

## ETHNOGRAPHIC AND QUALITATIVE METHODS

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ANTH 5031 Online ♣ University of North Texas  
Dr. Susan Squires  
Fall 2014

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will teach students anthropological fieldwork methods, building on any prior experience they may have. Students will learn through readings and discussion, and by conducting a semester-long fieldwork project. They will become familiar with both traditional long-term fieldwork approaches and rapid assessment techniques used in applied anthropology. Topics covered include: the relationship of research to theory; designing a project; ethics; data collection; analysis of data; and presentation of findings. The class will focus on the following fieldwork approaches: observation, interviewing, and focus groups. With regard to data analysis, students will learn about software, and engage in collaborative teamwork.

**Communication with Instructor:** My office is on the third floor at 308 Chilton Hall. My office hours are Wednesday 3-5. I would also be happy to talk at other times on Skype (User name - Susan.Squires) or GoToMeeting. You can make an appointment by emailing me at susan.squires@unt.edu or calling me at 970-369-5404.

**GoToMeeting and AdobeConnect:** GoToMeeting is a program officially sponsored by UNT and can be uploaded from Blackboard Learn. It allows us to have a teleconference and document share at the same time. AdobeConnect is a program use by the Anthropology Department. There will be times during the semester that we will need to coordinate schedules and get-together at the same time. This will allow us to design research questions, interview questions, and focus group questions as a class in real time. I will be sending out an email/announcement the first week of class to coordinate our schedules. This won't be every week, but rather about 4 times during the semester.

### REQUIRED TEXTS

LeCompte, Margaret D. and Jean J. Schensul.

2010 Designing and Conducting Ethnographic Research: An Introduction. Ethnographer's Toolkit, Volume 1, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. Walnut Creek: Altamira Press. (Referred to in Course Schedule as TKV1)

Schensul, Stephen L, Jean J. Schensul and Margaret D. LeCompte.

2012 Essential Ethnographic Methods: A Mixed Methods Approach. Ethnographer's Toolkit, Volume 3, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. Walnut Creek: Altamira Press. (Referred to in Course Schedule as TK V3)

LeCompte, Margaret D. and Jean J. Schensul.

2012 Analysis and Interpretation of Ethnographic Data: A Mixed Methods Approach. Ethnographer's Toolkit, Volume 5, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. Walnut Creek: Altamira Press. (Referred to in Course Schedule as TK V5)

**Note about textbooks:** These 3 books are part of a 5-volume set called The Ethnographer's Toolkit, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition series. Make sure to buy the 2<sup>nd</sup> editions of these books. There was a 1<sup>st</sup> edition series published in 1999. Some of the books in the 1<sup>st</sup> edition series are a different from the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition series. For example, what is now volume 3 in the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition series used to be volume 2 in the 1<sup>st</sup> edition series. It can get confusing if you are trying to work from the 1<sup>st</sup> edition series.

**Reading:** Make sure you keep up and complete all of the readings. We may not go over every word in the readings, but this does not make them any less important than what is discussed in class. Since you are in a

graduate course, I expect you to take initiative and read what has been assigned. This, of course, will benefit your career as an anthropologist! After all, you are paying to be trained as a practicing anthropologist and this course is one of the foundations of that training. Two years ago I actually had someone write on a course evaluation that she didn't open one of the books and that it was a waste of money. I was really shocked to hear a graduate student say this, as I expect all of you to take initiative for your education! (I wouldn't be surprised if this was the same student who kept falling asleep in class!)

**E-journals and Blackboard:** Some of the articles are available through e-journals and some of them are available directly on Blackboard. E-journals are electronic journals to which the library subscribes. To access e-journals, go to <http://irservices.library.unt.edu/> (also direct link on course homepage), click on e-journals, and then type the name of the journal for which you are looking. You then must locate the volume # and issue # to find the specific article you need. Articles that are not available through e-journals have been scanned and added directly to Blackboard. You should be able to click the link and access the article immediately.

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

- 1. Assignments (20% each).** You will have writing assignments for most lessons in the course. These assignments involve reading an article about the Lesson topic and writing an abstract about it. The goals are to read scholarly articles about methods, enhance your writing skills and ability to explain something you've just read, and to foster class discussion. You will post these assignments to 2 places in the course: (1) the assignment tool so I can grade it, and (2) to the discussion board to foster class discussion. Specific instructions for each assignment are located within the lessons. Assignments are due by midnight (**central time**) on the due date located in the Lessons, the syllabus, and on the calendar. Please let me know if you have any questions.

**Abstract Guidelines:** Please follow the abstract guidelines for your writing assignments. Detailed instructions and links to the abstract guidelines are embedded in the Lessons.

