

**ANG 6801 Ethnographic Field Methods (3 credits)**  
**Class #26154 / Section CT68**  
**Spring 2026**  
**Meeting Days: Fridays, Periods 3-5 (9:35 am- 12:35 pm)**  
**Location: Turlington 1208H**  
**Initial Draft subject to adjustments**

**Professor:** Catherine Tucker  
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**Phone:** (352) 392-0690  
**Office Hours:** TBD & By Appointment  
**Office Location:** Grinter 309

**Catalog Description:**

Methods of collecting ethnographic data. Entry into the field; role and image conflict. Participant observation, interviewing, content analysis, photography and documents, data retrieval, analysis of data.

**Course Overview:**

Ethnographic field research lies at the heart of sociocultural anthropology and is increasingly valued across the social sciences. This course provides a foundation in qualitative and quantitative ethnographic methods considering the range of ontological and epistemological stances. It aims to prepare graduate students for fieldwork by integrating methodological theory, in-class exercises and mini projects to ground principles and concepts in practical experience. Methods to be covered include participant observation, interviews, surveys, focus groups, text analysis, visual documentation (video, photography), cultural consensus analysis, and perhaps others. Students will practice field note-taking and learn basic data management and analysis tools. We will consider the advantages and challenges of mixed methods, participatory approaches, and transdisciplinary research. Our exploration of methods will be contextualized with attention to research positionality, ethics, theoretical approaches, intersectionalities, and responsibilities to our research communities, partners and collaborators.

**COURSE OBJECTIVE**

Examine and assess major ethnographic field methods through theoretical approaches, ethical considerations and practical exercises while accounting for variables and contexts that inform fieldwork.

**STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

1. Analyze the utility and limitations of major research methods with respect to ontological paradigms and epistemological stances.
2. Apply qualitative and quantitative data collection methods.

3. Understand the ethical and practical dimensions of fieldwork.
4. Evaluate dimensions of knowledge, power and positionalities in scientific research, including nonwestern perspectives relevant to ethnographic research.
5. Analyze your own positionality and intersectional aspects that will likely shape fieldwork experiences and perceptions (your own, and those of people with whom you interact)
6. Understand how to collect, organize, and analyze ethnographic data.

## REQUIRED AND RECOMMENDED BOOKS / RESOURCES

### Required:

Bernard, H. Russell. 2018. *Research Methods in Anthropology: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches, Sixth Edition*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield. (Available as an e-book through the Smathers Library)

Gardner, Andrew, and David M. Hoffman, eds. 2006. *Dispatches from the Field: Neophyte ethnographers in a changing world*. Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press. (Available as an e-book through the Smathers Library)

### Recommended:

(Excerpts) Wilson, Shawn. 2008. *Research is Ceremony: Indigenous Research Methods*. Halifax & Winnipeg: Fernwood Publishing. (Smathers Library Course Reserves)

(Excerpts) Marti, Judith E. 2017. *Starting Fieldwork: Methods and Experiences*. Waveland Press. (Smathers Library Course Reserves)

Additional required or recommended resources may be added. If so, they will be posted on Canvas or available through Smathers Library Course Reserves.

**IMPORTANT:** Readings and other resources are listed for the week that they will be discussed. Come prepared to discuss the assigned readings during class.

## GRADED COMPONENTS AND GRADING

**Assignments and Evaluated Participatory Exercises:** Instructions for each assignment will be posted on Canvas. Weekly discussions and in-class participatory activities will be presented during class.

1. 30% Participation in Weekly Class Activities and Discussions: In-class participation in weekly discussions and practice of methods, including: participant observation, interviews, surveys/questionnaires, Q methodology, photo voice, and other possible approaches. *This is a hands-on class with an expectation of in-person participation in weekly class activities, discussions, and oral reports assessing in-class methods exercises.*

2. 15% Discussion Posts: Critically evaluate and comment on weekly readings with respect to your research interests, pose a question for discussion and provide two peer commentaries.
3. 5% Questions for Discussion: Submit a question for discussion inspired by and contextualized by the weekly readings, assigned for weeks in which a discussion post is not assigned.
4. 15% Participant Observation Field Notes Exercise and Peer Reviews: Design a mini participation observation project, take detailed field notes, provide two peer reviews on others' field notes, and share experiences in class.
5. 20% Team Mini-Research Project: Create a mini research project that involves data collection using two or more methods, organize and analyze data, and present findings to the class.
6. 15% Synthetic Evaluation of Ethnographic Methods, Positionality and Ethics Relevant to Individual Research Plans: Vision board, poster or powerpoint, a brief reflective paper and a class presentation.

