

# ATH390 Business Anthropology

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**Spring 2019**

Mon, Wed, 11:40 AM - 1:00 PM  
364 Upham Hall

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Office Hours: Tue and Thu 1:05pm-2:30pm, or by appointment

## **Course Description:**

As a fast-growing branch of applied anthropology, business anthropology investigates and solves problems in today's global business environment relying on its holistic and comparative approach to culture and its ethnographic methods. This course offers students foundational understanding of how anthropological theories and methods are applied to identify, analyze and offer solutions to problems in various business contexts. This course combines discussion of key areas of inquiry in business anthropology and ethnographic cases ranging from such diverse issues as organizational culture and change, work process, consumer and group behavior, transnational entrepreneurship, and globalization.

By engaging with course materials such as readings, lectures, and audio-visual materials, students will use case studies and group projects to enhance analytical skills and creativity. Students will find solutions for problems presented in case studies. Students will also propose a project in which they identify a problem, collect data, critically evaluate and analyze their data, and offer a solution. Students are expected to spend four to six hours each week including class time and preparation.

## **Student Learning Outcomes:**

By completing this course, students will

1. Acquire foundational understanding of areas of application in business anthropology
2. Become familiar with the concepts and methods of business ethnography
3. Acquire an anthropological perspective of culture within the business context
4. Learn how to identify business problems and use ethnographic methods to collect data
5. Be able to analyze ethnographic data and apply business anthropology theories to propose appropriate solutions

## **Course Readings:**

Main textbooks

Tian, R., & Van Marrewijk, A. H. M. Lillis (2013). *General Business Anthropology*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. North American Business Press.

Jordan, A. T. (2012). *Business anthropology*. Waveland Press.

Additional Readings will be uploaded and available on Canvas.

## **Course Requirements:**

### ***Class Participation (20%)***

This is a course in which students are expected to learn through participating class discussion and other forms of active engagement with ideas. Students are expected to come to class, to engage in discussion, and to work with their peers. Your participation in class discussion will be just as important to your final grade as your attendance. Participation also includes case studies handed out in class.

#### **Attendance (10%):**

Attendance will be taken in the form of roll-call on Canvas at the beginning of each class. Students who are late and miss roll-call should come to me after class. Late for 10 minutes is counted as absence. Three accumulated absences will result in loss of half a letter grade. Excused absences due to health issues need to be consulted with the instructor **in advance** and **proof of treatment** be presented.

#### **Leading discussions (10%)**

During the latter half of the course, all students are also responsible to prepare questions and lead discussions of assigned readings. Students are expected to send me their prepared summaries and critical questions before Sunday so that I can post them on Canvas for others to respond. A sign-up sheet will be available on Canvas Pages.

#### ***Reading response and case studies (20%):***

**a)** In preparation for class discussion, all students should submit responses to the assigned readings. Responses are based on key questions posted by the instructor and due **Tuesday** of each week, before the course discusses assigned readings. Students are encouraged to bring notes of their reading response to class. Posts need not be long but should clearly demonstrate that you have critically read the texts. Students will be graded based on the quality of their reading responses. Late response posts **will not** be accepted.

**b)** Students are also responsible for addressing questions in **case studies** and those raised by other students in class discussion. Case studies will be evaluated by written response on handouts. Students who have substantial contributions to case study discussions will be noted for credits on a discussion credit sheet. Late response posts will receive half-credit.

### ***Topical Essays (30%)***

Students will write two topical essays, each worth 15% of total grade. The topic will be posted online three weeks before the due date. The citation style should follow APA 5th. Use double-space formatting and length should be about 5 double-spaced pages. Use 12-point Times New Roman font. Students who have had research or personal experiences relevant to the course are encouraged to incorporate their prior knowledge into the term papers. Those who are inspired to write on similar topics from an altered angle or different topics within the scope of this course may do so with my approval within a week after a topic is posted. Students should discuss their ideas with me as early as possible.

### ***Group Project and Presentation (30%)***

Students working in groups (typically 3-4 persons), will define a problem and propose a solution.

