

## ANTH 390: ANTHROPOLOGICAL RESEARCH METHODS

*If something exists, it exists in some amount. If it exists in some amount, then it is capable of being measured.* (Rene Descartes, Principles of Philosophy, 1644)

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This course is designed to provide a broad introduction to issues of anthropological research methods and design. Consideration is given to both quantitative and qualitative approaches to research, although more emphasis is placed on qualitative methods. No prior knowledge of methodology or statistics is expected or assumed. This course is intended to acquaint you with the logical sequence of stages involved in the conduct of original research, and to provide an introduction to the broad range of skills necessary to achieve this. While this course is, first and foremost, an introduction to anthropological research design and methodology, it is ultimately organized around elements of research design that cut across disciplines: the logic of scientific inquiry, ethics, conceptualization and measurement, sampling, and elementary analysis of quantitative data.

Research is a craft, and like any other craft, it takes practice to do it well. Therefore, you will *learn by doing* in all aspects of the course. Most of our time will be divided between discussion of weekly readings and hands-on exercises. I expect you to have studied the required readings prior to class. Take time to digest the new methods and ideas before you come to class, and be prepared to apply them or to ask about points that remain unclear. Periodically you will be asked to update the class on the development of your own research and to solicit feedback from the group. Everyone must come to class prepared to offer constructive criticism and suggestions.

In some ways this course is really two different classes in one:

1. A general survey of research methods in anthropology.
2. A hands on course focusing on behavioral measurement in naturalistic (i.e. field) settings that are useful in empirically answering a variety of questions of anthropological interest. These questions include, for example, shifting patterns of work and leisure, changes in the division of labor, infant and caretaker interactions, conversational topics, food and labor exchanges, decisions about labor allocation and subtle but important behavior changes according to different sociocultural settings and situations. Our goal here to familiarize you—in a participatory manner—with the kinds of behavior data that have been collected using a variety of approaches.

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By the end of the course, you should be able to:

- Formulate a feasible research question, and design research to answer it.
- Discuss the ethical implications of research.
- Analyze quantitative data with computer-based skills.
- Critically evaluate your own research and that of other social scientists.
- Submit a grant proposal for extramural funding of your dissertation research.

**Required Texts:**

- Bernard, H. Russell. (2006). *Research Methods in Anthropology: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches* (4/E). Alta Mira Press.
- Articles (from WebCT)

### **Some other helpful methodology texts:**

- Angrosino, Michael V. (2007). *Naturalistic Observation*. Left Coast Press.
- Lofland, Snow, Anderson, & Lofland (2005). *Analyzing Social Settings*. Wadsworth Publishing.
- Hume, L. and J. Mulcock, eds. (2004). *Anthropologists in the Field*. Columbia University Press.
- Johnson, Jeffrey C. (1990). *Selecting Ethnographic Informants*. Sage Publications.
- Gladwin, Christina H. (1989). *Ethnographic Decision Tree Modeling*. Sage Publications.
- Weller, Susan and Romney, A. Kimball. (1988). *Systematic Data Collection*. Sage Publications.

## **EVALUATION**

30% - **Participation**  
30% - **Class exercises**

10% - **Leading Class Discussions** (5% x2)  
30% - **Research Project** (15 pages)

## **PARTICIPATION and EXPECTATIONS**

The single best way to prepare for and to succeed in this course, simply stated, is to read the assigned materials in advance, complete all class exercises, and participate in all class meetings. Especially given the plethora of research methodologies, it is important to realize that what is covered in class sets the parameters for class assignments. You are expected to come to class prepared to participate in informed discussion of the material. Bringing questions to class regarding the various course readings and materials is expected, but also be sure to think about and question how course materials connect to (a) your own research interests, and (b) “the real world” as well! Also note that failure to complete any assigned project may result in an F for the class.

**Leading Class Discussion:** Students will be assigned to lead class discussion of each week’s readings; once on a chapter from Bernard, once on weekly articles. When it is your turn, you will be required to guide the class discussion on that reading. During this discussion you should note your thoughts on the reading, and craft a list of discussion questions (make a copy of these discussion questions for each student in the seminar). On your assigned day of class, you will start by asking questions about the assigned readings. You may set up these questions by making a few brief comments on your perspective of the text or by citing particular passages of the text that were interesting to you. Then, you will begin to lead the class in a discussion of these questions.

