

ANTHROPOLOGY 2280F-650

Economic Anthropology

COURSE OUTLINE

Fall 2020

Instructor: Christine Kennedy

Email: csuck2@uwo.ca

Credit value: 0.5 credit

Mode of delivery: For 2020/2021 this course will be conducted online. It is *asynchronous*, meaning that students will be provided with a variety of lesson materials and activities that can be done throughout the week, although there may be tasks that must be completed by specific times.

Calendar Course Description: This course explores the economic lives of people across a variety of cultures. Topics will include social and political economy, economics and morality, gifts and exchange, labour and production, commodities and consumption, fair trade, and concepts of land and mortgage.

Antirequisites: None.

Prerequisites: At least a 0.5 Essay course in any faculty.

Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. The decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

Territorial Acknowledgement: Western University is located on the traditional lands of the Anishinaabek, Haudenosaunee, Lūnaapéewak, and Attawandaron peoples. The First Nations communities in closest proximity to the University are: Chippewas of the Thames First Nation, Oneida Nation of the Thames, and Munsee-Delaware Nation.

Course Syllabus:

This course examines the economic lives of people across various societies. Economies, as we will see, are not isolated from other parts of social life. How people produce, exchange and consume goods and services are shaped by cultural practices and social and political institutions. We will discuss various theoretical approaches used by anthropologists to explain economic behavior, and the differences between economic anthropology and economics. We will further explore how global processes and connections affect people's economic lives and how local people, influenced by their cultural background, cope with and respond to changes.

Topics will include: social and political economy; production and labor; consumption and commodities; exchange and gifts; economics and morality; fair trade; concepts of land and mortgage; neoliberalism; and migration and labor.

Learning Outcomes:

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Discuss the contributions anthropologists have made to the study of economies and economic behavior.
- Debate how cultural, social and political factors influence economic activities, and how people respond to changes.
- Identify different theories used to explain economic behavior.
- Demonstrate improved research skills by locating scholarly sources.
- Synthesize information from various scholarly publications in written formats.

Course Materials:

Wilk, Richard R., and Lisa Cliggett. 2007. *Economies and Cultures: Foundations of Economic Anthropology*. Second edition. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

The textbook can be accessed through the "Course Readings" feature on the OWL course website. It can also be purchased via Amazon and VitalSource; for more information, please consult the OWL course website or contact the instructor.

Additional required readings (such as journal articles and non-textbook chapters) can be accessed through the "Course Readings" feature on the OWL course website.

Evaluation:

Grades will be based on the following:

- Forum Postings #1 – 20%
- Forum Postings #2 – 20%
- Quizzes – 10%
- Paper – 30%, due November 25
- Final exam – 20%, scheduled during the final exam period

Evaluation details:

Forum Postings

Forum Postings #1 (weeks 2 to 7) – 20%

Forum Postings #2 (week 8 to 13) – 20%

The purpose of the forums is for students to discuss the readings and engage with other students' thoughts. The forums provide us with the opportunity to learn from each other.

Students are required to make **at least 1 substantial contribution** to the forums **each week**, starting with week 2. The contributions should be thoughtful, well-supported, clear and coherent, no longer than 2 paragraphs (per contribution), but contain more than 2 or 3 sentences. Your posts need to engage with the readings (and films). I am looking for evidence that you have read, understood and thought about the book chapters and journal articles.

Your contributions can be responses to questions and comments posted by the instructor or other students. You can also start conversations.

Posts are due by Friday although you are encouraged to submit posts by Thursday to get discussions started; exception: contributions for week 13 are due Wednesday, December 9, 2020. There is no penalty for late submission of postings. However, forums will be **locked 3 days after the respective due dates at 7:00pm EST**; exception: the forum of week 13 will be locked on Thursday, December 10, 2020 (at 7:00pm EST). Once a forum is locked, you cannot make any contributions to that forum. It is therefore imperative that you submit postings within 3 days if you miss a due date (except in cases where students have been granted academic consideration). You are not allowed to submit more than 4 postings per weekly forum.

If you submit more than 6 posts within a period, I will count the best 6 for your mark. Bonus marks will be assigned for additional posts. Please note: If you submit 6 posts in a period but contribute to the forums of less than 5 weeks, marks will be reduced. More information on the forums, including grading, bonus marks and mark reductions, will be posted on the OWL course website.

Quizzes – 10% total

There will be 6 quizzes (worth 2% each) throughout the term, in weeks 3, 5, 7, 9, 11 and 13. The quizzes will consist of multiple choice and true/false questions. Each quiz will cover material of two weeks, including video lectures, written lesson information, journal articles and book chapters, documentaries etc. Each quiz will be open for 8 days (Saturday to Saturday); exception: quiz #6 will be open for 5 days until Wednesday, December 9.

