

ANTHROPOLOGY 8891.05: RESEARCH DESIGN AND ETHNOGRAPHIC METHODS

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Autumn 2019
Hours of instruction TR 9:35-10:55
Classroom: 018 Enarson
Walk-in hours: T2-4PM or by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The primary focus of this course is on hands-on student research activities. We cover a selection of methods that are central in ethnographic research – participant observation, writing fieldnotes, semi-structured interviews, surveys, and grounded theory. Other techniques and issues will be incorporated as they emerge from the course project. In addition to data-gathering methods, you will also learn to use quantitative and qualitative data analyses. And because methods are meaningless if they are not part of a well thought through research design, you will also learn how to design a research project and write it up in a research proposal. You will learn to design a study and be trained in different research methods by participating in a collaborative research project at the OSU campus. In this collaborative research project, we will design a study, collect data, analyze data, and write up the results in a report or presentation.

COURSE GOALS

The goal is to train students in research design and ethnographic research and this entails that students will be able to:

1. Understand and appreciate the anthropological approach to the study of human behavior (anthropological approach).
2. Recognize how culture shapes their own lives and research activities (reflexivity).
3. Develop their own conceptual framework that guides the design of their own research project (conceptual framework).
4. Design a research project that links research questions to data being collected, methods to be used, and data analysis (research design)
5. Collect data on human behavior using a wide range of ethnographic methods (data collection).
6. Analyze qualitative and quantitative data to answer research questions and/or evaluate hypotheses (data analysis).
7. Consider issues of justice, beneficence, and autonomy when they conduct research with human subjects (ethical conduct)
8. Write a competitive grant proposal that communicates clearly what they want to do, why they want to do it, how they plan to do it, how they will know if they succeed (grant writing).

DISABILITY SERVICES

Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact me privately to discuss their specific needs. Please contact the Office for Disability Services at 614-292-3307 in room 150 Pomerene Hall to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities.

COMMITTEE ON ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT STATEMENT

All students should become familiar with the rules governing academic misconduct, especially as they pertain to plagiarism and cheating. Ignorance of the rules is not an excuse and all alleged cases of academic misconduct will be reported to the Committee on Academic Misconduct (COAM).

READINGS

The following books are required reading and available in the OSU Book Store or through online booksellers like Amazon.com. Additional required and recommended readings will be made available through Carmen.

Bernard, H. Russell

2011 Research methods in anthropology: qualitative and quantitative approaches. Fifth edition. Walnut Creek (CA): Altamira Press.

Emerson, Robert M., Rachel I. Fretz, and Linda L. Shaw

2011 Writing ethnographic fieldnotes. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Second edition.

All assigned readings are mandatory. You are expected to have read the assigned readings once or twice before you come to class. As you read, highlight, take notes, summarize, look up new words or concepts, and come with questions for me and/or your classmates. In short, be prepared to discuss the readings in class and bring the readings to class. I also recommend you to go over the readings once more after class.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND EVALUATION

The course organization is relatively simple: on Tuesdays we discuss the readings for that week's topic and how it applies to students' own research projects and on Thursdays we apply the lessons to a collaborative research project. There are two different sets of homework: Tuesday's homework focuses on the readings and how it informs your own research project, while Thursday's homework is all about the collaborative course project.

Attendance and participation: You are expected to be actively engaged in class; that is, coming to class prepared, paying attention, and contributing to discussions and problem

solving, both by making comments and by facilitating other people's participation. Because it is difficult to do well in the course if sessions are missed *attendance at every class meeting is required*. Late arrival and early departure are considered poor participation; they are disruptive to others and make it likely to miss essential information. Please contact me if there is an emergency situation. If you are ill and must miss a class, you are responsible for getting the notes and assignment information from your classmates.

Tuesday homework assignments: You will read the assigned readings for the week and use the prompts to write a reflective note that is no longer than two pages long.

Collaborative course project: You will learn to design a study and train in different research methods by participating in a hands-on collaborative research project. The course project in Autumn 2018 will examine questions about the role of technology in the classroom at OSU. To study this topic, we will use a wide range of different ethnographic methods, including participant observations and semi-structured interviews with students and faculty. We will write up the results and present them to the director and staff of the Office of Distance Education and eLearning (ODEE) and other interested stakeholders.

