

SOC 228 – CULTURAL DIVERSITY & HUMAN NEED (4 credits)

Course Description

The study of culture, its origins and diversity has always been of immense value to anyone interested in the way the world functions. To know what culture is and see it function in all its varieties is the greatest step that can be taken along the road to understanding and peaceful cohabitation with others. In a globalised world where physical barriers to the free movement of people have been dramatically lessened, the study of cultural diversity has a heightened value and has become an important tool to anyone hoping to manage themselves on the world arena.

This course aims to equip students with the knowledge they need to cope with, and master the complex and interrelated factors, which make people and societies behave the way they do.

Required Text

Packet of readings. Articles from academic journals will be distributed during the semester.

Course Requirements

Students are expected to be self-conscious in their pursuit of sources of information and knowledge for this course. It will be considered self-evident in this course that at a third level learning institution students need not be told to visit the library and seek out for themselves books and articles relating to subjects covered in class.

A specific research project must be completed during the semester. Students will submit an oral proposal outlining the subject they desire to cover, the reason for its relevance and significance and the sources from which it is proposed information will be used.

Two examinations will be set, both of which will be of one and a half hours duration and will be taken at the university.

Students must attend and participate in all classes. A record shall be kept of this and an appropriate proportion of the final grade made to reflect success and conscientiousness in this.

Assessment

Mid-Term Exam	30%
Final Exam	30%
Research Project	30%
Attendance and Participation	10%

Approximate Schedule (subject to change)

Weeks 1&2

Introduction to class procedure

History of culture. What is it, when did it begin.

Human Nature v Culture, or Human Nature & Culture, or both?

Jared Diamond “Guns, Germs and Steel”.

Diversity: To what extent?

Discussion of research project

India: Poverty and Democracy

Colonialism and its aftermath

Weeks 3&4

Cultural features and their diversity.

Family, Child Nurture and Training.

Family Origin and Universality

Readings from Cultural Diversity, Jerry Diller. Pages 58 – 77. Ingoldsby, B.B. and Smith, S.

“Families in Multicultural Perspective” 1995. Murdock, G.P. (1949) Social Structure. New York: Free Press.

Weeks 5&6

Stanton, Max E. “Patterns of Kinship and Residence”.

Marital Structure.

Ingoldsby, B.B. and Smith, S. “Families in Multicultural Perspective” 1995. (Pages 116 – 137).

Marriage and divorce in Contemporary Society. Segalen, M and Whitehouse, J. C.,

Historical Anthropology of the Family (Pages 139 – 159)

Weeks 7&8

Case Study. The Amish.

Hostetler, John A., Amish Society. John Hopkins Press, 1993 (Pages 171 – 190, 255 – 270).

Gender and Sexuality.

Kottak, Conrad Philip. Cultural Anthropology, 9th ed, 2002 (Pages 276 – 298).

Blossfeld, Hans-Peter. 1995. The New Role of Women. (Pages 3 – 32).

Weeks 9&10

Ethnicity, Ethnic Diversity and Racism.

Cultural Diversity, Jerry Diller (Pages 28 – 58).

Thomas H. Eriksen, Ethnicity, Race, Class and Nation.

Pierre Van Den Berghe, “Does Race Matter?”

Eugenia Ramírez Goicoechea, Sociosymbolic Aspects Of Social Exclusion. Some Clues For The Study of Migrant Integration.

Weeks 11,12, &13

Comparative Religion.

Varieties and theories of Religion.

The Problem of Secularisation.

The great debate on “multiculturalism”. Can it work?

Human Rights and Multiculturalism.

Lila Abu-Lughod, “Do Muslim Women Really Need Saving?”

Anthropological Reflections on Cultural Relativism and Its Others

Belief and Culture: Confucianism and modern Japan. Ruth Benedict, “The Chrysanthemum and The Sword”