

Anthropology 304:10
Principles and Methods of Fieldwork 2015
Tuesdays 12:45 – 2:00 & Thursdays 11:15 – 12:30

Dr. McMillan	JBB 306	ljmcmill@stfx.ca	902.867.5021
Office Hours: Tuesday mornings or by appointment			

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: designs, methods, and techniques of anthropology. 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 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 Indigenous struggles for social justice as we build your methods toolkits.

Required Readings (*additional readings will be assigned in class*)

Bernard, H. Russell (2011) *Research Methods in Anthropology* (fifth edition) (Lanham: Altamira Press).

The fourth edition is on line at:

<http://www.antropocaos.com.ar/Russel-Research-Method-in-Anthropology.pdf>

Geertz, Clifford. 1973 *Thick Description: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture*. The interpretation of cultures: selected essays. New York: Basic Books, pp. 3-30.

http://www.sociosite.net/topics/texts/Geertz_Thick_Description.php

Sherwood, Juanita & Sacha Kendall (2013) *Reframing spaces by building relationships: Community collaborative participatory action research with Aboriginal mothers in prison*, *Contemporary Nurse*, 46:1, 83-94, DOI:

10.5172/conu.2013.46.1.83 To link to this article:

<http://dx.doi.org/10.5172/conu.2013.46.1.83>

Tuhiwai Smith, Linda (2012) *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples* (second edition) (London: Zed Books).

Tri-Council Policy Statement 2 Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (2014) Chapters 1-10.

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

Assignments

1. Reflexivity exercise. Read the Geertz article. Shift your focus from the things you ordinarily ignore. Make a list of the people, places, things, and occurrences that you ordinarily ignore when out in public. Ask yourself why you tend to ignore them. Do the things you tend to ignore have anything in common? Reflect on the things that make their way into your social viewfinder. How do your perceptual, moral, ethical and social biases affect the kinds of research questions you ask? Submit a short essay on your reflections (minimum 2 pages). 5% September 22.

2. Ethnographic exercise. Spend half a day in a place you have never been. Local, easy to get to, and safe. Before you go think about how you will become fluent in the ways and means of that area's culture. Write out a plan of approach. Keep good notes of your visit. Map your location. When you return, write up your experiences. When you write, try to avoid comparing everything you experienced to things you already know and are comfortable with in your own culture. Evaluate the experience on its own terms (5%). Explain how ethnography is different from how we usually come to know about a new situation or culture in daily life (5%) (minimum 3 pages plus field notes). 10% October 1.

3. Interviewing exercise. Read chapters on interviewing in Bernard. Prepare an interview guide on a selected life event topic. Work with a partner and ask each other the questions you have prepared. Make suggestions to improve the questions. Revise interview guide. Ask the questions of someone you know outside of class. Write a brief report summarizing interviewing techniques and comment on the characteristics of your interviews (minimum 3 pages present in class). 10% October 15.

4. Participant Observation exercise. With classmates, attend an event on campus. Take field notes as you observe. What do you see and hear. What do you think is important to include in your notes? Bring notes to class to compare similarities and differences. What do they reveal about the scene and the role of observer's perception in making data on the basis of observation? (describe event, assess and compare notes – hand in notes). 10% October 22.

5. Research goals and methods exercise. Identify five topics that interest you and that you think could be studied using qualitative methods. Explain why you find these topics of interest and what you would like to learn from your research. Choose one of your topics and design a research project detailing the methods you will use to answer your research goals. Explain

why the research design is the best choice for the topic that you have chosen (minimum 3 pages). 10% October 29.

6.Literature Search exercise. Conduct a search on the concept of Two-Eyed Seeing. Write a one-page summary of your interpretation of the concept. Include a one page annotated bibliography (3 sources) (maximum 2 pages) 5% November 3.

7.Ethical research exercise. Select a research topic and design an ethical study. Prepare an StFX Research Ethics Board Application for your project. Be sure to include: title, key words, research topic description and goals, a literature review, reference list, all the details of the study design and methods to be used (plus interview guides), rationale for the methods, dissemination strategy, and description of the participants. Include an invitation to participate and the consent /assent form.

http://sites.stfx.ca/research_ethics_board/forms_templates

(Completed form as per StFX REB instructions). 20% November 10.

