CULTURE CONTACT
AND COLONIALISM

Interactions within and between different groups of people have been part of the human condition for our entire evolutionary history. Some kinds of interaction are peaceful and others hostile; some are interactions among equals, and others are characterized by varying degrees of dominance and dependency; many interactions among groups of people lead to unintended outcomes, whether good or bad from the perspective of those involved. Many forms of interaction bring together people of different cultural backgrounds in situations that can be described as “contact.” Forms of culture contact that involve the movement of people and cultural practices from one setting to another—and often the movement of wealth from “colony” to “center”—can be referred to as “colonialism.” Anthropological topics related to the broader theme of culture contact and colonialism include the nature of group identity and intergroup interaction in our primate and early human ancestors; interactions and genealogical relationships among different species of ancestral humans; early human settlement in Australia some 40 to 50 thousand years ago; early human settlement in the Americas between 10 and 15 thousand years ago; the spread of ancient empires and trade networks in the Mediterranean, China, Mesoamerica, the Andes, and Europe; the European colonization of Africa and the Americas; the adoption of religious beliefs and ritual practices in different cultural settings throughout the world; the evolution and emergence of languages and other forms of communication; and the effects of colonial and postcolonial history on the lives of people in the present in places throughout Asia, Africa, and Oceania. These and other situations of culture contact and colonialism have in some cases led to the demise of cultural practices and native ways of life in many places, but people have also actively responded to these situations by creating new cultural practices, adopting aspects of other cultural traditions and making them their own.

The major objectives of this course are:

- to consider the variety of ways that anthropologists study colonialism, intergroup interaction, and culture contact in the past and present,
- to consider the many different forms of colonialism and culture contact that have taken place in human history and prehistory,
- to develop a global understanding of processes associated with intercultural interaction,
- to develop a comparative approach to the study of culture contact and colonialism.

Every section of the anthropology proseminar is devoted to a particular theme, which is then explored from the perspective of the four major subfields of anthropology, including archaeology, cultural anthropology, physical anthropology, and linguistics. Anthropology is a holistic field of study, and students in this course will learn how to evaluate many kinds of anthropological evidence that are relevant to our knowledge of culture contact and colonialism in the past and present. Students will learn how anthropologists in the different subfields frame research questions, and how they draw conclusions from the many kinds of data they collect. Students in this course will also become familiar with some of the major journals in which anthropological research is published and discussed, many of which are now available both in print and in digital format on line.

Some of the skills that students will develop through taking this course:

- critical thinking,
- making oral arguments about anthropological topics,
- making written arguments about anthropological topics,
- and the ability to pose questions and to know what kinds of data are relevant to answering them.
**COURSE SCHEDULE**

### INTRODUCTION
- R1/18  Boyd 2006—article published in the journal *Science*

### PRIMATES
- R1/25  Manson and Wrangham 1991; Silk 2002; Stanford 1999

### HUMAN EVOLUTION
- R2/1  D’Errico 2003; Mellars 2005; Mellars 2006; Shea 2003B; Zilhao 2006

### BIOARCHAEOLOGY
- R2/8  Larsen 1994; Merbs 1992

### LANGUAGE
- R2/15  Crawford 1978; Keesing 1988; TBA

### RELIGION AND RITUAL
- R2/22  Preucel 2002; Wallace 1970; TBA

### ARCHAEOLOGY OF CULTURE CONTACT
- R3/1  Algaze 2001; Millett 1990

### ETHNOGRAPHY OF CULTURE CONTACT

### F4/6-M4/9  EASTER BREAK
- R4/12  Sahlins 1985; Sahlins 1995; Wolf 1982
- R4/26  Packer 2006—article published in *The New Yorker*

### S3/17-S3/25  SPRING BREAK

### F5/4  1:00 – 5:00PM
- student paper presentations

**READING AND WRITING**

Students should read the assigned articles before the class for which they are assigned. Readings are available on Blackboard and in the Tulane library. All students in this course will write a term paper on a topic related to the anthropology of culture contact and colonialism. Students are welcome to consult with staff members of the writing workshop here on campus should they want feedback on approaches to writing and drafts of papers: [http://erc.tulane.edu/tutoring-writing.htm](http://erc.tulane.edu/tutoring-writing.htm). There are links to web pages about academic writing and citation at: [http://library.tulane.edu/research/research_help/citation_guide.php](http://library.tulane.edu/research/research_help/citation_guide.php).