- 2. "Attendance" and participation in virtual discussions (10%).** Since this course is a graduate seminar, participation is essential. Class participation makes up 10% of your final grade. You will be required to make comments on your classmates' assignments. Specific instructions for each assignment are located within the lessons. I will discuss more about "attendance" further in the syllabus. Postings are due by midnight (**central time**) on the due date.
- 3. Fieldwork project (70%).** Students will conduct a collaborative project over the course of the semester. Several assignments will be used to document and evaluate your fieldwork. These are the items and how much their grades are worth:

Activity	% of Grade
Observation fieldnotes	10%
Interview 1 transcript	7%
Interview 1 fieldnotes & reflections	3%
Interview 2 transcript	7%
Interview 2 fieldnotes & reflections	3%
Focus group transcript	7%
Focus group fieldnotes & reflections	3%
Coding	10%
Analysis write up	10%
Client Presentation	5%
Misc. – question development, teamwork, communication	5%

## PROJECT

We will be conducting a live project in this class for a real client. I will write much more about this project and the client in a separate post (announcement and discussion) the first week of class. This is going to take a huge amount of collaboration and cooperation among all to accomplish the goal of providing a quality project to our client. We will be designing the project, writing the interview and focus group questions, collecting data via observation, semi-structured interviews and focus groups, coding data, analyzing data, and writing up the project in a report and PowerPoint presentation.

**Weeks of heavy collaboration:** There will be many times in this course when there is very heavy collaboration, cooperation, and discussion. Because we are conducting a live, client-based project, we need to get our research design, interview questions, and focus group questions finished in a timely manner so that we can start collecting data. This will take cooperation on the part of everyone in the class. There is no room for missing assignments, not checking emails and announcements. We need the participation of everyone in the class. If I feel that you are not participating or your research partner tells me that you are not pulling your weight in collaboration, I will count off for your participation grade. I will keep you informed about the heavy collaboration weeks in advance.

**Assignments and dates towards the end of class:** The assignments and dates towards the end of the course may change from what is in the course right now. We are doing a live project for a client and dates at the end of this process are difficult to plan this far in advance. I will give you plenty of time and keep you posted along the way, but know that some of the dates may change.

## IMPORTANT INFORMATION

**Announcements:** Because this class involves a live project, I send out many, many, many announcements to the class during the semester. It is important that you read my announcements and my bulletin board posts. I have created a bulletin board topic called "Important Message" and I will post all announcements and answer all questions for the entire class here. Once we move into our project, I will probably set up additional topics related to specific aspects of our project. I will keep you informed along the way!

**Pop-Up Blocker:** Because I use the "announcement" tool very frequently in this class, it is very important that you turn your pop-up blocker off for Blackboard Vista use.

**Withdrawal:** If you are unable to complete this course you must withdraw by Oct. 5 (for a "W" with instructor approval), by Oct. 29 (for a "W" or "WF," as determined by the instructor, with instructor approval). Withdrawing from a course is a formal procedure which **YOU** must initiate. I cannot do it for you. If you simply stop attending and do not withdraw, you will receive a performance grade, usually an "F."

**Plagiarism Policy:** The Department of Anthropology does not tolerate plagiarism, cheating, or helping others to cheat. Students suspected of any of these will be provided the opportunity for a hearing; a guilty finding will merit an automatic "F" in the course. In addition, I reserve the right to pursue further disciplinary action within the UNT legal system, which may result in dismissal from the university. Plagiarism is defined as misrepresenting the work of others (whether published or not) as your own. It may be inadvertent or intentional. Any facts, statistics, quotations, or paraphrasing of any information that is not common knowledge, should be cited. For more information on paper writing, including how to avoid plagiarism, and how to use citations, see <http://www.unt.edu/anthropology/writing.htm>. For information on the university's policies regarding academic integrity and dishonesty, see the unt center for student rights and responsibilities, <http://www.unt.edu/csrr/>.

**Non-Discrimination Policy:** It is the policy of the university of North Texas not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, disability (where reasonable accommodations can be made), disabled veteran status or veteran of the Vietnam era status in its educational programs, activities, admissions or employment policies. In addition to complying with federal and state equal opportunity laws and regulations, the university through its diversity policy declares harassment based on individual differences (including sexual orientation) inconsistent with its mission and education goals. Direct questions and concerns to the equal opportunity office, 940 565 2456, or the dean of students, 940 565 2648. TDD access is available through relay texas, 800 735 2989. Anthropology does not discriminate on the basis of an individual's disability as required by the Americans with disabilities act. The program provides academic adjustments and aid to individuals with disabilities in its programs and activities. If you have a disability, you are strongly advised to contact the office of disability accommodations (uu 318a) or by telephone at 940 565 4323. It is the responsibility of the student to make the necessary arrangements with the instructors.

