

ANTH 802: Methods in Anthropology

(CRN 22466)
 Tuesdays, 2:00pm Neff 210
 Professor: Dr. Sarah Taylor
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Course Description:

Ethnography is the product of the fieldwork conducted by cultural anthropologists, however it is increasingly being adopted by other social sciences, public health, and many for-profit and non-profit organizations. The top employers of anthropologists in the U.S. are the federal government and Microsoft. The reason that many people are now looking to anthropology is its ability to provide the insight that quantitative data alone will never be able to identify: the nature of the human experience and cultural variation. This course is a practice-oriented seminar in ethnographic field methods. The course examines several traditional methods for qualitative data collection (participant observation, interviewing, and personal narratives), while also exploring the potential of selected mixed methods approaches (visual methodologies, surveys, and cognitive mapping).

Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, students will have demonstrated their ability to:

1. Understand different research methods used by cultural anthropologists.
2. Identify appropriate methodologies for answering a variety of research questions.
3. Be aware of the importance of ethics and the role of the ethnographer.
4. Collect and analyze different types of qualitative data to determine findings.
5. Develop an ethnographic narrative from their data.

Required Texts:

1. Bernard, Russell. *Research methods in Anthropology*. ISBN 978-0759108684
2. Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw. *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes*. ISBN 978-0759108684
3. All additional readings will be available in weekly Blackboard learning modules.

Office Hours:

Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, 11:00am to 1:00pm, and by appointment.

Grading:

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|---------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Projects | 100 points each x6 | 600 points |
| Report | 300 points | 300 points |
| Participation | 100 points | 100 points |
| Total | | 1000 points |

| Grade Scale: | |
|--------------|--------------|
| 1000-930 = A | 769-730 = C |
| 929-900 = A- | 729-700 = C- |
| 899-870 = B+ | 699-670 = D+ |
| 869-830 = B | 669-630 = D |
| 829-800 = B- | 629-600 = D- |
| 799-770 = C+ | 599-0 = F |

In this class, as in life, there are no exams.

Projects (600 points):

Each project provides the student with a chance to apply the concepts we are learning in the readings and class discussion to their own fieldwork endeavor. Each project builds upon the last, so it is important that you not fall behind on the projects or the readings. Instructions for submitting projects are listed in the syllabus (some will be submitted in class while others will be submitted via Blackboard). **There is NO OPPORTUNITY to get points for late projects.**

Project 1: Map with descriptions of people, space, and objects.

Project 2: Method of Choice (part A and B)

Project 3: Research Design

Project 4: Census and Social Structure

Project 5: Formal Interview

Project 6: Case Study

Report (300 points):

The final report will consist of a 25-30 page paper that details your research setting, methodology, findings, and analysis. Your overall dossier will include your synthetic field notes, maps, and projects.

Participation (100 points):

This is a graduate-level seminar. As such, you are expected to arrive in class having completed the readings and prepared to participate in discussion. Part of the benefit of this course is the chance to discuss your triumphs and obstacles (there will be both) with your peers. If you are not engaging in discussion or failing to bring the required materials to class, you are not participating. You are required to maintain a notebook of fieldnotes and bring it with you to class each week. Details will be provided in the first week. Your notebook will not be submitted at the end, but your typed synthetic notes will be.

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Academic Integrity

Students are responsible for knowing and following the Student Code of Conduct http://webs.wichita.edu/inaudit/ch8_05.htm and the Student Academic Honesty policy http://webs.wichita.edu/inaudit/ch2_17.htm. If you keep up with the reading, pay attention and take notes during lectures, and study before the exams, there is no reason you should not succeed in this class. In other words, there is no reason to cheat. This class is designed for students to work on their own and to follow a code of ethics that holds you, the student, personally accountable. If I observe any collusion between students, **both parties fail the assignment!** Similarly, plagiarism is unacceptable and will be taken seriously. All assignments will be submitted using Blackboard's SAFE Assign plagiarism checking system. Instances of cheating and plagiarism are immediately reported to the Dean of Judicial Affairs. Please take the class seriously, do your work honestly, and we will all enjoy a rewarding semester.

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Class policies and etiquette:

- I will respond to all emails and Blackboard messages as quickly as possible, however it may take **up to 24 hours**. Any message received after 5:00pm will not be read until the following day. Similarly, I generally avoid responding to emails on Saturdays and Sundays. If you need immediate assistance, you can contact me during office hours. At this time, I will be available on Blackboard Chat, via email, or via phone, and I will respond to your question right away. You are also expected to check your email regularly, as I will send all important announcements to your WSU email address via Blackboard. Missed emails because you are not in the habit of checking your WSU mail are not a valid excuse for late or missing assignment.
- While dissent from the prevailing notions presented in the readings and online discussions is accepted (and even encouraged!), it must be expressed in a manner respectful to the authors we are reading and to other members of the class.
- Many assignments will be submitted via Blackboard. We will take some time to go over our course page, but it will be largely up to you to learn how to navigate it. There are numerous resources to help. The first place to start is ALWAYS the help desk. 978-HELP As a student in this course, you are responsible for your own learning. Below, you will find a quick guide to how to ask for help with course materials and other technical problems. Just as it is my responsibility to provide the materials, information, and feedback to teach you, it is your responsibility to access the information, process the feedback, and be aware of what this course requires.
- All submitted materials are expected to be written in clear and correct grammar. We live in the future and should take advantage of the technology available to us; namely, spelling and grammar checks that are standard in all word processing software. Submissions that contain misspellings and other “Word Crimes” will be graded accordingly.
(<http://vevo.ly/yRwiKB>)
- I do not accept late assignments without a verifiable reason. I am not interested in negotiating how many points per day should be subtracted and whether or not weekends count toward the total point deduction. You are all experienced students and are familiar with what will and will not be considered a verifiable excuse for failing to meet a deadline.
- Lastly, your success in this class is my main objective for the semester. Should you experience unexpected academic, personal, or work related issues that affect your participation in the class please contact me right away. I will not always be able to accommodate you; however the earlier you discuss the situation with me, the more likely it is that I will be able to assist.

