

ANTH 4011: Anthropological Field Methods

T/TH 12:30-1:50pm

Matt 114

Anthropological Field Methods is a course in how anthropologists “do” anthropology. Every discipline is defined according to their own distinct search for knowledge. For example, psychologists may find knowledge through statistics while biologists test out hypotheses. However, the manner in which a researcher investigates, in terms of their/her/his research methods, is not just about the way they/she/he gathers data and information. Rather, research methods are instrumental in *creating* the very knowledge they are often purported only to discover. This course engages with the methods of anthropological thinking, especially in terms of how the ethnographer/collaborator relationship informs how questions over “culture” are both found and framed.

Instructor

Professor Nelson (she/her/ella)

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940.369.8449

ZOOM ID: [9403698449](#)

Office Hours

T/TH 2-3pm

Sycamore 120

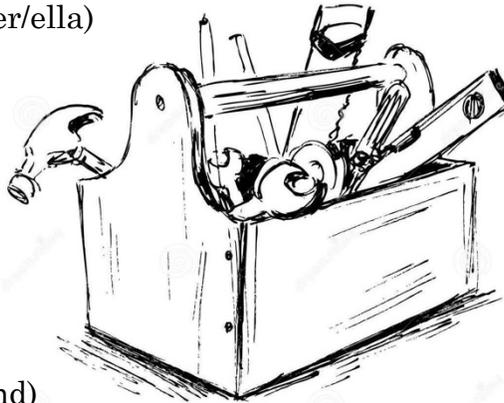
Required Materials:

Composition Book (Bound)

Participant Notebook (Small)

Barracoon (2018) by Zora Neale Hurston

ISBN 978-0-06-274821-8



Grade

Breakdown

Attendance 10%

Synthesis 10%

Exercises 10%

Papers 20%

Ethnographic

Experience 25%

Realization 25%

Grading Scale

A 90-100 D 60-69

B 80-89 F <60

C 70-79

Learning Objectives

- Students will acquire ethnographic skills that include engaging collaboratively with a social community, interviewing, and assessing the anthropological value of those experiences.
- Students will be able to think critically about the power and process of research. They will be able to contextualize current research approaches within a (problematic) legacy of anthropological research methods and discuss how research methods are dynamic tools in processes of power.
- Students will be able to critically reflect upon their own positionality both personally and as an ethnographic research student.
- Students will learn how to write ethnographic analyses in ways that are thoughtful, succinct, and anthropological.
- Students will practice collaboration and participation skills, gaining the experience of how to produce and present knowledge within an academic community.

Course Organization

As an in-person class, this course develops an understanding for anthropological methods through a collaborative and discussion-based approach which requires students to be present. **Assignments/assessments will be handed out in-class and submissions will be accepted only in-class unless otherwise noted.** *Canvas* will be used as a supplemental resource for readings/resources, announcements, and recording grades. Modules/materials will be published in synchronicity with our in-class meetings. In other words, you will not have access to full course materials as you would in an online, asynchronous class. *Students are encouraged to engage with/work through the following online materials on Canvas prior to the start of a unit:*

- **“Good to Think” Questions** (to keep in mind as we engage with unit themes)
- **Required Reading for the Unit** (with Author Pictures & Context)

Assessments Policy

Missing assignments as a result of an unexcused absence will result in a 0. Attempts at late submission, or assessments submitted in alternate ways (i.e. in-class v. email), will not be accepted. Make-up opportunities will only be considered with an approved and documented excused absence (see *Assessments/Attendance* below). Make-up work will be due the class meeting immediately following the excused absence(s) unless otherwise expressly determined by the instructor in writing.

Assessments

Attendance

10%

Students are expected to attend class meetings regularly and to abide by the attendance policy established for the course. If possible, it is advised that students communicate with the professor prior to being absent, so you and the professor can discuss and mitigate the impact of the absence on your attainment of course learning goals.

Attendance grades will be calculated according to the table below. ALL absences will be counted **unexcused** unless documentation of a [university approved absence](#) is provided to the instructor in writing within 48 hours of the missed class.

Synthesis

10%

Students will be randomly assigned to small group “recitations”, where they will 1) discuss unit themes and 2) **synthesize** their thoughts, readings, and discussions. Student recitations will be assessed through a SYNTHESIS worksheet that will be due (through Canvas) by the end of class. A group grade will be assessed based on the criteria below. More detailed instructions will be provided in class.

| Attendance Grade | Points | Unexcused Absences |
|------------------|--------|--------------------|
| A | 100 | 0 |
| A | 90 | 1-2 |
| B | 80 | 3-5 |
| C | 70 | 6-8 |
| D | 60 | 9-11 |
| F | 50 | 12+ |

Attendance

| Points Entered | Category |
|----------------|------------------------------------|
| 20 | Comprehensive: Above and Beyond |
| 17 | Well Done: Meets Expectations |
| 15 | Fair: Good Effort |
| 12 | Lacking: Needs Improvement |
| 0 | No Submission |

Synthesis

Exercises

10%

Students will be required to independently participate in exercises outside of class that are designed to elicit an experiential understanding of the themes we are exploring in-class. Exercises may include submissions of a creative nature (poetry, writing, art). Further details will be provided in-class.

