

Syllabus

Preparation for Practice and the Applied Thesis

ANTH 5050 On-Campus | Dr. Christina Wasson | University of North Texas
Spring 2020 | M 6-8:50pm | Auditorium 212

Course Description

Applied anthropologists work in many kinds of settings and take on a range of different roles. In this course, students will explore some of this diversity by interacting with guest speakers and reading case studies. In the process, they will identify an applied thesis project, if they have not already done so. Students will also receive training in the professional aspects of applied anthropology, such as client development and project design. They will learn how to market their skills and how to develop the entrepreneurial mindset that success in applied anthropology requires.

Office Hours and Communication with Instructor

My office is Sycamore 123. My office hours are Wednesdays 3-5. I would also be happy to meet at other times, and you are welcome to communicate with me at any time via phone or email. My phone number is 940 565 2752. My email address is christina.wasson@unt.edu.

Online Course Resources

Various course materials are available on a publicly available website, at <https://www.christinawasson.com/anth-5050/>.

Various course materials are stored on Canvas (<https://unt.instructure.com>), including the syllabus and readings. We will NOT use Canvas for discussions.

Our medium for online communication will be an email list. Its address is anth-5050-001@lists.unt.edu. If you send an email message to that address, it will be received by all class members.

Required Texts

The readings in this course come from two sources:

1. A book that is available at the UNT bookstore:
 - Nolan, Riall W. 2003. *Anthropology in practice: building a career outside the academy*. Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers. ISBN 1-55587-985-3 (paperback).
2. Articles that can be accessed through links on Canvas.

Course Requirements

1. **Participation in classroom discussions (25%).** As a graduate seminar, participation is very important in this course. Your participation grade will be based on the following elements:
 - Do you demonstrate that you have completed the assigned readings
 - Do you offer thoughtful analyses, reflections, and critiques of the topics discussed in class
 - Do your comments build on the comments of other class members
 - Are you usually present in class (if you have more than one unexcused absence, your grade will go down)

You are responsible for all materials and announcements presented in class, whether or not you were there. If you miss a day, your first step should be to ask a classmate for their notes. If you have questions after that, you are welcome to ask me.

2. **A series of assignments related to your applied thesis (adding up to 75%).** Here is a list of the assignments and how they are weighted. Instructions for each item are provided at the end of the syllabus.

Assignment	% of Course Grade
Field of Interest Paper	5
Organizations List	10
Interview Summary #1	10
Project Statement	10
Resume	10
Interview Summary #2	10
Proposal	20

Plagiarism Policy

The department of anthropology considers graduate students to be new members of the community of professional anthropologists, who are thus held to the high ethical standards of practicing professionals. They 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/>). Any work not meeting this standard will be evaluated in a hearing before the student; infractions will merit dismissal from the master's program.

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 Access. **It is the responsibility of the student to make the necessary arrangements with the instructors.**

Course Schedule

Note: We will have a series of guest speakers. This may cause the readings and topics to move around a bit.

Students are expected to complete each day’s assigned readings before class.

The readings are identified by author’s last name and year; for full information, see the final section of the syllabus.

	Topic	Assignments Due	Readings
WEEK 1 Jan 13	Introduction and Course Objectives		N/A
WEEK 2 Jan 20	NO CLASS – MLK HOLIDAY		Lave and Wenger 1991a Lave and Wenger 1991b
WEEK 3 Jan 27	Applied Anthropology as Community of Practice		Wasson 2006 Nolan Ch. 1
WEEK 4 Feb 3	[CW in India] 7pm Guest speaker Molly Beyer	Field of Interest Paper (submit on Canvas)	Nolan Ch. 2 (skip “Choosing a Graduate School” 38-49) Nolan Ch. 3
	Finding Applied Thesis Site; Career Planning		
WEEK 5 Feb 10	[CW in India] 6pm Guest speaker Lance Rasbridge		

