

ETHN 100B: Methods for Interdisciplinary Research

This course gives students the opportunity to think critically about the theory and practice of Ethnic Studies research. As an interdisciplinary field, Ethnic Studies has historically employed research methods from a wide range of traditional disciplines including literature, history, film and media studies, communications, sociology, anthropology, and geography, as well as insurgent, problem-based fields such as Arab American studies, Asian American studies, Black studies, Chican@/Latin@ studies, disability studies, gender studies, Indigenous studies/Native American studies, and queer studies. The result of all of this interdisciplinary ferment has been the formation of distinctive Ethnic Studies methods for producing knowledge about differences of ability, class, gender, nation, race, and sexuality.

This course is also a workshop in research methods. Each unit includes in-class and out-of-class assignments that ask you to engage research practices. We will think seriously about how to translate research questions into research and writing practices. Most of our attention will be directed towards how other researchers have approached their practice in relationship to their research question/problem. We will read different studies with an eye towards highlighting the activities and writing habits of the research who produced the “data” of their account. How did the researcher come to know what they know? How did they get from a sense of problem, to a research practice, and finally to writing up the research? We will also read some of the literature specifically addressed to methodological issues, including ethical obligations. As an experiment, try writing every day (or as near to it as you can muster) this quarter.

Course Goals and Expectations for Students:

Attendance in each class meeting is mandatory; please come on time and prepared to discuss the week’s reading and writing assignments. All written work is due to TED or in hard copy in class on the date listed in the syllabus. Each participant will be expected to complete a final project on a topic approved by the instructor. The format for the final write-up of this project will be discussed in class; projects are due to my office, Soc Sci 221, on Monday March 14th by 2:00pm.

Required Texts and Materials, available at the UCSD bookstore (bring to each class meeting)

- +Blank or lined notebook, for research exercises and in-class writing.
- +Folder for saving and submitting writing assignments and working group feedback.
- +Assigned readings are available on E-res and the course website.

Evaluation. Grades will be based on the following assignments:

1. Participation in class, including attendance, attentive listening, contributing to large and small group discussion (20% of final grade).
3. Research question and research design assignments (10% each; 20% total) **Papers must be turned in at the start of class on the days they are due** (each paper is worth 25% of final grade).

4. In-class writing and peer review (Portfolio 20%). Every Thursday we will meet with working groups for timed writing and peer feedback/editing. The structure for workshop writing days is: draft, feedback, re-draft. Final drafts are to be submitted to TED and as part of a portfolio at the end of the term with your final paper.

5. Final research project (30%): Presentation + Written analysis: Demonstrate your ability to use the methods taught in this course critically by applying them to primary sources of interest for your 100C project. Please have your honors mentor sign off on your choice of sources and argument by week 8.

In-class workshop presentations. Presentations should A) briefly summarize the material; B) describe its method and explain choice primary texts or artifacts and C) relate presentation material to assigned course readings/methods. **It is crucial that presentations are no longer than 10 minutes.**

Attendance. Every unexcused absence will affect your participation grade, and two excused absences are permitted before it affects your participation grade. In order to be counted as present you must arrive on time and stay until the conclusion of lecture or section.

Electronic Devices and Laptops. Cell phones and other electronic devices (PDA/iPod/iPad, laptops, etc.) may not be used for talking, texting, checking email or surfing the web. You may however use such devices to take notes in class and to search for information related to class discussion when prompted by the professor. Repeated use of electronic devices for other purposes distracts others and will negatively affect your grade.

ADA Statement. If you have a documented disability needing accommodations, please inform me and bring a notification letter outlining your approved accommodations. I will make all reasonable efforts to assist you. If, as a result of a disability, you cannot accept the content or terms of this syllabus, you must notify me in writing within one week of receipt of the syllabus. You may also seek assistance or information from the Office for Students with Disabilities, 858/534/4382.

Students with dependents: If you a care-giver to a child or another adult and need to discuss accommodations, please contact me.