8.Visual Methods exercise. Pick a social problem. Define it in visual terms. Bring an image to class. Interview your classmates on their perceptions of the social problem. Discuss the possibilities of visual methods for anthropology. 5% November 24.

9.Focus group exercise. Class preparation and participation. 5% November 26.

10.Indigenous research methodologies exercise. Read Linda Tuhiwai Smith's book. Based on the principles and concepts in Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples, design a collaborative research project that aligns with the agenda for Indigenous research and Indigenous activism. Include the details of the study design and the methods to be used. Following the description of your study, write a short essay on whether the decolonization of research methods will help reclaim Indigenous control over ways of knowing and being. Assess the methodological significance of this approach for anthropology and social justice (minimum 2 pages for research design + minimum 6 pages for essay). 20% December 3.

Reading and Lecture Schedule

September 8 Introductions and exercises for the anthropological mind	
September 10 Anthropology and Social Sciences / Bernard 1	
September 15 Foundations of Social Research / Bernard 2	
September 17 Methods and theory / Geertz "Thick Description"	
September 22 Preparing for Research / Bernard 3 <i>Reflexivity exercise due in class 5%</i>	1.

September 24 Participant Observation / Bernard 12	
September 29 Sampling I: The Basics / Bernard 5	
October 1 Sampling III: Informants / Bernard 7 <i>Ethnography exercise due in class 10%</i>	2.
October 6 Interviewing I: Un and Semi-structured / Bernard 8	
October 8 Interviewing II: Questionnaires / Bernard 9	
October 13 Interviewing III: Cultural Domains / Bernard 10	
October 15 Field Notes and Data Management / Bernard 13 <i>Interviewing exercise due in class 10%</i>	3.
October 20 Direct and Indirect Observation / Bernard 14	
October 22 Imperialism, History, Writing & Theory / Smith 1 <i>Participant Observation exercise due in class 10%</i>	4.
October 27 Research through Imperial Eyes / Smith 2	
October 29 Colonizing Knowledges / Smith 3 <i>5. Research goals and methods exercise due in class 10%</i>	
November 3 Two-Eyed Seeing <i>6. Literature Search exercise due in class 5%</i>	
November 5 Research Adventures on Indigenous Lands / Smith 4 & 5	
November 10 The Indigenous Peoples' Project / Smith 6 <i>Ethical Research Exercise due in class 20%</i>	7.
November 17 Articulating an Indigenous Research Agenda / Smith 7	
November 19 Community Based Research / Sherwood & Kendall	
November 24 Twenty-five Indigenous Projects / Smith 8 <i>Visual methods exercise – bring image to class 5%</i>	8.
November 26 Case Study of Maori / Smith 9 & 10 <i>9. Focus group exercise in class 5%</i>	
December 1 Research, Social Justice, Indigenous Activism / Smith 11 & 12	
December 3 Indigenous Research Project Presentations <i>10. Indigenous research methodologies exercise due in class 20%</i>	

All assignments are due in class on the dates given (print or electronically as directed). Late assignments will not be accepted.
 Successful completion of this course requires your attendance, full participation, evidence you have read the required readings prior to class and timely submission of all assignments.
 This syllabus is subject to change.

According to StFX's Academic Integrity Policy,
 The Code of Academic Conduct:

An academic community flourishes when its members are committed to five fundamental values. An academic community of integrity: a) advances the quest for truth and knowledge by acknowledging intellectual and personal honesty in learning, teaching, research, and service; b) fosters a climate of mutual trust, encourages the free exchange of ideas, and enables all to reach their highest potential; c) establishes clear standards, practices, and procedures and expects

fairness in interactions amongst students, faculty, staff, and administrators; d) recognizes the participatory nature of the learning process and honours and respects a wide range of opinions and ideas; and, e) upholds personal responsibility and accountability and depends upon action in the face of wrong-doing.

For information on academic integrity policies and procedures including the code of academic conduct and offenses against academic integrity including plagiarism, cheating, falsification, tampering please refer to this website:
http://sites.stfx.ca/registrar_office/sites/sites.stfx.ca/registrar_office/files/Academic%20Integrity-Mar_2015_0.pdf

Course Code of Conduct

We agree to treat each other with respect; to allow each person equal time and opportunity to share their opinions without prejudice; to keep an open mind when listening to opinions that differ from our own and share our views without causing harm to others; to be on time and to be prepared. Please make this classroom a safe space to share.