#### **Project proposal (5%)**

Project proposals will be due in class. Proposals must be approved before you move ahead. Refer to the sample proposal on Canvas for instructions.

#### **Presentation (20%)**

The results of your project will be presented to the class. These presentations are to be about 15 minutes long. They will thus be summary presentations – they will highlight the project findings but not delve into all the details and complexities. Students will be evaluated both by the instructor and student audience anonymously. Each part of evaluations accounts for 50% of weight.

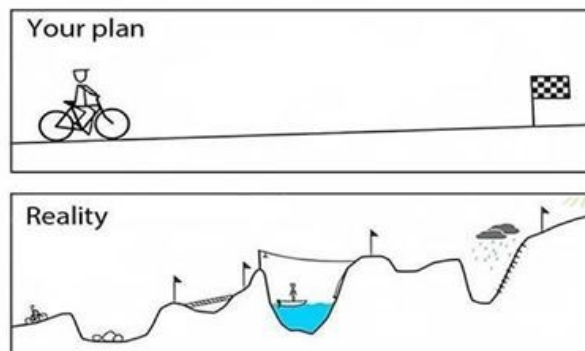
#### **Teamwork evaluation (5%)**

Students will also be evaluated by the other members of their own group as to whether they contribute actively to researching the topic and creating the presentation. Students who do not submit evaluations receive half credit of the evaluations they receive.

### **Class Expectations:**

We will together create and maintain a supportive, active, and inclusive learning environment. I will be supportive and guide your paths to meeting our learning objectives.

I expect students to attend class on time, finish readings and assignments on time, respect different opinions, keep



confidentiality of each other's statement when requested, engage actively in class discussions, be a good team member in group project, and practice critical thinking skills through writing assignments and presentations.

**Academic Misconduct:**

The use of other peoples' ideas and words without correct attribution is unacceptable behavior and will not be tolerated. Please read the Anthropology Department statement on academic misconduct below for more information on what constitutes academic misconduct. Students who are caught misusing source materials will be reported to the chair of the ATH department; the procedures outlined in the university handbook will be followed. Most of your written assignments will be assessed using a software package that detects misuses of cited material by comparing your paper to millions of other documents available on-line and through pay services.

**Course Outline:**

Week	Topics	Readings
1	Chapter 1. Introduction: what is business anthropology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tian et.al., 2013. Chap1</li> <li>• Jordan 2010.</li> </ul>
2	Chapter 2 Development of Business Anthropology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tian et.al., 2013. Chap2</li> <li>• Jordan 2012. Chap2</li> <li>• Agar 2009. Chap4-5</li> </ul>
3	Chapter 3. Methodologies of Business Anthropology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tian et.al., 2013. Chap3</li> <li>• Jordan 2012. Chap3</li> <li>• Benedict 1985.</li> <li>• Klausner 1994.</li> </ul>
4	Chapter 4. What is Culture; Cultural Issues in Business World	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tian et.al., 2013. Chap4</li> <li>• Malefyt &amp; Moeran. 2003. Introduction: Advertising Cultures – Advertising, Ethnography and Anthropology</li> </ul>
5	Chapter 5 Organization Cultures and Changes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tian et.al., 2013. Chap5</li> <li>• Moeran 2003. Fields, networks and frames: advertising social organization in Japan</li> <li>•</li> </ul>
6	Chapter 6 Business Ethnographies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tian et.al., 2013. Chap6</li> <li>• Arnould &amp; Otnes 1999. Making magic consumption: A study of white-water river rafting.</li> <li>• Wallendorf, M., &amp; Arnould, E. J. (1988). "My favorite things": A cross-cultural inquiry into object attachment,</li> </ul>