Research Proposal: You will design and write one proposal for your own research project (real or imaginary). The proposal is divided in six parts: problem statement, literature review, objectives, data collection, data analysis, and project significance. You will write one draft and one final version as a grant proposal for the National Science Foundation. You will receive detailed instructions on what to cover in each section. The complete research proposal is due in finals week. I recommend that you continuously revise and update your proposal over the course of the semester.

Evaluation: Course responsibilities will be weighted in the following way:

Attendance and participation	10%
Reflective Notes (15)	30%
Collaborative Project assignment (9)	30%
Research proposal final version	30%
Total	100%

Final grades are based on the OSU Standard Scheme. A general guide to how you are doing is: A 93; A- 90-92; B+ 87-89; B 83-86; B- 80-82; C+ 77-79; C 73-76; C- 70-72; D+ 67-69; D 60-66; E < 60.

SCHEDULE AND TOPICS

WEEK 1: ETHNOGRAPHIC RESEARCH

Read: Agar (2006), Henrich et al. (2010), Bernard (2011- CH1-2), Small (2008)

T8/20: Discussion of anthropological approach

R8/22: Discussion of ethnography and course project

WEEK 2: RESPONSIBLE CONDUCT OF RESEARCH

Read: AAA Code of Ethics (2012), AAA Statement on IRB (2004), Tobin et al. (1991:1-11), Weisner (1997)

- *Complete CITI test*

T8/27: Discussion of ethical issues in students' research

R8/29: Discussion of Preschool in three cultures – an example of ethnography

WEEK 3: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORKS

Read: Ravitch and Riggan (2012:1-49), Emerson (2011:1-20)

- *CP assignment due: (1) literature*

R9/3: Discussion of conceptual frameworks

T9/5: Compare and discuss relevant literature

WEEK 4: RESEARCH DESIGN

Read: Johnson (1998:131-167), Bernard (2011:54-112), Cliggett (2005:23-46),

T9/10: Discussion of research design

R9/12: Discuss Cliggett as example of research design

WEEK 5: PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION

Read: Spradley (1980:63-84), Bernard (2011:256-290), Emerson (2011:21-44)

- *CP assignment due: (2) objectives*

T9/17: Lecture on participant observation

R9/19: Discuss objectives and develop observation protocol

WEEK 6: WRITING FIELDNOTES

Read: Bernard (2011:291-336), Emerson (2011:45-88)

- *CP assignment due (3) observations*

T9/24: Lecture on writing fieldnotes

R9/26: Compare and discuss observations, develop a more focused protocol

WEEK 7: SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

Read: Spradley (1979:55-91), Bernard (2011:156-186)

- *CP assignment due: (4) fieldnotes*

T10/1: Lecture on semi-structured interviews

R10/3: Compare and discuss focused observations, develop an interview guide

WEEK 8: QUALITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS I

Read: Bernard (2011:337-345,407-457), Emerson (2011:89-128)

T10/8: Lecture on grounded theory and grant writing

No class because of Autumn Break

WEEK 9: SAMPLING

Read: Bernard (2011:113-155), Emerson (2011:129-170)

- *CP assignment due: (5) semi-structured interviews*

T10/15: Lecture on sampling (and writing grant proposals)

R10/17: Compare and discuss interview reports

WEEK 10: QUALITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS II

Read: Charmaz (2001), Emerson (2011:171-200)

T10/22: Example of grounded theory from Charmaz

R10/24: Grounded theory exercise

WEEK 11: STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS I

Read: Bernard (2011:187-255)

- *CP assignment due: (6) grounded theory*

T10/29: Grounded theory of fieldnotes and interviews

R10/31: Lecture on surveys and survey development

WEEK 12: STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS II

Read: Trochim (2005:76-86)

- *CP assignment due: (7) structured interviews*

T11/5: More work on survey

R11/7: Preparing for quantitative data analysis

WEEK 13: QUANTITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS

Read: Bernard (2011:458-558)

- *CP assignment due: (8) quantitative data analysis*

T11/12: Lecture on quantitative data analysis (and data management)

R11/14: Compare and discuss quantitative data analysis

WEEK 14: PRESENTING RESEARCH (AAA MEETINGS)

Read: Matthews (2005:799-808), Emerson (2011:201-248), Tracy (2012:109-135)

- *CP assignment due: (9) writing*

T11/19: Interpreting all our results

R11/21: Discussion of writing up qualitative research

WEEK 15: REVISITING RESEARCH DESIGN

T11/27: Revisiting research design

No class because of Thanksgiving Break

WEEK 16: WRAPPING UP

T12/3: Presentation of results for stakeholders + SEIs

FINALS WEEK

△ Grant proposal is due Friday 6 December before 12 noon in the Carmen Dropbox.