**Student Behavior Online Discussion:** Student behavior that interferes with an instructor's ability to conduct a class or other students' opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated in any instructional forum at unt. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be directed to leave the classroom/discussion and the instructor may refer the student to the center for student rights and responsibilities to consider whether the student's conduct violated the code of student conduct. The university's expectations for student conduct apply to all instructional forums, including university and electronic classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The code of student conduct can be found at [www.unt.edu/csrr](http://www.unt.edu/csrr)

**Online Discussion:** Online participation and collaboration is key to your learning and delivering a good project report to our client. Below are some guidelines for doing this well.

- Limit your messages to 1-2 screen lengths.
- Fill in the subject line for each message.
- Build on the ideas of others, as well as initiating new ideas. If your message builds on an existing thread, use REPLY. If you are starting a new thread, use CREATE MESSAGE.
- Remember that quality is better than quantity. "Me too" and "I agree" type messages add little.
- Quote the relevant part of a message in yours so that others know what you are referring to.
- Ensure a respectful tone in all messages.
- If your message is not relevant to the whole group, send it privately via e-mail.

### ***Interactive Learning Skills***

- Focus on the subject of the discussion and bring it back to the main purpose if there is topic drift.
- Suggest people take their messages to alternative places such as the Cosmic Cafe for the "off topic" messages.
- Encourage all to participate.
- Respond to another classmates' question.
- Weave several messages together and then push the discussion further with a question or thought provoker.
- Present another perspective on the issue being discussed.
- Provide a practical application for an idea.
- Be willing to participate in a debate.
- Illustrate your point with a story (short).
- Actively seek out other perspectives, e.g. "This is what I think, but I'm sure others have another perspective to share."
- Provide group regulatory functions, e.g. "We seem to be getting off topic here. Could we return to...".

- Accept and understand diversity in learning and personal styles. Respect different points of view.

### ***Dealing with Conflict Online***

- Did you have a strong reaction to a message? Take a step back. Write your response but don't send it. Wait 24 hours. Have someone else read it first.
- Is there another interpretation? Perhaps clarification is in order. While online interaction can enhance learning, it has some limitations; non-verbal cues are missing.
- Politely agree to disagree and walk away.
- Disagreements over points of view are a necessary part of learning, but personal attacks on the motivations and intelligence of others cannot be tolerated. Remember that there are people behind the words that we see and treat others with the respect we all want and deserve.

## **YOUR FIRST ASSIGNMENT**

**Bio Statement and Picture:** Your first assignment is to post a bio statement on the “Welcome and Introductions” discussion board. Most of you have met each other at the online master’s in applied anthropology orientation, but we do have students from other programs enrolled in this class. Building community is an important aspect of this class and posting a bio statement is the first step to getting to know each other. Your bio statement should include: your name, where you live, your degree program, your academic interests, and personal interests. Also include information about your research experience - qualitative and/or quantitative. Finally, attach a recent picture of yourself so we can get a visual! **Bio statements must be posted by 5PM (central time), Saturday, August. 30th.**

## **NOTES**

The instructor reserves the right to add, delete, or revise segments of this course or syllabus.

*Atlas.ti:* While I will not be requiring you to use Atlas.ti in this class, it is a good software program to know that assists you in the analysis of qualitative data. It doesn't actually do the analysis for you, but it helps you organize and code data for easy text searches in Atlas.ti. I have included an overview about it in Lesson 8. Please note that Atlas.ti does not make a Mac compatible program. Mac users generally know how to work around this. If you have questions, please post a message on the discussion board for your classmates. I don't have a Mac so I don't have the answers.

And finally I want to give credit to Dr. Lisa Henry for designing, organizing and writing this course. She is fully responsible for the content, which I think is extraordinary and will provide you with a wealth of information to prepare you in qualitative methods.

