RESEARCH METHODS
IN SOCIAL AND CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY
Anthropology 412 (CRN 10068) / 412H (CRN 10069) / 512 (CRN 10074)

Fall 2016
MWF 12:45 - 1:50, CH 328 / CH 287

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Office Hours: MT 2:00 – 3:00 and by appointment.

COURSE DESCRIPTION
This course is designed to give the student a working familiarity with research design, qualitative research methodologies, and anthropological analysis of qualitative data. Individually or in groups, students will initiate a field site in the Portland area, performing a study on a topic meaningful to the local community. Within this larger context, students will hone their skills in applying theoretical knowledge to practical research, and will explore various ethnographic methods, including interviewing and participant observation. They will collect and analyze primary data. For their final projects, students will write a detailed proposal for a hypothetical future research project based on preliminary research performed during the quarter. Class readings and discussions will focus not only on research design and methodology but also on ethical and experiential considerations surrounding ethnographic fieldwork and writing.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES
In accord with the Anthropology Department’s Learning Goals, by the end of the quarter, students will have enhanced their mastery of

- Research
  - Ethical issues in anthropological fieldwork
  - Library research skills
  - Principles of research design
  - Qualitative ethnographic methods, including setting up a field site and obtaining data through a variety of techniques
- Critical Thinking
  - Analysis of topics and situations suitable for the application of qualitative research methods
  - Techniques of analyzing qualitative data in conversation with anthropological theory
- Communication
  - Skills in proposal writing, including crafting a literature review and an annotated bibliography
  - Skills in presenting research plans and results in person and in video format
- Professional Competence in employing anthropological methods in practice

RECOMMENDED PREPARATION
Anth 304: Social Theory, Anth 305: Culture Theory, or a theory course in a related social-science discipline is strongly recommended.
REQUIRED READINGS
Many class materials are posted on D2L (see below). You may either read these documents online or print a copy for personal use. The following books are required and are available at the PSU Bookstore:

(Note: you can access this text as an eBook through the PSU library)

CLASS REQUIREMENTS
Grades in this course will be based on attendance (5%), reading quizzes (20%), field research notes (10%), an analysis of data essay and presentation (25%), and a final individual or group proposal and presentation (40%). Students in Anth 512 and Anth 412H may either undertake the same assignments as students in Anth 412 or arrange with the instructor to dovetail their work in this class with their thesis research. Students in Anth 512 and Anth 412H are also expected to complete an online ethics training (required for all students submitting applications to PSU’s Human Subjects Research Review Committee.)

Class policies
All work must be completed to receive a passing grade in this class. Late papers will lose one letter grade for each day past due except in the event of severe illness or emergency. Requests for extensions on deadlines should be made in writing ahead of the due date or as soon as possible thereafter; the clock stops ticking when the student contacts the instructor to arrange a new deadline. Please retain for your own records a copy of all the work you submit.

Plagiarism (intellectual theft) is a serious academic offense and a violation of the PSU Student Code of Conduct. Any assignment containing plagiarized material will receive a failing grade and will be reported to the University through a Student Code of Conduct Complaint. You are responsible for reading and understanding the University policy and the Anthropology Department plagiarism policy (posted on D2L). Please ask the instructor if you have any questions.

Courteous use of technology is allowed in the classroom, including accessing reading materials on laptops or tablets and typing notes into an electronic document. Checking email and accessing social media websites is disrespectful and distracting; students who engage in these activities while class is in session will be asked to shut down their technology immediately and will be barred from using it for the remainder of the quarter. All cell phones should be silenced during class.

Students with a documented disability needing accommodations in this course should immediately inform the instructor.

Anthropology majors should seek advising at least twice a year from faculty members in the Anthropology Department for advice on meeting graduation requirements and achieving career goals.
D2L (Desire 2 Learn Learning Management System)

Many class materials, including the syllabus, links to readings, reading questions and quizzes, and instructions for the essay and proposal assignments will be posted on D2L. Students may read the materials online or print copies for individual use.

Reading quizzes are due by one minute before the start of class (i.e., by 12:44 PM) on the day the reading is noted on the syllabus.

Assignments are due by one minute before midnight on the due-date noted in the syllabus. Students will turn in assignments through the “Dropbox” function on D2L. (Please submit essays as Word .doc or .docx files or .pdf files; the instructor’s computer often mangles other types of files, which makes her grumpy.)

