I. 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, as a way of applying ethnography as a social scientific methodology as a critical approach to learning about culture and society within the fields of Anthropology and Sociology.
I. Learning Goals and Objectives:

**Knowledge:**
* To learn how ethnographic research methods can be used in the study of culture;
* To understand cultural diversity by reflecting upon personal and external understandings of enculturation within their own social and historical contexts;
* To enhance research skills through participant observation, interviewing techniques, and reflexivity; and
* To understand how ethnography involves qualitative, quantitative, and comparative methods.

**Values:**
* To recognize that anthropology is built on the practice of fieldwork, data analysis and interpretation;
* To develop a respect for human beings, for their uniqueness, individuality, worth and dignity;
* To understand that many individuals are born and raised in culturally different settings with value systems that may not be the same as the prevailing value system in a given society; and
* To acknowledge the history of ethnographic research and to develop a commitment to confidentiality and other ethical research practices.

**Skills:**
* To demonstrate critical understanding of ethical considerations in ethnographic research;
* To conduct ethnographic research using a variety of qualitative and quantitative methods;
* To use ethnographic methods for social science research, community-based studies, and applied work;
* To systematic 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 examine how fieldwork contributes to our understanding of culture and cultural variation;
* To assist in a literature review of Central American migrants and refugees in the U.S.; and
* To write and present quality ethnographic materials.

**Student Support Services.** The Center for Accommodation and Support Services is available to register for services and to make necessary accommodations for quizzes, exams, and note takers (visit the Student Union East, Room 106, 747-5148). Please speak to me early in the semester to make arrangements to accommodate your needs. The University Counseling Center is located at 202 Union West, 747-5302, for walk in appointments and career, study skills, and personal worth workshops. The Student Health Center is located in the Union Building East, Suite 100, 747-5624. The University Writing Center is located in the UTEP library Room 227 for drop-in tutoring and assistance with your writing assignments and final paper. I strongly encourage you to seek help if and when you need it throughout the semester.

II. Required Course Texts and Materials:


Additional Course Readings (CR's) will be made available on Blackboard as PDF files or as class handouts.

III. Research Supplies and Equipment:

To take your field notes, you will need small and medium sized bound composition notebooks and/or sketching paper. You will also need different colored pens and highlighters for the editing and revision process of your writing assignments. The class require the following work instruments: digital camera for the photographs during the fieldwork. A digital voice recorder or tape recorder for conducting and recording interviews (look for digital recorders with USB connections to facilitate downloading data to your computer). Free access (with UTEP ID) to a digital camera or digital video recording equipment is made possible at the UTEP library media center on the 3rd floor.

IV. Course Requirements:

This class will be delivered in person the attendance is mandatory. Students are responsible for reading all assignments in the time frame indicated and for completing all activities (discussions, debates, papers) within the announced time span. Each lesson will expire one week after its activation date and cannot be accessed after that. Exceptions will be made only for documented medical emergencies.

There will be debates, discussion and written paper that represents a significant portion of your grade. Familiarity with Spanish is not required although it will be highly advantageous when searching for additional materials. This is a reading, audiovisual and writing intensive course designed to challenge pre-conceived ideas and understandings.

The subjects matter for this course will include adult themes. Students are required to be respectful and mature while dealing with these sensitive topics. If, for any reason, anyone becomes uncomfortable with the topics. I recommend to communicate with the professor through email vmvazquezro@utep.edu

V. Academic Integrity

Plagiarism, cheating and other forms of academic dishonesty are prohibited and will be referred to the Office of the Dean of Students. Students must do their own work on all class papers and exams. Work submitted formally (i.e., Papers) will be evaluated for content and for standard grammar and style. Contributions to discussions will be permitted somewhat greater deviation from standard practice for formal submission.

Standard practices of academic integrity are required in the course. All material submitted must be the student's own work. Ideas and expressions cited from the work of others must be credited appropriately. The course will follow the University of Texas at El Paso 's policies on academic honesty. These policies can be found at the Student Affairs webpage.
**VI. Copyright Notice**
Many of the materials that are posted within this course are protected by copyright law. These materials are only for the use of students enrolled in this course and only for the purpose of this course. They may not be further retained or disseminated.

**VII. Technical Requirements**
You will be taking this entire course, and possibly other courses, on your computer. You must have the minimum hardware and software to successfully complete this course. If you are in the market for a new system, please consider spending a bit more to upgrade to a more optimal system. Please refer to the Getting Started off the course for more information on technical requirements.

