

UC 12126 12F

CBM003 ADD/CHANGE FORM

APPROVED MAR 27 2013

Undergraduate Council  
 New Course  Course Change  
 Core Category: WID Effective Fall 2014

or Graduate/Professional Studies Council  
 New Course  Course Change  
 Effective Fall 2014

1. Department: CCS College: CLASS  
 2. Faculty Contact Person: Susan Rasmussen Telephone: 33787 Email: srasmuscn@uh.edu

3. Course Information on New/Revised course:  
 • Instructional Area / Course Number / Long Course Title:  
ANTH / 2304 / Introduction to Language and Culture  
 • Instructional Area / Course Number / Short Course Title (30 characters max.)  
ANTH / 2304 / INTRODUCTION TO LANGUAGE AND C  
 • SCH: 3.00 Level: SO CIP Code: 45.0299.05 01 Lect Hrs: 3 Lab Hrs: 0

RECEIVED OCT 12 2012

4. Justification for adding/changing course: To meet core curriculum requirements  
 5. Was the proposed/revised course previously offered as a special topics course?  Yes  No  
 If Yes, please complete:

• Instructional Area / Course Number / Long Course Title:  
 \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_  
 • Course ID: \_\_\_\_ Effective Date (currently active row): \_\_\_\_

6. Authorized Degree Program(s): BA/BS  
 • Does this course affect major/minor requirements in the College/Department?  Yes  No  
 • Does this course affect major/minor requirements in other Colleges/Departments?  Yes  No  
 • Can the course be repeated for credit?  Yes  No (if yes, include in course description)

7. Grade Option: Letter (A, B, C ...) Instruction Type: lecture ONLY (Note: Lect/Lab info. must match item 3, above.)

8. If this form involves a change to an existing course, please obtain the following information from the course inventory: Instructional Area / Course Number / Long Course Title  
ANTH / 2304 / Introduction to Language and Culture  
 • Course ID: 283654 Effective Date (currently active row): 2003

9. Proposed Catalog Description: (If there are no prerequisites, type in "none".)  
 Cr: 3. (3-0). Prerequisites: Prerequisite: concurrent enrollment in or completion of ENGL 1303 or equivalent Description (30 words max.): Anthropological perspectives on the relation of language and culture including social use of language, language as behavior, and non-verbal communication.

10. Dean's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: 10/9/12

Print/Type Name: Sarah Fishman

## REQUEST FOR COURSES IN THE CORE CURRICULUM

Originating Department or College: Comparative Cultural Studies

Person Making Request: Susan Rasmussen

Telephone: 713-743-3987

Email: srasmussen@uh.edu

Dean's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: 09-10-12

Course Number and Title: Anthropology 2304: Language and Culture (Introduction to Linguistic Anthropology)

Please attach in separate documents:

Completed CBM003 Add/Change Form with Catalog Description

Syllabus

List the student learning outcomes for the course (Statements of what students will know and be able to do as a result of taking this course. See appended hints for constructing these statements):

\* Students will attain, through lectures, discussions, and readings, and demonstrate, through exams and other assignments such as the exercise/essays, knowledge about the relationships among language, culture, and society and anthropological approaches to studying them. \*Students will develop, through class discussions of primary sources and secondary works of linguistic anthropology, critical reading and thinking skills. \*Students will, in class and in written assignments, demonstrate their ability to communicate effectively. \*Students will, through their assignments, development their ability to use empirical skills in their writing and thinking, and learn proper documentation skills. \*Students will explore issues of social responsibility in class and in their writing.

Component Area for which the course is being proposed (check one):

**\*Note:** If you check the Component Area Option, you would need to also check a Foundational Component Area.

Communication

American History

Mathematics

Government/Political

Science

Language, Philosophy, & Culture

Social & Behavioral Science

Creative Arts

WJD Component Area Option

Life & Physical Sciences

Competency areas addressed by the course (refer to appended chart for competencies that are required and optional in each component area):

Critical Thinking

Teamwork

Communication Skills

Social Responsibility

Empirical & Quantitative Skills

Personal Responsibility

Because we will be assessing student learning outcomes across multiple core courses, assessments assigned in your course must include assessments of the core competencies. For each competency checked above, indicated the specific course assignment(s) which, when completed by students, will provide evidence of the competency. Provide detailed information, such as copies of the paper or project assignment, copies of individual test items, etc. A single assignment may be used to provide data for multiple competencies.