Cheating and Plagiarism. Whether intentional or inadvertent, plagiarism is a serious violation. All work submitted in this course must be your own. The use of sources such as ideas, quotations, paraphrases, or anything written by someone else must be properly acknowledged and cited. If you have questions about the proper citation of sources, please ask your Teaching Assistants. Students who plagiarize, or who cheat on an exam, will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with University policy. Students are expected to be familiar with UCSD's Policy on Integrity of Scholarship, available at:
<http://www.senate.ucsd.edu/manual/appendices/app2.htm#AP14>.

Discussion Ethics. This class is intended for students interested in challenging commonly held

understandings of race, gender, sexuality, class, and nation. Given the nature of the course there will likely be a wide range of opinions. Ideally the course will prompt you to think for yourself and to raise questions about conventional views and received wisdom. However, please engage one another in discussion with respect and consideration. These norms are reflected in the UCSD Principles of Community that we are all expected to follow (<http://wwwvcb.ucsd.edu/principles.htm>).

Course Aims. The goal of this course is to help prepare students for original Ethnic Studies research, including as part of the departmental honors program. We will build a working knowledge of several methodological approaches in Ethnic Studies and to understand how they work in practice and in relationship to research problems. Towards this goal, students will complete several writing assignments building a research prospectus for their 100C project. They will also apply research methods from the course to primary sources in the final project.

January 5 (Tu) Syllabus Overview What are interdisciplinary research methods?

Assignments:

- + Submit right now a piece of paper with your name, project keywords, a one sentence project that includes that main research question and several sites you will analyze.
- + Begin keeping portfolio: a folder or binder into which you place each printed assignment, taking notes with feedback from groups. You will submit this as part of final project at end of quarter.

For Next Tuesday:

2. bring project blurb to share next TUESDAY next week

January 7 (Th) Out of Class Assignment:

Finding your muse: 1) Identify an author (fiction or non-fiction) whose writing style you wish to emulate.

2. Isolate a brief passage (around 100-150 words) to type up and share with group on Thursday.

3. Type 1 single-spaced written page on the writing habits of your literary muse (explain 3-4 qualities you will emulate in exercises where you will channel your muse TUESDAY)

Week 2-3: Fieldnotes & Ethnography

January 12 (Tu)

Reading:

1. Eve Tuck (2009) "Suspending Damage: A Letter to Communities." *Harvard Ed. Review*. 79 (3) 409-428.
2. Ch 1. *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes*, 2nd Edition. Chicago and London: Univ. of Chicago Press. 1-16.

In class

- + Meet your group. Share project blurbs (project description stubs) with your group.
- + (Notebook) Timed writing: channeling your muse.

Writing/Research Assignment for Thursday (remember to bring out of class assignment as well):

Complete all writing exercises in Narayan chapter in your notebooks (or type, print, fold and affix neatly to notebook).

January 14 (Th)

Reading:

1. Narayan, Preface and Chapter 1: Story and Theory

In class:

1. Share muse excerpts: Take turns reading out statement on habits of your muse.
2. 1. 3 short Narayan chapter exercises and 1 longer exercise (p.22)
3. Channel your muse exercise

January 19 (Tu)

Reading:

1. Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw. 2011. excerpts from Chapter 3, *Writing Fieldnotes I: At the Desk, Creating Scenes on a Page*. In *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes*, 2nd Edition. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press. 51-85.
2. Laura Pulido. "FAQ: Frequently Asked Questions About Being a Scholar-Activist." Ch. 13, pp. 341-365 in Hale, *Engaging Contradictions: Theory, Politics, and Methods of Activist Scholarship* (University of California Press, 2008).

In Class:

Exercise (handout): Developing a Research Question. Exchange for feedback, place in portfolio.
Revise developing a research question, submit next tuesday
Handout: "Fieldnotes" (for Thursday)

*inspiration: imaginativeethnography.org

January 21 (Th)

Ethnographic observation. Fieldtrip! Meeting location TBA

Exercise: Conduct 30 minutes of observation, taking fieldnotes.

