

Spring 2010

ANG 6766 Research Methods

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ANG 6766
RESEARCH METHODS
IN APPLIED ANTHROPOLOGY

SPRING 2010 ~ THURSDAY 2-4:45 PM
SOC 37 & PHY 209B (COMPUTER LAB)

Instructor: Dr. Rebecca Zarger

Office: SOC 141

Office hours: Wednesdays 10am-12pm

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Qualitative, ethnographic research is the foundation of anthropological inquiry and practice. This course serves as a broad introduction to ethnographic methods and research design in the field and is intended to provide you with a range of experiences and techniques to prepare you for future long-term research endeavors.

During the semester, we focus on three related aims:

- 1) to offer a seminar for discussion of epistemological and practical implications of how anthropologists gather data;
- 2) to provide practical experience and exercises in many widely-used techniques of anthropological research; and
- 3) to provide an opportunity to engage in applied field research, through collaboration with a local community partner, providing the chance to explore multiple methods.

Another aim of the course is to conceptualize the ways qualitative and quantitative data can be collected in combination and what types of research questions best lend themselves to particular approaches. What are the roles and responsibilities of anthropologists in conducting fieldwork? What relationships do ethnographers have with individuals and communities? How can we look critically at the assumptions we make when conducting research? How are research design, aims, and outcomes currently being transformed through anthropological practice?

During the seminar, you are encouraged to share experiences and relate course material to the challenges you will confront as you carry out your research project this semester. For each class meeting you should be prepared to give support, feedback, and critique.

COURSE GOALS

After completing this course you should be able to:

- Define a research problem and design an appropriate data collection proposal
- Apply anthropological research methods to a variety of research contexts individually and/or in collaborative teams
- Carry out a wide range of ethnographic research techniques including observational and participatory techniques, sampling techniques, interviewing skills, cognitive tasks, visual data collection, and survey design
- Gain a basic understanding of qualitative data analysis using a software package such as

Atlas.ti

- Obtain IRB certification and expertise in research ethics for anthropologists
- Understand conflicts arising from research practice with regards to representation, collaboration, participation, power, and privilege
- Analyze, write-up, and present original research findings
- Apply concepts from required readings and in class discussions to the “service learning,” or field research experience portion of the course

FIELD RESEARCH EXPERIENCE WITH COMMUNITY PARTNER

This course is a “service learning” experience, in which students and the instructor will be engaged in working with a community partner to collaborate on shared goals and mutually agreed-upon outcomes of the ethnographic research assignments to be carried out during the semester.

For Spring 2010, our research partner will be East Tampa Community Gardens, a newly formed non-profit interested in establishing and managing community gardens in East Tampa in various locations where land may be available and residents are interested in supporting and/or participating in a community garden. A lease has already been signed for one lot for a community garden for a period of two years, and we will be coordinating with the organization’s directors, Frances Brooks and Maria Ortiz on this project.

Students in the course will carry out research assignments that focus on collection of information relevant to the community partner and provide an opportunity to link classroom content with action research and the production of research outcomes that address the community partner’s needs. The assignments also allow for students to reflect on what they have learned through their field research experience and offer suggestions as to future directions for the partnership.

Expectations for Student Research

- All students in the course will participate in the group research experience, unless explicit permission is given by the instructor to pursue a separate individual research project. In the event a separate project with another community partner is approved, it must involve the same level of commitment, final products, and number of hours devoted to field research as the group project.
- Students will be divided into ‘teams’ of 3-4 and each team will focus on one particular aspect of the research. Anticipated components of the research that have been identified by the community partner are:
 - Interviewing local residents and key stakeholders about their perceptions of community gardens and the goals, form, and purposes a garden would serve in their particular community. Topics include: garden social organization and maintenance, health benefits of gardens, and education and intergenerational activities.
 - Interviewing city council members and community leaders about what benefits and challenges community gardens pose from their perspectives.
 - Holding representative focus groups with residents to document the

variability in points of view about gardens and to identify priority projects for East Tampa community gardens over the short and long term.

- Linking partner members with other gardens, organizations, and businesses throughout the Tampa Bay region with an interest in supporting community gardens. This would involve informal interviews with the aim of locating available resources and working to connect individuals/organizations interested in sharing knowledge about different models of organization for community gardens. A database of interested stakeholders will be developed for the community partner.
 - Participating in gardening activities, events, meetings and other aspects of the East Tampa Community Gardens organization.
- Students are required to carry out field research as outlined above for a minimum of 20 hours during the semester to complete all assignments for the course.

