ANTY 431.01: Ethnographic Field Methods

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Anthropology 431: Ethnographic Field Methods

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Office hours: Mondays and Fridays 11:30-1:00 PM and by appointment

Classroom: Social Sciences 252
Day and time: Friday 9:00-11:20 A.M

Course Description A seminar on anthropological field methods, particularly ethnographic fieldwork. Students read a range of articles on ethnographic research skills and actively participate in discussion and fieldwork exercises with an emphasis on learning participant observation and writing field notes, as well as ethnographic analysis and ethics.

Learning Outcomes Upon completing this course, students can identify and demonstrate basic ethnographic field research methods, and also recognize ethical issues in narrative description, interpretation and analysis of field observations.

Policies University policies on drops, adds, changes of grade option, or audit status will be enforced. This is a traditional letter grade course. No Pass/Fail option is allowed.

Accessibility 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 assignments. The instructor will work with the student and DESS staff to make accommodations.

Code of conduct All students must be familiar with and adhere to the Student Conduct Code. Students are expected to participate in class discussions and activities unless an absence is excused for reasons stated in the Academic Catalog.

Readings: Ethnographic Fieldwork: An Anthropological Reader and Fieldworking

Advanced Writing: Each student will keep a portfolio of weekly formal and informal written responses and reflections on readings and fieldworking exercises. These entries should address course goals and learning outcomes. Each week, students will identify two quotes and two questions from required readings for class discussion (100 points); and complete field exercises from Fieldworking (200 points). After Spring Break, students will choose a topic, outline and draft an essay draft on an approved topic, with citations and prepare an oral presentation for class and/or at UMCUR. Based on feedback, students will revise and submit the essay ie lieu of a final exam (200 points). Final grades will be based on points earned for the portfolio, fieldwork exercises and final essay (total 500 points).

Grades Final grades are calculated according to the following scale: 90-100% A, 80-89 % B, 70-79% C, 60-69 % D, below 60% F; Plus/minus grades are at instructor's discretion.
Advanced Writing in the Major (from the catalog) general education requires that the course provide criteria for evaluation of assignments, detailed instructions, tools and strategies for effective writing and editing in the major. The course assignments must require students to write frequently for different audiences, genres and purposes, meeting expectations based on the conventions for research, analysis, and writing in the field (of anthropology).

Upon completing the upper-division writing requirement, students should be more active, confident, and effective contributors to a body of knowledge and should understand the ethical dimensions of inquiry. Upon completing the upper-division writing requirement, the student should be able to

1. Identify and pursue more sophisticated questions for academic inquiry
2. Find, evaluate, analyze, synthesize information effectively from diverse sources
3. Manage multiple perspectives as appropriate
4. Recognize the purposes and needs of discipline-specific audiences and adopt the academic voice necessary for the chosen discipline
4. Use multiple drafts, revision, edit and conduct inquiry preparing written work
5. Follow the discipline’s conventions of citation, documentation, presentation
6. Develop competence in information technology and digital literacy

The course instructors should provide feedback on students' writing and require students to revise and resubmit at least one formal writing assignment, specifically, each student should individually compose at least 20 pages of writing assessment over the course of the semester, and base a significant portion (at least 50%) of the course grade on student performance on writing assignments. The course should also incorporate information literacy into learning outcomes, instruction, assignments, formal, informal, graded, ungraded, in- and out-of-class exercises. Possible writing tasks includes journal entries, case studies, blogs, e-portfolios, hypertext, lab reports, free writing, annotated bibliography, essay, analyses, proposals, abstracts, reviews, field notes, electronic postings, research papers, or proofs.

Syllabus

Week One (Jan. 19) Introduction

Syllabus, Goals and Expectations, Writing Center

Week Two (Jan. 26) What are Ethnographic Methods? Fieldwork and fieldnotes

Fieldworking Chapter 1 Stepping in and stepping out: understanding cultures
Reader: Fieldwork in Cultural Anthropology 1-48
Part I Beginnings 49, Intro 51 Antonius C. G. M. Robben
1 The Observation of Savage Peoples 56 Joseph-Marie Degérando
2 The Methods of Ethnology 63 Franz Boas
3 Method and Scope of Anthropological Fieldwork 69 Bronislaw Malinowski
**Week Three (Feb. 2) What do we study and why? Collaboration**
Fieldworking Chapter 2  writing self and writing culture understanding fieldwriting
Reader: Part II Fieldwork Identity 83 Intro 85 Antonius Robben
4 A Woman Going Native 92 Hortense Powdermaker
5 Fixing and Negotiating Identities in the Field 103 Roschanack Shaery-Eisenlohr
6 Being Gay and Doing Fieldwork 114 Walter L. Williams
7 Auto-mythologies and the Reconstruction of Ageing 124 Paul Spencer