## COURSE SCHEDULE AND READING ASSIGNMENTS

<u>Week</u>	<u>Topics and Assignments</u>	<u>Core readings</u>
Aug. 24	<b>Introduction to course</b> <b>Assignments:</b> 1. Learn Blackboard Learn 2. Read entire syllabus 3. Post a bio message on the “Welcome and Introductions” discussion board (See specific instructions on the end of the syllabus) – due 8-30	
Aug 31	<b>Social Science, Anthropology and Ethnography</b> <b>Assignments:</b> 1. Social Research - Assignment #1 – due 9-4 2. Post comments on Assignment #1 – due 9-6	TK V1, Ch. 1-2 TK V3, Ch. 2
Sept. 7	<b>Lesson 2: Theory and Epistemology</b> <b>Assignments:</b> 1. Theory and Epistemology - Assignment #1 – due 9-11 2. Post comments on Assignments #1 & #2 – due 9-13 <b>I will try and arrange a call to meet our client the week of Sept 7 or 14:</b> Dr. Alexandra Mack, Workplace Anthropologists for Pitney Bowes	<b>TK V1 Ch. 3</b>
Sept. 14	<b>Lesson 3: Ethics and Research</b> <b>Assignments:</b> 1. Ethics and Research - Assignment #1&2 – due 9-17 3. Post comments on Assignment #1 & 2 – due 9-20 4. Read over the AAA code of ethics <a href="http://www.aaanet.org/committees/ethics/ethcode.htm">http://www.aaanet.org/committees/ethics/ethcode.htm</a> 5. NIH Human Subjects Training certificate <a href="http://phrp.nihtraining.com/users/login.php">http://phrp.nihtraining.com/users/login.php</a> email a copy of the NIH certificate to me by the 20 <sup>rd</sup> and keep an e-copy for yourself	<b>TK V1 Ch. 10</b>
Sept. 21	<b>Lesson 4: Research Design Part 1</b> <b>Assignments:</b> 1. Research Design – Assignment #1 – due 9-24 2. Post comments on Assignment #1 – due 9-27 3. Get ready for designing our project next week – lots of collaboration!	<b>TK V1 Ch. 4-5</b> <b>TK V3 Ch. 1</b>
Sept 28	<b>Lesson 5: Research Design Part II</b> <b>Class activity:</b> Design Research Project – this week is reserved for designing our research Project for Pitney Bowes. If necessary we may arrange for a GoToMeeting Conference Call	<b>TK V1 Ch. 6</b> <b>TK V3 Ch. 10</b>
Oct. 5	<b>Lesson 5: Observation and Fieldnotes</b>	<b>TK V3 Ch. 3-4</b> <b>Writing</b> <b>Ethnographic</b> <b>Fieldnotes</b> (on Blackboard)

- Assignments:**
1. Observation and Fieldnotes - Assignment #1 – due 10/ 8
  2. Post comments on Assignment #1 – due 10 10
  3. Observation and Fieldnotes - Assignment #2 – due 10 / 11

<b>Oct. 12</b>	<b>Lesson 6: Informants and Interviewing</b>	Optional	<b>TK V3 Ch. 6-7</b> TK V3 Ch 5
	<b>Assignment due:</b>		
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Informants and Interviewing - Assignment #1 – due 10 15</li> <li>2. Post comments on Assignment #1 – due 10 18</li> <li>3. Interview Questions – due 10 18</li> </ol>		
	<b>Class activity:</b>		
	Design Interview – this is going to take an incredible amount of collaboration and time these next two weeks – be ready! Specific instructions will be detailed in an announcement.		
<b>Oct. 19</b>	<b>Lesson 6: Focus Groups</b>	Focus Group Manual – Blackboard	TK V3 Ch. 8
	<b>Assignment due:</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> interview transcript and fieldnotes – due 10-25	
	<b>Class Activity</b>	Review and Finalize Focus Group questions Specific instructions will be announced	
<b>Oct 26</b>	<b>Lesson 7 Analysis of Qualitative Data Part I</b>		TK V1, Ch. 7 TK V5, Ch. 1-6
	<b>Assignment due:</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 2<sup>nd</sup> interview transcript and fieldnotes 11/1</li> <li>2. Focus Group fieldnotes 11/1</li> </ol>	
	<b>Class activity:</b>	Review qualitative analysis program	
<b>Nov. 2</b>	<b>Lesson 8: Analysis of Qualitative Data part II</b>		TK V5, Ch 7-8, 10
	<b>Review Lesson 8</b>	on Coding and Atlas.ti	
	<b>Assignments:</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Observation coding – due 11-15</li> <li>2. Interview coding – due 11-15</li> <li>3. Focus group coding – due 11-15</li> </ol>	
<b>Nov. 9</b>	<b>Analysis of Qualitative Data III</b>		
	<b>Class Activity: Data Analysis in Teams</b>		
<b>Nov 16</b>	<b>Analysis of Qualitative Data part IV</b>		TK V1, Ch. 9
	<b>Class Activity: Data Analysis – Class discussion on combining Team Analysis</b>		
<b>Nov 23</b>	<b>Analysis of Qualitative Data part V</b>		TK V3, Ch.11
	<b>Finalize analysis and begin design of client report</b>		
<b>Nov 30</b>	<b>Wrap-up &amp; Final Write-up for Client Presentation</b>		
<b>Dec 7</b>	<b>Client Presentation</b>		Date to Be Announces

