

Anthropology 489

SPECIAL TOPICS IN ANTHROPOLOGY: THE ANTHROPOLOGY OF TOURISM

Spring Semester 2005
Mondays & Wednesdays, 4:10-5:25 pm
Anthropology Building, Room 130

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Office Hours: Mondays, 12:00-2:00 pm; Wednesdays; 11:00 am -12:00 pm

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COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Most people in the world have some experience with tourism – as tourists, as employees in the tourist industry, or as locals living in a tourist destination. Despite threats from terrorism and natural disasters, the tourist and hospitality industry is likely to maintain its spot as the largest industry in the world. From the tourist perspective, tourism provides a break from ordinary life by providing relaxation, adventure, and/or exploration. Tourism, however, can have both positive and negative impacts on local people, local cultures, and the environment. Anthropologists have studied the phenomenon of tourism in numerous developing countries. This course focuses on these anthropological studies of tourism. Course topics include:

* Cultural Responses towards Tourism (How do local people feel about having tourists in their backyards? Do they feel that the economic benefits outweigh the sense of being intruded upon? How does this vary from one place to the next?)

* The Cultural Politics of Tourism Representation (Whose culture and what culture is represented in contexts where there are multiple ethnic groups?)

* Tourist Arts and the “Commodification” of Culture (Do local cultures remain “authentic” when they start to stage performances for tourists and to produce “junk” for tourists?)

* Economic Development and Tourism (Is tourism a good path for a developing country? Why or why not? Do certain locals benefit more from tourism development?)

* Gender and Tourism Development (How does tourism affect women and men differently? What job opportunities are available and how do cultural constructions of gender influence who gets these jobs? Finally, how has “sex tourism” affected women in some countries?)

* Sustainable Development and Ecotourism (Is ecotourism really eco-friendly? Does ecotourism help save the environment and maintain homes for endangered species? What are the results of ecotourism in different countries?)

COURSE FORMAT

This course will be conducted as a seminar. Most of the class time will be devoted to the discussion of the course readings and related topics, as well as progress on your independent research projects. As a seminar, the emphasis is on collaborative and interactive learning, rather than the direct transfer of information from professor to students.

COURSE READINGS

Sharon Gmelch, *Tourists and Tourism: A Reader*

Erve Chamber, *Native Tours: The Anthropology of Travel and Tourism*

Jamaica Kincaid, *A Small Place*

Deborah McLarem, *Rethinking Tourism and Ecotourism: The Paving of Paradise and What You Can Do To Stop It*

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

Class Participation and Attendance (15% of final grade)

Participation and attendance are required for this course. The participation/attendance component of the grade is based on your performance in the following areas: (1) attending class meetings; (2) participating in class discussions on a regular basis; and (3) presenting your final paper to the class. If necessary, attendance will be taken with a short reading quiz on days with a reading assignment. Note: Attendance is mandatory during student paper presentations even if you are not presenting that day. To get full credit for class participation and attendance, you need to participate in class discussions. Much of the class time will be devoted to discussions of the readings. There is a lot of reading for this course, and you are expected to do the assigned reading before you come to class. Although I will lead the discussions, I expect you to participate in the discussions on a regular basis. During each class, I will take notes on participation. Students who are regularly prepared for class will receive a higher participation grade than students who do not seem to do the reading on a regular basis. You do not have to say something every day to get a good grade, as long as you are following the conversation closely. As for attendance, you are allowed two unexcused absences during the semester without any penalty. All excused absences (with university documentation) will be accepted without penalty. At the end of the semester, I will assign a grade for participation and attendance. If you attend regularly, you can expect to receive a participation/attendance grade in the A or B range.

Research Paper (35% of final grade)

You will be expected to write a 12 page (typed and double-spaced) research paper on a topic related to the anthropology of tourism. You may choose to write about tourism in a particular country (tourism in Mongolia, tourism in Mexico), you might choose to write about a particular type of tourism (i.e. ecotourism, space tourism, impact of natural disasters on tourism, etc.), or you might choose to write about a specific type of tourism in a specific country (i.e. sex tourism in Thailand, shopping tourism in the Arabian Gulf, or health tourism in Cuba, impact of international terrorism on tourism to Israel). It is crucial that your paper contains a central research question (i.e. What are the prospects for space tourism? Has ecotourism in Costa Rica really been eco-friendly? How have the Thai government's policies towards tourism affected sex

tourism?) You should get some ideas for your paper from the course readings. Your paper should be based on a variety of sources such as academic articles and books (mandatory); tourist marketing on websites; travel books; government statistics on tourism; newspaper articles on tourism. Before the final paper is due, you will turn in a paper proposal (February 9), a paper bibliography (February 23), and a paper draft (April 6). These assignments will be graded, and the grade will be incorporated into the final paper grade. The paper proposal should be a one paragraph description of your paper topic and your research question. The paper bibliography should include at least 8 sources that you will use for your final paper. The paper draft should be a minimum of 10 pages. Further information on the paper assignment will be provided in class.

Note: All papers will be turned in through Turnitin.com, an online resource to detect plagiarism.