Critical Thinking:

*writing*

*a take-home*

Students will attain, ~~through lectures, discussions, and readings~~, and demonstrate, through ~~exams and other assignments such as the exercise/essays~~, knowledge about the relationships among language, culture, and society and anthropological approaches to studying them. ~~Students will develop, through class discussions of primary sources and secondary works of linguistic anthropology, critical reading and thinking skills.~~

Sample paper assignment(s):

Human communication is based largely on symbols. What are some common nonverbal symbols in our society? Were these devised for a particular purpose (as with advertising) or did they develop spontaneously? What social functions are served by those that developed spontaneously? Address these questions using methods of participant observation and interviewing.

Or:

Using specific examples from interactions you have observed in a public setting, **discuss how language influences culture and how culture influences language.**

Communication Skills:

*the same listed above*

Students will, in class and in written assignments, demonstrate their ability to communicate effectively.

Empirical & Quantitative Skills:

*the same listed above*

Students will, through their assignments, develop their ability to use empirical skills in their writing and thinking, and learn proper documentation skills.

Teamwork:

Click here to enter text.

Social Responsibility:

*through the same assignment listed above.*

Students will explore issues of social responsibility in class and in their writing.

Personal Responsibility:

Click here to enter text.

Will the syllabus vary across multiple section of the course?

Yes

No

If yes, list the assignments that will be constant across sections:

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Inclusion in the core is contingent upon the course being offered and taught at least once every other academic year. Courses will be reviewed for renewal every 5 years.

The department understands that instructors will be expected to provide student work and to participate in university-wide assessments of student work. This could include, but may not be limited to, designing instruments such as rubrics, and scoring work by students in this or other courses. In addition, instructors of core courses may be asked to include brief assessment activities in their course.

Dept. Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

University of Houston  
Department of Anthropology  
Phone: (direct) 743-3787; (departmental administrator) 743-3780

Anthropology 2304, Section 31481  
Introduction to Language and Culture: Introductory Linguistic Anthropology  
Spring Semester 2010  
Time: MWF noon-1 PM  
Place: AH 108

Office Hours: McElhinney 258-A, MW 2:30-3:30 PM or by special appointment. It is easier to reach me by my direct office telephone voice-mail than by e-mail.

(NOTE: This syllabus is subject to minor modification. It is the students' responsibility to attend class or otherwise obtain information on all changes.)

Subject Matter, Goals of Course:

This is an introductory course in linguistic anthropology, one of several major sub-fields in the discipline of anthropology. In anthropology, one goal of studying language-related topics is to understand the extent to which a language structures the thinking of those who speak it; in other words, how far, and in what ways, does language affect the world-view of the speakers? These are important questions, relevant to contemporary concerns in advertising, politics, religion, medicine, education, and current events, in other cultures and societies as well as our own. There are many points of overlap between cultural and linguistic anthropology. Linguistic anthropology, however, makes more explicit reference to issues such as the role of language in symbolism, differences between human and non-human primate communication systems, and interrelationships between language, world-view, and social action. There are also similarities between the field called sociolinguistics and linguistic anthropology. For example, some scholars in both fields try to describe the grammar of unwritten languages. But the distinctiveness of anthropological linguistics lies in its theoretical framework: the concept of culture. In the United States, the examination of language as a key to world-view had its beginning within the Boasian historical-particularist school. Boas emphasized the collection of data in the form of verbatim texts from local informants so as to preserve their meanings.

Language can be defined as the learned system of arbitrary but socially-conventional vocal symbols by means of which human beings, as members of a society, interact and communicate in terms of their culture. Language defined as such is an exclusively human trait. It makes possible culture. It is the primary transmitter of culture from generation to generation. Language makes it possible to share a culture, and moreover, also to contest or dispute it, because any system of language consists of conventionally-accepted symbols by which we try to share and negotiate private experience.

The essential function of language is communication. Other animals communicate in a variety of ways including 1) sound; 2) scent; and 3) body motions in space. Primates use all three methods of communication. The great apes exhibit a variety of call systems, from the limited system of the gibbon to the more comprehensive one of the chimpanzee. But each call is mutually exclusive. The ape cannot elaborately combine parts of the two calls to obtain a third call which will combine the two messages. His/her system of communication is closed. Our system is more open; we can combine two or more units of meaning into sentences. Although chimpanzees have been unsuccessful at learning human speech, they have been taught systems of communication. The origin of language is speculated upon, but no definite conclusions have been reached. It probably developed from the limited systems of calls characteristic of higher primates. Anthropologists generally agree that language perhaps was necessary for humans to become makers and users of tools, which places the origin of language as we know it early in human evolution.