### **Grading Scale:**

**The course will be graded as follows:**

A	100%	to	94%
A-	<94%	to	90%
B+	<90%	to	87%
B	<87%	to	84%
B-	<84%	to	80%
C+	<80%	to	77%
C	<77%	to	74%
C-	<73%	to	70%
D+	<70%	to	67%
D	<67%	to	64%
D-	<64%	to	60%
E	<60%	to	0%

### **CLASS CALENDAR**

**Adjustments may be made to meet interests of the class.**

**Students are responsible for reading emails and class announcements.**

<b>W k</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Activity/Assignments</b>	<b>Readings (On Canvas or in Required Texts) Prepare to discuss on indicated date</b>
1	Jan 16	Introduction  What is ethnography?  Ontologies and world views	Introductions & Research Interests  Exercise: How do we perceive? How do we know?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">What are ontology and epistemology?</a> (3:06) Brief definitions</li> <li>• <a href="#">Ontology, Epistemology &amp; Methodology</a> (8:59) More detailed explanations and methodological aspects</li> </ul>

2	Jan 23	Research Paradigms, Ontologies and Approaches to Research	<p>Discussion Post</p> <p>Developing research questions</p> <p>Initial Participant Observation Exercise</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">What is Research? - A. Ashton et al.</a> (5:15)</li> <li>• Bernard Ch. 1-4 (Excerpts)</li> <li>• Wilson, G. 2023. Research made simple: an introduction to feminist research. 26 (3): 87-88.</li> <li>• Wilson, S. Ch.2 On the Research Journey. <i>Research Is Ceremony: Indigenous Research Methods</i>. Halifax &amp; Winnipeg: Fernwood. Pp. 22-42.</li> </ul>
3	Jan 30	Research ethics, Participant observation	<p>Ethics exercise</p> <p>Discussion Post</p> <p>Initial Field Notes Discussion</p> <p>IRB Training</p> <p>Expanded Participant Observation &amp; Field Notes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• American Anthropological Association. Statement on Ethics. <a href="https://americananthro.org/about/policies/statement-on-ethics/">https://americananthro.org/about/policies/statement-on-ethics/</a></li> <li>• Bernard. Ch 12: Participant Observation</li> <li>• Marti. 2017. Ch. 6 Participant Observation, Ch.7 Jottings. In <i>Starting Fieldwork</i>. Pp.45-67. (Course Reserves)</li> <li>• <a href="#">Hermeneutics Simply Explained (Hermeneutic Circle T Gadamar)</a> (9:31)</li> <li>• Hoffman, D. Swimming Through Fieldwork: Constructing Trust in the Caribbean. In <i>Dispatches from the Field</i>. Pp. 15-32</li> <li>• Tucker (unpublished): Tips for useful field notes</li> <li>• Video: What is Ethical Space? <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kjjUi-5gra0m">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kjjUi-5gra0m</a></li> </ul>
4	Feb 6	Interviews & focus groups Navigating power and positionality Doing fieldwork	<p>Reflections on Ethics and IRB</p> <p>Discussion Post</p> <p>Developing Interview protocols</p> <p>Field Note Peer Reviews</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bernard Ch.8 Interviewing I: Unstructured and Structured</li> <li>• Marti, J. 2017 Ch.8 Interviews. In <i>Starting Fieldwork</i>. Pp.67-76 (Course Reserves)</li> <li>• Drybread, K. 2006. Sleeping with One Eye Open: The Perils of Fieldwork in a Brazilian Juvenile Prison. In <i>Dispatches from the Field</i>.</li> <li>• Hautzinger, Sarah, 2012. Depending on Context: Counterintuitive Uses of Focus Groups in Mixed-Method Ethnographic Research. <i>Human Organization</i> 71(1):22-31. (Course Reserves)</li> </ul>
5	Feb 13	Surveys and Sampling	<p>Discussion Question</p> <p>Experience of interview practice</p> <p>Developing a team-based survey</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bernard Ch. 5 Sampling I: The Basics, Ch. 7 Sampling III: Nonprobability Sampling, Ch. 9 Interviewing II: Questionnaires</li> <li>• Bullen, P. B. 2014. How to write awesome survey questions, Part I. <a href="http://www.tools4dev.org/resources/how-to-write-awesome-survey-questions-part-1/">http://www.tools4dev.org/resources/how-to-write-awesome-survey-questions-part-1/</a></li> <li>• 7 tips for good survey questions <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Iq_fhTuY1hw">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Iq_fhTuY1hw</a></li> <li>• Peutz, N. Of Goats and Foreigners: Research Lessons on Soqatra Island, Yemen. In <i>Dispatches from the Field</i>. Pp. 83-102.</li> </ul> <p><u>Recommended:</u> Bernard Ch. 6 Sampling II: Theory</p>