**VIII. Technical Support**
The University of Texas at El Paso provides free 24/7 Helpdesk support to academic students and faculty members teaching on-line. The Helpdesk can provide answers to questions about using technology and services, as well as, technical support. Please visit the Technical Support Page for more information.

**XIX. Academic Assistance and Disability Statement**
In Section 504 of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, if a student needs an accommodation then the Center for Accommodations and Support Services located at UTEP need to be contacted. If you have a condition that may affect your ability to perform successfully in this course, you are encouraged to discuss this in confidence with the instructor and/or the director of the Center for Accommodations and Support Services. You may call (915) 747-5148 for general information about the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the rights that you have as a UTEP student with a disability. You also can visit the CASS website at http://sa.utep.edu/cass/ or the CASS office in Room 106 East Union Building. Individuals with disabilities have the right to equal access and opportunity. It is the student’s responsibility to contact the instructor and the Center for Accommodations and Support Services at The University of Texas at El Paso.

**COVID 19 Measures -PROTEC YOURSELF-**. Review the guidelines https://www.utep.edu/ehs/COVID-19/

**COVID-19 PRECAUTIONS**
Please stay home if you have been diagnosed with COVID-19 or are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms. If you are feeling unwell, please let me know as soon as possible, so that we can work on appropriate accommodations. If you have tested positive for COVID-19, you are encouraged to report your results to covidaction@utep.edu, so that the Dean of Students Office can provide you with support and help with communication with your professors. The Student Health Center is equipped to provide COVID 19 testing.

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention recommends that people in areas of substantial or high COVID-19 transmission wear face masks when indoors in groups of people. The best way that Miners can take care of Miners is to get the vaccine. If you still need the vaccine, it is widely available in the El Paso area, and will be available at no charge on campus during the first week of classes. For more information about the current rates, testing, and vaccinations, please visit epstrong.org
**Ethnographic Methods Field Assignments Menu:**

- **Participant observation/Culture Plunge.** Select a culturally distinctive place or event to conduct participant observation research in which you are not currently acquainted with or comfortable with. **Take detailed field notes** of the place, people and activities of the event, and specifically describe **at least 3 distinct cultural scenes** you observed. Pay attention to how this place/spaces is used, while also taking note of the people’s verbal and non-verbal forms of communication. Write a 2 to 3 page, double-spaced narrative essay that describes your personal observations and interaction(s) with others as well as your critical descriptions, reflections and interpretations of the social interactions you observed. Your goal is to **describe and interpret** the social events that took place in the space(s) you have observed. The place or event may be photographed or video-recorded if permission is acquired. Assignment may be done individually. Places suggested – Your community, UTEP Campus, El Paso Borders, El Paso’s communities. *(Due to the Covid 19 Pandemic, you can make this exercise based on a documentary available on the class lesson instructions)*

- **Life and Labor Interview Midterm.** Students are to contact a person to interview, gain a signed consent form, develop semi-structured open-ended interview questions, conduct and record the interview, transcribe at least 3-4 pages of the interview, code the interview to identify key themes in the person’s narrative, write a 2-paragraph abstract of the interview, and then write a 2–3-page synthesis of the interviewee’s life and labor history. **Goals:** To **develop skills in listening and interviewing, transcription, qualitative data analysis, coding, and the ability to synthesize, and write about critical events in a person’s life and labor history.** Assignment may be done individually.

- **Autoethnography and Life Chart.** This is a reflexive autobiographical assignment based on Leigh Berger & Carolyn Ellis “Composing Autoethnographic Stories,” in Angrosino’s book (161-176), and G.G. Núñez’s *In Search of the Next Harvest*. Write a 2-page autoethnographic narrative written in the first person. Students are to select a key social issue or topic of personal interest, identify one theoretical perspective to address this issue, provide a one-page literature review of how this topic is addressed in anthropology/sociology, and tie your personal experience to this topic. Life Charts should have at least three lines of reflection, academics, family, labor history, and significant others in your life. A reflection describing your life chart and analyzing key themes and patterns in your life chart should accompany your work. **Autoethnography and life chart. Goals:** To **develop skills in writing, linking personal insights with social science theory, and critical reflection.**

- **Quizzes and Debates in Class.** Quizzes and Debates will consist of multiple choice and short essay questions and will cover your course readings, and lectures (Each quiz and debates worth 10 points for a total of **120 points**)

- **Ethnographic Urban Photographs Portfolio.** Fieldwork exercise focused on the analysis of urban problems in El Paso.