REQUIRED READINGS

- Agar, Michael
2006 *An Ethnography By Any Other Name ... Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung / Forum: Qualitative Social Research.*
- Bernard, H. Russell
2006 [1994] *Research methods in anthropology: qualitative and quantitative approaches.* Walnut Creek (CA): Altamira Press.
- Charmaz, Kathy
2001 *Grounded theory. In Contemporary field research: perspectives and formulations.* R.M. Emerson, ed. Pp. 335-352. Long Grove (IL): Waveland Press.
- Cliggett, Lisa
2005 *Grains from grass: aging, gender, and famine in rural Africa.* Ithaca (NY): Cornell University Press. Pp. 23-46.
- Emerson, Robert M., Rachel I. Fretz, and Linda L. Shaw
2011 *Writing ethnographic fieldnotes.* 2nd edition. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Henrich, Joseph, Steven J. Heine, and Ara Norenzayan
2010 *Most people are not WEIRD.* *Nature* 466(1 July 2010):29.
- Johnson, Jeffrey C.
1998 *Research design and research strategies. In Handbook of methods in cultural anthropology.* R.H. Bernard, ed. Pp. 131-171. Walnut Creek (CA): Altamira Press.
- Matthews, Sarah H.
2005 *Crafting Qualitative Research Articles on Marriages and Families.* *Journal of Marriage and Family* 67:799-808.
- Moritz, Mark. 2016. 'Big data's 'streetlight effect': where and how we look affects what we see'. *The Conversation*, May 16, 2016. theconversation.com/big-datas-streetlight-effect-where-and-how-we-look-affects-what-we-see-58122
- Ravitch, Sharon M., and Matthew Riggan
2012 *Reason & Rigor: How conceptual frameworks guide research.* Los Angeles: Sage.
- Spradley, James P.
1979 *The ethnographic interview.* New York: Wadsworth. Pp. 55-91.
- Spradley, James P.
1980 *Participant observation.* New York: Wadsworth. Pp. 63-84.
- Tracy, S.J.
2012 *The toxic and mythical combination of a deductive writing logic for inductive qualitative research.* *Qualitative Communication Research* 1:109-141.
- Weisner, Thomas S.
1997. *The ecocultural project of human development: why ethnography and its findings matter.* *Ethos* 25 (2):177-190.

RECOMMENDED READINGS

- Agar, Michael H.
1996 [1980] *The professional stranger: an informal introduction to ethnography*. London: Academic Press.
- Angosino, Michael
2002 *Doing Cultural Anthropology*. Prospect Heights (IL): Waveland Press.
- Crane, Julia G., and Michael V. Angrosino
1992 *Field projects in anthropology: a student handbook*. Long Grove: Waveland Press.
- de Munck, Victor C. & Elisa J. Sobo, ed.
1998 *Using methods in the field: a practical introduction and casebook*. Walnut Creek (CA): Altamira Press.
- Dewalt, Kathleen M., and Billie R. Dewalt
2002 *Participant observation: a guide for fieldworkers*. New York: Altamira Press
- Emerson, Robert M., ed.
2001 *Contemporary field research: perspectives and formulations*. Long Grove (IL): Waveland Press.
- Flinn, Juliana
1998 *Freelists, ratings, averages, and frequencies: why so few students study anthropology*. In *Using methods in the field: a practical introduction and casebook*. V.C. de Munck and E.J. Sobo, eds. Pp. 85-96. Walnut Creek (CA): Altamira Press.
- Galman, Sally Campbell
2007 *Shane, The Lone Ethnographer: A Beginner's Guide to Ethnography* Lanham (MD): Altamira Press.
- Galman, Sally Campbell.
2013. *The good, the bad, and the data: Shane, The Lone Ethnographer's Basic Guide to Qualitative Data Analysis*. Lanham (MD): Altamira Press.
- Henrich, Joseph, Steven J. Heine, and Ara Norenzayan
2010 *The weirdest people in the world?* *Behavioral and Brain Sciences* 33(2-3):61-83.
- Hess JR., G. Alfred
1999 *Using ethnography to influence public policy*. In *Using ethnographic data: interventions, public programming, and public policy*. J.J. Schensul, ed. Pp. 57-113. Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press.
- Lareau, Annette
2003 *Unequal childhoods: class, race, and family life*. Berkeley (CA): University of California Press. Pp. 1-13, 259-287.
- McCurdy, D., J. P. Spradley, and D. J. Shandy
2005 [1972] *The cultural experience: ethnography in complex society*. Long Grove (IL): Waveland Press.
- McKillup, Steve
2006 *Statistics explained: an introductory guide for life scientists*. Cambridge (UK): Cambridge University Press.
- O'Reilly, Karen
2009 *Key concepts in ethnography*. Thousand Oaks (CA): Sage.
- Ottenberg, Simon
1990 *Thirty years of fieldnotes: changing relationships to the text*. In *Fieldnotes: the*

