

Anthropology (ANTH) 491

Ethnobiology: Traditional Biological Knowledge in Contemporary Global Context (Revision 5)

Delivery Mode: Individualized Study Online [↗](#) with Video Component [↗](#) (Overseas students, please contact the University Library before registering in a course that has an audio/visual component)

Credits: 3

Areas of Study: Arts, or Social Science

Prerequisites: ANTH 275 or equivalent, or introductory biology or consent of the instructor.

Precluded: ANTH 591 (ANTH 491 may not be taken for credit if credit has already been obtained for ANTH 591)

Challenge: ANTH 491 is not available for Challenge.

Faculty: Faculty of Humanities & Social Sciences [↗](#)

Status: Replaced with new revision, see the [course listing](#) [↗](#) for the current revision [✕](#)

Notes:

Overseas students, please contact the **University Library** before registering in a course that has an audio/visual component.

 Overview

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This course examines ethnobiology—cultural knowledge of plants, animals, and ecology—and the nature of traditional knowledge. The course consists of introduction to ethnobiology and the nature of traditional knowledge, followed by sections on cultural knowledge and use of plants (ethnobotany), animals (ethnozology) and ecology (ethnoecology and traditional resource management), ending with an examination of contemporary issues (traditional versus commercial intellectual property rights to genetic and ecological diversity and medicinal plants, conservation and traditional societies, and sustainable development). ANTH 591 covers substantially the same material and can be taken as a graduate course in the **Master of Arts—Interdisciplinary Studies** [↗](#) program.

 Outline

Outline

Part 1: Introduction and Classification

- Unit 1: Introduction to Ethnobiology
- Unit 2: Ethnobiological Classification

Part 2: Ethnobotany



- Unit 3: Ethnobotany and Plants as Foods
- Unit 4: Plants as Medicines
- Unit 5: Plants for Technology

Part 3: Ethnozoology



- Unit 6: Ethnozoology
- Unit 7: Animals and World View: Canadian First Nations and Native Alaskans

Part 4: Ecological Knowledge and Contemporary Issues

- Unit 8: Traditional Ecological Knowledge and Traditional Environmental Management
- Unit 9: Contemporary Issues: Traditional Cultures, Resource Management and Conservation, and Traditional Knowledge and Intellectual Property

Evaluation


Evaluation

To **receive credit**  for ANTH 491, you must achieve a grade of at least 50 percent on the research paper or final essay, and **D (50 percent)**  for the overall course mark.

Activity	Weight
Journal, Parts 1-4	20%
Assignment 1 Quiz	5%
Assignment 2 Short Paper	20%
Assignment 3 Short Paper	20%





Activity	Weight
Assignment 4 Research Paper or Final Essay	35%
Total	100%


To learn more about assignments and examinations, please refer to Athabasca University's [online Calendar](#) .


Materials

Materials

Balick, Michael J., and Paul Alan Cox. 1997. *Plants, People, and Culture: The Science of Ethnobotany*. New York: Scientific American Library.  (Print)


Hunn, Eugene S., with James Selam and Family. 1990. *Nch'i-Wána "The Big River": Mid-Columbia Indians and Their Land*. Seattle: University of Washington Press.  (Print)

Nelson, Richard K. 1983. *Make Prayers to the Raven: A Koyukon View of the Northern Forest*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.  (Print)

ANTH 491 Selected Ethnobiology Bibliography: a list of articles, booklets, and texts organized by topics.  (Print)

Important Links

Important Links

- > [Academic Advising](#) 
- > [Program Planning](#) 



> [Request Assistance](#) 

> [Support Services](#) 

Athabasca University reserves the right to amend course outlines occasionally and without notice. Courses offered by other delivery methods may vary from their individualized-study counterparts.

Opened in Revision 5, June 25, 2019

Updated December 2, 2021, by Student & Academic Services

View [previous revision](#) 