Exams (50% of final grade)

There are two exams for this course. Each exam consists of several short essay questions based on the course readings and films. The second exam is not cumulative.

COURSE POLICIES:

Academic Dishonesty

The Aggie Honor Code states: “An Aggie does not lie, cheat, or steal or tolerate those who do.” Please refer to the new Aggie Honor Code (www.tamu.edu/aggiehonor/newcode.pdf) for the various definitions of academic misconduct. All cases of plagiarism and cheating in this class will be handled according to university policies. If you are caught plagiarizing or cheating, you will automatically receive a zero for the assignment and you may receive an F for the class. As commonly defined, plagiarism consists of passing off as one’s own ideas, words, writings, etc., which belong to another. In accordance with the definition, you are committing plagiarism if you copy the work of another person and turn it in as your own, even if you have the permission of the person. Plagiarism is one of the worst academic sins, for the plagiarist destroys trust among colleagues without which research cannot be safely communicated.

Late Papers

Late papers will be penalized two points for each weekday late. If the paper is more than 25 days late, you will receive up to half the total points for the assignment.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities are guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. Special accommodations can be made for students with disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring accommodation, please contact the Office of Support Services for Students with Disabilities (Room 126, Koldus Building, 845-1637).

ABOUT THE INSTRUCTOR:

I started teaching at Texas A&M in January 2001. After finishing high school in The Woodlands, Texas, I received a B.A. (1989) in Political Science from Texas Christian University, and an M.A. (1993) and Ph.D. (1997) in Anthropology from Indiana University. Before coming to Texas A&M, I taught at the University of Iowa and Pitzer College, a small liberal arts college in California. I am a cultural anthropologist who specializes in the region of Central Asia. Most of my research has been conducted in post-Soviet Kazakhstan. In the summer of 2001, I conducted research on the development of international tourism in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. This project covers the rise of “Silk Road Tourism” (multiple-country tours along the Ancient Silk Road) and “Yurt-Stay Ecotourism” (where tourists stay in traditional yurts (felt tents) with real nomad families). I am an avid traveler, having visited over 30 countries in Europe, Asia, and the Americas.

COURSE OUTLINE:

WEEK	DATE	TOPIC & ASSIGNMENTS	READINGS
Week 1	1/19	Introduction to the Course	
Week 2	1/24	The Emergence of Modern Tourism	Chambers, Preface & Ch.1 Gmelch, Ch. 1
		DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES ON TOURISM	
	1/26	The “Guest” Perspective	Gmelch, Ch. 2-4
Week 3	1/31	The Tourist Gaze	Gmelch, Ch. 5-7
	2/2	The “Host” Perspective Film: <i>The Toured: The Other Side of Tourism in Barbados</i> (39 minutes)	Kincaid, pp. 1-37
Week 4	2/7	Cultural Responses Towards Tourists & Tourism	Kincaid, pp. 41-81
	2/9	The Anti-Tourism Perspective <i>Paper Proposal Due</i>	McLaren, Prologue & Chs. 1-3
Week 5	2/14	Film: <i>Cannibal Tours</i> (86 minutes) (Class meets in Library Annex, Room TBA)	
	2/16	Guest Lecture: <i>Library Research Methods</i> (Class meets in Library, Room TBA)	

		TOURISM AND THE POLITICS OF CULTURAL REPRESENTATION	
Week 6	2/21	Tourism and Culture	Chambers, Ch. 4
	2/23	Tourism and the Issue of Authenticity <i>Paper Bibliography Due</i>	Gmelch, Ch. 8, 11
Week 7	2/28	Tourism as Cultural Commoditization	Gmelch, Ch. 9-10, & Ch. 26
	3/2	Exam One	
		SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC IMPACTS OF TOURISM	
Week 8	3/7	Tourism, Society and the Political Economy	Chambers, Ch. 2
	3/9	Tourism Development in the Local Community	McLaren, Ch. 4
		SPRING BREAK (March 12-20)	
Week 9	3/21	Local Experiences with Tourism	Gmelch, Ch. 12-14
	3/23	Coping with Tourists	Gmelch, Ch. 15-17
Week 10	3/28	Gendered Aspects of Tourism	Gmelch, Ch. 18 & 19
	3/30	Film: <i>Trekking on Tradition</i> (44 minutes) (Class meets in Library Annex, Room TBA)	
Week 11	4/4	Specific Impacts of Tourism	Gmelch, Ch. 20-22
		TOURISM ALTERNATIVES	
	4/6	Backpacking and Student Travel <i>Paper Draft Due</i>	Gmelch, Ch. 23, 25
Week 12	4/11	Sustainable Development and Ecotourism	Chambers, Ch. 3 McLaren, Chs. 5-6

	4/13	Ecotourism in Costa Rica	Gmelch, Ch. 24
Week 13	4/18	Exam Two	
	4/20	Student Paper Presentations	
Week 14	4/25	Student Paper Presentations	
	4/27	Student Paper Presentations	
Week 15	5/2	Student Paper Presentations <i>Final Paper Due</i>	