Outcomes for Community Partner

- Final research report that summarizes interviews and other data collected, as well as relevant literature on the topic and suggestions for future directions. The report may be helpful to describe variability in community perceptions of need for gardening spaces and activities, challenges related to establishing them and other aspects that community members feel need to be addressed as plans move forward. The report will demonstrate to civic leaders, potential funding agencies, local schools, and other interested parties important elements that could support or act as barriers to community gardening efforts.
- Presentation of final research report to community partner and/or larger East Tampa residents at community or public meetings.
- Documentation of local expertise in gardening practices by identifying individuals with in-depth knowledge and experience who wish to share their expertise with others in the community, particularly youth.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Designing and Conducting Ethnographic Research

By Margaret D. LeCompte and Jean J. Schensul (vol. 1, *Ethnographer's Toolkit*), Alta Mira Press, Walnut Creek, CA. 1999.

Essential Ethnographic Methods

By Stephen L. Schensul, Jean J. Schensul, and Margaret D. LeCompte. (vol. 2, *Ethnographer's Toolkit*), Alta Mira Press, Walnut Creek, CA. 1999.

Research Methods in Anthropology: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches, Fourth Edition. By H. Russell Bernard. AltaMira Press. 2006.

RECOMMENDED/OPTIONAL TEXT:

Analyzing and Interpreting Ethnographic Data

By Margaret D. LeCompte and Jean J. Schensul (vol. 5, Ethnographer's Toolkit). Alta Mira Press, Walnut Creek, CA. 1999.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS AND EXPECTATIONS

In class Participation:

Your participation and attendance is critical for success in this course. It is a participatory research experience! Please come to class well-prepared and ready to critically engage the material or method up for discussion. You are encouraged to bring relevant questions or challenges from your ongoing field research up for class discussion. You will have the opportunity to present at least one method of your choosing so that you can explore your thesis and/or dissertation research interests.

Field Research Experience Participation:

You are required to be engaged in field research that relates directly to work with our community partner for a minimum of **20 hours** during the semester. These hours will be documented and fulfilled as you carry out assignments and contribute data to include the final report to the community partner.

Course discussion blog:

You are required to post **discussion questions (4 questions total for the semester)** on the assigned readings **by Tuesday at 5 pm prior to class on Thursday afternoon**. You should also write **four responses** to questions posed by your peers during the semester **by Wednesday at midnight**. You may also suggest activities or exercises during course meeting time to accompany your questions.

IRB and ethics training:

Each of you will complete USF Institutional Review Board online training and turn in a copy of your certificate. If you plan to publish results from your project (if it is related to your thesis/dissertation) you should consider completing an IRB application as well before conducting any research. If you do not plan to publish results, you do not need to complete an IRB application.

Critique paper:

Connecting your research to the existing literature and building theory requires expertise at evaluating others' work in published form. You will write a critique of an anthropological research article you choose that is relevant to your research for this course. More details on this assignment are found on Blackboard.

Research proposal:

The main focus of the course is to become engaged in "doing" research, from the beginning of the semester. This requires a decision about your team's research early on in the form of a very brief three page research proposal. Since a 15 week semester is a limited time frame, students and the instructor will work together to decide on a feasible research topic and plan, given the community partner's interests. The proposal is an opportunity to sketch out that plan and work through the process of crafting a clearly defined research proposal. A detailed description of the proposal format is available on Blackboard.

Experiential research assignments:

During the semester there will be several assignments, both during and out of class, designed to give you first-hand experience with various methods and techniques of data collection and qualitative analysis. Some will be group activities and others are individually assessed. The total weight for these assignments is 30% of your final grade.

Research Presentation:

The seminar will culminate with a meeting with the community partner at which each of you will present the findings of your research. More details about the format and expectations for the presentations will be provided later in the semester.

Final Paper/Report:

In addition to the presentation of your research project for the community partner, you are required to write a paper or report describing the results or findings of your team’s research. Each team will author a section of the final report to the community partner. A detailed framework for the paper is provided on Blackboard. The page limit for an individual final paper is 20 pages not including graphics, figures, or charts.

GRADING

Final grades are assigned based on the following scale: A = 92-100, A- = 90-91, B+ = 88-89, B = 82-87, B- = 80-81, C+ = 78-79, C = 72-77, C- = 70-71, D+ = 68-69, D = 62-67, D- = 60-61, F = <60. Please note that S/U contracts must be signed no later than one week after the last day to add classes. An A, B, or C is considered an “S” grade, while a D or F is considered a “U” grade.