On the class dates marked with the symbol **DQ #1...**, all students will turn in at least one typed discussion question about required readings.

On the class dates marked with the symbol **TP #1...**, all students will turn in the appropriate component of their term paper.
TP #1 1/25 State the subfield of anthropology on which your term paper will focus.

TP #2 2/15 What is the tentative topic of your term paper?

TP #3 3/1 What is the tentative title of your term paper?

TP #4 3/15 Submit a typed list of at least five bibliographic references.

TP #5 4/5 Submit a page (or more) of typed text.

TP #6 4/26 Submit your final term paper in class.

PRESENTATIONS AND DISCUSSION
All students will give presentations in class about selected readings, which will set the stage for class discussion about those readings—and all students will give presentations about their term papers during the final exam period set aside for this course.

GRADES
Students will earn points towards final grades for this course throughout the semester, according to their performance on writing assignments and in class presentations, and through participation in class discussions. Final grades are determined as follows.

Semester grade scores are determined by:
- class participation 15%
- class presentations 30%
- discussion questions 15%
- term paper 40%

Letter grades are derived as follows:
- A = >94
- A- = 90-94
- B+ = 87-89
- B = 84-86
- B- = 80-83
- C+ = 77-79
- C = 74-76
- C- = 70-73
- D = 60-69
- F = <60

COURSE POLICIES
Students are encouraged to participate actively in class discussions and are expected to respect the thoughts and opinions shared by others taking this course. Take advantage of your chances to read, to write, to reflect, and to learn in this course and in your other courses. Attendance is mandatory, students are expected to attend and to participate in every scheduled class meeting, reading and homework assignments should be completed by the date for which they are assigned, and the exams must be taken as scheduled. Each student may be absent from one class, after which points will be deducted from the class participation component of his or her course grade.

Students are welcome to study with each other and to talk about the material and ideas covered in the course, but exams and writing assignments must reflect individual thought and effort.

Cheating on exams, plagiarism of written material, and other forms of academic misconduct are strictly forbidden, they will lead to disciplinary action, and academic misconduct by a student may result in a failing grade for this course. Students are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the honor code and adhering to it—http://college.tulane.edu/honorcode.htm. The more general code of student conduct, which includes statements about the honor code and other university policies, is available on line at—http://studentaffairs.tulane.edu/judicial/CodeofStudentConduct.pdf.

In addition to consulting with the professor about issues related to coursework and their performance in this course in particular, students are welcome to consult with teachers and staff of the Center for Educational Resources and Counseling here at Tulane University (http://www.erc.tulane.edu/), whose web site includes pages devoted to study tips (http://www.erc.tulane.edu/study/index.htm), tutoring services (http://www.erc.tulane.edu/tutoring/index.htm), and counseling services
please know that those resources are there for you if you want or need them. there is nothing wrong with asking for help.

**learn more**

anthropology is the study of the human experience—in its many different forms in many different settings—in the past and present. the holistic perspective that is characteristic of anthropology is valuable as a lens for understanding current events, for solving the problems and challenges that people face, and also for understanding the different viewpoints that different people have about the world in which we live. anthropologists have jobs in a variety of settings—in colleges and universities, museums, research institutes, government, public advocacy and activist groups, consulting firms, and elsewhere—but more generally, anthropology enriches our knowledge of our world and of ourselves, and that perspective benefits people in any career path.

the course web page includes links and other material related to careers in anthropology.