

# PRINCIPLES AND METHODS OF FIELDWORK 2017

ANTHROPOLOGY 304.10

Tuesdays 7:00-9:30 JBB 337

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Office Hours: Tuesdays and Wednesdays 5:00-6:30 or by appointment

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JBB 306

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Anthropological research is a vast world of complex inquiry. It requires careful attention to the creative and ethical approaches used in the production of research questions, methodological selection, technical decisions and research goals. This Principles and Methods of Fieldwork course is about doing qualitative research well. Through lectures, seminars, group work and field assignments, students will learn a variety of applied research skills valuable to any future careers. We will consider the theories of method and conduct exercises to develop abilities in ethical research design including: community-based participatory research, historical-comparative research, participant observation, writing and coding field notes, interview techniques, data management, document and image analysis, archival research and ethnography. Students will become familiar with the historical background and evolution of qualitative research methods as they develop their critical and reflexive research practice for today. We will study decolonizing research methodologies and examine the role of research in contributing to Indigenous rights recognition and reconciliation as we build your fieldwork toolkits.

## **REQUIRED TEXTS** (additional readings will be assigned in class)

Materials as assigned throughout the course will be available on line through the StFX library. Course texts are available on reserve in the Angus L. MacDonald library. If you wish to have a hard copy of a text please order independently.

Bernard, H. Russell. *Research Methods in Anthropology* Lanham: Altamira Press, 2006

On line version:

[http://www.cycledoctoralfactec.com/uploads/7/9/0/7/7907144/\[h.\\_russell\\_bernard\]\\_research\\_methods\\_in\\_anthropol\\_bokos-z1\\_1.pdf](http://www.cycledoctoralfactec.com/uploads/7/9/0/7/7907144/[h._russell_bernard]_research_methods_in_anthropol_bokos-z1_1.pdf)

Drawson, Alexandra and Elaine Toombs, Christopher Mushquash. "Indigenous Research Methods: A Systematic Review" in *The International Indigenous Policy Journal* Vol. 8 (2) Article 5, April 2017

On line version:

<http://ir.lib.uwo.ca/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1339&context=iipj>

First Nations Centre. *Ownership, Control, Access, and Possession (OCAP) or Self-Determination Applied to Research: A Critical analysis of Contemporary First Nations Research and Some Options for First Nations Communities*. Ottawa: National Aboriginal Health Organization, 2005.

[http://www.naho.ca/documents/fnc/english/FNC\\_OCAPCriticalAnalysis.pdf](http://www.naho.ca/documents/fnc/english/FNC_OCAPCriticalAnalysis.pdf)COURSE

Tri-Council Policy Statement *Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans*. Ottawa: Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC) and Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC), 2014.

On line version:

<http://tcps2core.ca/extframe.html?url=http://www.pre.ethics.gc.ca/eng/policy-politique/initiatives/tcps2-eptc2/Default/>

Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada

<http://www.trc.ca/websites/trcinstitution/index.php?p=905>

## **COURSE ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADES**

10% Participant Observation & Field Notes Exercise (September 1, 2017)

10% Interviewing Exercise (October 10, 2017)

20% Research paper (October 24, 2017)

10% Focus Group Exercise (October 31, 2017)

10% Field Notes Coding Exercise (November 14, 2017)

40% Research Design and Ethics Application Assignment (November 28, 2017)

Attendance is required. 40% of your grade is based on informed participation, research methods exercises and in-class assignments. Readings must be completed before class and students are expected to raise questions, exchange ideas and fully participate in discussions and activities. Disagreeing with something from the readings, or with others' comments during discussion is okay – understanding different interpretations are part of what anthropology is about. Different viewpoints help us think through our own opinions and are important to developing our critical thinking skills. Share your ideas, but be respectful of each other. Together we must make this class a safe space for sharing divergent points of view. Periodically you will be asked to write short essays, one-minute papers, workshop questions, practice research methods in small groups, and present findings, which will be assessed. If you are absent on an in-class assignment day you will receive a grade of 0 for that activity. There will be no make up opportunities. Late assignments will not be accepted.

## PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION & FIELD NOTES EXERCISE 10%

September 12, 2017

Participant observation is a cornerstone method. It involves getting close to people and making them feel comfortable with your presence so you can record information about their lives. With the class attend the lecture by the Honourable Romeo Dallaire September 5, 2017 in the Keating Centre at 7:30. Record everything you hear, see, feel and experience around you in as much detail as possible. Describe the presenter, the presentation, the audience, and the audience's reaction to what is presented. Describe the location. Include your reflections on how you experienced the event and conducting this exercise. Hand in your field notes in class September 13. Be prepared to compare and contrast your observations with your classmates.

## INTERVIEWING EXERCISE 10%

October 10, 2017

Read the chapters in Bernard on interviewing. Select a life event topic. Design an interview guide. Include in your guide examples of leading and probing questions. What are the problems with leading questions? With a classmate administer your interview guide. Write up a report summarizing interviewing techniques and comment on the characteristics of your interview experience and include your interview guide and the responses to the questions.

## RESEARCH PAPER 20%

October 24, 2017

Read chapter 9 "Research Involving First Nations, Inuit and Métis Peoples of Canada in the Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical conduct Involving Research with Human. Write a position paper discussing what are the best research methods to use when working with Indigenous peoples. Explain your position by clearly identifying, defining and describing ethical research methods. Justify your approach using examples. Select a minimum of 5 academic sources relevant to Indigenous research methods.

This assignment is intended to develop the following skills:

- 1) Identifying, defining and describing ethical research methodologies;
- 2) critically assessing research methodologies as they pertain to Indigenous peoples;
- 3) using ethnographic and other anthropological evidence to support your argument;
- 4) using the essay format to present an argument and support it with evidence.

Titled, 5 pages, 12 point font, double spaced, page numbers, complete bibliography and in text citations. Essays are due at the beginning of class; late assignments will not be accepted.

Follow the StFX Anthropology Department Academic Essay Guide

[http://stfx.libguides.com/ld.php?content\\_id=3538355](http://stfx.libguides.com/ld.php?content_id=3538355)

<http://stfx.libguides.com/c.php?g=101558&p=658461>

Please follow the rules of academic honesty; do not plagiarize and cite work correctly. Familiarize yourself with StFX's Academic Integrity Policies and Procedures and seek assistance from the library if you have questions.

[http://sites.stfx.ca/library/academic\\_integrity](http://sites.stfx.ca/library/academic_integrity)

#### FOCUS GROUP EXERCISE 10%

October 31, 2017

Choose a research topic and a research question. Design a series of focus group questions that you will ask a small group of participants (in class) to respond to help you answer your research question. Conduct the focus group. Reflect on your topic, research question and focus group question responses. What worked? What information do you still need to seek? What changes would you make to your focus group approach? Hand in your topic, central research question, focus group questions and your reflections.

#### FIELD NOTES CODING EXERCISE 10%

November 14, 2017

Read the chapters in Bernard on Choose a research topic. Select a day to conduct participant observation at a particular location relevant to your research topic. Spend a minimum of two hours observing and taking detailed field notes or schedule a series of observations and collect notes. Create a coding strategy. Code the notes. Hand in your detailed coding strategy and your coded field notes in class.

#### RESEARCH DESIGN AND ETHICS APPLICATION ASSIGNMENT 40%

November 28, 2017

This is a big assignment. You cannot do this assignment in one or two days. Start working on this assignment in September. Select an anthropological topic, frame an anthropological research question(s) and design an anthropological research project to address the problem. Remember that anthropology is the study of humans. Do not use psychology experiments as methods.

Carefully and thoroughly complete the StFX Research Ethics Board Application. Follow the instructions on the application and use the other links to find examples of good applications and answers to frequently asked questions.

[http://sites.stfx.ca/research\\_ethics\\_board/forms\\_templates](http://sites.stfx.ca/research_ethics_board/forms_templates)

Part 1 of the form is worth 20%

The literature review 1(c) must be well researched and properly cited with a **minimum of 7 relevant academic anthropology sources** and a minimum of 3 pages in length. Sections 1 d-g must be clearly and logically presented. Make sure that the research design will enable you to answer your research question/problem. Any surveys instruments, interview question guides, or other forms of engagement must be included in an attachment in the appendices.