- makings of anthropology. R. Sanjek, ed. Pp. 139-160. Ithaca (NY): Cornell University Press.
- Schensul, Jean J., and Margaret D. LeCompte, eds.
1999 Ethnographer's toolkit. Volume 1-7. Walnut Creek (CA): Altamira Press.
- Tobin, Joseph, David Wu, and Dana Davidson
1991 Preschool in Three Cultures: Japan, China and the United States. New Haven (CT):
Yale University Press. Pp. 1-71.
- Weller, Susan C., and A. Kimball Romney
1988 Systematic data collection. Newbury Park (CA): Sage.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The goal is to train students in designing and conducting ethnographic research, and this entails that students will be able to:

1. Understand and appreciate the anthropological approach to the study of human behavior (anthropological approach).
 - a. Understand other cultures without judging them by the standards of their own culture (relativistic perspective).
 - b. Consider the whole range of cross-cultural variation when formulating hypotheses about human behavior and societies (comparative perspective).
 - c. Understand that elements of culture are interrelated and should be understood within context (holistic perspective)
 - d. Understand what culture is and how it shapes how humans experience, perceive and act in the world (culture concept).
 - e. Understand why and how anthropologists study cross-cultural variation (epistemology).
 - f. Understand how culture shapes their own lives and research activities (reflexivity).
2. Develop their own conceptual framework that guides the design of their own research project (conceptual framework).
 - a. Explain what a conceptual framework is.
 - b. Reflect on what personal motivations drive research.
 - c. Use relevant and appropriate theoretical paradigms.
 - d. Articulate clearly and logically their own conceptual framework.
 - e. Convince reader of importance of topic and rigor of approach.
3. Design a research project that links research questions to data being collected, methods to be used, and data analysis (research design).
 - a. Formulate clear research questions, hypotheses, and objectives.
 - b. Identify the necessary data needed to answer research questions, evaluate hypotheses and/or achieve objectives.
 - c. Identify the appropriate methods to collect the necessary data.
 - d. Identify the appropriate population, sample, sample size, and sampling techniques from which to collect the necessary data.
 - e. Identify the appropriate methods to analyze the data to answer the research questions and/or evaluate the hypotheses.
4. Collect data on human behavior using a wide range of ethnographic methods (data collection).
 - a. Develop an observation protocol, conduct systematic observations, and write expanded fieldnotes.
 - b. Develop a semi-structured interview guide, conduct semi-structured interviews, and transcribe the interview.
 - c. Develop a survey instrument, administer the survey online, and manage the survey data in a spreadsheet.

5. Analyze qualitative and quantitative data to answer research questions and/or evaluate hypotheses (data analysis).
 - a. Analyze qualitative data from observations and semi-structured interviews using a grounded theory approach.
 - b. Analyze quantitative survey data using simple descriptive, comparative, and correlational statistics.
6. Consider issues of justice, beneficence, and autonomy when they conduct research with human subjects (ethical conduct)
 - a. Consider how to respect human subjects, protect their autonomy, and obtain informed consent (respect for persons).
 - b. Consider and weigh the costs and benefits of the research activities for human subjects (beneficence).
 - c. Consider how research activities are administered fairly and equally among potential research participants (justice).
 - d. Obtain IRB approval for research with human subjects in a timely manner.
7. Write a competitive grant proposal that communicates clearly what they want to do, why they want to do it, how they plan to do it, how they will know if they succeed (grant writing).
 - a. Explain clearly the questions that the project aims to address and why they are important.
 - b. Describe clearly the theoretical contribution of the project and how the project builds on existing theoretical knowledge.
 - c. Explain what data should be collected and how it will be analyzed to answer the research questions.
 - d. Explain the qualifications of the researcher to be able to successfully conduct the proposed research.
 - e. Explain the broader impacts of the research and potential contributions to society and how these will be assessed.