

ANT s307 CULTURE AND COMMUNICATION

Anthropology s307 (meets with LIN 312)
Summer 2013
SAC 4.118
M-F: 10-11:30

Dr. Anthony K. Webster
SAC 4.154
Phone: 471-1176
Hours: TW 1-2.
OR by appointment
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Description: An introduction to the study of culture through communication and the theory of signs. This class introduces and explores the nature and structure of the “uniquely” human achievement known as “language.” In so doing, we examine (briefly) the structural properties of language (i.e., morphology, syntax, semantics, and phonology) and the social and cultural embeddedness of language in use. Languages are social and cultural practices and linguistic anthropologists attend to that interface between languages, cultures, and the individual.

Requirements: There are two exams: a mid-term (20% of grade) to be taken in class on July 30th and a take home final exam (25% of grade) due Aug. 16. There is also a 4-5 page book review (25% of grade) of Basso’s book due Aug. 7th. On Aug. 7th, we will discuss Basso’s book. The book review should both summarize and evaluate Basso’s book (especially in light of the Ahearn book and class discussion). Each student will be responsible for bringing a question based on the readings to class every class. These will be handed in at the beginning of each class (20% of grade). Class participation (10% of grade) is vital for a successful course and will be encouraged. I will not accept late assignments. Please do not ask. Plagiarism will not be tolerated. My hope is that on Fridays we will watch a film—of my choosing—and discuss it as nascent linguistic anthropologists.

Grading:

Mid-term	20%
Final exam	25%
Basso review	25%
Daily questions	20%
Class participation	10%

Grades:

A	90%-100%
B	80%-89%
C	70%-79%
D	60%-69%
F	Below 60%

There are no pluses or minuses in this class.

Required Texts:

Laura Ahearn. (2012). *Living Language: An Introduction to Linguistic Anthropology*. Oxford: Oxford UP.

Keith Basso. (1979). *Portraits of "The Whiteman."* Cambridge: Cambridge UP.

On Reading: I expect that students will do the bulk of their reading from Ahearn for the course over the weekends. That said, readings will be assigned in "chunks" for a given week with the expectation that students will have read the entirety of the assigned materials for the week by the Monday of class. For the first week, things will obviously be different. See below. Begin reading Basso's book as soon as possible. Do not wait until the last minute to both read and review his book. It never ends well.

Schedule:

Week One: July 15-19.

July 15: Introductions

July 16: Chapter One (Ahearn)

July 17: The structure of language part 1 (no readings)

July 18: The structure of language part 2 (no readings)

July 19: Film and discussion

Week Two: July 22-26.

Read Chapters Two, Four and Eleven (Ahearn)

July 26: Film and discussion

Week Three: July 29-Aug. 2.

July 29: Read Chapter Five (Ahearn)

July 30: Mid-term

July 31-Aug. 1: Read Ahearn Six and Seven

Aug. 2: Film and discussion

Week Four: Aug. 5-9.

Read Chapters Eight and Ten (Ahearn)

Aug. 7: Book Review for Basso Due, Discuss Basso

Aug. 9: Film and discussion

Week Five: Aug. 12-16.

Read Chapters Nine and Twelve (Ahearn)

Aug. 13: Final Exam given out

Aug. 16: Film and discussion

Take Home Exam Due

Special Needs

Students with disabilities who require special accommodations need to get a letter that documents the disability from the Services for Students with Disabilities area of the Office of the Dean of Students (471-6259 voice or 471-4641 TTY for users who are deaf or hard of hearing). This letter should be presented to me at the beginning of the semester and accommodations needed should be discussed at that time. See following website for more information:

<http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/ssd/providing.php>

Emergency Evacuation Policy

Occupants of buildings on the UT Austin campus are required to evacuate and assemble outside when a fire alarm is activated or an announcement is made. Please be aware of the following policies regarding evacuation: Familiarize yourself with all exit doors of the classroom and the building.

Remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when you entered the building. If you require assistance to evacuate, inform me in writing during the first week of class. In the event of an evacuation, follow my instructions or those of class instructors. Do not re-enter a building unless you're given instructions by the Austin Fire Department, the UT Austin Police Department, or the Fire Prevention Services office.