WEEK 6 Feb 17	[CW in India] 7pm Guest speakers Diana Hubbard and Heather Roth	Organizations List (submit on Canvas)	Borofsky 2000 Singer 2000 Butler 2006
	Public Anthropology; Practitioner Case Study		
WEEK 7 Feb 24	Finding a Job; Surviving at Work; Practitioner Case Study; Applied Thesis Planning		Nolan Ch. 4 Nolan Ch. 5 Copeland-Carson 2006
WEEK 8 Mar 2	Advancing the Profession; Consulting; Ethics of Studying Up	Resume	Nolan Ch. 6 Crain and Tashima 2013 Forsythe 1999
SPRING BREAK			
WEEK 9 Mar 16	Planning Your Methods		Gluesing 2012 Riopelle 2012
WEEK 10 Mar 23	Practitioner Case Studies; Writing a Project Statement	Interview Summary #1	Pinsker 2006 Trotter 1987
WEEK 11 Mar 30	Client Development; Designing the Project		Block 1981a, 1981b, 1981c
WEEK 12 Apr 6	Practitioner Case Studies; Writing the Proposal	Project Statement	Sunderland and Denny 2003 Wasson and Squires 2012
WEEK 13 Apr 13	Practitioner Case Studies		Esber 1987 Fiske 2012 Hoffman 2013
WEEK 14 Apr 20	Doing the Applied Thesis; Practitioner Case Studies	Interview Summary #2	Applied Thesis Proposal Koons 2013 Partridge 2013
WEEK 15 Apr 27	Review and Wrap-Up		N/A
FINALS May 4	N/A	Proposal – place hard copy in my box	N/A

Instructions for Assignments

1. Field of Interest Paper

Write an essay about your field of interest, be it public health, refugees, organizational change, or whatever.

First of all, be as specific as you can about your interests. What is it about this field that draws you to it? Do you have previous experience in this area? What kind of organization might you work in, for your applied thesis and, later on, for your career (if relevant)?

Secondly, describe important issues or problems that organizations in this field are currently dealing with. Be as specific as you can. If you want, you can focus on the situation in a particular community or agency. If you are not that familiar with your field of interest, do some library/web research to identify current issues. How can an applied anthropologist help with these issues?

The essay should be about 5 pages, double-spaced, with page numbers.

2. Organizations List

Prepare a list of 5 organizations that could be potential sites/clients for your applied thesis. For each organization, include ALL of the following information:

- Name of organization
- Address of organization
- Website of organization
- Name, job title, department, phone number, and email address of at least one contact person who might be able to sponsor your applied thesis (i.e., not the receptionist)
- Brief explanation of how you found out about the organization/contact person
- Brief explanation of what the organization does
- How the organization relates to your research interests and possible thesis ideas

3. Resume

Prepare a resume based on Nolan Ch. 4 and class discussions. The audience for the resume should be your potential applied thesis sites.

4. Interview Summary #1

In order to complete this assignment, you must first conduct an informational interview. This is an opportunity for you to start to build your network in your areas of interest, to learn more about possible career directions, and to get advice about your applied thesis project. You will learn how to do an informational interview in class.

Do not choose someone you already know well – the point is to expand your network. Do not conduct the interview using email. It should be face-to-face or by phone or Skype. Do not interview a professor unless that is your career goal, or unless you have prior approval from me.

Write a summary of what you learned in the informational interview. Start by explaining why you chose that person – how do they relate to your research interests and career goals? Then, write about what you learned in the interview. What did you discover about the person's field of work? What did you especially like/dislike/find exciting/find boring? What advice did you get on setting up your applied thesis?

The summary should be about 3-4 pages, double-spaced.

Note: Start planning your interviews many weeks before the assignments are due, because it can take a surprisingly long time to set them up. Expect that you may have to put a fair amount of effort into finding a good person to interview. Coordinating schedules can take weeks too; many of these people are very busy.

5. Project Statement

Design a one-page summary of your desired applied thesis for potential clients. You may not go over one page but you can be creative with fonts, line spacing, and so forth. Make the page visually appealing, so potential clients will want to read it through. You will learn more about how to design a project statement in class, before the assignment is due. The point of the statement is to have something to hand organizations when you approach them, that tells them what you want to do and how they will benefit. The most common mistake students make with this assignment is to focus too much on themselves and not enough on what they can do for the client.

6. Interview Summary #2

Same instructions as Interview Summary #1.

As an alternative, you can proceed to actually contacting organizations about your applied thesis and setting up interviews. In that case, write about your initial applied thesis-seeking meeting(s).

7. Proposal

The proposal may be either somewhat hypothetical or the one you will actually put to use. Even if you are not ready to start your applied thesis, writing out a hypothetical proposal will provide you with a strong foundation for the final version.

The proposal format should follow the guidelines established by the department. They can be accessed on the website for this course. You will learn more about how to write a proposal in class.