The quiz with the lowest mark will be dropped from the overall grade calculation; consequently, your overall grade will not be negatively affected if you miss 1 quiz. Students who miss quizzes should contact the instructor. Accommodations will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Paper – 30%

I will provide a list of topics from which you can choose one for your paper. The paper is supposed to be 1,500 to 1,700 words in length (excluding the reference list).

You are expected to incorporate points from **at least 4 different class readings** and **at least 3 anthropological publications** that are not class readings (i.e., articles in peer-reviewed journals, scholarly books, and/or book chapters, published between 1999 and 2020). As class readings count those journal articles and book chapters listed in the course outline. Films and non-anthropological texts count in addition to the 7 required sources.

This assignment is an exercise in critical thinking, in developing a thesis/a main argument, in synthesizing information from scholarly sources, and in properly acknowledging the ideas, wording and data of other authors.

The paper is due on **November 25, 2020 (11:55pm EST)**. The penalty for late submission of the paper is **2% per weekday**. I will not accept papers submitted after December 2, 2020 (11:55pm EST). Submit an electronic copy of your essay via "Assignments" on the OWL course website.

A detailed assignment outline (including format guidelines) will be posted on the OWL course site.

Final Exam – 20%

The final exam will be a take-home essay. The exam is due within the exam period, date TBA.

Academic Integrity - Statement on Plagiarism:

Students must write their assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing. It is also a scholastic offence to submit the same work for credit in more than one course. Plagiarism is a major scholastic offence.

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and [Turnitin.com](https://www.turnitin.com).

Course Specific Conditions Required to Pass this Course:

In order to pass an essay course, the student must exhibit some minimal level of competence in essay writing and the appropriate level of knowledge of the content of the course.

In order to pass this essay course, students need to submit the written assignments (i.e., the paper and the forum postings) and receive a passing grade on the paper and either forum postings #1 or forum postings #2.

Course Specific Statements and Policies:

Statement on Email

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or concerns. I endeavour to reply to messages within 24 hours (Monday to Friday until 5:00pm EST). I will respond to emails sent on Friday after 5:00pm (EST) and on the weekend on Monday of the following week. I am also happy to talk with you face to face via Zoom. Please contact me to set up a date and time for a Zoom session.

Statement on Technology

Because this is an online course, it is imperative that students have the proper equipment (computers, laptops etc.) and internet connection. Students must familiarize themselves with the OWL course site and its different features. Non-working computers, computer programs, internet connections etc. or lacking the knowledge of how to use OWL will not be accepted as valid excuses for having missed assignment deadlines. If you experience technical difficulties or have technical questions regarding OWL, please contact the [Helpdesk](#), Western Technology Services and not the instructor.

Accommodation Policies

Students with disabilities work with Accessible Education (formerly SSD) which provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive testing. The accommodation policy can be found here: [Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities](#).

Academic Consideration for Student Absence

Students will have up to two (2) opportunities during the regular academic year to use an on-line portal to self-report an absence during the term, provided the following conditions are met: the absence is no more than 48 hours in duration, and the assessment for which consideration is being sought is worth 30% or less of the student's final grade. Students are expected to contact their instructors within 24 hours of the end of the period of the self-reported absence, unless noted on the syllabus. Students are not able to use the self-reporting option in the following circumstances:

- for exams scheduled by the Office of the Registrar (e.g., December and April exams)
- absence of a duration greater than 48 hours,
- assessments worth more than 30% of the student's final grade,
- if a student has already used the self-reporting portal twice during the academic year

If the conditions for a Self-Reported Absence are *not* met, students will need to provide a Student Medical Certificate if the absence is medical, or provide appropriate documentation if there are compassionate grounds for the absence in question. Students are encouraged to contact their Faculty academic counselling office to obtain more information about the relevant documentation.

Students should also note that individual instructors are not permitted to receive documentation directly from a student, whether in support of an application for consideration on medical grounds, or for other reasons. **All documentation required for absences that are not covered by the Self-Reported Absence Policy must be submitted to the Academic Counselling office of a student's Home Faculty.**

No academic consideration will be granted retroactively more than 10 days after an assignment's due date or a missed quiz or test. Please see your academic counsellor immediately if you will be seeking academic consideration based on medical or compassionate grounds.

For Western University policy on Consideration for Student Absence, see: [Policy on Academic Consideration for Student Absences - Undergraduate Students in First Entry Programs](#)

[Student Medical Certificate \(SMC\)](#)

Religious Accommodation

Students should consult the University's list of recognized religious holidays, and should give reasonable notice in writing, prior to the holiday, to the Instructor and an Academic Counsellor if their course requirements will be affected by a religious observance. Additional information is given in the [Western Multicultural Calendar](#).

Institutional Statements and Policies:

All students should familiarize themselves with Western's current academic policies regarding accessibility, plagiarism and scholastic offences, and medical accommodation. These policies are outlined in Western's academic policies by clicking on this link: [Western's academic policies](#).