**Week Four (Feb. 9) Who do we study and why? Participant Observation**
Fieldworking Chapter 3 reading self/cultures, understanding texts
Reader: Part III Fieldwork Rapport 135 Intro 137 Jeffrey A. Sluka
8 Champukwi of the Village of the Tapirs 143 Charles Wagley
9 Behind Many Masks: Impression Management 153 Gerald D. Berreman
10 Politics of Truth, Emotion among Victims, Perpetrators of Violence 175 Antonius Robben

**Week Five (Feb. 16) Where do we study and why? Dialogue**
Fieldworking Chapter 4 Research place: the spatial gaze
Reader: Part IV The “Other” Talks Back 191 Intro 193 Jeffrey A. Sluka
11 Custer Died for Your Sins 199 Vine Deloria, Jr.
12 Here Come the Anthros 207 Cecil King
13 When They Read What the Papers Say We Wrote 210 Ofra Greenberg
14 Ire in Ireland 219 Nancy Scheper-Hughes

**Week Six (Feb. 23) How do we study and why? Engagement**
Fieldworking Chapter 5 researching people: the collaborative listener
Reader: Part V Fieldwork Conflicts, Hazards, and Dangers 235 Introduction 237 Jeffrey A. Sluka
15 Ethnology in a Revolutionary Setting 244 June Nash
16 The Ethnographer’s Tale 256 Neil L. Whitehead
17 Anthropology from the Bones: A Memoir 274 Cynthia Keppley Mahmood
18 Reflections on Managing Danger in Fieldwork: Anthropology in Belfast 283 Jeffrey A. Sluka
UMCUR Abstracts due March 1

**Week Seven (March 1) How do we study and why? Advocacy**
Fieldworking Chapter 6 researching language: the cultural translator
Reader: Part VI Fieldwork Ethics 297 Introduction 299 Jeffrey A. Sluka
19 The Life and Death of Project Camelot 306 Irving Louis Horowitz
20 Confronting the Ethics of Ethnography: Fieldwork in C. America 318 Philippe Bourgois
21 Ethics versus “Realism” in Anthropology 331 Gerald D. Berreman
22 Worms, Witchcraft Wild Incantations 353 Jeffrey David Ehrenreich
Week Eight (March 8) When do we study and why?
Fieldworking Chapter 7 researching archives: locating cultures
Reader: Part VII Multi-Sited Fieldwork 365 Intro 367 Antonius Robben
24 Beyond “Culture”: Space, Identity, Politics Difference 374 Akhil Gupta and James Ferguson
25 Afghanistan, Ethnography, and the New World Order 387 David B. Edwards
26 Being There and There! Reflections on Multi-Site Ethnography 399 Ulf Hannerz
27 A New Form of Collaboration: Matsutake Worlds 409 Matsutake Worlds Research Group

Week Nine (March 15) No class Spring Break March 18-22

Week Ten (March 29) Description and Interpretation Topic, outline due
Fieldworking Chapter 8 Fieldwriting, From Down to Up Draft
Part VIII Sensorial Fieldwork 441 Introduction 443 Antonius Robben
28 Balinese Character: A Photographic Analysis 450 Gregory Bateson and Margaret Mead
29 The Taste of Ethnographic Things 465 Paul Stoller and Cheryl Olkes
30 Dialogic Editing: Interpreting How Kaluli Read Sound and Sentiment 480 Steven Feld
31 On Rocks, Walks, and Talks in West Africa 496 Kathryn Linn Geurts

Week Eleven (April 5) Reflections and Reflexivity Essay draft due
Part IX Reflexive Ethnography 511 Introduction 513 Antonius Robben
32 Fieldwork and Friendship in Morocco 520 Paul Rabinow
33 The Way Things Are Said 528 Jeanne Favret-Saada
34 Transmutation of Sensibilities: Empathy, Intuition, Revelation 540 Thomas J. Csordas
35 “At the Heart of the Discipline”: Critical Reflections on Fieldwork 547 Vincent Crapanzano

Week Twelve (April 12) Fiction in Ethnography Presentationa (practice)
Part X Engaged Fieldwork 563 Intro 565 Jeffrey A. Sluka
36 Introduction – 1942 573 Margaret Mead
37 Scholarship, Advocacy, Politics of Engagement in Burma 579 Monique Skidmore
38 “Human Terrain”: Past, Present Future Applications 593 Roberto J. González
39 The Gaza Freedom Flotilla: Ethnographic Notes 605 Nikolas Kosmatopoulos

Week Thirteen (April 19) Presentations UMCUR
Week Fourteen (April 26) Debrief UMCUR Indiidual consultations
Week Fifteen (May 3) Course evaluation Portfolios due
Finals Week (May 6-10) Final essays due.