		possessiveness, and social linkage.
7	Chapter 7 Business Anthropology and Marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tian et.al., 2013. Chap7</li> <li>• Moeran 2007. Marketing scents and the anthropology of smell</li> <li>• Arnould &amp; Wallendorf 1994. Market-oriented ethnography: interpretation building and marketing strategy formulation.</li> </ul>
8	Chapter 8. Consumer Behavior and Business Anthropology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tian et.al., 2013. Chap8</li> <li>• Arnould &amp; Thompson 2005. Consumer culture theory (CCT): Twenty years of research.</li> <li>• Sherry 2008. The ethnographer's apprentice: Trying consumer culture from the outside in.</li> <li>• Xu &amp; McGehee 2012. Chinese shoppers in the US</li> </ul>
9	Chapter 9 Anthropological approach to Product Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tian et.al., 2013. Chap9</li> <li>• Maschio. 2002. The Refrigerator and American Ideas of "Home"</li> <li>• Watkins. 2006. Beauty Queen, Bulletin Board and Browser: Rescripting the refrigerator</li> <li>• Ourahmoune 2012. Product design and creativity. In <i>Marketing Management</i>.</li> </ul>
10	Chapter 10 Competitive Intelligence, Knowledge Management, and Anthropology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tian et.al., 2013. Chap10</li> <li>• Wang &amp; Borges. 2013. Does Competitive Intelligence Matter? An Anthropological Way of Thinking</li> <li>• Marsden 2004. Indigenous management and the management of indigenous knowledge</li> </ul>
11	Chapter 11. International Business and Globalization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ferraro 2006. Cultural Anthropology and International Business. <i>The Cultural Dimension of International Business</i></li> <li>• Fadiman, Jeffrey, "Tribalism and Racism: Still Marketing Risks," <i>South Africa's Black Market: How to do Business with Africans</i>.</li> <li>• Irons &amp; Quinn 1994. "Selling Development of Somalia: The Food Monetization Program," in Robert Moran et al., <i>International Business Case Studies for the Multi-Cultural Marketplace</i></li> </ul>
12	Chapter 12. Anthropological Study of Entrepreneurship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tian et.al., 2013. Chap12</li> <li>• Mambula and Sawyer: Acts of Entrepreneurial Creativity for Business: Case Study of a Small Manufacturing Firm... <b>IJSE</b></li> <li>• Spring 2002. "Gender and the Range of Entrepreneurial Strategies: The Typical and the New African Woman Entrepreneur."</li> </ul>
13	Chapter 13. Business Education and the Future of	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tian et.al., 2013. Chap13</li> <li>• Tian &amp; Walle 2009. Anthropology and business education: Practitioner applications for a qualitative</li> </ul>

	Business Anthropology	method. <i>International Journal of Management Education</i> , 7(2), 59-67.
14	Business Anthropology Case Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student presentations and discussion Session 1</li> </ul>
15	Business Anthropology Case Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student presentations and discussion Session 2</li> <li>• Final Paper due</li> </ul>

### Grading Scheme:

A+	100%	to 97%
A	<97%	to 94%
A-	< 94%	to 90%
B+	< 90%	to 87%
B	< 87%	to 84%
B-	< 84%	to 80%
C+	< 80%	to 77%
C	< 77%	to 74%
C-	< 74%	to 70%
D+	< 70%	to 67%
D	< 67%	to 64%
D-	< 64%	to 61%
F	< 61%	to 0%

### Learning Resources:

#### Course Canvas site

Course readings, assignments, announcements, and other class material will be on the Canvas site. Log on to <https://miamioh.instructure.com/> to access the site.

#### Howe Writing Center

Website: [miamioh.edu/howe/](http://miamioh.edu/howe/)

#### Disability Services

Student disability services website: [miamioh.edu/student-life/sds](http://miamioh.edu/student-life/sds)  
513-529-1541

#### Learning Center

This center helps students in achieving their academic goals by offering a range of services. Students are encouraged to check out their website: [miamioh.edu/student-life/rinella-learning-center/](http://miamioh.edu/student-life/rinella-learning-center/) 513-529-8741

**Student Counseling Service**

Website: [miamioh.edu/student-life/student-counseling-service/](http://miamioh.edu/student-life/student-counseling-service/) 513-529-4634

The instructor reserves the right to make small modifications to this syllabus as the semester progress.