Additional concerns of linguistic anthropologists addressed in this course include: the social use of language, for example, language and gender; language and social stratification; language acquisition and comparisons of oral and literary traditions. In sum, most course topics fall within two major domains of

inquiry: 1) anthropological models of culture derived from language; and 2) sociopolitical contexts of language use.

Student Learning Outcomes:

- Students will attain, through lectures, discussions, and readings, and demonstrate, through exams and other assignments such as the exercise/essays, knowledge about the relationships among language, culture, and society and anthropological approaches to studying them. Students will develop, through class discussions of primary sources and secondary works of linguistic anthropology, critical reading and thinking skills.
- Students will, in class and in written assignments, demonstrate their ability to communicate effectively.
- Students will, through their assignments, development their ability to use empirical skills in their writing and thinking, and learn proper documentation skills.
- Students will explore issues of social responsibility in class and in their writing.

Readings:

In sum total, there are **four** books at the University bookstore to be purchased and several items on library reserve for this course. The four books are the following:

- an anthology (collection) of selected works on language, culture, and society, Making Sense of Language, edited by Susan D. Blum, NY and Oxford: Oxford University Press, (2009);
- a textbook, Language, Culture, and Communication, by Nancy Bonvillian (Prentice Hall, 5<sup>th</sup> or latest edition);
- a symbolic/semiotic analysis of American popular culture as myth, American Dreamtime, by Lee Drummond (London: Littlefield Adams Books, 1996); and
- an ethnography by a linguistic anthropologist specializing in folklore, verbal art, and performance, Performing Dreams, by Laura Graham (2003 or latest edition)

Class format, procedure, requirements, and grades:

Classes will be mixed in format, consisting of lectures, discussions of readings led alternately by students and instructor, films and other audio-visual resources, and group projects. The instructor will utilize audiovisuals when appropriate, and also draw some examples from her own long-standing field research on verbal art performance in Tuareg (Tamajaq-speaking) communities in northern Niger and Mali, West Africa, and brief additional research in France among Tuareg expatriates there, as well as from language-related research by other anthropologists elsewhere, when relevant. Although the professor will present much background material in lecture form, this is informal, comments and questions from students at intervals are encouraged, and a significant portion of class meetings will be devoted to student participation: hypothetical field projects and role-playing simulation exercises, and both general and small “buzz-group”-style discussions and debates, in so far as time permits. Students are responsible for preparing required readings in advance of the class date for which discussion is scheduled, and exams will test students on required readings as well as class lectures and audiovisuals. Unless the professor indicates otherwise, readings are required, although depth of discussion for each varies according to time constraints. Students are also expected, in their two assigned written field exercises, to draw from concepts in lectures and readings where relevant.

Grades will be based upon the following **four written requirements**:

- two take-home written exercises**, intended to be fun as well as an opportunity for “hands-on” application of selected issues and principles in the study of language, culture, and society. They will be distributed two weeks in advance of their respective due dates. Each is worth 25 points or approximately one-fourth of the course grade, i.e., together, both are worth 50 points or one-half of course grade total;
- one in-class, closed book midterm examination**: worth 20 points or one-fifth of course grade; and
- one in-class, closed-book final examination**, administered to all students, WITHOUT EXCEPTION, during the official final examination week. Final is worth 30 points, approximately one-third course grade. The final exam will cover all material covered after the midterm.

Maximum total points for course grade: 100. IF YOU CANNOT TAKE THE EXAMS OR SUBMIT ASSIGNMENTS AT THE DESIGNATED TIMES AND DATES, DO NOT REGISTER FOR THIS COURSE/SECTION.

Course Outline:

General Orientations---

UNIT

NO CLASS MONDAY JANUARY 18; MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY

I January 20, 22, and 25: Language, Thought, and Culture; the Structure of Language and How Anthropologists Study It

Readings: in Bonvillain text, chapter 1 ("Introduction") and chapter 2 up to "Manual Language"; and in Blum anthology, chapter 1 by Burling

film: Do You Speak American?