Students can access D2L with their Odin username and password at https://d2l.pdx.edu. Use of D2L will be demonstrated on the first day of class. Please contact the instructor immediately if you encounter difficulties in accessing and using this resource. (Note: Running the “System Check” on the login page often solves problems with off-campus access to D2L.)

Class participation (5%)

Class participation forms an important aspect of the learning experience in this upper-level class, and is therefore both expected and required. Legitimate reasons to miss class are few and dire, and should if at all possible be reported to the instructor before the start of the class period to obtain an excused absence. Unexcused absences will result in loss of points, and students with more than 3 unexcused absences will receive no points for class participation.

In order to provide time for research and other class-related activities, on some days we will not meet in the classroom during our regularly scheduled time. Such days are marked on the schedule at the end of this syllabus.

Reading questions and quizzes (20%)

Reading questions for many course materials will be posted in the Course Content module for each section of the course. Intended to point students toward main ideas and themes of the readings, these questions will act as study guides. Reading questions are likely to show up on reading quizzes.

Short reading quizzes will be assigned related to some of the articles and book chapters for Sections 1 – 4. (Materials read for Section 5 will be evaluated through the annotated bibliography assignment.)

Students are asked to read the assigned materials and take the brief quizzes on D2L before the start of the class during which we are scheduled to discuss the assigned material. (I.e., reading quizzes are due by 12:44 PM on the day of class; late quizzes will receive only partial credit.) Days on which reading quizzes are due are noted on the syllabus.

Each quiz will be evaluated on a check-minus/ check/ check-plus basis. Quizzes will contain 4-6 questions. Answers to individual quiz questions may range in length from 1-2 sentences to a short paragraph. A grade of “check” or above counts as “full credit.” Quizzes are intended to ascertain whether students have done the assigned reading; anyone who has read the materials should be able to answer the questions easily.

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<th>0= No credit</th>
<th>No basis for grade; quiz not taken</th>
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<tr>
<td>1= Check minus</td>
<td>Quiz taken after the due date</td>
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<td>2= Check minus</td>
<td>Minimal grasp of the material; some questions left unanswered</td>
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Field research and field notes (10%) (Due on Fridays of Weeks 4, 5, and 6)

This course will require that students identify a research site and/or population to work with and that they spend significant time at the location or with the people during the term. I expect that students will spend 3 to 7 weeks doing field work, committing 3-5 hours a week at minimum to interact with people and write up notes. The longer a student spends doing fieldwork, the better his or her grasp of social dynamics and the easier it will be to come up with a good project for the proposal and good data for the analysis of data exercise (see below).

Students are asked to submit field notes or other data weekly through D2L during weeks 4, 5, and 6 and in general to keep the instructor apprised of progress in their research.

Essay: Analysis of Data (20%) (Due Wednesday 9 November)

Presentations (5%) November 4-9

Each student (even students working on group projects) will write an individual data analysis essay. In a 6-7 page essay, students will describe and analyze data that they have gathered during their on-going fieldwork. They will briefly discuss the field site and the specific question to be addressed. They will describe the theoretical approach to the question and explain the method(s) used to gather the data. (Possible methods include: participant observation, interviews, life histories, surveys, studies of proxemics, mapping, archival research, photography, etc.) They will interpret and analyze the data in light of the chosen theoretical approach. Further assignment instructions will be posted on D2L. Sample papers are available for consultation on D2L.

Each student will give one 8-minute in-class presentation on his or her research. Students will describe their research site, their specific topic of investigation, the methods they use most often, the data they have gathered, and the analysis of their findings. This presentation can be based on the data-analysis essay described above or can cover new ground.

Each presentation will be followed by a brief question-and-answer period.

Proposal for Hypothetical Future Study (40%)

Using fieldwork performed during the quarter as a basis, working individually or in groups, students will write a 10-12 page, double-spaced research proposal for 10 weeks of hypothetical future research. Detailed instructions for proposal-writing will be posted on D2L and discussed in class.

The proposal will require as much research and writing as a term paper. Work for this proposal will take place in a series of cumulative steps, including initiating a quarter-long research project, crafting an annotated bibliography pertaining to this research, writing a first draft of the research proposal, and revising the draft based on feedback from the instructor. Students will share their ideas with their classmates through online videos.

