

**Education and Cultural Knowledge**  
Course Outline and Syllabus

Transmission and transformation of cultural knowledge and symbolic orders in schools and other educational institutions around the world. How culture interacts with beliefs and knowledge and how teachers' and students' belief systems and cultural models interact in social contexts to contribute to continuity and change.

- 7-11-03      Introduction and goal setting
- 7-14-03      Beliefs and knowledge: how they are created and sustained  
D'Andrade, Preface & Chs. 1-2  
\*Rabow et al.
- 7-15-03      Systems of categorization and conceptualization  
D'Andrade, Chs. 3-4  
**Choice of course project**
- 7-16-03      Folk systems of meaning and folk epistemologies  
D'Andrade, Chs. 5-6
- 7-17-03      Relation of cultural models of knowledge to emotion, motivation, and action  
D'Andrade, Chs. 7-8
- 7-18-03      D'Andrade, Chs. 9-10
- 7-21-03      Situated cognition and learning  
Lave & Wenger, Forwards and Chs. 1-2
- 7-22-03      Lave & Wenger, Chs. 3-5  
**Project overview due**
- 7-23-03      Selfhood, identity, individuality, and communalism  
Holland, et al., Preface and Chs. 1-3
- 7-24-03      Holland, et al., Chs. 4-6
- 7-25-03      The distribution of knowledge by social organization and social stratification  
Holland, et al., Chs. 7-9

- 7-28-03 Holland, et al., Chs. 10-13
- 7-29-03 The relationship among culture, education, and schooling  
Levinson, et al., Preface, Forward, and Chs.1-3
- 7-30-03 Levinson, Chs. 4-6
- 7-31-03 Teachers' belief systems and their influence on students  
Levinson, Chs. 7-9
- 8-1-03 The organization of knowledge and reasoning in schools and societies  
Levinson, Chs. 10-12
- 8-5-03 **Course project due by 5 pm**

Required Textbooks:

D'Andrade, Roy

1995 The Development of Cognitive Anthropology. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Holland, Dorothy, William Lachicotte, Jr., Debra Skinner, and Carole Cain

1998 Identity and Agency in Cultural Worlds. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press

Lave, Jean, and Etienne Wenger

1991 Situated Learning: Legitimate Peripheral Participation. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Levinson, Bradley A., Douglas E. Foley, and Dorothy C. Holland, eds.

1996 The Cultural Production of the Educated Person: Critical Ethnographies of Schooling and Local Practice. Albany: State University of New York Press.

\*Rabow, Jerome, Michelle A. Charness, Johanna Kipperman, and Susan Radcliffe-Vasile

1994 William Fawcett Hill's Learning Through Discussion. Third ed. Thousand Oak, CA: Sage.

\*Available on reserve in Aderhold 232

Course Objectives

As a learner in this course you will read and reflect on your own practice as teacher and learner and on major texts in cognitive anthropology and educational anthropology. At the end of the course you will

1. Analyze the relationships among a society or group's culture and its forms of education for the assumptions held about knowledge, how it is produced, and human reasoning.
2. Identify theories of how people categorize and conceptualize their experiences and of how these are developed into beliefs, knowledge, and epistemologies.
3. Trace the distribution of knowledge systems across the groups that constitute societies:

- age groups; occupational groups; religious groups; ascribed groups such as gender, race and ethnicity, social class, sexual orientation, and abledness
4. Compare and contrast theories of situated cognition and learning with context-free theories of learning and cognition
  5. Apply cognitive theories to issues of identity, affect and agency, and the conduct of instruction.

Course Requirements:

1. I expect regular attendance and will take excessive absences (missing more than 6 hours of a 3 credit-hour course) into account in the final course grade.
2. I expect people to come to class prepared and to contribute constructively to class discussions and activities. Frequent lack of preparation and either dominating or avoiding classroom contributions will also be taken into account in the final course grade. Every student will take at least two turns leading discussion on the assigned material each day, using the guidelines from William Fawcett Hill's Learning Through Discussion.
3. All students are required to use the WEBCT services that support this course. Some course material will be available only on the course WEBCT site. We will be emailing one another for individual and group purposes using this site. Assignments are to be submitted on the WEBCT site.
4. Research projects—see directions in subsequent section.
5. Grades will be based on the following activities:
 

Class attendance and participation	30
Project overview	20
Final research project	50
Total Points	100

Grading follows the University of Georgia policy:

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

Accommodations for Qualified Individuals with Disabilities

University of Georgia policy is to make reasonable accommodations for qualified individuals with disabilities. Please let me know if you have a disability request.

Nature of This Course

Anthropological study of culture, human nature, and human variation involves reviewing research and theories about controversial topics such as racism or human identities and abilities. People have strong feelings, values, and beliefs that affect how they interpret scientific and other scholarly information. Although diversity of opinions is central to the scholarly inquiry encouraged in this course, everyone is expected to accurately represent the variety of views

discussed. We may agree to disagree, but we must be able to express the viewpoint with which we disagree. Sound scholarship depends, then, on respectful listening and sometimes respectful disagreement.

### Instructor

I can be reached by telephone at 542-6489, by e-mail preferably through the WEBCT site, but also at [preissle@coe.uga.edu](mailto:preissle@coe.uga.edu), and in my office, Aderhold 624E, before and after classes and by appointment. Preissle is pronounced price-lee with the accent on the first syllable. I work in the social foundations of education program here at the University of Georgia as well as in the College of Education's qualitative and ethnographic research program. My degrees are an A.B. in history from Grinnell College in 1964 and an M.A. (University of Minnesota) in 1971 and an Ed.D. (Indiana University) in 1975, concentrating in anthropology and education. My scholarly interests and publications focus on sociocultural theory, gender studies, classroom social life, immigration and education, and qualitative research design. My personal interests include books, music, gardening, birding, miniature schnauzers, and ballroom dancing.

### Course Activities:

Three of the course projects, from which you select one, ask you to apply the course materials to your own experiences as an individual or as an educator. The fourth option is open ended.

1. You may select any one of the course objectives or combination of objectives and write a cultural critique of your experiences as a student or as a teacher, using your own life history as the source of information (10-15 pages).
2. You may select any one of the course objectives or combination of objectives to write a cultural analysis of an educational system with which you are familiar (a family, a religious institution, a particular school) (10-15 pages).
3. You may opt to contribute material to a section of the Georgia Systemic Teacher Education Program (GSTEP) Bridge of resources for classroom teachers, specifically the section on learning environments (learning communities, community resources, the culturally responsive classroom) and to write a critique of the resources, using concepts we've learned in the course (8 pages of critique with resources attached or listed if they are websites.)
4. Student-initiated option: if you have an ongoing project for which you may integrate a cultural analysis using course concepts, please submit a paragraph proposal on July 15.

The projects are due the last day of class. A 2-page plan for the project is due midway through the term. Rubrics for assessing the plan and the final projects will be developed cooperatively in class.