Full References for Readings; All Available Through Canvas

- Block, Peter. 1981a. Chapter 2: Techniques are Not Enough. In *Flawless Consulting: A Guide to Getting Your Expertise Used*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 13-36.
- Block, Peter. 1981b. Chapter 4: Contracting Overview. In *Flawless Consulting: A Guide to Getting Your Expertise Used*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 53-68.
- Block, Peter. 1981c. Chapter 5: The Contracting Meeting. In *Flawless Consulting: A Guide to Getting Your Expertise Used*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 69-106.
- Borofsky, Robert. 2000. Public Anthropology. Where To? What Next? *Anthropology News* 41(5):9-10.
- Butler, Mary Odell. 2006. Random Walk. *NAPA Bulletin* 26:20-31.
- Copeland-Carson, Jacqueline. 2006. Seeing Double: An Anthropologist's Vision Quest. *NAPA Bulletin* 26:55-81.
- Crain, Cathleen and Nathaniel Tashima. 2013. An Anthropologically Based Consulting Firm. In *A Handbook of Practicing Anthropology*, ed. Riall W. Nolan. Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 125-136.
- Esber, George S. 1987. Designing Apache Homes with Apaches. In *Anthropological Praxis: Translating Knowledge into Action*, ed. Robert M. Wulff and Shirley J. Fiske. Boulder: Westview Press, 187-196.
- Fiske, Shirley. 2012. Global Climate Change from the Bottom Up. In *Applying Anthropology in the Global Village*, ed. Christina Wasson, Mary Odell Butler and Jacqueline Copeland-Carson. Walnut Creek: Left Coast Press, 143-172.
- Forsythe, Diana E. 1999. Ethics and Politics of Studying Up in Technoscience. *Anthropology of Work Review* 20(1):6-11.
- Gluesing, Julia. 2013. Being There: The Power of Conventional Ethnographic Methods. In *Advancing Ethnography in Corporate Environments: Challenges and Opportunities*, ed. Brigitte Jordan. Walnut Creek: Left Coast Press, 23-37.
- Hoffman, Susanna M. 2013. Becoming a Practicing Disaster Anthropologist. In *A Handbook of Practicing Anthropology*, ed. Riall W. Nolan. Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 114-124.

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- Lave, Jean and Etienne Wenger. 1991a. Legitimate Peripheral Participation. In *Situated Learning: Legitimate Peripheral Participation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 27-43.
- Lave, Jean and Etienne Wenger. 1991b. Midwives, Tailors, Quartermasters, Butchers, Nondrinking Alcoholics. In *Situated Learning: Legitimate Peripheral Participation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 59-87.
- Partridge, William L. 2013. Multilateral Governmental Organizations. In *A Handbook of Practicing Anthropology*, ed. Riall W. Nolan. Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 150-160.
- Pinsker, Eve C. 2006. Theory and Practice: Improvising Life as a Practicing Anthropologist. *NAPA Bulletin* 26:135-151.
- Riopelle, Kenneth. 2013. Being There: The Power of Technology-Based Methods. In *Advancing Ethnography in Corporate Environments: Challenges and Opportunities*, ed. Brigitte Jordan. Walnut Creek: Left Coast Press, 38-55.
- Singer, Merrill. 2000. Why I am Not a Public Anthropologist. *Anthropology News* 41(6):6-7.
- Sunderland, Patricia and Rita Denny. 2003. Psychology vs Anthropology: Where is Culture in Marketplace Ethnography? In *Advertising Cultures*, ed. Timothy deWaal Malefyt and Brian Moeran. Oxford: Berg, 187-202.
- Trotter, Robert T. 1987. A Case of Lead Poisoning from Folk Remedies in Mexican American Communities. In *Anthropological Praxis: Translating Knowledge into Action*, ed. Robert M. Wulff and Shirley J. Fiske. Boulder: Westview Press, 146-159.
- Tso, Judy. 2013. An Independent Consultant in a Business of One. In *A Handbook of Practicing Anthropology*, ed. Riall W. Nolan. Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 93-103.
- Wasson, Christina. 2006. Making History at the Frontier. *NAPA Bulletin* 26:1-19.
- Wasson, Christina and Susan Squires. 2012. Localizing the Global in Technology Design. In *Applying Anthropology in the Global Village*, ed. Christina Wasson, Mary Odell Butler and Jacqueline Copeland-Carson. Walnut Creek: Left Coast Press, 251-284.
- Winthrop, Robert. 2013. Environment and Resources. In *A Handbook of Practicing Anthropology*, ed. Riall W. Nolan. Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 266-277.