6	Feb 20	Participatory approaches, Group Interviews, and Transdisciplinary approaches	Discussion Post  Developing a focus group/group interview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ogawa, A. 2006. Initiating Change: Doing Action Research in Japan. In Gardner &amp; Hoffman. <i>Dispatches from the Field</i>.</li> <li>Steger, C. et al. 2021. Science with society: Evidence-based guidance for best practices in environmental transdisciplinary work. <i>Global Environmental Change</i> 68:102240</li> <li>Luker. 2008 Ch 1 Salsa Dancing? In the Social Sciences? In <i>Salsa Dancing into the Social Sciences</i>. Cambridge, MA. Harvard U Press.</li> </ul>
7	Feb 27	Visual data collection, Participatory approaches to photography	Photovoice exercise  Discussion Question  Discussion: experiences of the practice group interview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Marti, J. 2017. Ch. 11. Photography as Anthropology. In <i>Starting Fieldwork</i>. Pp. 93-100. (Course Reserves)</li> <li>Wang, C., &amp; Burris, M. A. 1997. Photovoice: Concept, Methodology, and Use for Participatory Needs Assessment. <i>Health Education &amp; Behavior</i>, 24(3), 369–387.</li> <li>Mitchell, F., Billiot, S &amp; Lechuga-Peña, S. 2020. Utilizing Photovoice... <i>Genealogy</i>, 4(2), 51. <a href="https://doi.org/10.3390/genealogy4020051">https://doi.org/10.3390/genealogy4020051</a></li> </ul>
8	Mar 6	Cultural consensus approaches, Card sorting Q methodology	Discussion Question  Q methodology exercise  Preparation for team project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bernard Ch. 10 Interviewing III: Cultural Domains, Ch.16 Analyzing Cultural Domains</li> <li>Lobinger, K., &amp; Brantner, C. 2020. Picture-sorting techniques. Card sorting and Q-sort as alternative and complementary approaches in visual social research. In L. Pauwels &amp; D. Mannay, eds. <i>The Sage Handbook of Visual Research Methods. 2nd Revised and Expanded Edition</i>. Pp. 309-321. London: Sage. (Course Reserves)</li> </ul>
9	Mar 13	Data Organization and Analysis	Discussion Question  Team Mini-Project progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bernard Ch. 13 - 16 (Excerpts) Field Notes and Database Management</li> <li>Briney, K. 2015. Rethinking Data Management. TEDxUWMilwaukee. <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dXKbkpilQME">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dXKbkpilQME</a></li> <li>The why, what and how of data management planning. 2014. <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gYDb-GP1CA4">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gYDb-GP1CA4</a></li> <li>Tutorials on qualitative software packages</li> </ul>
	Mar 16 - 22	SPRNG BREAK		
10	Mar 27	Text Analysis, discourse analysis	Team Mini-Project Presentations  Discussion Question  Start of Team Text analysis exercise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bernard Ch. 18 - 19 Text Analysis I and II</li> </ul>

