

Course Syllabus
ANTH 411: Fieldwork
(Sociocultural anthropology)

Prerequisites: ANTH 410: Research Design

Description

ANTH 411 is an independent study course in which students conduct ethnographic research as proposed in ANTH 410: Research Design. For a student enrolled in ANTH 411, the goal is to engage in the research tasks specified in the "Methods" section of their research proposal.

Required Texts

There are no required texts, except for readings that are assigned for the weekly Communitas meetings and other readings that are required by individual advisors.

However, all students are recommended to consult the texts that were used in ANTH 325: Ethnographic Methods as well as other books on methods in the social sciences. The Hamersly Library has an excellent collection of books on ethnographic methods. Moreover, it is important that students read "theoretical" or "topical" literature as well, particularly those articles and books that were listed in the proposal as "Works Still to be Read".

Requirements

In addition to conducting fieldwork as was specified in the "Methods" section, there are a number of requirements.

1. Students are to devise and complete interview guides and/or survey forms that will be used in the research process. Students should bring those to their advisor for review before you using them.
2. Students are to collect detailed fieldnotes and data of the following kind:
 - Log. Keep a daily notebook of observations, reflections, spatial descriptions, excerpts from informal discussions, and analyses of events. Do this throughout the course of fieldwork. (required)
 - Survey Data. Collect numerical, demographic, and/or survey data by through standardized questionnaires (optional)
 - Interview Notes. Keep hand-written notes on semi-structured interviews or life histories that you have conducted. Interview notes should be organized in a notebook or steno-pad and clearly labeled with date, informant name (you may choose to use a pseudonym), place of interview, and any other relevant information. If you enter notes directly into a laptop computer

or transcribe taped interviews into a word processor, print up hard copies of these interview notes to keep in a binder.
(optional)

- Photographs (optional)
- Supporting library, archival, newspaper, or Internet research (optional)

3. Students may aim to accomplish additional tasks, including:

- Transcribing audio-taped interviews (required if interviews are audio-taped)
- Tabulating numerical survey data (required if surveys used)
- Typing research notes into a word processing program or other program for managing text-based data (optional but strongly recommended)

4. Students must keep track of their research activities on a "Field Experience Calendar" (a monthly calendar, covering the 10-week research period, which indicates the specific tasks that you have accomplished and the days on which you have accomplished these tasks). This is required.

- For your calendar, I recommend that you print up blank calendar pages for the months that you will be doing your research. Then you can pencil in what you do as you proceed. You can access blank calendar pages for any given month through a word processing program like Microsoft Word.

Grading

Your grade for this course will be calculated as follows. See above for more details on what is expected of you for each item.

	Percentage of grade
Interaction with advisor	10
Midterm report	10
Methods description	30
Participation in <i>Communitas</i>	10
Overall quality of fieldwork	20
Presentation of fieldwork	20
	100%

Interaction with advisor

This includes efforts to seek out advice from your advisor and to follow his/her suggestions in a timely and appropriate manner. Generally speaking, it is not sufficient to talk to your advisor once at the beginning of research and once at the end. You should try to visit, phone, or email at least once every two weeks to let your advisor know how things are going. If your research takes you away from Oregon and you have no access to email, this

requirement may be waived with the approval of your advisor. Likewise, if your research takes place in the summer and your advisor is not available for consultation, this requirement may be waived with the approval of your advisor. Nevertheless, whenever you and your advisor are near to Email, you should uphold your obligation to remain in touch with him/her.

Midterm Report

A Mid-term report is due by week 5 and will consist of a report that includes:

- A list of the specific tasks that you have accomplished so far (this list should include all of the items penciled in on your calendar)
- A brief summary of your impressions on how research is going
- A brief description of any changes that you have made to your research agenda.

Email or send this report if you are not in residence. If problems arise and it looks like your research will last more than ten weeks, then consult with your advisor about the possibility of receiving an incomplete. If this occurs, you will have to arrange a new date for submitting the Mid-term Report. You must also fill out an incomplete contract at the end of the semester.

Methods Description

By Final's week, you must submit a 5 page narrative that describes your fieldwork and the methods that you used to collect anthropological data. This narrative must be written for someone completely unfamiliar with your research and it must be polished, meaning organized and carefully written (unlike your mid-term report, which is more schematic). It must discuss the field site, the research methods employed, and the duration of the fieldwork. Be thorough and complete, and leave no questions about your research methods unanswered! You can choose for yourself whether to write this in a formal, scientific mode or a confessional, reflexive mode. You may wish to complement your narrative with maps, tables, photographs, and/or other graphics. The "Methods Description" that you write for ANTH 411 will become a section of your completed 35-page senior thesis.

Overall quality of fieldwork

So that your advisor can assess the quality of your research experience, you must schedule a 1-2 hour meeting during finals week. At this time, you will bring:

- Your completed 5-page "Methods Description" (described above)
- Your "Field Experience Calendar" (described above)
- All research guides (including survey forms and interview guides)
- All field notes (including field log, survey data, interview notes, photographs, and archival/library/Internet notes)

At this meeting you will go through field notes in a detailed manner and informally discuss your research experience, talking about what you did over the past 10-week period. Your professor will pose questions about particular interviews and experiences. You must also be prepared to discuss how your actual field experience was different from or similar to your proposed methodology, as outlined in the Senior Thesis Research Proposal (which you presented to the department at the end of ANTH 410: Research Design).

Presentation of fieldwork in Communitas meeting

Finally, you will present your fieldwork experience in the Communitas meeting, briefly covering the issues you also discussed in the meeting with your advisor. In addition, you will share some of your "fieldwork lessons" with other students who are thinking of their Senior Project, writing their proposal, or doing fieldwork. You will discuss questions like: "What worked really well?" "What would you have done differently?"

Final Notes

Any anthropology student who earns A's in ANTH 410, ANTH 411, and 412 will be eligible to be honored as Outstanding Anthropology Student in late May of their senior year on Student Recognition Night

Anthropology majors who complete a senior thesis of outstanding quality will be encouraged to submit their paper to Focus – An Online Publication of Undergraduate Articles and Photography in Anthropology – and present their thesis at the Northwest Anthropological Conference.