Working groups: 45 minutes to discuss 3 issues/each from observation and fieldnotes exercise.

Week 4-5: Community-Based Research Practices

January 26 (Tu) Engaging Contradictions

Due today before class on Ted: “developing a research question” final version

Reading:

1. Hale, Forward and Introduction
2. Soyini Madison “Co-Performative Witnessing.”

Assignment:

Before Thursday, taking notes in your notebook, conduct a 30 minute interview (doesn't have to be related to your research, but if it is, great!). Prepare to present 3 issues/observations/challenges (positive or negative) you came across in conducting the interview to your working group on Thursday.

January 28 (Th)

In class: Working Groups:

Exchange and discuss preparation for, context of, and content of interview exercise. Record feedback from group members on your and other's interviews. Place in portfolio.

Writing Exercise: (Notebook) Interview narration.

February 2 (Tu) Space: Mapping the Terrain

Reading:

1. Kamala Vishweswaran, Ch 3 “Betrayal: An Analysis in Three Acts.” from *Fictions of Feminist Ethnography*. 40-59
2. Shirley Suet-Ling Tang, “Forged in Dialogue: Toward a Critically Engaged Activist Research.” In *Engaging Contradictions*, 237-263.

In Class:

Exchange research design exercise for feedback. Place in portfolio, with notes. Revise to submit next Tues.

Assignment: Revise Research Design exercise for Tuesday.

February 4 (Th): Applied Research Skills: Meet in Library

Geisel Classroom 2, from 11-12:20 on Thur, Feb 4.

Reading:

1. Ruth Wilson Gilmore, “Forgotten Places,” In Hale, *Engaging Contradiction*

Week 6-7: Archives

Tu. 2/9

***Due before lecture: Submit revised research design outline before class via TED.**

Readings

1. George Eley. 2005. Becoming a Historian: A Personal Preface. In *A Crooked Line: From Cultural History to the History of Society*. University of Michigan Press.
2. Anjali Arondekar, *For the Record*, Introduction

Th 2/11. Meet at library special collections (Main floor, Geisel library)

Orientation to archival work, to special collections, and going through the process of analyzing a primary source exercise with special collections librarian, Heather Smedberg.

Tu 2/16 Representation in Archives: Documents and Images

Dayo Gore, *Radical Women*, Introduction + one additional chapter.
Notebook: Free writing/primary source analysis, exchange in groups

Th 2/18 Representation in the Media

Screening: *Representation and the Media* – Sut Jhally (Stuart Hall)

Reading: Roland Barthes: *Rhetoric of the Image* (pg. 152-163)

<http://faculty.georgetown.edu/irvinem/theory/Barthes-Rhetoric-of-the-image-ex.pdf>

Week 8-9: Reading Culture

Research topic sign-off by honors mentors due this week

Tu. 2/23 Images: Archival, and in the Media

Handout: Final Research Paper assignment

Reading:

Daphne Taylor-Garcia. "The Discursive Construction of 'Women' in Las Americas." I-VII.
<http://people.duke.edu/~wmignolo/links-of-interest/WKODTG/WKO-DTGindex.html>

Jillian Hernandez. *Carnal teachings: raunch aesthetics as queer feminist pedagogies in Yo! Majesty's hip hop practice*. Pp. 88-106.

Th. 2/25 Reading Images

In class assignment: Writing assignment and group exchange: bring in an image or media related to your project (media, report, etc.) and "read" it critically. (Notebook): Write down 1) a brief description of your image; 2) your analysis, then 3) exchange with group members for feedback (take notes in your notebook)

Tu. 3/1: Reading film

Reading:

Fatimah Tobing Rony, "Robert Flaherty's *Nanook of the North*: The Politics of Taxidermy and Romantic Ethnography"

Screening: *Nanook of the North*

Th. 3/3

Day One Workshopping and Presentations.

3/8: Individual Research Workshops and Presentations.

3/10: Individual Research Workshops and Presentations.