Course Schedule and Readings:

Week 1 (September 9 - 13): Introduction to the Course

Week 2 (September 14 - 20): Introduction to Economic Anthropology

Economies and Cultures: Chapter 1 (Economic Anthropology)

Economies and Cultures: Chapter 2 (Economics and the Problem of Human Nature)

Week 3 (September 21 - 27): Neoclassical Microeconomics ... and Anthropological Views

Economies and Cultures: Chapter 3 (Self-Interest and Neoclassical Microeconomics)

Truitt, Allison. 2020. "Money." In *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of Anthropology*, edited by Felix Stein, Sian Lazar, M. Candea et al. <http://doi.org/10.29164/20money>.

Quiz #1

Week 4 (September 28 - October 4): Social and Political Economy

Economies and Cultures: Chapter 4 (Social and Political Economy)

Millar, Kathleen. 2008. "Making Trash into Treasure: Struggles for Autonomy on a Brazilian Garbage Dump." *Anthropology of Work Review* 29 (2): 25-34.

Week 5 (October 5 - 11): Economics and Morality

Economies and Cultures: Chapter 5 (The Moral Human: Cultural Economics)

Taussiq, Michael. 2010[1980]. "The Baptism of Money and the Secret of Capital." In *The Devil and Commodity Fetishism in South America*, 126-139. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press.

Quiz #2

Week 6 (October 13 - 18): Production and Labor

Ong, Aihwa. 2010[1987]. "Spirits of Resistance." In *Spirits of Resistance and Capitalist Discipline: Factory Women in Malaysia*, 195-213. Second Edition. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Curry, George N., Gina Koczberski, and Susan May Inu. 2019. Women's and Men's Work: The Production and Marketing of Fresh Food and Export Crops in Papua New Guinea. *Oceania* 89 (2): 237-254.

Week 7 (October 19 - 25): Exchange and Gifts

Economies and Cultures: Chapter 6 (Gifts and Exchange)

MacCarthy, Michelle. 2015. "Like Playing a Game Where You Don't Know the Rules': Investing Meaning in Intercultural Cash Transactions Between Tourists and Trobriand Islanders." *Ethnos* 80 (4): 448-471.

Quiz #3

Week 8 (October 26 - November 1): Consumption and Commodities

Oka, Rahul Chandrashekhar. 2014. "Coping with the Refugee Wait: The Role of Consumption, Normalcy, and Dignity in Refugee Lives at Kakuma Refugee Camp, Kenya." *American Anthropologist* 116 (1): 23-37.

Scheper-Hughes, Nancy. 2002. "The Ends of the Body: Commodity Fetishism and the Global Traffic in Organs." *SAIS Review* 22 (1): 61-80.

November 2 - 8: Reading Week (no class)

Week 9 (November 9 - 15): Fair Trade

Besky, Sarah. 2008. "Can a Plantation be Fair?: Paradoxes and Possibilities in Fair Trade Darjeeling Tea Certification." *Anthropology of Work Review* 29 (1): 1-9.

Moberg, Mark. 2014. "Certification and Neoliberal Governance: Moral Economies of Fair Trade in the Eastern Caribbean." *American Anthropologist* 116 (1): 8-22.

Quiz #4

Week 10 (November 16 - 22): Neoliberalism

Ortner, Sherry B. 2011. "On Neoliberalism." *Anthropology of This Century* 1.
<http://aotcpress.com/articles/neoliberalism/>.

Brett, John A. 2006. "'We Sacrifice and Eat Less': The Structural Complexities of Microfinance Participation." *Human Organization* 65 (1): 8-19.

Week 11 (November 23 - 29): Land and Mortgage

Shipton, Parker. 2009. "Introduction." In *Mortgaging the Ancestors: Ideologies of Attachment in Africa*, 1-22. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Castellanos, M. Bianet. "Don Teo's Expulsion: Property Regimes, Moral Economies, and Ejido Reform." *The Journal of Latin American and Caribbean Anthropology* 15 (1): 144-169.

November 25: PAPER DUE

Quiz #5

Week 12 (November 30 - December 6): Migration and Labor

Sanchez, Teresa Figueroa. 2013. "Californian Strawberries: Mexican Immigrant Women Sharecroppers, Labor, and Discipline." *Anthropology of Work Review* 34 (1): 15-26.

Rodkey, Evin. 2016. "Disposable Labor, Repurposed: Outsourcing Deportees in the Call Center Industry." *Anthropology of Work Review* 37 (1): 34-43.

Alfaro, Veronica. 2020. "Temporary Workers in Canada: Crossing Borders in Pandemic Times." *Compass*. Posted August 4, 2020. <https://www.compas.ox.ac.uk/2020/temporary-workers-in-canada/>.

Week 13 (December 7 - 9): Conclusion

Economies and Cultures: Chapter 7 (Conclusions: Complex Economic Human Beings)

Quiz #6

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