- Online library research quiz (5%, P/NP) Due Week 3 (Weds Oct 12)
- Video statement of preliminary research concept (P/NP) Due Week 4 (Monday Oct 17). Students will make a 2-minute video that explains their preliminary ideas for their chosen research site and project topic. The video can be a voice-over-PowerPoint, a
webcam recording, or a mixture of the two. Students may work individually or in groups. Links to videos will be shared through a Google Doc. (Groups may turn in one video statement, with all group members’ names listed or mentioned and, preferably, with all members participating in the video.) Students will view and respond to classmates’ posts. Further instructions will be posted on D2L.

- **Annotated Bibliography (5%) Due Week 8** (Monday Nov 14): Students will read widely on topics related to their research topic. They will turn in an annotated bibliography of articles and books of **topical, locational, and theoretical relevance** to the project. Each annotation should be at least a paragraph long. This bibliography will form the basis of the “review of the literature” section in the research proposal. Annotated bibliographies for individually-conducted research projects should include at least 10 items; bibliographies for group projects should include at least 8 items selected by each individual, with several other items read by two or more of the group members. (Groups may turn in one bibliography, with all group members’ names listed, including indication of who has read and annotated which sources.) **Sample annotated bibliographies** are available for consultation on D2L.

- **Draft Proposal. Due Week 9** (Wednesday Nov 23): Turn in a draft of the group or individual proposal. (Groups should turn in only one document.) This draft will be returned with extensive suggestions and comments. *Failing to turn in a draft on the due-date will result in a deduction of 10 points on the assignment grade.* **Sample proposals** are available for consultation on D2L.

- **Video Proposal Presentation (5%) Due Week 10** (Monday Nov 28). Working individually or in groups, students will craft a **3-minute video presentation** of their proposal idea. Links to videos will be shared through a Google Doc. Online video presentations will be viewed and discussed in class.

- **Final Proposal. (25%) Due Exam week** (Monday Dec 5). Groups should turn in only one document. All group members will receive the grade assigned to their collective work.

**Research Integrity – Online Training (Anth 412H and 512 only) Due Wednesday Oct 19.** Students in Anth 412H and 512 are required to complete an online training in human subjects research. This training may take up to four hours and is free for students affiliated with PSU. Students should save the electronic certificate they receive upon completing the training; send a copy to the instructor for course credit, and submit a copy when you file your HSRRC application. For further details, see the [HSRRC website](#).

**COURSE OUTLINE**

**SECTION 1: Research and research design**
(Chapter 1: Thick Description: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture. Pp. 3-30.)
Bernard – Research Methods in Anthropology (RMA)
Chapters 1-7 (skim chapters 5 and 6)
Gardner and Hoffman – Dispatches from the Field (DFF) pp. 1-52
SECTION 2: Research ethics
Gardner and Hoffman – Dispatches from the Field (DFF) pp. 53-103
Informed Consent - .pdf file on D2L

SECTION 3: Research methods
Bernard – Research Methods in Anthropology (RMA) Chapters 8-14
(Read chapters 8, 10, 12, and 13 carefully; skim chapters 9, 11, and 14)
Gardner and Hoffman – Dispatches from the Field (DFF) pp. 105-165

SECTION 4: Analyzing research data
Bernard – Research Methods in Anthropology (RMA) Chapters 15-19
Gardner and Hoffman – Dispatches from the Field (DFF) pp. 167-235

SECTION 5: Writing research proposals
Individually chosen materials (for annotated bibliography/ proposal)

CLASS SCHEDULE
(Note: This schedule is subject to adjustment and change.)
RMA: Research Methods in Anthropology (followed by chapter numbers). Chapters in parenthesis may be skimmed.
DFF – Dispatches from the Field (followed by page numbers)
D2L: D2L materials (followed by description or author’s name)

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<th>Readings, assignments due, guest presentations</th>
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<td>Read: DFF 1-52</td>
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<td>Read: D2L AAA Ethics statements; DFF 53-103</td>
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<td>Read and take quiz: RMA 8, (9), 10, (11) &lt;br&gt;Due: Video on research site and topic selection</td>
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<td>Read: D2L sample Analysis of Data papers  &lt;br&gt;Due: Field notes #2</td>
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<td>Read: D2L proposal-writing materials  &lt;br&gt;Guest presentation: Writing Center on proposals</td>
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