



FACULTY OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL AND CULTURAL STUDIES  
*Te Kura Mahinga Tangata*

## *Cultural Anthropology*

# ANTH 204

## Modern Anthropological Thought

20 POINTS

TRIMESTER 1 2014

### Important dates

**Trimester dates:** 3 March to 2 July 2014

**Teaching dates:** 3 March to 6 June 2014

**Easter/Mid-trimester break:** 18 April to 4 May 2014

**Last assessment item due:** 4 June 2014

**Withdrawal dates:** Refer to [www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/withdrawals-refunds](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/withdrawals-refunds). If you cannot complete an assignment or sit a test or examination, refer to [www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/aegrotats](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/aegrotats).

## Class times and locations

Lectures:	Monday and Wednesday 10:00-10:50pm	Hunter LT 119
Tutorials:	Thursday 9:00-9:50am	MY 303
	Thursday 12:00-12:50pm	MY 631
	Thursday 2:10-3:00pm	KK 202A
	Thursday 3:10-4:00pm	KK 104

Please sign up for one tutorial using SCubed.

## Names and contact details

<b>Course Coordinator</b>	Associate Professor Jeff Sissons Murphy Building, MY 1017 Tel: 04 463 6131 Email: jeff.sissons@vuw.ac.nz Office hours: By appointment
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## Communication of additional information

Additional information related to the course will be made available on Blackboard. You will automatically receive all Blackboard announcements as an email sent to your @myvuw.ac.nz email address. If you are not going to use this Victoria email address set up for you, we strongly encourage you to set a forward from the Victoria email system to the email address you do use.

## Prescription

This course explores inspiring and influential ideas in recent Anthropology by discussing the writings of some of the discipline's greatest thinkers. Among the topics considered are: symbolism and the interpretation of cultures; culture and globalisation; ethnography and morality; culture and history; culture and evolution; culture and power; culture and experience.

## Course content

The course engages critically with contemporary thought in the discipline of cultural anthropology. Cultural anthropology has been defined in many ways, but for the purposes of this course it is defined as the comparative study of culture, the symbolic or meaningful dimension of social life. In Weeks 1 and 2 we consider the work of Clifford Geertz, who first narrowed down the definition of culture to 'webs of meaning', and discuss criticisms of his views. At about the same time that Geertz was redefining culture as meaning, others were approaching it as the logical product of the human mind (Week 3) or as meaningful logics operating in history (Week 4). More recently, culture has been approached as global flows rather than local meanings, although this approach has also come in for criticism (Week 5). In a context of global capitalism the interpretation of culture through ethnography is inevitably political (Week 6). Culture is being further understood as practices (Week 7) or as discourses tied to regimes of power/knowledge (Week 8). Others emphasise the ways that culture always directs and underpins experience (Week 9). In Weeks 11 and 12 we critically discuss the distinction between nature and culture and consider whether society itself is a culturally specific concept that has outlived its usefulness.

## Course learning objectives (CLOs)

Students who pass this course will be able to:

- (1) Have a deeper understanding of some central currents within contemporary anthropological thought
- (2) Develop a greater ability to critically analyse anthropological writing in general and
- (3) Think and write about human society and culture in more theoretically informed ways.

The forms of assessment will assist in achieving the aims and objectives outlined above and to develop particular study skills.

- The essays are designed to enhance general research and analytical skills in cultural anthropology and to enhance writing skills generally.
- The in-class test is designed to measure how well the readings and lectures for this course have been understood.

## Teaching format

Lectures and tutorials.

While attendance at lectures and tutorials is not compulsory, students are expected to regularly attend them, and will be advantaged if they do so.

There are nine tutorials for this course. All are on Thursdays. Students may choose one of the following times: 9:00am, 12:00pm, 2:10pm and 3:10pm.

## Mandatory course requirements

In addition to achieving an overall pass mark of 50%, students must:

- submit essay 1 and essay 2, and
- sit the in-class test.

## Workload

The expectations are that students will work 10 hours per point, therefore a 20 point course equates to 200 hours over the trimester. This includes scheduled contact time, individual or group study, and work on assessment tasks.

Attendance at lectures and tutorials	approximately 3 hours/week
Reading for lectures and tutorials	approximately 5 hours/week
Reading for and writing assignments	approximately 5 hours/week

## Assessment

This course is 100% internally assessed and requires three pieces of work (two essays and one in-class test).

