). UG NGO presentations will occur on February 26th, March 26th, and April 23rd. Additional instructions will be provided in class.

GS - Thematic Essays – In lieu of exams, there will be 3 short papers assigned throughout the semester (6-7 pgs. each). At least one week prior to each due date, you will be given a question or series of questions to address in your essay. Essays should clearly draw on material presented in lecture, films, readings, and during class discussions. Thematic Essays are due via E-Courseware dropbox on Thursdays by 12 pm. Each essay is worth 150 points (450 total for the semester). I WILL NOT ACCEPT LATE PAPERS.

GS - Research Paper & Presentation
Students will choose a research topic that focuses on some aspect of one of the themes that we are covering in this course – women’s rights, health and human rights, and indigenous rights. Students can tailor their research topic to their particular interests, but students must discuss their chosen paper topic with Dr. L-P (see below). After researching the topic, students will write and submit a 15-page research paper on the chosen topic.

Set-up a time to meet with Dr. L-P and discuss your specific paper topic before February 12th.

A 3-sentence description of your paper will be due in class on February 19th.

An outline of your paper and 5 annotated citations are due in class on April 2nd.
Paper is due on May 2nd by 12 pm.
Make presentation to class – May 7th during the scheduled final exam period.


Research Paper and Presentation is worth 200 points (150 for paper; 50 for presentation). I WILL NOT ACCEPT LATE PAPERS.

## GRADING - UG

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<th>Assignments</th>
<th>Point breakdown</th>
<th>Total Pts.</th>
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## GRADING - GS

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<td>Thematic Essay</td>
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<td>Research Paper &amp; Present</td>
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## STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

1. It is the student’s responsibility to read and understand the syllabus. Special circumstances may require modifications in the syllabus and in the assignments. If this occurs, advance notice will be given in class and these changes will become part of the syllabus.

2. Students are required to have a University of Memphis email account and access to E-Courseware and to check both daily for communication regarding course content. All emails from me to you will use the University of Memphis system and E-Courseware. If you use a different email system, be sure to forward your U of M account to that other address. Do not email me through E-Courseware; make sure you send your communication directly to almbrtpn@memphis.edu

3. Students are expected to attend class regularly and complete all assignments. Success in this class requires consistent attendance, regular class participation, and keeping up on all reading and work assignments.

4. Emailing and text messaging are very distracting during class and are strictly forbidden in the classroom. Phones are to be turned off or set to silent and put away during class.

5. Late assignments will only be permitted for medical reasons, family emergencies or official University business. Written documentation is required.
6. Excused absences for religious holidays and other events must be cleared with the instructor in advance.

7. Whenever you use another person’s words or ideas you must properly cite them. Word for word copying of another person’s words without proper attribution is known as plagiarism and is a serious form of academic dishonesty. Plagiarism and academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Students engaging in academic dishonesty of any kind will automatically receive an F in this course and be referred to Judicial Affairs. Refer to the University of Memphis’ Office of Judicial and Ethical Programs for its policy on academic misconduct: http://saweb.memphis.edu/judicialaffairs/dishonesty/definitions.htm.

Students with Disabilities
The University encourages the full participation of students with disabilities. Students with disabilities are invited to meet individually with the instructor to discuss any accommodations that may be needed for successful participation in this course.

Inclement Weather
In the event that inclement weather requires the cancellation of classes at the University of Memphis, local radio and television media will be immediately notified. Additionally, the University of Memphis has established an inclement Weather Hotline at 678-0888.

READING SCHEDULE AND ASSIGNMENTS

WEEK 1 – January 22 – Introduction to Course

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<th>Culture and Rights</th>
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WEEK 2 – January 29 – Anthropology, Culture and Human Rights

Questions: What are human rights? History of UDHR, What’s in the UDHR? What is the relationship between culture and rights?

ALL READ:

- Review Key Human Rights documents (links on E-courseware)
  - Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948
  - International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights 1966
  - International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights 1966
- American Anthropology Association statement on Human Rights
  http://www.aaanet.org/about/Policies/statements/Declaration-on-Anthropology-and-Human-Rights.cfm
WEEK 3 – February 5th – Human Rights Actors & Practices

Questions: How do Anthropologists understand and study rights?

ALL READ:
- Goodall, Mark. 2009, Chapter 6, “Rights Unbound” in Surrendering to Utopia, pgs.111-127.

**Women’s Rights**

WEEK 4 – February 12th – Culture, Bodies, Sex

ALL READ
- Merry, *Human Rights and Gender Violence*. Chpts. 3-5

DUE: GS – 3 sentence description/thesis of research paper topic

Recommended:
- CEDAW Made Easy: Question and Answer Booklet (on E-Courseware)

WEEK 5 – February 19th – Religion, Education & Marriage

ALL READ:
- Merry, *Human Rights and Gender Violence*. Chpt. 6-7.

Choose 3 of the Following:
O Mita Bhadra, “Changing Age at Marriage of Girls in India” in Girl Child in Indian Society (pgs. 120-147).

WEEK 6 – February 26th – Speaking of Rights and Women
Film - TBA
UG- NGO Presentations in class
GS - Thematic Essay – due Thursday, February 28th 12 pm

Health and Human Rights

WEEK 7 – March 5th – Public Health, World Health, and Human Rights
O Paul Farmer, Pathologies of Power, Intro - 4.
Choose 2 of the following:
O Benjamin Mason Miller, The World Health Organization, The Evolution Of Human Rights And The Failure To Achieve Health For All” In Global Health And Human Rights.
Recommended:

WEEK 8 – March 12th – No Class Spring Break

WEEK 9 – March 19th – Discourses of Rights in Research & Intervention
ALL READ:
O Paul Farmer, Pathologies of Power, Chapters 5-9
UG Choose 1 and GS Choose 2 Of The Following:
Week 10 – March 26th – Shifting the Paradigm
Guest Speaker or Film - TBA
UG- NGO – Presentations in class
UG take home midterm – due Thursday March 28th by 12 pm.
GS - Thematic Essay – due Thursday March 28th by 12 pm.

Indigenous Rights

WEEK 11 – April 2nd – Indigeneity, Culture & Natural Resources
ALL READ
  o Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People, 2008.
DUE: GS – Detailed outline of research paper and at least 5 bibliographic references.
FILM: Trinkets & Beads

WEEK 12 – April 9th – Indigenous Land Rights in Australia & Honduras
ALL READ:
Choose 2 from the following list:
Choose 2 from the following:
GUEST LECTURE: Dr. Keri Brondo will speak on Garifuna Rights to Land and Natural Resources in Honduras
WEEK 13 – April 16th – Analyzing the Northern Territory Emergency Response

ALL READ:
- Northern Territory Emergency Response Act (link on E-Courseware)
- James Anaya, Observations On The Northern Territory Emergency Response In Australia, Report by the UN Special Rapporteur.

Choose 2 of the following:

FILM: Our Generation available at - http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tcq4oGL0wlI


Week 14 - April 23rd – What is the Anthropologist to do?

READINGS TBD
UG- NGO Presentations in class.
UG Take Home Exam Handed out
GS - Thematic Essay Due to E-Courseware on Thursday, April 25th 12 pm.

WEEK 15 – April 30th – Work Day – No Class
UG – Take home final exam due – please submit online to E-Courseware by 8:30 pm.
GS – Research Paper due Thursday May 2nd by 12pm – please submit online to E-Courseware.

May 2nd – Study Day

May 7th – Final Exam – 5:30-8:00 pm
GS – GS Presentations during exam period. All students attend.