- **Final Paper Ethnographic Research Proposal** *(Written Paper based on Independent Research Project (50 points)).* Students are to choose from: 1) doing an applied research practicum coordinated by the Center for Civic Engagement and writing a final paper based on their service learning experience; 2) develop a research question, designing research tools, and conducting a literature review of the topic (10 academic sources) and conduct their own
ethnographic research project to write a “mini-ethnography” on a local sub-cultural group in the community; 3) students with media backgrounds can design, produce, and generate a video-ethnography (15-20 minutes in length.). **Goals:** To develop critical research skills based on individual interests and future application of social science in career goals.

Final Paper Proposal Rubrics @2000 – 4000-word (10-15 pages) research paper due with the following sections:
- abstract
- Introduction- Explain the main objective of the proposal. Describe the community, the informants, the relevance’s of the project. Remember is a proposal. A historical background.
- Theory- discuss at least of three theories related with your proposal.
- Methods- discuss the main methods, how long will be the fieldwork phase.
- Findings – how this ethnography will be able to contribute to the society.
- Significance of the research
- Challenges and ways, you would address them if you were to do the project again
- Conclusion
- attach to your paper typed field notes, evidence of hours completed for SL option, maps, or photographs. For ideas on mapping and documenting public spaces, see http://www.nytimes.com/2009/11/17/technology/internet/17maps.html?_r=2&hp&

**Goals of Service Learning/Ethnographic Research:** To encourage first hand fieldwork experiences, participant observation, systematic documentation and critical reflection via the systematic taking of field notes, data analysis via coding, writing and editing a final ethnography. Nothing will ever compare to having first-hand research experience.

**Tips for Succeeding in this Class (this is not a class requirement)**

1. **Field notes:** The systematic writing of field notes is important in doing ethnographic research. Write during or **within 24 hours** of your participant observation experiences. Add the dates, times, and locations of your interviews, and type up your notes as soon as possible. Your field notes are your raw data, your typed notes will help you code key themes, and identify great quotes and examples to incorporate in your papers and in your final ethnography. I will review the field note-taking process, but you can use a double-entry process using Word to make two columns. On the left column describe objective descriptions including what you see, hear, experience; and on the right column provide your own subjective interpretations, thoughts, and reflections on what you have experienced.

2. **Reading and Note-taking:** As you read, I suggest you use a double-entry log of your reading notes, and your thoughts/reflections of the material. In your notes, remember to include page numbers, key definitions, “direct quotes,” examples, and visuals for later recall.

3. **Writing:** **Pre-writing:** Start early on your fieldwork assignments, work on a draft, and let it sit for a day, and then look at it with fresh eyes and revise. **Brainstorming:** When deciding what to study or who to interview, try a brainstorming exercise with lists or clusters to get your ideas going. **Drafting:** Write a rough draft in one sitting. Walk away. Rest. Do something else before returning to your work. **Revising:** Reread your draft and revise. Sharpen your key sentences and your paragraph structure. Look for evidence and examples of your key topics from your
interview field notes/recordings. Editing: When satisfied with the content and structure of your paper, read it aloud, slowly, and improve language, typos, and grammatical errors. Ask another person to read and edit your work if necessary. Turn it in on time. Writing is an on-going process; your work does not have to be perfect, but it does need to get done. We will continue to work on improving our interviewing, listening, observing, note-taking, synthesizing, critical thinking, and writing skills throughout the semester. Avoid Procrastinating and get an early start on your reading and writing assignments.

Grade Breakdown Grading:
120 points - In class exercises (assignments and debates)
50 points – Midterm Ethnographic Interview video and transcription
30 points – Fieldwork Photograph Portfolio
50 points – Final Ethnographic Proposal

Grade Breakdown
A – 250 pts. -225 pts.
B- 224 pts. – 200 pts.
C- 199 pts. -177 pts.
D- 176 pts. -149 pts.
F- 148 pts. -0 pts.
250 points totals

*Note* There are more possible points available in the class
All assignments may be written in English or Spanish

Important Note about Academic Integrity and research ethics. Students must present their own efforts and contributions in all assignments and examinations. Cheating, plagiarism, and falsifying research data will not be tolerated. Plagiarism is taking someone else’s work and representing it as one’s own. Honesty and respect for your work and the work of others is essential to your success in this course and in your academic career.

Follow the Code of Ethics of the American Anthropological Association found at Principles of Professional Responsibility at: http://ethics.aaanet.org/ethics-statement-0-preamble/. Understand that as a UTEP student you represent the Department of Sociology and Anthropology, as well as the overall university at all times. Be respectful of yourself, your classmates, your professor, your scholarship, community, and research informants during the length of your research. In conducting fieldwork, practice safety and common sense in selecting your informants and conducting your fieldwork.

