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### ANTY 431.01: Ethnographic Field Methods

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## **Anthropology 431: Ethnographic Field Methods**

### **SYLLABUS**

#### **Instructor Information**

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#### **Description**

This course will introduce students to socio-cultural anthropological data collection methods including observation, interviewing, as well as management and analysis of qualitative data. Students will be exposed to a range of ethnographic research skills and experiences by actively participating in data collection, management and analysis activities. The course will also provide training in research ethics and computer assisted qualitative data analysis.

#### **Goals and Learning Outcomes**

After successfully completing this course the student should be able to:

1. Conduct professional applied ethnographic research data collection procedures.
2. Recognize, evaluate and address ethical issues in applied anthropological research.
3. Perform primary data management procedures.
4. Conduct fundamental anthropological analyses, including the construction of matrices, formative theoretical models, and narrative analyses.
5. Utilize basic field work technologies in data collection and analysis activities.
6. Perform basic computer-assisted ethnographic data collection, management, analysis and presentation activities using a software program.

#### **Prerequisites**

Prerequisites for this course are ANTY 220S (Culture and Society) or ANTY 401 (Anthropological Data Analysis).

In addition, all students must provide documentation that they have successfully completed a web-based ethics training course. Go to the CITI: Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative <https://www.citiprogram.org/> and create a username/password. If this is a new profile, one of the required fields asks about your "Role in human subjects research." Select

the blank line at the top of the pick list. Respond to the appropriate discipline (social and behavioral science) regarding RCR. We will begin these training activities in class.

In addition, this course requires a basic working knowledge of MS-Word, MS-Excel, MS-Windows, Moodle and using an internet browser (e.g., Chrome).

## **Requirements**

### Undergraduates

- Assignments, in-class activities (60%)
- Portfolio (40%)

### Graduates

- Assignments, in-class activities (60%)
- Portfolio (20%)
- Methodology paper (20%)

Final cumulative grades will be based upon the point totals for each of the requirements outlined above. Plus/minus grades for this course may be given at the discretion of the instructor.

### Assignments, activities & field exercises

Over the course of the semester students will be assigned approximately 10 activities and field exercises that focus on developing specific ethnographic research skills. These activities will be discussed in more detail and assigned in class about a week before they are due (although some assignments will have longer deadlines). These assignments will form the basis of undergraduate student portfolios and will also serve as a foundation for graduate research papers. Students are expected to attend class on a regular basis and to participate in class activities and discussions.

### Portfolio

Students will complete a portfolio that documents their learning process. This portfolio will consist of two primary components: 1) a written reflective analysis or narrative that describes the student's learning; and 2) evidence or documentation of learning in the form of assignments from the course that the student determines best exemplify this process (located in an appendix). The portfolio narrative should explicitly address course goals and learning outcomes. Portfolios should be submitted bound in a folder or three-ring binder. Note: Please keep copies of all of your assignments so that you can use them to create your portfolio.

### Methodology paper

Graduate students will be required to complete a 12-15 page (3000-3750 words) methodology paper. More detailed guidelines for this paper will be provided.

### **Policies**

#### Hard copies and paper formats

Unless explicitly noted, all written assignments must be turned in as hard copies – electronic submissions will not be accepted. All written assignments should be typed, double-spaced in 12-point Arial or Times font with 1 inch margins.

#### Adds, drops, grade changes

University policies on drops, adds, changes of grade option, or change to audit status will be strictly enforced. These policies are described in the current catalog. This is a traditional letter grade course. No Pass\Fail option is allowed.

#### Electronic devices

Cell phones and other electronic devices should be turned off for the duration of class.

#### Professional courtesy

Please be on time for class. Tardiness and/or irregular attendance will result in a lower grade.

#### Extra credit

There are no extra credit assignments offered in this course.

#### Students with disabilities

University policy states that it is the responsibility of students with documented disabilities to contact instructors during the first week of the semester to discuss appropriate accommodations to ensure equity in grading, classroom experiences, and outside assignments. The instructor will work with the student and the staff of the Disability Services for Students (DSS) to make accommodations. Please contact DSS (243.2373) for more information.

#### Email

Please conduct any email communications with me through your UM account.

### Late assignments

Late assignments are generally not accepted.

### Code of conduct

All students need to be familiar with the Student Conduct Code. The code is available for review online at <http://www.umt.edu>

### Return of course materials

Course assignments including research papers and portfolios, will not be returned. If you want copies of these materials please make yourself duplicates.

## **Class Format**

### Lecture & discussion

In general, the first portion of each class period will be devoted to presentation and in-class discussion. Students are expected to have completed the reading assignments prior to class and to be prepared to discuss them.

### In-class exercises

The second portion of each session will typically involve some type of exercise where students practice the research method(s) or analysis approach described in the first part of the session (or a previous session). The second part of class may also be devoted to a discussion of the assigned readings.