Part 2 of the form is worth 10%

Your design needs to consider who and how people will participate in your study. The recruitment strategy must be described clearly, logically and in great detail. Make sure that your project is ethical, anthropological, realistic, doable in scope and content, and in no way will cause any harm to participants.

Parts 3 – 15 of the form are worth 10%

Please include the Letter of Invitation, Invitation to Participate and Consent/Assent Forms in your assignment (attached in appendices as per the instructions). Be sure to answer all questions and particularly # 9 very carefully. Consider all of the issues we have discussed regarding research ethics, and explain your strategies for how best to protect the interests of your participants. Your interview guides, surveys, focus group, photo solicitation, or video ethnography questions, and so on, need to be included in the appendices. Make sure these questions and your research design will help you gather the information you need to answer your central research question(s) or problem.

## **COURSE OUTLINE**

This syllabus is subject to change. Below are the required readings per week, please complete the assigned readings prior to class.

### **September 5: Introduction & Rapid Immersion Participant Observation Field Trip**

Attend overview of course and then go as a group to the Honourable Romeo Dallaire talk. Prepare participant observation field notes for next class.

### **September 12: Participant Observation**

Bernard (chapter 12 Participant Observation)

*Participant Observation Assignment Due 10%*

### **September 19: Literature Searches**

Bernard (chapter 4 Literature Search)

### **September 26: Conducting Ethical Research AND Indigenous Research Methods**

Bernard (chapter 3 Preparing for Research) and Tri-Council Policy Statement *Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans*

### **October 3: Interviewing & Focus Groups AND Indigenous Research Methods**

Bernard (chapter 9 Interviewing: Unstructured and Semistructured) and OCAP First Nations Centre. *Ownership, Control, Access, and Possession (OCAP) or Self-Determination Applied to Research: A Critical analysis of Contemporary First Nations Research and Some Options for First Nations Communities* (see url above)

### **October 10: Structured Interviews & Questionnaires AND Indigenous Research Methods**

Bernard (chapter 10 Structured Interviewing) and Dawson, Alexandra and Elaine Toombs, Christopher Mushquash. "Indigenous Research Methods: A Systematic Review" in *The International Indigenous Policy Journal* Vol. 8 (2) Article 5, April 2017.

*Interviewing Exercise Due 10%*

**October 17: Free-Listing, True / False, Sentence Frames, Triad Tests, Free Pile Sorts AND National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation**

Bernard (chapter 11 Structured Interviewing – Cultural Domain Analysis) and TRC Calls to Action <http://www.trc.ca/websites/trcinstitution/index.php?p=905>

**October 24: Composite Measures**

Bernard (chapter 12 Scales and Scaling)

*Research Essay on Indigenous Methodologies Due 20%*

**October 31: Sampling and Choosing Informants & Focus Group Night**

Bernard (chapter 6 Sampling and chapter 8 Nonprobability Sampling and Choosing Informants)

*Focus Group Exercise Due 10%*

**November 7: Field Notes**

Bernard (chapter 14 Field Notes: How to Take Them, Code Them, Manage Them)

**November 14: Direct and Indirect Observation**

Bernard (chapter 15 Direct and Indirect Observation)

*Field Notes Exercise Due 10%*

**November 21: Research Design Elements**

Bernard (chapter 17 Qualitative Data Analysis – Text Analysis)

Round table discussion of your research proposals

**November 28: Feasting and Rituals**

Sharing your research experiences, presenting your ethics proposals and practicing your favourite methods over potluck snacks.

*Research Design and Ethics Application Due 40%.*

The use of phones, tablets and laptops for other than course related work is not permitted during class.

**IMPORTANT DATES**

September 12 – last day to receive full tuition refund (where applicable)

October 24 – last day for partial tuition refunds (where applicable)

November 3 – last day to drop first term courses