Final grades will be calculated as follows:

| | |
|---|------|
| Participation (In Class and Field Research/minimum of 20 hours) | 15% |
| Critique paper | 5% |
| Method summary | 5% |
| Research Proposal | 10% |
| Assignments | 30% |
| Research Presentation | 10% |
| Research Paper/Report | 25% |
| <hr/> | |
| Total | 100% |

ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY

Penalties for academic dishonesty (including cheating and plagiarism) may include: assignment of an “F” or a numerical value of zero on the assignment, quiz, exam, etc.; assignment of an “F” or an “FF” grade (the latter indicating academic dishonesty) in the course; and/or suspension or expulsion from the University. Please consult the Undergraduate Catalog for further definitions and examples of such offenses.

The University of South Florida has an account with an automated plagiarism detection service which allows instructors and students to submit student assignments to be checked for plagiarism. The instructor reserves the right to: 1) request that assignments be submitted as electronic files; 2) electronically submit assignments to SafeAssignment, 3) ask students to submit their assignments to SafeAssignment through myUSF. Assignments are compared automatically with a database of journal articles, web articles, and previously submitted

papers. The instructor receives a report showing exactly how a student's paper was plagiarized.

OTHER COURSE POLICIES

- Course notes and recordings are not permitted for sale without the express written consent of the instructor.
- Students with disabilities should consult with me privately as soon as possible (the first week of classes). If accommodations are needed, a letter from the Office of Academic Support and Accommodations for Students with Disabilities (SVC1133) will be required. Please inform me if there is a need for an alternate format for documents or a note-taker.
- If you must miss class due to observance of a religious holiday, notify the instructor by the second class meeting

~COURSE SCHEDULE~

** denotes optional reading

"Toolkit" referred to as *ET vols 1,2, & 5*

- Jan. 14 *Introduction to ethnographic research methods: Overview of course*
- ET vol. 1, chapters 1-2
 - Sobo, E. and De Munck, V. 1998. "The Forest of Methods" in *Using Methods in the Field*
 - Agar, Michael H. 2001. "Ethnography," In *International Encyclopedia of Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 7:4857-62, Elsevier Science.
 - **Augner, Robert. 1995. "On Ethnography: Storytelling or Science?" *Current Anthropology* 36 (1): 97-130.
- Jan. 21 *Ethics of anthropological research*
- ET vol. 1 chapters 8 and 9
 - Fluehr-Lobban, Carolyn. "Ethics and Anthropology 1890-2000: A Review of Issues and Principles", pp 1-28 in *Ethics and the Profession of Anthropology: Dialogue for Ethically Conscious Practice*. 2nd Edition.
 - Marshall, Patricia A. 2003. "Human Subjects Protections, Institutional Review Boards, and Cultural Anthropological Research." *Anthropological Quarterly* 76 no2 Spr 2003.
- IRB certificate due**
- Jan. 28 *Ethnographic inquiry: building theory and method*
- ET vol. 1, chapters 3-4
 - ET vol. 2, chapter 1-2
- Systematics: Reliability and generalizability*
- ET vol. 2, chapter 11
- Abstract of research project due**
- Feb. 4 *Research Design: Problem definition*

- Bernard chapter 1-3
- ET vol. 1, chapter 5
- ET vol. 2, chapter 3

Research Design: proposals

- **Michael Watts, “The Holy Grail: In Pursuit of the Dissertation Proposal.” (2001, Regents of the University of California, 12 pp.)

Selection of Methods I: student presentations

Methods summary due

Feb. 11 *Data Collection: Sampling, entering ‘the field’*

- ET vol. 1, chapter 6-7
- ET vol. 2, chapter 4, 10
- Bernard chapter 4, 6

Project proposal due

Feb. 18 *Participant observation*

- Victor DeMunck. 1998. “Participant Observation: a thick explanation of conflict in a Sri Lankan village” in *Using Methods in the Field*
- ET vol. 2, chapter 5
- Geertz, Clifford, “Being There: Anthropology and Scene of Writing” in *Works and Lives* 1988, Stanford University Press.

Fieldnotes

- Bernard chapter 14
- Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw. 1995. Chapters 1-2 *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes*, University of Chicago Press.

Critique paper due

Feb. 25 *Interviewing*

- ET vol. 2, chapter 6-7
- Bernard chapter 9

Systematic behavioral observation

- Bernard chapter 15

Observation assignment due

Mar. 4 *Ethnographic surveys and structured interviews; consensus analysis, pile sorts, freelists*

- Weller, Sue. 1998. “Structured interviewing and questionnaire construction” in *Handbook of Methods in Cultural Anthropology*
- ET vol. 2, chapter 8

Mapping communities, populations, and social phenomena

- Crane, Julia G. and Michael V. Angrosino. 1992. “Making maps.” In J.G. Crane and M.V. Angrosino, *Field Projects in Anthropology: A Student Handbook*. Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press, 30-52.