A Note on the use of Photography and Video. The use of photographs in ethnography is tricky and requires consideration particularly when working with minors, Native American, women of particular faiths, and with “hidden” populations in our society who do not wish to be photographed. Be respectful of people’s privacy, cultural and religious practices. Always seek consent and approval before taking pictures or video-tapping people’s activities. If people wish to have their faces concealed, you will need to make the appropriate modifications to respect their rights.

Writing Center: I encourage you to visit the University Writing Center located on the second floor in the main entrance of the library.
Through the Ethnography Research will be able to problematizing and propose solutions to the main problems in the Border. Dr. Vázquez. International Bridge Américas (Puente Libre) By. Dr. Vazquez 2017.

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**Fall Semester 2021 Course Calendar**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Weeks and Dates</th>
<th>Lecture Topics</th>
<th>Readings Assignments Due</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>August 23 (Monday)</td>
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<tr>
<td>August 25 (Wednesday)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Lesson 1 II Part</strong></td>
<td><strong>The Goals of Social Science Research, and Selecting a Research Topic.</strong>&lt;br&gt;What does an Ethnography look like? How is an ethnography organized? Hint: read the conclusion of the book you have chosen, browse the table of Contents, and then read the intro. What theory/methods were used? What culture was studied? How Was this study done? What did the Author add to the study of this Group of people?</td>
<td><strong>Reading suggested:</strong>&lt;br&gt; Discuss Murchison Chapters 1-2 &amp; Angrosino (1-18) in class.&lt;br&gt; Firs Assignment (10 pts.) Short presentation, PowerPoint.&lt;br&gt; Ethnographic exercise: describe your community. Explain the main problems, the daily life, describe the residents, etc. <strong>Community Description: Due Sunday, August 29 11:59 pm discuss in class Monday 30</strong></td>
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<td>August 25 (Wednesday)</td>
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<tr>
<td>August 30 (Monday)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lesson 2</td>
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| September 1 (Wednesday) | **Research Design and writing up research proposal**  
Brainstorming Topics of interest and preliminary literature review  
Introduction Participant Observation  
Learn how to Actively listen  
**Documentaries:**  
**Reading suggested:** Murchison Chapters 3-4:  
Second Assignment (10 pts.)  
Participant Observation Exercise  
Due Sunday September 5 11:59 pm  
Discuss in class Wednesday 8 |
| September 6 (Monday No Class Labor Day) – September 8 (Wednesday) |  |

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<tr>
<th>Lesson 3</th>
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| September 8 (Wednesday) | **Research Ethics/Ethical Scenarios**  
**Discuss real-world ethical scenarios.** Review AAA Code of Ethics to generate a response to these scenarios.  
**Ethical violation in the Ethnographic Research Violence and culture**  
**Documentary: Dirty Money Drug/ World’s scariest drug**  
**Reading suggested:** Chapter Three Fieldwork Values and Ethics. Vivanco  
**Articles:**  
Third Assignment Etic  
Due date Friday 17 11:59 pm |
| September 13 (Monday) |  |

