

# **ANTHROPOLOGY 810.21: RESEARCH DESIGN AND ETHNOGRAPHIC METHODS**

Mark Moritz  
mark.moritz@gmail.com  
4058 Smith Laboratory  
(614) 247-7426

Spring 2011  
W 1:30-4:18  
0060 Science and Engineering Library

Office hours: R 10-1 or by appointment

## **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

The primary focus of this course is on hands-on student research activities. We focus on a selection of methods that are central to much anthropological fieldwork – participant observation, writing fieldnotes, semi-structured interviews, surveys, freelists, pile-sorts, and rankings. Other techniques and issues will be incorporated as they emerge from the course project. In addition to data-gathering methods, you will also learn and experiment with 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. In this collaborative research project we will as a class design a study, collect data, analyze data, and write up the results in a report.

This course will be taught as a seminar. This means that students share responsibility for the success of the course and have to come to class prepared, i.e., having read and reflected on the readings. You also have to bring the readings to class for discussions.

## **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 your 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.

## **LEARNING OUTCOMES**

You will learn how to study human behavior using ethnographic methods through participation in a collaborative research project. You will also learn how to design your own study.

## REQUIRED READING

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

2006 Research methods in anthropology: qualitative and quantitative approaches. Fourth edition. Walnut Creek (CA): Altamira Press.

Galman, Sally Campbell

2007 Shane, The Lone Ethnographer: A Beginner's Guide to Ethnography. Lanham (MD): Altamira Press.

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

1995 Writing ethnographic fieldnotes. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND EVALUATION

**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.

**Readings:** 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 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 Spring 2011 will examine students' use of the recently renovated Thompson Library. Architects and librarians have put much thought into the design of the different study, work and meeting spaces in the new library. However, the way students use, perceive, and even modify spaces in the library may or may not have been planned by the architects and/or librarians. To study students' use of the library we will use a wide range of different ethnographic methods, including participant observations and semi-structured interviews with students, librarians, and architects. We will write up the results and present them to the director of the OSU libraries.

**Research Proposal:** You will design and write one proposal for your own research project (real or imaginary). The proposal is divided in five parts: introduction, objectives, population and sample, methods, and analysis. Two drafts are due over the course of the quarter (see schedule below). The proposal should follow the guidelines of the NSF Grant Proposal Guide. You will receive detailed instructions on what to cover in each section. The complete research proposal, including an IRB application (for exemption, expedited or full review), is due in finals week. All sections have to be put on your wiki page. I recommend that you continuously revise and update your proposal as you develop your research proposal over the course of the quarter.

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

Attendance and participation	15%
Thompson Library project assignment (9)	45%
Research Proposal drafts (2)	20%
Research proposal final version	20%
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.

**Academic Misconduct:** All students should become familiar with the rules governing academic misconduct (e.g., cheating, plagiarism). Ignorance of these rules is not an acceptable defense. Anyone violating said rules will be reported to the Board of Academic Misconduct. If you have any questions, please see me.

**Special notes from the instructor:**

- Only in cases of properly documented illness or personal emergency will late assignments be accepted. Late assignments will progressively lose value and will be evaluated and returned as time allows.
- We use a wiki for the course project (<https://anthropology81021.wikidot.com>). The secret password is: bieb2010.
- I use Carmen to post information for the class (e.g., syllabus, cancelled office hours, changes in reading assignments). Check it regularly.

## SCHEDULE AND TOPICS<sup>1</sup>

- *TL assignment* = Thompson Library assignment
- △ *RP assignment* = Research Proposal assignment

### WEEK 1: ETHNOGRAPHIC RESEARCH

March 30: Introduction to course, project, wiki, citi, and ethics

Read: AAA Code of Ethics, AAA Statement on IRB (2004), Galman (2007), Bernard (2006:28-68), Agar (2006), Henrich et al. (2010), O'Reilly (2009:1-4, 104-109)

- *Complete CITI test and bring hard copy of certificate to class*

### WEEK 2: RESEARCH DESIGN

April 6: Research design and research strategies

Read: Johnson (1998:131-167), Bernard (2006:69-95, 109-145), Cliggett (2005:23-46)

- *TL assignment due: 1) literature*

### WEEK 3: PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION

April 13: Sampling and participant observation

Read: Spradley (1980:63-84), Bernard (2006:146-168, 186-209, 342-386, 413-450), Emerson (1995:1-54)

- *TL assignment due: 2) objectives*

### WEEK 4: FIELDNOTES

April 20: How to write fieldnotes

Read: Emerson (1995:66-107), Ottenberg (1990:139-160), Bernard (2006:387-412)

△ *RP first draft due*

- *TL assignment due: 3) observations*

### WEEK 5: UNSTRUCTURED & SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

April 27: Unstructured and semi-structured interviews

Read: Spradley (1979:55-91), Bernard (2006:210-250), O'Reilly (2009:70-77)

- *TL assignment due: 4) fieldnotes*

### WEEK 6: QUALITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS

May 4: Grounded theory

Read: Charmaz (2001), Bernard (2006:451-521, 522-548), O'Reilly (2009:13-17, 92-98, 118-124), Emerson (1995:108-168)

- *TL assignment due: 5) semi-structured interviews*

### WEEK 7: STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

May 11: Surveys

Read: Bernard (2006:251-298, 318-341)

- *TL assignment due: 6) qualitative data analysis*

---

<sup>1</sup> Please note that this is a tentative schedule and that the instructor reserves the right to make changes.

**WEEK 8: FORMAL METHODS**

May 18: Free-lists, pile-sorts, and rankings

Read: Bernard (2006:299-317), Weller & Romney (1988:6-20), Flinn (1998:85-96)

△ *RP second draft due*

- *TL assignment due: 7) structured interviews*

**WEEK 9: QUANTITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS**

May 25: Data management and statistical analysis

Read: Bernard (2006:549-648)

- *TL assignment due: 8) quantitative data analysis*

**WEEK 10: WRITING UP RESEARCH**

June 1: Writing ethnographically

Read: Hess (1999), Emerson et al. (1995: 169-210), Galman (2007), O'Reilly (2009:227-232), Matthews (2005: 799-808).

- *TL assignment due: 9) writing*

**FINALS WEEK**

△ *Final version of the research proposal is due on Wednesday June 8<sup>th</sup> before midnight.*

## 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  
1995 *Writing ethnographic fieldnotes.* Chicago: University of Chicago 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.
- Henrich, Joseph, Steven J. Heine, and Ara Norenzayan  
2010 *Most people are not WEIRD.* *Nature* 466(1 July 2010):29.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- Weller, Susan C., and A. Kimball Romney  
1988 *Systematic data collection.* Newbury Park (CA): Sage.

## 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.
- Barley, Nigel  
2000 [1983] *The innocent anthropologist: notes from a mud hut*. Prospect Heights (IL): Waveland Press.
- Crane, Julia G., and Michael V. Angrosino  
1992 [1984] *Field projects in anthropology: a student handbook*. Long Grove (IL): 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.
- Henrich, Joseph, Steven J. Heine, and Ara Norenzayan  
2010 *The weirdest people in the world?* *Behavioral and Brain Sciences* 33(2-3):61-83.
- Kearney, Margaret H., et al.  
1995 *Salvaging Self: A Grounded Theory of Pregnancy on Crack Cocaine*. *Nursing Research* 44(4):208-213.
- Lareau, Annette  
2003 *Unequal childhoods: class, race, and family life*. Berkeley (CA): University of California Press. Pp. 1-13, 259-287.
- Madrigal, Lorena  
1998 *Statistics for anthropology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- 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.
- 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.