LAS/ANTH 391
Ethnography: Critical Perspectives
FALL 2018
Mondays 1-4PM
SRH 1.320

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OFFICE HOURS: Wednesdays 13:00-14:30 p.m. (or by appointment)
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CLASS DESCRIPTION
The seminar is an exploration of the relationship between ethnography and theory from an anthropological perspective, focusing on the ways in which social theory and methodology are mutually productive. The course will critically reflect on the multiple ways in which scholars are thinking and writing about contemporary social issues and people’s subjective experiences drawing on questions such as how do we use data to think about theory and how do theoretical frameworks shape ethnographic production. The class will draw on conceptual tools combined with a close reading and analysis of ethnographic studies dealing with subjects such as gender, the environment, economics, and human-non human relations among others to critically examine themes such as power and knowledge production, the politics of ethnographic fieldwork, positionality and representation, decolonizing methodologies, and experimental writing approaches. Overall, this seminar seeks to stimulate student’s critical awareness of the complex dynamics at play that shape the production of ethnographic knowledge.

Required Books

Additional required readings for the course will be available on the Canvas course website at http://courses.utexas.edu/. I will use Canvas to distribute course materials, and to communicate and collaborate online. You can find support in using Canvas at the ITS Help Desk at 475-9400, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., so plan accordingly.
REQUIREMENTS

1. **Attendance and Participation (10%)** Attending and actively participating in class is vital to the learning process. Your active participation in class is required. You demonstrate your commitment to the class by contributing respectfully to discussions and engaging enthusiastically in learning activities. Attendance will be checked randomly. All students are allowed 1 excused absence. Students who miss class due to illness or emergency are required to bring documentation from their healthcare provider or other relevant, professional third party. Failure to submit third-party documentation will result in unexcused absences. Four (4) unexcused class absences will result in forfeiture of all attendance points.

2. **Weekly Memos (20%)**
Weekly memos are to be no more than one doubled-spaced page long. They should be analytical as well as synthetic to demonstrate mastery of the week’s reading. See details in *Guideline for Weekly Memos*.

3. **Class presentation/Leading discussion (20%)**
Students will be assigned to lead one class discussion, which will begin with a formal, oral presentation of the reading accompanied by a one-page written handout summarizing key issues. Presentations should cover key issues and concepts, convey and assess the authors’ arguments as well as make connections to related issues. The student in charge of presenting should come prepared with a set of the questions based on the readings to help facilitate class discussion. The idea is to involve the whole class in the conversation. See details in *Guideline for Class Presentations*.

4. **Writing Modules (50%)**
Students will be assigned four modules of writing exercises, that will be due throughout the semester. Detailed instructions will be given during the first day of class.

GRADES
Final grades will be assigned as follows:
- A = 94-100 % (of 500 possible points)  
  A- = 90-93
- B+ = 87-89  
  B = 84-86  
  B- = 80-83
- C+ = 77-79  
  C = 74-76  
  C- = 70-73
- D+ = 67-69  
  D = 64-66  
  D- = 60-63
- F = 0-60

Note on Incompletes
Incomplete (I) grades are given only in documented emergency cases (usually only for a death in the family, major illness or injury, or birth of your child), and if the student has completed the majority of the coursework (usually everything but the final paper). If you encounter any difficulty that might prevent you completing the coursework, please do not wait until the end of the term; contact the instructor immediately.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND OTHER UNIVERSITY POLICIES
Students who violate University rules on academic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University. Since such dishonesty harms the individual, all students, and the integrity of the University, policies on academic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. In promoting a high standard of academic integrity, the University broadly defines academic dishonesty as basically all conduct
that violates this standard, including any act designed to give an unfair or undeserved academic advantage, such as:

- Cheating
- Plagiarism (Links to an external site.)
- Unauthorized Collaboration / Collusion (Links to an external site.)
- Falsifying Academic Records
- Misrepresenting Facts (e.g., providing false information to postpone an exam, obtain an extended deadline for an assignment, or even gain an unearned financial benefit)
- Multiple submissions (Links to an external site.) (e.g., submitting essentially the same written assignment for two courses without authorization to do so)
- Any other acts (or attempted acts) that violate the basic standard of academic integrity

NOTE: For the University's official definition of academic dishonesty, see Section 11-402 (Links to an external site.), Institutional Rules on Student Services and Activities at http://catalog.utexas.edu/general-information/appendices/appendix-c/student-discipline-and-conduct/

Documented Disability Statement: Students with disabilities may request appropriate academic accommodations from the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, Services for Students with Disabilities at 512-471-6259 (voice) or 512-410-6644 (video phone) or e-mail ssd@austin.utexas.edu or http://ddce.utexas.edu/disability/ (Links to an external site.)

Emergency Evacuation Policy
Occupants of buildings on the UT Austin campus are required to evacuate and assemble outside when a fire alarm is activated or an announcement is made. Please be aware of the following policies regarding evacuation:

- Familiarize yourself with all exit doors of the classroom and the building. Remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when you entered the building.
- If you require assistance to evacuate, inform me in writing during the first week of class.
- In the event of an evacuation, follow my instructions or those of class instructors. Do not re-enter a building unless you’re given instructions by the Austin Fire Department, the UT Austin Police Department, or the Fire Prevention Services office.

Class Technology Policy: Cell phones must be silenced and put away. If I notice otherwise, you will be marked absent. You may use a laptop to take notes. However, it should not be used for anything else during class.

Please note: I reserve the right to change or amend the course syllabus as necessary.

COURSE SCHEDULE

WEEK 1
Monday 09/03:
  • Labor Day. No class

WEEK 2: Ethnography: Framing the Debate
Monday 09/10


**Recommended reading**


**WEEK 3: Ethnography Framing the Debate - continued**

**Monday 09/17**


**Recommended Reading**

• Caduff, C. 1999. “Ethnographies of Science: Conversation with the Authors and Commentary.” *Cultural Anthropology* 14(1).


**WEEK 4: Decolonizing Knowledge Production**

**Monday 09/24**


• **DUE:** Writing Module #1 [by Wed 09/24].

**Recommended Reading**


**WEEK 5: Representation**

**Monday 10/01**


**Recommended Readings**

**WEEK 6: Collaborations**
Monday 10/08
• **DUE:** Writing Module #2 [by Wed 10/08]

**Recommended Reading**

**WEEK 7**
Monday 10/15

**WEEK 8**
Monday 10/22
• **DUE:** Writing Module #3 [by Wed 10/22].

**WEEK 9:**
Monday 10/29

**WEEK 10:**
Monday 11/05
• **DUE:** Writing Module #4 [by Wed 11/05].
WEEK 11:
Monday 11/12

WEEK 12:
Monday 11/19

WEEK 13:
Monday 11/26
• DUE: Writing Module #5 [by Wed 11/26]

WEEK 14:
Monday 12/03

WEEK 15
Monday 12/10
• Conclusions