### In-class free work time

There will also generally be a portion of class devoted to working on your class requirements and assignments.

## **Required Textbooks**

- Bernard, H. Russell. Research Methods in Anthropology: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches (5th edition). Lanham, MD: Altamira Press. ISBN: 0759112421. [B]
- Whiteford, Linda M. and Robert T. Trotter II. Ethics for Anthropological Research and Practice. Long Grove, Illinois: Waveland Press. ISBN 9781577665359. [W&T]

## **Word to the Wise**

You should have an active UM Box account and utilize it to back up all of your class work. It is not a bad idea to have a portable USB storage device to keep electronic files backed up as well.

## **Course Supplement**

A web-based supplement for this class is available on Moodle: <http://umonline.umt.edu/>. Technical support is provided at: <http://umonline.umt.edu/tech-support/default.php>.

## **Course Schedule, Topics & Reading Assignments**

Reading assignments and tutorials for each week should be completed by the date outlined in this schedule. Readings from required course texts are designated by author initials (see key above in required textbooks section). Other readings are generally designated by author's last name.

### **Week 1/Jan 25: Introduction; research design; ethics (part I)**

- B Ch. 1 (Anthropology & the Social Sciences) (pp.1-22)
- Bernard et al., "The Construction of Primary Data in Cultural Anthropology"

### **Week 2/Feb 1: Ethics (part II); sampling**

- W&T, Ethics for Anthropological Research and Practice (pp.1-130)
- B Ch. 7 (Sampling III: Nonprobability Sampling & Choosing Informants)
- Trotter et al., "A Methodological Model for Rapid Assessment"
- AAA Code of Ethics: <http://ethics.americananthro.org/category/statement/>
- SfAA Statement Ethics and Professional Responsibilities: <http://www.sfaa.net/about/ethics/>
- B Chs. 5 & 6 (Sampling I: The Basics; Sampling II: Theory)

### **Week 3/Feb 8: Ethnographic field notes**

- B Ch. 13 (Field Notes and Database Management)
- Emerson et al., "Writing Up Field Notes I"

### **Week 4/Feb 15: Interviewing (part I)**

- B Ch. 8 (Interviewing I: Unstructured & Semistructured)
- Spradley, "Step Two: Interviewing an Informant"

### **Week 5/Feb 22: Interviewing (part II)**

- B Ch. 9 (Interviewing II: Questionnaires) & Ch. 10 (Structured Interviewing III: Cultural Domain Analysis)
- Borgatti, "Elicitation techniques"

### **Week 6/Feb 29: Transcription; data management**

- McLellan et al., "Beyond the Qualitative Interview: Data Preparation and Transcription"

### **Week 7/Mar 7: Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis: Nvivo**

- QSR, "Nvivo 10: Getting Started"
- Nvivo 10 Windows "How To"  
videos: <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLNjHMRgHS4Fd4Xgb-oQpZ8b9TDNg4EaXB>

### **Week 8/Mar 14: Coding**

- Bernard & Ryan, "Codebooks and coding"
- LeCompte & Schensul, "Ch 4: Analysis from the top down" and "Ch 5: Analysis from the bottom up"

### **Week 9/Mar 21: Data management & analyses I**

- B Ch. 15 (Introduction to Qualitative & Quantitative Analysis) & Ch. 18-19 (Text Analysis I: Interpretive Analysis, Narrative Analysis, Performance Analysis, and Conversation Analysis; Text Analysis II: Schema Analysis, Grounded Theory, Content Analysis, and Analytic Induction)
- Miles & Huberman, Chapter 4: "Early steps in analysis"

### **Week 10/Mar 28: Data management & analyses II**

- Ryan & Bernard, "Techniques to identify themes"

### **Week 11/Apr 4: Spring Break**

### **Week 12/Apr 11: Data management & analyses III**

- B Ch. 17 (Cognitive Anthropology II: Decision Modeling, Taxonomies, and Competent Analysis)

- Averill, “Matrix Analysis as a Complementary Analytic Strategy”
- Strauss, “What makes Tony run?”

**Week 13/Apr 18: Research dissemination & presentation**

- LeCompte & Schensul, “Ch. 10: Fine Tuning Results”
- LeCompte & Schensul, “Ch. 11: Creating Interpretations”
- Tong et al., “Consolidated Criteria for Reporting Qualitative Research”
- How to Give a Fabulous Academic  
Presentation: <http://getalifephd.blogspot.com/2011/04/how-to-give-fabulous-academic.html>

**Week14/Apr 25: Catch up**

**Week 15/May 2: Wrap up**

- Graduate presentations (May 5)
- Graduate methodology papers due (May 5)
- Portfolios due (May 5)

This syllabus provides a general plan. Changes may be necessary and will be announced in class.