II Jan. 27, 29, and February 1: Communication Systems, Pt. I: The Characteristics and Origins of Language and Speech

Readings:

In Blum: chapter 2 by Hockett and chapter 5 by Stokoe; and

(on reserve): chapter 3 ("He's a Big Baby", pp. 49-68) from Philip Lieberman book, Eve Spoke

III Feb. 3, 5, and 8: Communication Systems, Pt. II: Similarities and Differences between Humans and other Primates in Sign/Symbol Systems

Readings: in Bonvillain text, selections (pp. 30-35) from "Manual Language" section in chapter 2; in Blum, chapter 6 by Dunbar; and

(on reserve): chapters 4 ("Signs of Intelligent Life") and 5 ("But Is It Language?") from Roger Fouts book, Next of Kin (1997)

film: Keeli and Ivy

IV Feb. 10, 12, and 15: Language Acquisition, "Virtuosity," and Related Issues

Readings: Bonvillain, chapters 9 and 10; and in Blum, chapter 4 by Pinker and chapter 16 by Antal

film: Genie

Language, Culture, and World-view---

V Feb. 17, 19, and 22: Perspectives on Non-Verbal Communication: The Body; Time and Space

Readings: Bonvillain text, selection (pp. 34-41) from "Manual Language" section in chapter 2; and selection (pp. 60-65) on space and location in chapter 3; in Blum, chapter 45 by Basso; and

(on reserve): chapter 2 from John Wood book, When Men Are Women

MIDTERM EXAM IN CLASS AND CLOSED-BOOK, MONDAY MARCH 1

VI Feb. 24, 26, and March 1: Language and "Reality": Reflections, Critiques, and Reformulations of the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis

Readings: Bonvillain text, selections in chapter 3 (pp. 44-56, up to "Ethnoscience" section); and in Blum, chapter 9 by Whorf, chapter 10 by Lee, and chapter 12 by Levinson

FIRST WRITTEN EXERCISE ASSIGNMENT DISTRIBUTED WEDNESDAY MARCH 10 AND DUE WEDNESDAY MARCH 24

VII Mar. 3, 5, and 8: Language and Cognitive Categories: Classical Ethnoscience; Cognitive Anthropology and Taxonomies: Classic and Recent Perspectives on Classification

Readings: Bonvillain, selections in chapter 3 (pp. 56-60); in Drummond book, American Dreamtime, chapter 1; in Blum, chapter 37 by Blum; and (on reserve): chapter TBA from Anna Tsing, Friction

SPRING BREAK WEEK OF MARCH 15; NO CLASSES

Linguistic Models of Culture---

VIII Mar. 10, 12, and 22: Language and Meaning: Structural Linguistics, Its Impact on Cultural/Linguistic Anthropology and Post-structural Critiques and Responses; the Language of Myth  
Readings: in Drummond book, chapters 2 and 4; in Blum, chapter 3 by de Saussure; and Start Graham book, chapters 1 and 2

IX Mar. 24, 26, 29, and 31: Metaphor, Tropes, and Signifying Systems in Expressive/Affective Culture  
Readings: Bonvillain, pp. 65-76 in chapter 3; in Blum, chapter 11 by Lakoff and Johnson; and in Drummond, chapters 3 and 5

Language Use in Cultural/Social/Political Settings---

X April 2, 5, 7, and 9: Oral and Written Traditions; Verbal Art Performance, and Narrative  
Readings: in Bonvillain: "Narratives" section in chapter 4, pp. 96-106; in Blum, chapter 7 by Ong and chapter 8 by Street and Besnier; Continue Graham, chapters 3 and 4; and in Drummond book, chapter 7

SECOND WRITTEN EXERCISE DISTRIBUTED IN CLASS MONDAY APRIL 5 AND DUE MONDAY APRIL 19

XI Apr. 12, 14, 16, and 19: Ethnography of Speaking; Discourse Analysis  
Readings: Bonvillain, chapters 4 and 5; in Blum, chapters 35 by Austin and 36 by Sherzer; and Complete Graham book (chapters 5, 6, 7, and Epilogue)

film: Language

XII Apr. 21 and 23: Language, Social Differentiation, Intention, and Practice, Pt. I: Linguistic Encounters, Change, and Variation in State-Formation, Class, and Ethnic Relations  
Readings: Bonvillain, chapters 11 and 12; and in Blum, chapter 14 by Ohly, chapter 17 by Zantella; and chapter 22 by Hinton

XIII Apr. 26 and 28: Language, Social Differentiation, Intention, and Practice, Pt. II: Gender  
Readings: Bonvillain, chapters 7 and 8; and in Blum, chapter 31 by Holmes; and chapter 34 by Keenan (Ochs)

XIV Apr. 30 and May 3: Emergent Communications  
Readings: in Blum, chapter 40 by Miller and Slater; and (on reserve): selection from Horst, Heather A. and Daniel Miller, The Cell Phone: An Anthropology of Communication, Oxford and NY: Berg Press (2006), chapter on "Link-Up" and chapter on "Coping"

IN-CLASS, CLOSED-BOOK FINAL EXAMINATION, FRIDAY MAY 7, 11 AM- 2 PM