## **GRADING, ATTENDANCE, & MAKE UP WORK**

Work that simply but correctly fulfills the requirements of any assignment will receive a ‘C’, while truly good work will receive a ‘B’. Only exceptional work will receive an ‘A’. Since each class meeting represents an entire week of class, only two absences will be allowed without penalty (with obvious exceptions for hospitalizations and the like) and, as per CSU policies, coming in late and leaving early count as partial absences, and talking, texting, and other such disruptions will count against your participation grade. Please note that since the paper assignment is known well in advance, late papers will lose 1/3 of a letter grade per day (including weekends).

Students with disabilities who require reasonable accommodations must be approved for services by providing appropriate and recent documentation to the Office of Disabled Student Services (DSS). This office is located in Craven Hall 4300A, and can be contacted by phone at (760) 750-4905, or TTY

(760) 750-4909. Students authorized by DSS to receive reasonable accommodations should meet with the Department Chair during his or her office hours in order to ensure confidentiality.

**Academic Dishonesty** is the highest crime among scholars. Consequences are severe and, *at the least*, will result in an 'F' for that assignment if not for the class. I have also known cases in which one's higher education degree has been revoked upon discovery of plagiarism, so be aware and beware! (Besides, what *you* have to say really is much more compelling and interesting anyway!)

As per the Student Academic Honesty Policy:

**A. Students are responsible for knowing and understanding the rules of Academic Honesty as outlined in the university catalog, to include fabricating information and data, cheating, facilitating academic dishonesty, and plagiarizing.**

**B. Students are responsible for communicating with the professor if they do not understand how the policy applies to a particular class or assignment. Students are responsible for utilizing the library resources (e.g. the plagiarism tutorial, consulting a librarian, or referring to a style guide) on academic honesty and plagiarism to fully understand the differences between a citation, giving credit, original writing, and plagiarism.**

## COURSE SCHEDULE

*Note: always come to class having read the assigned reading for that class!*

### Week 1 **Intro. to ANTH 390**

**Read:** *Bernard*, Preface & Ch. 1

### Week 2 **Surveying Time Use & Behavior I**

**Read:** *Bernard*, Ch. 2; Kahneman et al. (2004), Winkler (2002); Schwartz et al. (2002), Stinson (1999)

### Week 3 **Ethics & Research**

**Read:** *Bernard*, Ch. 3; AAA Code of Ethics

### Week 4 **Literature Search/Review**

**Read:** *Bernard*, Ch. 4

### Week 5 **Focusing on Behavior I**

**Read:** *Bernard*, Ch. 5; Johnson & Sackett (1998); Bogerhoff Mulder & Caro (1985)

### Week 6 **Surveying Time Use & Behavior II**

**Read:** *Bernard*, Ch. 6 & 7; Wells & Lo Sciuto (1966); Grad class - Marketing Research (1967)

### Week 7 **Spot Observations I**

**Read:** *Bernard*, Ch. 8; Baksh (1989); Hames (1987)

### Week 8 **Spot Observations II**

**Read:** *Bernard*, Ch. 9

### Week 9 **Spot → Continuous Observations**

**Read:** *Bernard*, Ch. 10; Konner & Worthman (1980); Dunbar & Marriott (1997); Pianta et al. (2007); Viera & Garrett (2005)

### Week 10 **Interviewing**

**Read:** *Bernard*, Ch. 11 & 12; TBD

### Week 11 **TBD**

**Read:** *Bernard*, Ch. 13; TBD

### Week 12 **TBD**

**Read:** *Bernard*, Ch. 14; TBD

### Week 13 – **NO CLASS**

**Read:** *Bernard*, Ch. 15

### Week 14 **Data Analysis**

**Read:** *Bernard*, Ch. 16; TBD

### Week 15 **“Best” Methods**

**RESEARCH PROJECT DUE**