Papers

20%

You will be asked to submit **300-500 word** papers at the end of key units/themes. These essays should be informed by lectures, discussions, and readings. I will be looking for a polished writing sample with a clear thesis, argument, and properly cited references. Your argument needs to offer something more than a summary or editorial.

Ethnographic Experience

25%

Students will be required to present for approval an independently sought community collaboration. The goal of this experience is for students to practice the art of being “ethnographic” and reach a level of cultural intimacy with their community collaborators that allows for a deeper and more complex understanding of how a community seeks to make sense of the world and each other. **Students are expected to spend significant time with their community collaborators outside of class-time and are required to dedicate an average of 2-3 days a week (averaging 4-6 hrs. a week) to them.** The *Ethnographic Experience* portion of your grade will be based on the following individual assessments (further details will be provided in class):

- Community Collaborator Proposal
- Field-Notes Journal & Analysis
- Comment Map
- Getting Ethnographic Worksheet
- Community Collaborator Assessment of Anthro-Student

Realization

25%

Your final project will be an in-class panel on the culmination of your ethnographic experience. You will be asked to position your ethnographic experience in conversation with the themes we discussed on anthropological field methods. Students will be assessed on creativity/originality, depth of their ethnographic experience, and ability to bring that full-circle with the larger issues of anthropological research. Further details will be provided in class.

- The “Art” of Cultural Intimacy
- Reflective Methodology Map
- Panel Discussion

External Time Commitment

Anthropological field methods require an embodied understanding not only of what it means to “do” anthropology, but of what it is to “experience” being “anthropological”. To that end, this course is unique in that it requires both substantial time commitments outside of the classroom in addition to experiences and relationships which may prove to be outside of a student’s comfort zone. In addition to the regular time demands drawn from homework, this course requires a significant increase in time committed outside of our class meetings. **Students are expected to independently seek out an approved community collaboration and dedicate between 4-6 hours per week (spread across 2-3 days) to spending time with them.** In addition, students will be required to conduct exercises outside of class time that will demand planning, availability, and flexibility that will also challenge the boundaries of their comfort zone.

Semester Schedule*

| PERSPECTIVE (8/22-8/31) | | |
|---|---|--|
| Methods: You Are How You Research | | |
| 8/22 | Introduction to the Course | |
| 8/24 | Class Discussion-"The Ethnographer's Eye" | |
| 8/29 | In Class Activity: Nacirema | |
| 8/31 | Class Discussion-"They Are How We Research" | Due: Exercise on Perspective |
| PARTICIPATION (9/5-10/26) | | |
| Participant-Observation: How We Do What We Do | | |
| 9/5 | Introduction to Part-Observation/ Discussion of Community Collaborator Proposals | Due: Paper on Perspective |
| 9/7 | Film Discussion: <i>Zora Neale Hurston: Claiming a Space</i> | |
| 9/12 | Class Discussion-"The Devil's in the Details" | Due: Community Collaborator Proposal |
| 9/14 | In Class Activity-Getting To Know You Real(it)y | |
| 9/19 | Recitation | Barracoon: xi-36 Due: Synthesis #1 (In-Class) |
| 9/21 | Class Discussion-"Being Present v. Being There" | |
| 9/26 | In Class Activity-E.E. Round Robin | |
| 9/28 | Panel Group Formations | Due: Exercise on Participation |
| 10/3 | Ethnographic Share | Due: Field Notes Check |
| 10/5 | In Class Activity-Games Day! | |
| 10/10 | Recitation | Barracoon: 37-76 Due: Synthesis #2 (In-Class) |
| 10/10 | Class Discussion: If You Know, You Know" | |
| 10/12 | Ethnographic Share | Due: Field Notes Check |
| 10/17 | Workshop: Comment Maps | |
| 10/19 | Workshop: Comment Maps | Due: Comment Maps |
| 10/24 | In Class Activity: Somethin' To Talk About | Due: Paper on Participation |
| 10/26 | Recitation | Barracoon: 77-113 Due: Synthesis #3 (In-Class) |
| POWER (10/31-12/7) | | |
| A Reckoning: Wrestling with Our Disciplinary Legacy | | |
| 10/31 | Class Discussion-"Rooted in Racism" | Community Collaborator Assessment Requests Sent Out |
| 11/2 | Workshop: Getting Ethnographic | Due: Exercise on Power |
| 11/7 | Class Discussion-"Taking Stock" | Due: Getting Ethnographic |
| 11/9 | Recitation | Marshall (2023): Chapter 4 Due: Synthesis #4 (In-Class) |
| 11/14 | Workshop-Reflective Methodology Map | |
| 11/16 | Workshop-Art of Cultural Intimacy | Due: Paper on Power |
| 11/21 | FALL HOLIDAY-NO CLASS | |
| 11/23 | FALL HOLIDAY-NO CLASS | |
| 11/28 | Panel Rehearsals: No Class Meeting | Due: Reflective Methodology Map (Online Submission) |
| 11/30 | Workshop-Panels | Due: Art of Cultural Intimacy |
| 12/5 | Panels | |
| 12/7 | Panels | |

