

## AGRICULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY

ANTH 8500

Monday, 1:25-4:25PM

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Office Hours: Tuesday-Thursday 3:30-4:30PM

### Course Description

Anthropologists have created an important global discipline based mainly on the study of agricultural populations. However, anthropology has largely failed to create a strong subdiscipline called “agricultural anthropology”. While we have medical anthropology, nutritional anthropology, urban anthropology, etc., we have only a glimmer of what might be called “agricultural anthropology”. This seminar picks up where I essentially left the field some 20 years ago. In the 1980s, I wrote a series of articles arguing for the establishment of ‘agricultural anthropology’. While not entirely my idea, I was the first to put the concept into print but failed to carry through over the long term. Subsequently, a few courses were taught around the U.S. but by the 1990s “agriculture” had become out of vogue in academic and development circles. I argue that we need to return to a re-consideration of agricultural anthropology by picking up where I left off, update the subdiscipline, and even promote it as much needed perspective. This will be the main objective of this advanced seminar. By the end of the seminar I want us to have a “white paper” which might be publishable with all of us as co-authors.

### Course Organization

This is going to be a demanding course with quite a bit of non-conventional activities. Everyone, including myself, will have a great deal of new reading and writing to undertake. Each seminar will be organized around a set of themes central to agricultural anthropology. Each of us will organize at least two sessions during the semester which will involve developing a relevant bibliography, assigning readings to the class, developing a discussion sheet, and contacting a relevant speaker. I will work with each of you to help establish direct contact (either through phone conference or invited participation) with a number of living “pioneers” of agricultural anthropology, contemporary cutting-edge anthropologists making a potential contribution, and a number of non-anthropologists. Each week we will have heavy reading drawn from the required texts as well as additional materials you will assign. Your grade will be based on quality of participation and guidance to the class, quality of presentation, and quality of written products (including the final papers). Toward the end of the class, we will boil down our papers into a white paper advancing the cause of agricultural anthropology.

## Class Policies

Attendance in all seminars, field trips, and other assigned activities is required. Coming to class on time and staying the full time is an indication of interest in the seminar. All assignments must be completed on time and according to our mutually agreed upon schedule.

## Readings

Netting, R. 1993. Smallholders, Householders: Farm Families and the Ecology of Intensive, Sustainable Agriculture. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Rhoades, R. 1984. Breaking New Ground: Agricultural Anthropology. CIP:Lima Peru (also the chapter version from Green's edited volume to be provided to class).

Rhoades, R. 2001. Bridging Human and Ecological Landscapes. Dubuque, IA. Kendall/Hunt Publishers (selected chapters).

Ruttan, V. In Press. Social Science Knowledge and Economic Development. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Assigned Readings during the semester. These will be announced as soon as possible for the entire semester by January 28. They will be placed in a folder in the Ecolab. Also, we will add to an existing file cabinet dedicated strictly to literature related to agricultural anthropology.

Prior to each seminar meeting, we will read one chapter from Robert Netting's book and one chapter from a soon-to-be published book by Vernon Ruttan (access it through his webpage at <http://www.apec.umn.edu/faculty/vruttan> and by clicking on New Book). You will be in charge of leading the discussion on these chapters and providing a discussion summary sheet. Also, you will provide one or two key readings (books or articles) providing background to your chosen our guest speakers. Also, as mentioned above, you will also develop a detailed bibliography on your themes from an agricultural anthropology perspective.

## Weekly Topics and Readings (approximate dates)

Week 1 (January 7). Brief introduction to Agricultural Anthropology. Personal involvement of instructor. Objectives of Course. Course guidelines, grading, and calendar.

Week 2 (January 14). Roots of Agricultural Anthropology I: The "Classics" and Key Personalities. R. Rhoades.

Reading: Breaking New Ground (both versions) and reading of John Bennett or Walter Goldschmidt. Also, one chapter each from Netting and Ruttan.

Invited speaker: J. Bennett or W. Goldschmidt.

Netting. Prologue (pp. 1-27); Ruttan. Chapter 1.

Week 3 (January 21-Martin Luther King Day). No class this week. Therefore, please use time to prepare drafts of your bibliographies.

Week 4 (January 28). Origins of Agriculture and Types of Agricultural Systems. Juana Camacho.

Reading: Netting. Chapter 1 (pp. 28-57); Ruttan. Chapter 2.  
Guest Speaker: Assisted by R. Rhoades.

Week 5 (February 4). Cultural Ecology and Agricultural Decision Making. Todd Crane.

Reading: Netting. Chapter 2 (pp. 58-101); Ruttan. Chapter 3.  
Guest Speaker: Peggy Barlett

Week 6 (February 11). The Ethnoecological Tradition and Agricultural Decision Making. Brian Campbell.

Reading: Netting. Chapter 3 (102-122); Ruttan. Chapter 4.  
Guest Speaker: Harold Conklin and Virginia Nazarea

Week 7 (February 18). Agricultural Anthropology, Green Revolution, and Farming Systems Research. Mitch Chapura.

Reading: Netting. Chapter 4 (123-145); Ruttan. Chapter 5.  
Guest Speaker: David Norman.

Week 8 (February 25). Sustainable Agriculture and Natural Resource Management. Brian Campbell.

Reading: Netting. Chapter 5 (146-156); Ruttan. Chapter 6.  
Also, R. Rhoades (2001) book "Bridging Human and Ecological Landscapes" (selected chapters)

Guest Speaker: Miguel Altieri or Carl Jordan)  
Possible visit to Jordan's farm.

Week 9 (March 4). Interdisciplinary and Participatory Methods for Agricultural Anthropology. Caroline Weathers.

Reading: Netting. Chapter 6 (157-188); Ruttan. Chapter 7.  
Guest Speaker: Robert Chambers.

Week 10 (March 11). No class. Based on assumption we will do field trips in Atlanta.

Week 11 (March 18). Spring Break. No Classes.

Week 12 (March 25). Indigenous Knowledge, Rights, and Movements. Caroline Weathers.

Reading: Netting. Chapter 7 (189-231); Ruttan. Chapter 8..

Guest Speaker: David Cleveland and/or Tony Bebbington

Week 13 (April 1). Post-Industrial Agriculture: Biotechnology and Vertical Food Systems. Todd Grane.

Reading: Netting. Chapter 8 (232-260); Ruttan. Chapter 9.

Guest Speaker: Pat Roy Mooney or other

Week 14 (April 8). Contemporary Issues: Organic Farming, “Slow Food”, “Food First” and Alternative Food Systems. Mitch Chapura.

Reading: Netting. Chapter 9 (261-294); Ruttan. Chapter 10.

Class will attend a 3:30 seminar on community-based research in IBR where Rhoades will be a panelist.

Week 15 (April 15). Agricultural Changes and Transformations: Migration, Displacement, and Urban-Rural Interfaces. Juana Camacho.

Field Trip to vertical production factory, USDA/UGA Agricultural Experiment Station, or local organic farmer.

Reading: Netting. Chapter 10 (295-319) and Chapter 11 (320-334); Ruttan. Chapter 11.

Guest Speaker: to be determined.

Week 16 (April 22). Presentations. Final field trip to one listed for Week 15.

Week 17 (April 29). Presentations. Final “white Paper” Synthesis. Final papers due.