EER-8710: Advanced Ethnographic Research  
4 Credit Hours Fall 2014 Wayne State University  
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Course Description in Graduate Bulletin:
8710 Advanced Ethnographic Research. Cr. 4

Prerequisite: EER 7880.

Purpose:
The course will be “hands-on;” all students will work on the same project (team ethnography) to practice data-collection, analysis, and writing stages via a shared interest in making methods meaningful, i.e., useful for one’s own research. The course will require out-of-class devotion to reading, practicing research, and writing. Although every student will practice all aspects of ethnography, the final project will be a consolidated written research report with PowerPoint presentation. I attached the protocol for the class project to the syllabus. This particular topic is of critical importance for our society. It is imperative that you represent this as a “class project” and NOT research, as there is no IRB approval. We will not be able to publish findings for the same reason. It is my obligation to teach you how to do ethnography in a scientifically valid manner—you will learn by doing an ethnographic project related to an educational system.

Ethnography is exploratory and emergent. For that reason, we will review the assignments and progress through the coursework at every class, using your classmates to enrich your learning experience. Ethnography is cumulative—you must keep up. I will assess your readiness to do coursework-required activities when we meet. You should expect to do participant observation, write detailed fieldnotes, perform ethnographic interviewing, and transcribe your interviews. Other assignments will be as assigned in class.

Part of ethnography is analysis of qualitative data. In order to do that, we will use the heuristics (Educational Paradigms) included in the following required texts:


I may supplement with articles or short readings throughout the semester.
Grading:
You are all adult learners. I expect you to act like adults, showing respect to your classmates and to me. I need to verify that you approach this class project with the highest ethical standards. An ethical breach is grounds for a failing grade.

You must turn in all assignments on time or you jeopardize the entire project. Each assignment builds on the previous one. Ethnography is a series of ethnographic hypotheses and research decisions about where you can find data relevant to understanding the research question. As noted above, we will review types of data collection appropriate to the project in class every week. I also expect an open and honest discussion of difficulties on a personal level as well as on a group project level. Although everyone has other commitments and responsibilities, that will be true for the rest of your life. We will negotiate these concerns as members of a team.

You will be receiving credit in a required graduate doctoral level course, indicating that you have developed certain skills and can think independently. If you have further questions about grades, read Pedagogy of the Oppressed. Expect to work hard. Learning is fun.

I am very transparent and will always try to understand your concerns—In order for me to do that, you must share them with me. I always use the following set of simple guidelines.

- I show up for class to keep you safe and to ensure others helping us (volunteers) are safe.
- Do NOT wait to share concerns or grievances until course evaluation time—tell me early and I will adjust my behavior or expectations.
- My job is to help you to develop critical thinking skills.
- You must do the work of learning.
- There is something wrong if we do not have fun.

I am including the following content because to the best of my knowledge, I am required by Wayne State University to include these rules. They make the rules; I interpret the rules.

Other Matters:

Cancellations of Class & “Snow” Policy: If for any reason I must cancel class, I will try to contact students via email, and inform my secretary (Sheri Martini, 313-577-1614, don’t bug her if campus is open). You must determine when it is not safe to travel. We come from a variety of locations and conditions always vary, so make good decisions based on your conditions and turn around if driving is not safe. If the campus is open, I must hold class.

WSU Plagiarism Policy: Plagiarism includes copying material (more than 5 consecutive words) from outside texts or presenting outside information as if it were your own or by not crediting authors through citations. (APA cites require author, year, and page number for direct quotes in quotation marks and for paraphrases with no quotation marks.) It can be deliberate or unintended. If in doubt about the use of a source, cite it. University policy states that students can be subject to multiple sanctions, from reprimand to expulsion as a consequence of academic dishonesty.
Students caught plagiarizing information from other sources will receive a failing grade in the course. To enforce this policy, all outside references must be submitted with assignments. Check out web resources related to plagiarism to learn more. For instance a good plagiarism definition can be found at: http://www.suite101.com/content/a-definition-for-plagiarism-a10232; and paraphrasing examples good and bad at http://library.csusm.edu/plagiarism/howtoavoid/how_avoid_paraphrase.htm ] Or from the 1500s:

**WSU Disability Services Policy:** If you have a documented disability that requires accommodations, you will need to register with Student Disability Services (SDS) for coordination of your academic accommodations. The Student Disability Services (SDS) office is located at 1600 David Adamany Undergraduate Library in the Student Academic Success Services department. SDS telephone number is 313-577-1851 or 313-577-3365 (TDD only). Once you have your accommodations in place, I will be glad to meet with you privately to discuss your special needs. Student Disability Services’ mission is to assist the university in creating an accessible community where students with disabilities have an equal opportunity to fully participate in their educational experience at Wayne State University. Please be aware that a delay in getting SDS accommodation letters for the current semester may hinder the availability or facilitation of those accommodations in a timely manner. Therefore, it is in your best interest to get your accommodation letters as early in the semester as possible.

**WSU Religious Observance Policy:** Because of the extraordinary variety of religious affiliations represented in the University student body and staff, the Wayne State University calendar makes no provision for religious holidays. It is University policy, however, to respect the faith and religious obligations of each individual. Students who find that their classes or examinations involve conflicts with their religious observances are expected to notify their instructors well in advance so that alternative arrangements as suitable as possible may be worked out.

**WSU Withdrawal Policy:** Students who withdraw from a course after the end of the 4th week of class will receive a grade of WP, WF, or WN:

- **WP** will be awarded if the student is passing the course (based on work due to date) at the time the withdrawal is requested
- **WF** will be awarded if the student is failing the course (based on work due to date) at the time the withdrawal is requested
- **WN** will be awarded if no materials have been submitted, and so there is no basis for a grade

Students must submit their withdrawal request on-line through Pipeline. The faculty member must approve the withdrawal.