Assessment item	% of final grade	CLO(s)	Due date
1 Essay One (2000 word essay)	35	2,3	4pm on 24 March 2014
2 Essay Two (2500 word essay)	40	2, 3	4pm on 26 May 2014
3 In-class test (45 minutes)	25	1, 2, 3	4 June 2014

Essay topics will be handed out during lectures and posted on Blackboard.

A guidance statement on the in-class test will be handed out at least two weeks before the date of the test.

## Submission and return of work

Assignments must be placed in the assignment box on level 9, Murphy Building, to the side of the lifts. The Assignment Box is cleared at 4pm on the due date. All work is date-stamped and receipt recorded. Every effort will be made to return marked assignments within two-weeks of the due

date. Marked assignments not collected in lectures or tutorials can be collected at the Murphy 9<sup>th</sup> floor reception desk, **between 2.00pm and 4.00pm only** from Monday to Friday.

The in-class test will be collected at the end of the class on 5 June.

## **Extension and Penalties**

### **Extensions**

If you wish to seek an extension please contact the Course Coordinator **before** the due date of the assessment item. The granting of extensions is at the discretion of the Course Coordinator.

### **Penalties**

Penalties will apply for lateness in presenting assignments. Unless an extension has been approved beforehand or a medical certificate is later presented 5% will be deducted from the marks for each day that the assignment is late (counting that piece of work as 100%).

## **Practicum/placement/field trip/internship arrangements**

There are no other arrangements for this course.

### **Set text**

There is no set text for this course. All readings will be posted on Blackboard.

## **Recommended reading**

Moore, J.D. (2009), *Visions of Culture: An Introduction to Anthropological Theories and Theorists* (3rd edition), Lanham, MD: AltaMira Press. Available from vicbooks, Ground Floor Easterfield Building, Kelburn Campus.

'Film Interviews with Anthropologists' is the title of a good collection on YouTube.

**Note that an extensive list of readings related to the course and assignments will be available on Blackboard.**

## **Class representative**

The class representative provides a useful way to communicate feedback to the teaching staff during the course. A class representative will be selected at the first lecture of the course. Students may like to write the Class Rep's name and details in this box:

Class Rep name and contact details:
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## **Student feedback**

In response to student feedback, the essay topics have been written to give students more guidance and also to allow for more flexibility for students with a particular interest in a topic area to follow that up.

You will have an opportunity to participate in the evaluation of this course.

Student feedback on University courses may be found at [www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/feedback/feedback\\_display.php](http://www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/feedback/feedback_display.php).

## Other important information

The information above is specific to this course. There is other important information that students must familiarise themselves with, including:

- Academic Integrity and Plagiarism: [www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/plagiarism](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/plagiarism)
- Aegrotats: [www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/exams-and-assessments/aegrotat](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/exams-and-assessments/aegrotat)
- Academic Progress: [www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/academic-progress](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/academic-progress) (including restrictions and non-engagement)
- Dates and deadlines: [www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/dates](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/dates)
- FHSS Student and Academic Services Office: [www.victoria.ac.nz/fhss/student-admin](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/fhss/student-admin)
- Grades: [www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/exams-and-assessments/grades](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/exams-and-assessments/grades)
- Resolving academic issues: [www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/avcacademic/publications2#grievances](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/avcacademic/publications2#grievances)
- Special passes: [www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/avcacademic/publications2#specialpass](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/avcacademic/publications2#specialpass)
- Statutes and policies including the Student Conduct Statute: [www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/policy](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/policy)
- Student support: [www.victoria.ac.nz/home/viclife/student-service](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/viclife/student-service)
- Students with disabilities: [www.victoria.ac.nz/st\\_services/disability](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/st_services/disability)
- Student Charter: [www.victoria.ac.nz/home/viclife/student-charter](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/viclife/student-charter)
- Student Contract: [www.victoria.ac.nz/home/admisenrol/enrol/studentcontract](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/admisenrol/enrol/studentcontract)
- Turnitin: [www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/wiki/index.php/Turnitin](http://www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/wiki/index.php/Turnitin)
- University structure: [www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about)
- VUWSA: [www.vuwsa.org.nz](http://www.vuwsa.org.nz)

## School Contact Information

Head of School: Dr Allison Kirkman, MY1013

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International Student Liaison: Dr Hal Levine MY1023

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School of Social and Cultural Studies: [www.victoria.ac.nz/sacs/](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/sacs/)