Course Schedule:

Week 1: January 20

Topic: Introduction; Notes as Data
Activity: Diving in and doing anthropology

P L A N N I N G

Week 2: January 27

Topic: Ethics in anthropology and the politics of representation
Readings: EF&S Chapters 1 and 2; PDF Bourgois (1990) "Confronting Anthropological Ethics"; Fluehr-Lobban (1994) "Informed Consent in Anthropological Research"; Gonzales (2008) "Human Terrain System"; McFate (2008) "Cultural Common Sense"; Excerpts from "Ethics and the Profession of Anthropology"
Due: CITI training certificate

Week 3: February 3

Topic: Space and Spatiality
Readings: EF&S Chapters 3 and 4; Bernard Chapters 2 through 4; PDF LeCompte "Mapping Social Networks and Spatial Data"

Week 4: February 10

Topic: Research Design
Readings: Bernard Chapters 5 through 8, PDF LeCompte "Designing Ethnographic Research," Chapters 4, 5, and 6.
Due: Brief project description and fieldsite identification

Week 5: February 17

Topic: Methodologies and Epistemologies
Readings: Bernard Chapters 9 through 12; PDF Schensul "Focused Group Interviews"; PDF Plummer "The Call of Life Stories in Ethnographic Research", PDF Ruth Behar "Rage and Redemption"
Due: Map of field site (Project 1)

P R A C T I C U M

Week 6: February 24

Topic: Being and Doing in the Field
Readings: Bernard Chapters 13 through 15; PDF Creswell "Quantitative Methods" and "Mixed Methods Procedures"
Due: Method of Choice (Project 2) part a

Week 7: March 3

Topic: Types of Observation
Readings: EF&S Chapter 5; PDF Ball (2001) "Photo and Film"; PDF Pink (2001) "Visual Ethnography" chapters 3 and 4; PDF Nastasi "Audiovisual Methods in Ethnography"
Due: Research Design (Project 3) due via Blackboard by 11:59pm

Week 8: March 10

Topic: Talking and Listening
Readings: PDF Goffman (1973) "The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life"; PDF Sherman Heyl (2001) "Ethnographic Interviewing";
Due: Method of Choice (Project 2) part b

Week 9: March 17

SPRING BREAK!

Week 10: March 24

NO CLASS

Week 11: March 31

Topic: Objectivism and Subjectivism
Readings: PDF Madison (2004) "Critical Ethnography", Additional readings TBD
Due: Census and Structure (Project 4) due via Blackboard

Week 12: April 7

Topic: Transforming data into narrative
Readings: EF&S Chapters 6 and 7, Additional readings TBD
Due: Formal Interview (Project 5)

Week 13: April 14

Topic: Data management, analysis, and survival!
Readings: Additional readings TBD
Due: Case Study (Project 6)

P E E R - R E V I E W W O R K S H O P

Week 14: April 21

Week 15: April 28

Week 16: May 5

Conference-style Presentation, Group A

Week 17: May 12 (2:40pm to 4:30pm)

Conference-style Presentation, Group B

FINAL PAPERS DUE via Blackboard FRIDAY MAY 15 by 11:59pm

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University Policies

Inclusive Excellence

Wichita State University is committed to achieving “Inclusive Excellence” and institutional strength through curricula, co-curricula, and other practices, which promote and encourage the intermingling of its students, faculty, and staff from different backgrounds, in a challenging intellectual and multicultural climate that is marked by respect and appreciation for the spectrum of human diversity. The University is also committed to an “all-inclusive” diversity and does not discriminate on the basis of race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity/expression, sexual orientation, age, socioeconomic status, disability, religion, national origin, or military status.

Disabilities

If you have a physical, psychiatric/emotional, or learning disability that may impact on your ability to carry out assigned course work, I encourage you to contact the Office of Disability Services (DS). The office is located in Grace Wilkie Annex, room 150, (316) 978-3309 (voice/tty). DS will review your concerns and determine, with you, what academic accommodations are necessary and appropriate for you. All information and documentation of your disability is confidential and will not be released by DS without your written permission.

Counseling & Testing

The WSU Counseling & Testing Center provides professional counseling services to students, faculty and staff; administers tests and offers test preparation workshops; and presents programs on topics promoting personal and professional growth. Services are low cost and confidential. They are located in room 320 of Grace Wilkie Hall, and their phone number is (316) 978-3440. The Counseling & Testing Center is open on all days that the University is officially open. If you have a mental health emergency during the times that the Counseling & Testing Center is not open, please call COMCARE Crisis Services at (316) 660-7500.

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