Mapping assignment due

- Mar. 11 **SPRING BREAK**
No class
- Mar. 18 *Discourse Analysis*
- Farnell, Brenda and Laura Graham “Discourse-centered methods” 1998 in *Handbook of Methods in Cultural Anthropology*
- Audio data collection, analysis, and transcription*
Interviewing assignment due
- Mar. 25 *Participatory action research and community-based partnerships*
- Fals-Borda, Orlando. The application of participatory action research in Latin America. *International Sociology* vol. 2, no. 4, pp. 329-347.
- Project status report assignment due**
- Apr. 1 *Qualitative data analysis: Coding, categorizing, and searching for patterns*
- ET vol. 5, chapters 2-5
 - Bernard chapters 16-17
 - **Bernard, R. and G. Ryan. “Text Analysis: Qualitative and Quantitative Methods” in *Handbook (Ch. 16)*, Bernard, H. R. Ed. 1998.
- Atlas.ti Lab: bring interview transcript**
- Apr. 8 Field Research
- Apr. 15 Field Research
- Apr. 22 *Creating interpretations and writing up findings*
ET vol. 5, chapters 10, 11
In class: Peer review of sections of final report
Complete Draft of Report Sections Due
- Apr. 29 Research presentations to Community Partner
Final Report/Papers Due in Class

**This schedule, all assignments, and requirements are subject to change as necessary.

Other Recommended Texts, Reference Books, & Reading

Agar, Michael. 1996. *Professional stranger: An informal introduction to ethnography*. Second edition. Academic Press.

Angrosino, M. 2004. *Projects in Ethnographic Research*.

- Angrosino, M. 2006. *Doing Cultural Anthropology: Projects for Ethnographic Data Collection*. Waveland Press.
- Becker, Howard S. 1986, *Writing for Social Scientists: How to Start and Finish Your Thesis, Book, or Article*. University of Chicago Press.
- Bernard, H. Russell. Editor. 1998. *Handbook of Methods in Cultural Anthropology*. AltaMira Press.
- Denzin, Norman K. 1997. *Interpretive Ethnography: Ethnographic Practices for the 21st Century*. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications.
- Denzin, N. K. and Y. S. Lincoln (1994). *Handbook of qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- De Munck, Victor C. et al. 1998. *Using Methods in the Field: A Practical Introduction and Casebook*. Altamira Press.
- DeWalt, Kathleen M. and Billie R. DeWalt, 2002, *Participant Observation: A Guide for Fieldworkers*, Altamira Press.
- Ember, Carol R. and Melvin Ember. 2000. *Cross-Cultural Research Methods*. Oxford: AltaMira Press.
- Emerson, Robert M., Rachel I. Fretz, and Linda L. Shaw, 1995. *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes*. University of Chicago Press.
- Fluehr-Lobban, Carolyn, 2003. *Ethics and the Profession of Anthropology: Dialogue for Ethically Conscious Practice*, Second Edition, Altamira Press.
- Johnson, Jeffrey C. 1990, *Selecting Ethnographic Informants*. Qualitative Research Methods, Vol. 22. Sage Publications.
- Locke, L. F., W. W. Spirduso, and S. J. Silverman. 2000. *Proposals that work: A guide for planning dissertations and grant proposals*, 4th edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Pelto, Pertti J. and Gretel H. Pelto. 1978. *Anthropological Research: The Structure of Inquiry*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Robben, Antonius C.G.M. and Jeffrey A. Sluka, eds., 2007. *Ethnographic Fieldwork: An Anthropological Reader*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Sanjek, Roger ed., 1990. *Fieldnotes: The Makings of Anthropology*. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press.
- Spradley, James P. 1979. *The Ethnographic Interview*. New York: Holt Rinehart and Winston.
- Spradley, James P. 1980. *Participant Observation*. New York: Holt Rinehart and

Winston.

VanMaanen, John. 1988. *Tales of the Field: On Writing Ethnography*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Weller, Susan and Kimball Romney. 1986. *Systematic Data Collection*. Sage Publications.

Wolcott, Harry. 1994. *Transforming Qualitative Data*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1994.

Wolcott, Harry F. 1995. *The Art of Fieldwork*. Oxford: AltaMira Press.

Wolcott, Harry F. 1999. *Ethnography: A Way of Seeing*. Oxford: AltaMira Press.