

Spring 2019
ANTH 3358 / SOCI 3358
ETHNOGRAPHIC METHODS

Place: Liberal Arts 211
Time: Tue and Thu, 1.30 to 2.50 p.m.

Instructor: Pratyusha Basu
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Department of Sociology and Anthropology
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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course focuses on the acquisition and application of ethnographic research methods used in the social sciences with a focus on ethnography as theory, method, and practice. This class will involve both intellectual and experiential learning; that is students will learn through course lectures, readings and discussions as well as hands-on ethnographic fieldwork or survey-based research. Topics covered in this class include the ethics of ethnographic research, as well as theoretical, methodological, and practical approaches to various ways of carrying out fieldwork. This course emphasizes taking systematic field notes, conducting participant-observation research, doing structured and unstructured interviews, data analysis, and transforming primary field data into written ethnographic documents. By utilizing various ethnographic methods, this course aims to link practical knowledge with disciplinary methodological and theoretical debates, thus applying ethnography as both a social scientific methodology and critical approach to learning about culture and society within the fields of Anthropology and Sociology.

Course Objectives

- To learn how ethnographic research methods can be used in the study of culture and society.
 - To recognize that anthropology and sociology are built on the practice of fieldwork, data analysis and interpretation.

- To acknowledge the history of ethnographic research and to develop a commitment to confidentiality and other ethical research practices.
- To understand how ethnography involves qualitative, quantitative, and comparative methods.
- To enhance research skills through participant observation, interviewing techniques, and reflexivity.
 - To systematically record fieldwork practices, organize and present ethnographic data.
 - To demonstrate confidence in identifying and interviewing key informants, entering research sites, and conducting primary field-based research.
 - To write and present quality ethnographic materials.

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

Attendance, In-class and Take-home Assignments: 20%

In-class and take-home assignments will include answering short quizzes and short essays based on class readings, reporting the content of group discussions, and leading discussions on selected readings.

Field Assignments (3): 25%

Students will conduct three kinds of ethnographic research projects: autoethnography, field observation, and interviews. Details on how these projects are to be conducted and reported will be provided in class.

Exams (2): 30%

Each exam will consist of short answer and short essay questions drawn from the textbook and class discussions. Details will be discussed in exam review sessions.

Final Research Paper: 30% (due in Final Exams week)

Proposal: 5%

Presentation: 5%

Final paper: 20%

The research paper will extend and improve one or more of the three field assignments. Length of the research paper should be at least 2000 words (around 8 double-spaced pages). A proposal for the research paper has to be submitted and approved by the instructor. Students will also make a group presentation on the topic and methods of their final research paper.

Grading scale (based on weighted total percentage points)

A = 90% plus

B = 80-89.9%

C = 70-79.9%

D = 60-69.9%

F = 59.9% and below

READINGS

Required Textbooks

Murchison, Julian M. 2010. **Ethnography Essentials: Designing, Conducting, and Presenting Your Research.** San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass. (ISBN: 9780470343890)

Angrosino, Michael V. 2007, 2nd ed. **Doing Cultural Anthropology: Projects in Ethnographic Data Collection.** Prospect Heights, Illinois: Waveland Press. (ISBN:9781577664642)

Additional readings will be required and information on these will be provided via Blackboard.

Please remain attentive to any changes in required readings and readings/assignments schedule on Blackboard.

SCHEDULE OF COURSE TOPICS, READINGS, AND ASSIGNMENTS

Jan 22 introduction

Introducing Ethnographic Methods

Jan 24 Murchison, Ch 1

Jan 29 Murchison, Chs 2 and 3

Jan 31 Murchison, Ch 4

Feb 5 *ethnographic articles*

Feb 7 *ethnographic articles*

Autoethnography assignment due: Feb 11

Data Collection through Observations and Interviews

Feb 12 Murchison, Chs 6 and 9
 Angrosino, Ch 8

Feb 14 Murchison, Chs 7 and 10
 Angrosino, Ch 9

Feb 19 Angrosino, Chs 3 and 7

Feb 21 no class

Observation assignment due: Feb 25

Feb 26 Angrosino, Ch 2 and 15

Feb 28 Angrosino, Chs 13 and 14

Mar 5 Angrosino, Chs 5 and 6

Mar 7 Murchison, Ch 11

Mar 12 Exam 1

Mar 14

Mar 19 Spring Break

Mar 21 Spring Break

Interview Assignment due Mar 25

Data Analysis and Writing

Mar 26 Murchison, Chs 5 and 8

Mar 28 Angrosino, Ch 4

Apr 2 Murchison, Chs 12 and 13

Apr 4 Murchison, Chs 14 and 15

Paper Proposal due: Apr 8

Apr 9 *ethnographic articles*

Apr 11 *ethnographic articles*

Draft Presentation due: Apr 15

Apr 16 Angrosino, Chs 1 and 16

Apr 18 *ethnographic articles*

Apr 23 Presentations

Apr 25 Presentations

Apr 30 *ethnographic articles*

May 2

May 7 Exam 2

May 9

Supplementary Course Information

Class Environment

It is important to recognize that the classroom is an environment that requires respect for all participants. Therefore, students are expected to conduct themselves in a considerate manner. All participants in the class must respect the classroom environment by being on time, turning off cellphones, earphones, and headphones, avoiding extraneous talking and chatting, refraining from reading non-class material, and by not eating during class time.

Help with Writing

The University Writing Center (Library Building, Room 227, Tel. 747-5112) provides walk-in assistance with writing to all UTEP students at no cost (including walk-in assistance and on-line assistance with writing and citations). Check the website – <http://uwc.utep.edu/index.php/hours-location> – for a Spring 2016 schedule and more information.

Special Facilities

Individuals who have any disability, either permanent or temporary, which might affect their ability to perform in this class, must inform the instructor at the start of the semester. Adaptations of methods, materials, or testing may be made as required for equitable participation.

Incomplete Grades

Incomplete grades (I) will not be given in the course except under exceptional circumstances, based on written documentation, and at the discretion of the instructor.

Religious Preference Absence

Students who anticipate being absent from class due to the observation of a major religious activity must provide written notice of the dates to the instructor by the second week of the semester.

Selling Class Notes and Audio / Video Recordings

It is not permitted to sell notes and audio /video recordings from this class. If you need audio and video recordings of the class for personal study, please inform the instructor and obtain permission before doing so.

Academic Dishonesty

Cheating is unethical and not acceptable. Plagiarism is using information or original wording in a paper without giving credit to the source of that information: it is also not acceptable. Do not submit work under your name that you did not do yourself. If you are found to be cheating or plagiarizing, you will be subject to disciplinary action, per UTEP catalog policy. Refer to <http://sa.utep.edu/osccr/academic-integrity/> for further information.