

SEP. 07 2003

GRANDE PRAIRIE REGIONAL COLLEGE
DEPARTMENT OF ARTS, COMMERCE AND EDUCATION
ANTHROPOLOGY 2500 3(3-0-0), UT, FALL 2001
NORTH AMERICAN ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

Instructor: Dr. Laurie Nock
Phone: 539-2830 (office); 539-7348 (home)
Office Hours: Tuesdays 1:30-2:30; Thursdays 1:30-2:30. Drop-ins welcome.

Office: C215
E-mail: nock@gprc.ab.ca

Delivery method: lecture
Pre-requisites: AN1010

Required text: Nancy Bonvillain, Native nations: cultures and histories of Native North America. Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 2001.
Other readings may be assigned during the term.

Calendar description: Ethnographic survey of First Peoples, focusing on the interplay between environment, economic, political, social and ideological systems, and experience with the modern world.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course serves the dual purpose of helping students learn of the aboriginal societies of North America, and demonstrating the value, techniques and shortcomings of the ethnographic method. We shall study the peoples of the principal cultural/ecological areas of North America (the Arctic, Subarctic, Plateau, Plains, California, Northwest Coast, Northeastern Woodlands, Southeastern Woodlands and the American Southwest), ranging from mobile foraging bands to agricultural societies. We shall study the coherence between levels of economic, political, social and ideological complexity (or hierarchy) and associated environmental factors. This in turn will be shown to be related to the historical experience of the peoples of these areas, and to the pattern and timing of intrusion by the modern world system. Approaches to this subject matter include general ethnographic overview, a focus on particular anthropological topics, and cross-cultural research.

REQUIREMENTS AND EVALUATION

Students will submit four short (5-page) assignments during the term, referring to four different culture areas, and based largely on class discussion and the course text. The first take-home assignment is not optional. You may complete as many of these assignments as you like; your best marks will be used in calculating the final course grade. Assignments must be submitted by 3:00 p.m. Friday of the week they are due. The results of research into a specific topic, crossing the boundaries of culture areas or of time, will be submitted in the form of an essay and will be shared with a group of students near the end of the term.

A further 25% of the course grade may be earned on in-class assignments, whose timing and content will be at the discretion of the instructor. Many opportunities to earn points will be provided, so there will be no make-ups for these. To facilitate both class discussion in-class assignments, you are strongly encouraged to be familiar with assigned readings and to focus your reading on both ethnographic content and issues of interest to you. For this portion of this the course ONLY, calculate your mark as a percentage of total marks obtainable.

70-100%	= 9	40-44%	= 4
61-69%	= 8	35-39%	= 3
55-60%	= 7	30-34%	= 2
50-54%	= 6	10-29%	= 1
45-49%	= 5	0-10%	= 0

All other assignments are marked on the stanine system, i.e. out of 9.

ASSIGNMENT	%	DUE DATE
Take-home assignments	50	Fridays; see Course Schedule
In-class assignments	25	Throughout term
Essay - Cross-cultural topic	25	Week 12
One late assignment, (not in-class)		Week 14

TAKE-HOME ASSIGNMENTS (50% in total; do four)

The assignments among which you may choose are included with your course schedule, along with the week in which they are due. These should be approximately 5 pages long, double-spaced (1250 words). The first assignment must be done by all students.

CROSS-CULTURAL RESEARCH (25%)

Due Date: Friday of Week 12

Length: approximately ten pages, double-spaced, or 2500 words

For this assignment, you are to describe, compare and contrast the practices North American Aboriginal peoples in at least two different culture areas. Possible topics (not to be taken as recommendations) include funerary practices, art, body decoration, clothing, warfare and peacekeeping practices, cuisine. . . You may (but need not) restrict yourself to the peoples whose ethnographies you have already studied, but use additional sources. It is expected that you will demonstrate what you have learned about how anthropologists approach these topics. The results of your research will be shared with a group of students during the last week of classes. Alternatively, you may use this opportunity to study culture change, by researching practices in different time periods. Films may also be used for this project.

YOU MUST submit a brief description of your topic and sources at the end of Week 8.