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<tr>
<th>Lesson 4</th>
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| September 13 (Monday) | **Intro to Participant observation research and Culture Shock**  
Open-ended Observation and writing field notes- Entering the Field in Ethnographic Research, Jottings and Field notes  
**Reading suggested:** Exploratory or Open-ended Observation and Angrosino 83-90 by Borman et al; and Murchison Chapter 5.  
**Brain storming Exercise (5 pts)** |
<p>| September 15 (Wednesday) |  |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lesson 4</th>
<th>September 20 (Monday) – September 22 (Wednesday)</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Identifying and Interviewing Informants in Ethnographic Research</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Conducting In-Depth, Open Ended Life and Labor History Interviews/Genealogies</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Reading suggested:</strong> Angrosino 19-32; Angrosino pp. 33-44, and Murchison Chapter 6 and Chapter 7.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Reading discussion and interviews examples</strong></td>
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<tr>
<th>Lesson 4</th>
<th>September 27 (Monday) – September 29 (Wednesday)</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Transcribing, coding, memoing, and Analyzing field notes</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Class Discussions of Life Histories</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Start working on your midterm interview.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Digital video cameras may be checked out from the 3rd floor of the UTEP library with your student ID. You can also reserve a study group room to conduct your interview on campus.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Reading suggested</strong> Murchison Chapter 8; Angrosino 45 to 62.</td>
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<td><strong>Life and Labor History questions draft (10 pts).</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Discuss in class a description of your interview, informant and topics. September 29 Wednesday</strong></td>
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<tr>
<th>(Midterm Interview)</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Ethnographic Interview Part II</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Semi-structured and Structured Interviews</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Research Surveys that Integrate Quantitative and Qualitative data</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Reading suggested:</strong> Chapter Seven Asking Questions. Fieldnotes. Vivanco</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Midterm: Interview video and Transcription of your interview on blackboard Upload on Blackboard Due Sunday October, 18-11:59 pm</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Midterm Grade report will be available from October 20.</strong></td>
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<th>Lesson 5</th>
<th>October 11 (Monday) – October 13 (Wednesday)</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>A brief analysis of The Ethnographic Research focused on Inequality and Violence.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Reading suggested:</strong> Murchison Chapters 9 and 10. Analysis of the following ethnography research: <strong>Reading suggested:</strong> The Killing Consensus (Selected readings) Graham Denyer Willis (2015)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Selected readings:</strong></td>
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<td>Lesson 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>II Part</td>
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<td>October 18 (Monday)</td>
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<td>October 20 (Wednesday)</td>
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<td>Lesson 6</td>
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<td>October 25 (Monday) – October 27 (Wednesday)</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 01 (Monday) - November 3 (Wednesday)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lesson 8</td>
<td>Visual Ethnography Ethnographic Photograph Analysis Fieldwork Exercise</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 8 (Monday) – November 10 (Wednesday)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lesson 9</td>
<td>Writing Auto -Ethnography. Put it all together How to organize your ethnographic research</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 15 (Monday) - November 17 (Wednesday)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lesson 10</td>
<td>The Challenge of Ethnographic research/The pertinence of the Ethnographic Research in El Paso/ Pandemic impact and</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 22 (Monday) – November 24 (Wednesday) November 29 (Monday)</td>
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December 1st (Wednesday)

the ethnographic approach. Final Recap.

TURN IN YOUR FINAL WRITTEN PAPER PRINTED (50 PTS DECEMBER 1ST)

Note: Syllabus and Course Schedule Subject to Modifications.

IMPORTANT:
Required COVID-19 Student Training Video
All students, regardless of where you are taking classes, are asked to watch a COVID-19 informational and training video. Students can access the 6-minute training video at covidtraining.questionpro.com.

Ethnographic Research Methods
Dr. Victor M. Vazquez Rodriguez
Department of Sociology and Anthropology
UTEP

Sample Consent Form to be presented in writing to your research informants. Please translate, read or explain if necessary.

Consent Form

My name is ______________________. I am a student at the University of Texas in El Paso (UTEP). As part of the class, I am taking on Ethnographic Research Methods, I am required to conduct a short-term research project. I have chosen to do my research on __________. Your involvement in this project will contribute towards my personal and academic development by allowing me to fulfill my research requirement for this class.

Please understand that your participation in this research is voluntary and that you may withdraw at any time or decline to answer any question you choose. I would like to assure you that your responses will be held strictly confidential and that your actual personal identity will not be used in any publication(s).

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact my Professor, Dr. Victor Vazquez at the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at UT El Paso at (915) 747-6529.

___________________________  __________________________
Name of Participant       Name of Researcher

___________________________  __________________________
Signature of Participant    Signature of Researcher

___________________________  __________________________
Phone number or contact information Phone number or contact information

DATE: ____________________________
Consentimiento para ser entrevistado/a

Mi nombre es ____________________. Soy estudiante en la Universidad de Texas en El Paso (UTEP). Como requisito para mi curso de metodología estaré haciendo un estudio. Yo he decidido estudiar _______. Su participación en este proyecto va a contribuir a mi desarrollo personal y profesional al apoyarme a cumplir con mis estudios.

Su participación en este estudio es voluntaria, ya que tiene el derecho de no contestar alguna pregunta que usted desee o dejar de participar en este estudio en cualquier momento. Deseo asegurarle que sus respuestas serán tratadas con respeto y confidencialidad. Su nombre o apellido no serán identificados en ningún documento o publicación si usted así lo desea.

Si tiene preguntas, favor de comunicarse con mi profesora, Dr. Vazquez en el departamento de Sociologia y Antropologia en UTEP al (915) 747-6529.

___________________________  _________________________
Nombre del participante     Nombre del estudiante
___________________________  _________________________
Firma del participante      Firma del estudiante
___________________________  _________________________
Teléfono                    Teléfono
___________________________
Fecha de la entrevista