ANTH 5700 Online ♣ University of North Texas

Dr. Susan Squires

Fall 2014

COURSE OVERVIEW

Anthropological theory and method are increasingly in demand for evaluations because of the capacity of anthropology to delineate cultural positions of individuals and organizations around key issues of needs assessment, service delivery, equity and justice in the design and implementation of both public and private programs. This course will provide a graduate-level experience in the field of evaluation anthropology, an important area for jobs in practicing and applied anthropology in government and the private sectors. The course will seek to create, define and promulgate a specifically anthropological component to a solid basis of research and method already existing in evaluation. The approach taken will link evaluation and anthropological method and theory and will address common methodological, logistic and theoretical issues that occur in the course of conducting evaluation projects using holistic, mixed method and qualitative designs.

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.

E-journals and Blackboard: There is no one required texts for this course. 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 as part of each lesson. In each leasson ook for a folder called Readings. You should be able to click the link and access the article immediately. Most of the readings are from the texts listed below.

- Rossi PH, Freeman HE and Lipsey MW. 1999. Evaluation: A Systematic Approach. 6th Ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. This is a pricey book that is now available in an 8th Ed. You might do better to work through the articles in this course and decide later what to buy if you need it

- Alkin, MC Evaluation *Roots: Tracing Theorists Views and Influences. Thousand Oaks, CA,* Sage. 2004

- Shadish WR, Cook TD, Leviton. LC. *Foundations of Program Evaluation*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage. 1991.

- Butler, M. O. and J Copeland-Carson (eds.), *Creating Evaluation Anthropology*, NAPA Bulletin 24, 2005.

If you want to buy the evaluation texts by Rossi et all, Alkin and Shadish they can be found on Amazon.com or on the American Evaluation Association website at www.eval.org. Membership is required to purchase books though the AEA. A student membership is $30 per year and you get *two* journals. It's worth more than any textbook. The Butler & Carson book can be found on AnthroSource, available at the UNT library electronic resources. http://irservices.library.unt.edu/

Make sure you keep up and compete all of the readings. We may not go over every word, but this does not make them any less important. 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!

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Grading
1. **Practice Exercise Assignments (10% each).** There are 3 written course assignments to help you practice evaluation approaches before you begin your team projects. Assignments are due by midnight (**central time**) on the due date located in the Lessons, the syllabus, and on the calendar.

2. **Participation in virtual discussions (20%).** 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. Postings are due by midnight (**central time**) on the due date.

3. **Course Project (50%)** Working in teams, you will design a small scale evaluation.

Completion of Practice Exercises	30%
Participation in activities & course discussion	20%
Evaluation Project as follows:	
• Development of an evaluation problem	10%
• Evaluation design	15%
• Final evaluation report	25%
TOTAL	100%

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 because the evaluation projects will be for real clients 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.

GpToMeeting and Adobe Connect: 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.

Announcements and Important Information: Because this class involves live projects, 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. 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

Guidelines for Online Discussion

> *How to Write Good Messages*
> 1. Limit your messages to 1-2 screen lengths.
> 2. Fill in the subject line for each message.

3. 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.
4. Remember that quality is better than quantity. "Me too" and "I agree" type messages add little.
5. Quote the relevant part of a message in yours so that others know what you are referring to.
6. Ensure a respectful tone in all messages.
7. If your message is not relevant to the whole group, send it privately via e-mail.

Interactive Learning Skills
1. Focus on the subject of the discussion and bring it back to the main purpose if there is topic drift.
2. Suggest people take their messages to alternative places such as the Cosmic Cafe for the "off topic" messages.
3. Encourage all to participate.
4. Respond to another classmates' question.
5. Weave several messages together and then push the discussion further with a question or thought provoker.
6. Present another perspective on the issue being discussed.
7. Provide a practical application for an idea.
8. Be willing to participate in a debate.
9. Illustrate your point with a story (short).
10. Actively seek out other perspectives, e.g. "This is what I think, but I'm sure others have another perspective to share."
11. Provide group regulatory functions, e.g. "We seem to be getting off topic here. Could we return to…".
12. Accept and understand diversity in learning and personal styles. Respect different points of view.

Dealing with Conflict Online
1. 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.
2. Is there another interpretation? Perhaps clarification is in order. While online interaction can enhance learning, it has some limitations; non-verbal cues are missing.
3. Politely agree to disagree and walk away.
4. 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.

PROJECTS

As part of your project you will work with at least one other person to take a small scale evaluation from start to finish. Currently I have several project sponsors eager for your help.

- **Working on teams.** Evaluations are almost never conducted by "lone wolf" evaluators. Evaluation problems are complex and require many different kinds of skills to address. As you have undoubtedly noticed in the past, teamwork is hard work. I encourage you from the start to maintain daily contact with your team members and try not to wander off and do your own thing. And listen carefully to what your team members are saying.

- **Time pressure**. People often wait until the last possible minute to think about evaluation. This means that clients usually want their answers the day before yesterday. There is almost never enough time to do the deliberate, comprehensive plan you would like to do for your evaluation. This is of course a big problem here because we have thirteen weeks, no matter what. You do not have time to dawdle here.

- *Getting a small enough problem.* Just about every evaluation proposal I have ever written looked dauntingly complex to me the first time I saw the problem. A significant evaluation skill is cutting through complexity (dare I say confusion) to discover one, simple question to be evaluated. This is not easy, in fact it may be the most challenging thing about the whole process.

- *Scope creep.* A very frustrating part of evaluation. You start out with a nice clean evaluation question, but as you go on to collect and analyze data, all kinds of interesting stuff shows up that you would like to check out. Some of this you can do, but most of it you can't. In a "real" evaluation, you will have neither time nor the money. Here you don't have the time. Keep your eye on the ball and learn how to put off questions that don't directly link to your evaluation question until later.

Teaming: *You will be responsible for building your own teams. If you have someone in the class who you have worked with before on related projects, that is a no-brainer. However, you can build teams from scratch. We will have people put intros up on the web-site in Week 1. Email people with whom you have common interests.*

Schedule of Deadlines for Assignments	Schedule
Form a team	**Sept 14**
Choose an evaluation project. And describe the problem to be evaluated	**Post by Sept 20**
Practice Exercise I: Design Phase	**Sept 20**
Define an evaluation question. On your team, determine what your evaluation will try to find out. One clear question is best, but you may not get there on the first round. We can work it.	
Description of Evaluation Problem Due	*Sept 27*
Design the evaluation. What will you want to find out and from whom. What will be your data sources and how will you collect data? How to you plan to analyze it to answer your evaluation question.	**Sept 30-Oct 21**
Practice Exercise II – Implementation phase Due	**Oct 11**
Evaluation Design Due	*Oct 25*
Practice Exercise III: Analysis	**Oct 25**
Collect and analyze data. Do the work. It's best if you collect data fast and allow plenty of time for analysis.	**Post Analysis Nov 22**
Draft presentation and Report.	**Draft Nov 30**
Evaluation Presentation and Report	*Finals Week*

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