11	Apr 3	Spatial analysis methods	Community mapping exercise Team Text analysis progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cromley. Mapping Spatial Data in Schensul &amp; LeCompte (Course Reserves)</li> </ul>
12	Apr 10	Presentations and Discussion of Text Analysis	Presentation of team text analysis projects	
13	Apr 17	Presentations and Synthesis	Individual Class Presentations Course synthesis and reflections	
14	Apr 24	READING DAY		
15	Apr 27	FINALS WEEK	Evaluation of Ethnographic Methods Due: Apr 27	

## UNIVERSITY POLICIES

**This course complies with all UF academic policies. For information on those policies and for resources for students, please see [this link](https://syllabus.ufl.edu/syllabus-policy/uf-syllabus-policy-links/).** [<https://syllabus.ufl.edu/syllabus-policy/uf-syllabus-policy-links/>]

### Additional Policies and Resources:

**Religious observances:** <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/#religiousholidaystext>

The Florida Board of Education and state law govern university policy regarding observance of religious holidays. The following guidelines apply:

- Students, upon prior notification to their instructors, shall be excused from class or other scheduled academic activity to observe a religious holy day of their faith.
- Students shall be permitted a reasonable amount of time to make up the material or activities covered in their absence.
- Students shall not be penalized due to absence from class or other scheduled academic activity because of religious observances.

### **Procedure for conflict resolution**

Any issues, disagreements or grade disputes should be discussed first between the instructor and the student. If the problem cannot be resolved, please contact Prof. John Krigbaum ([krigbaum@ufl.edu](mailto:krigbaum@ufl.edu), (352) 294-7540), Chair of Anthropology. Be prepared to provide documentation of the problem, as well as all graded materials for the semester. Issues that cannot be resolved departmentally will be referred to the University Ombuds Office (<http://www.ombuds.ufl.edu> [Links to an external site.](#); 352-392-1308) or the Dean of Students Office (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu> [Links to an external site.](#); 352-392-1261).

### **Late policies and assignment extension policies for the course**

- Late assignments/quizzes/exams without an excuse will be reduced 10% per day late.

- All unexcused late work will not be accepted a week after the due date unless arrangements are made with the instructor.

### **Communication practices for the course**

- You are responsible for materials posted on E-Learning (Canvas) at <https://elearning.ufl.edu/>, including required readings, announcements, details on assignments, and other supplementary material. Canvas technical support is available at <https://elearning.ufl.edu/student-help-faqs/>.
- The instructor may use email to make general class announcements or to contact you directly about your work. You are responsible for checking your official UF email regularly to be aware of communication from the instructor. There are no allowances for students who fail to read their email announcements or whose inboxes are full at the time an announcement is sent.
- Canvas Notifications: In your Canvas “Account,” click on “Notifications.” Set the notification for “Submission Comment” to either “Notify Immediately” or “Daily Summary.” The instructor may communicate with you regarding your assignments through Submission Comments more so than e-mail. We expect every student to read their submission comments within 24 hours of posting. Some of them may require immediate action on your part.

### **Library Resources**

- **Library Resources (General Courses):** The [UF Libraries](#) provide access to numerous resources and services that will help you succeed in this course. Access thousands of [online databases, books, and articles](#) or visit one of the [branch locations](#) for additional [resources, services, and study spaces](#). Can’t find what you are looking for? You can [Ask A Librarian](#) for help by email, chat, text, or phone.
- **Library Resources (Courses with Researching/Writing Component, Grad Courses):** The [UF Libraries](#) provide access to numerous resources and services that will help you succeed in this course. Access thousands of [online databases, books, and articles](#) or visit one of the [branch locations](#) for additional [resources, services, and study spaces](#). Further, as this class requires students to complete a bibliography, research paper, or project, both the [Anthropology Library Guide](#) and the [Anthropology Assignment Guide](#) may be of assistance. You can also contact the [Anthropology Librarian](#) directly for help with developing your research topic/question, searching for sources, and evaluating information. And you can also [Ask A Librarian](#) for help by email, chat, text, or phone.
- **Ginessa Mahar** (Anthropology Librarian): [gimahar@ufl.edu](mailto:gimahar@ufl.edu), office: Library West Room 500
- **Anthropology Library** [Website](#)