*Please access learning materials via CANVAS. This schedule and its contents are subject to change. Check CANVAS announcements for updates.

ASSESSMENTS KEY

| | | | |
|---|-----------------------------------|---|---------------------|
|  | Synthesis x 4 (10%) |  | Exercises x 3 (10%) |
|  | Realization x 3 (25%) |  | Papers x 3 (20%) |
|  | Ethnographic Experience x 5 (25%) | | |

NB! *Field-Notes & Time Logs will be collected & assessed in-class @ random.*

Policies**Academic Integrity Policy****University Policy on Academic Integrity:****(Policy and Procedures number 06.003)**

Academic Misconduct: “Academic Misconduct,” in this policy, means the intentional or unintentional action by a student to engage in behavior in the academic setting including, but not limited to: cheating, fabrication, facilitating academic misconduct, forgery, plagiarism, and sabotage.

Department Policy on Academic Integrity:

The Department of Anthropology expects its students to abide by the high ethical standards of practicing professionals within the field of anthropology. The Department of Anthropology does not tolerate cheating, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, forgery, plagiarism, or sabotage. This includes the use of unauthorized professional writing/editing services and generative AI for assignments. Students are expected to follow the [American Anthropological Association’s code of ethics](#): “In their capacity as researchers, anthropologists are subject to the ethical principles guiding all scientific and scholarly conduct. They must not plagiarize, nor fabricate or falsify evidence, or knowingly misrepresent information or its source” (<http://ethics.americananthro.org/category/statement/>).

Students are encouraged to use the [UNT Writing Center](#). For additional resources to help with paper writing, including how to avoid plagiarism and how to use citations, see the [Department of Anthropology Writing Guide](#). For information on the University’s policies and procedures regarding academic integrity and dishonesty, see the UNT [Student Academic Integrity policy](#).

Course Policy on Academic Integrity:

An allegation of academic dishonesty, if found credible by the instructor, may result in a range of academic penalties or sanctions ranging from admonition to expulsion from the University. Any student suspected of cheating in this course will receive at the very least a 0 on the assignment or up to an F in the course. A report of academic integrity violation shall be filed against the student with UNT and the student will have an opportunity to appeal the decision according to UNT’s appeal process.

ADA Policy

UNT makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide a student with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding one’s specific course needs. Students may request accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. For additional information see the [ODA website \(https://disability.unt.edu/\)](https://disability.unt.edu/).

Transmission and Recording of Student Images in Electronically-Delivered Courses

1. No permission is needed from a student for his or her image or voice to be transmitted live via videoconference or streaming media, but all students should be informed when courses are to be conducted using either method of delivery.
2. In the event an instructor records student presentations, he or she must obtain permission from the student using a signed release in order to use the recording for future classes in accordance with the Use of Student-Created Work guidelines above.
3. Instructors who video-record their class lectures with the intention of re-using some or all of recordings for future class offerings must notify students on the course syllabus if students' images may appear on video. Instructors are also advised to provide accommodation for students who do not wish to appear in class recordings.

No notification is needed if only audio and slide capture is used or if the video only records the instructor's image. However, the instructor is encouraged to let students know the recordings will be available to them for study purposes.

Emergency Notification & Procedures

UNT uses a system called Eagle Alert to quickly notify students with critical information in the event of an emergency (i.e., severe weather, campus closing, and health and public safety emergencies like chemical spills, fires, or violence). In the event of a university closure, please refer to CANVAS for contingency plans for covering course materials.

Student Resources

Eagle Dreamers

<https://www.unt.edu/daca>

Questions: dacainfo@northtexasdreamteam.org

Workshops: immi.gr/dacaupdates

Opening Doors International Services: <https://www.odisinc.org/>

United We Dream: <https://unitedwedream.org/>

First Generation Success Center

<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/first-generation-success-center>

UNT Student Legal Services

<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-legal-services>

Black Lives Matter

<https://ied.unt.edu/UNTBLM>

Pride Alliance

<https://ied.unt.edu/pridealliance>

Food Pantry presented by Kroger

<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/food-pantry>

Voting

votedenton.com

COVID Information

[Student Health and Wellness Center Walk-In Vaccination Information](#)