

FIELD METHODS SOCY 3401 SPRING 2016

Instructor: Matthew Brown

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Office Hours: Tuesday 5 – 6 P.M. and Thursday 4:30 - 6 P.M.

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You are responsible for everything in this syllabus, the text, articles, the registration handbook, and material covered in lecture.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is designed to provide you with the guidance and tools to conduct original field research on a topic of your choice. Most social science research strives to be objective and often requires that the researcher never interact directly with the participants. This type of research is referred to as quantitative. In contrast, field research or ethnography embeds the researcher in the social phenomena of interest as the researcher observes and, may or may not, interacts directly with the participants. The goal of ethnography is to provide the subjective meaning and experience of the participants, not the researcher's interpretation of the participants' lives. This makes for a fundamentally different research experience and findings. Field research stands out as a research method because of the close relationship between the researcher and the participant. Field research is one type of qualitative methodology.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

Honor Code

All students of the University of Colorado at Boulder are responsible for knowing and adhering to the academic integrity policy of this institution. Violations of this policy may include: cheating, plagiarism, aid of academic dishonesty, fabrication, lying, bribery, and threatening behavior. All incidents of academic misconduct shall be reported to the Honor Code Council (honor@colorado.edu; 303-735-2273). Students who are found to be in violation of the academic integrity policy will be subject to both academic sanctions from the faculty member and non-academic sanctions (including but not limited to university probation, suspension, or expulsion).

Other information on the Honor Code can be found at

<http://www.colorado.edu/policies/honor.html> and at <http://honorcode.colorado.edu>

Honor code violations will result in a 0 for the assignment.

Classroom Behavior

Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. Those who fail to adhere to such behavioral standards may be subject to discipline. Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, color, culture, religion, creed, politics, veteran's status, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity and gender expression, age, disability, and nationalities. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name. I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise

me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records. See policies at

<http://www.colorado.edu/policies/classbehavior.html> and at

http://www.colorado.edu/studentaffairs/judicialaffairs/code.html#student_code

I DO NOT ALLOW COMPUTERS IN CLASS (IPADS OR LAPTOPS).

Discrimination and Harassment

The University of Colorado Boulder (CU-Boulder) is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working, and living environment. The University of Colorado does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, creed, religion, sexual orientation, or veteran status in admission and access to, and treatment and employment in, its educational programs and activities. (Regent Law, Article 10, amended 11/8/2001). CU-Boulder will not tolerate acts of discrimination or harassment based upon Protected Classes or related retaliation against or by any employee or student. For purposes of this CU-Boulder policy, "Protected Classes" refers to race, color, national origin, sex, pregnancy, age, disability, creed, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or veteran status. Individuals who believe they have been discriminated against should contact the Office of Discrimination and Harassment (ODH) at 303-492-2127 or the Office of Student Conduct (OSC) at 303-492-5550. Information about the ODH, the above referenced policies, and the campus resources available to assist individuals regarding discrimination or harassment can be obtained at <http://hr.colorado.edu/dh/>

Religious Holidays

Campus policy regarding religious observances requires that faculty make every effort to deal reasonably and fairly with all students who, because of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled exams, assignments or required attendance. Talk with me to make arrangements that allow you to observe and complete the assignment. See full details at http://www.colorado.edu/policies/fac_relig.html

Students with Disabilities

If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please submit a letter to me from Disability Services in a timely manner so that your needs may be addressed. Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities (Contact: 303-492-8671, Willard 322, www.colorado.edu/disabilityservices)

REQUIRED READINGS

Hennink, Monique, Inge Hutter, and Ajay Bailey. 2011. *Qualitative Research Methods*. Los Angeles, CA: Sage.

Lois, Jennifer. 2003. *Heroic Efforts: The Emotional Culture of Search and Rescue Volunteers*. New York: New York University Press.

Additional readings will be made available throughout the semester on D2L.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. **This course is labor-intensive.** You will spend a lot of time outside of the classroom in your field setting. I expect you to spend at least eight hours a week in your setting and an additional two hours writing your in-depth field notes.
2. Readings for the day need to be completed *before* the class meeting. Class activities and discussions will primarily draw from the assigned readings.
3. This class will be taught as a quasi-seminar and workshop. Therefore, talking, working, and thinking with others are an important part of this class. In order for discussions to take place, you will be required to share your experiences and questions. I will encourage all students to express opinions, critiques, and thoughts about others' comments and experiences. Remember, that we will be discussing the ideas, philosophies, and methodologies of field research, not each other.
4. **All assignments must be turned in on time. I deduct 10% of the assignment grade every class it is late. Late assignments will only be accepted within two class meetings of its original due date.**

EVALUATION COMPONENTS

Assignments: You will be able to get each assignment from the D2L page (Writing Assignments).

Each assignment is worth 10 points.....5 x 10 = 50 points.

In-class exercises: You will be put into small groups during class to discuss the material or individually tackle a task. You will write a summary of these exercises and submit to me. These will be unannounced and you cannot turn one in if you were not in class.

Each exercise is worth 5 points.....3 x 5 = 15 points.

Paper Sections: A full draft of each section is due on the day when we will be editing one another's papers. A deduction of 10% will occur if you do not have a full draft or miss class for this class.

Each assignment is worth 50 points.....2 x 50 = 100 points.

Methods Exam: A take-home essay exam.....50 points.

Individual Defense: The final part of the class is a defense of your analysis, and conclusions. Attendance is required, each day you miss 10% deduction will be imposed. Final presentation..... 10 points.

TOTAL POINTS = 225

Save all graded work for this course. If you do not have the original graded copy of your work, challenging your grade successfully will not be considered.

TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE

WEEK 1

Tu 1/12 Course Introduction & Thinking Topics
Th 1/14 Epistemology and Qualitative Research: Text 1 & 2

WEEK 2

Tu 1/19 Starting Where You Are: Text 3
Th 1/21 Getting In and Evaluating Sites

WEEK 3

Tu 1/26 Getting In and Evaluating Sites
Th 1/28 Library Research Tutorial (place – TBA)

WEEK 4

Tu 2/2 Site and Topic Decision
Assignment I
Th 2/4 Getting Along & Logging Field Notes: Text 5 & 8

WEEK 5

Tu 2/9 Interviewing: Text 6 & Articles: Weiss “Preparation for Interviewing” and “Issues in Interviewing”
Th 2/11 Research Ethics & Issues in the Field: Text 4
Assignment II & CITI Certificate

WEEK 6

Tu 2/16 Reflexivity & Positionality: Article: England “Getting Personal”
Th 2/18 Six Words: Article “Nuts, Schiz, Psycho”
Assignment III

WEEK 7

Tu 2/23 Introduction/Lit Review draft edit
Th 2/25 Field Day: Text 8
Introduction/Lit Review

WEEK 8

Tu 3/1 Workshop
Th 3/3 Workshop
Assignment IV

WEEK 9

Tu 3/8 Lois Intro – 3
Th 3/10 Lois 4 – 8

WEEK 10

Tu 3/15 *Sidewalk*
Th 3/17 *Sidewalk: Methods*

WEEK 12

Tu 3/29 Thinking Topics
Th 3/31 Asking Questions: Text 9

WEEK 13

Tu 4/5 Coding: Text 10
Th 4/7 Analysis: Text 11
 Methods Essay Exam

WEEK 14

Tu 4/12 Analysis: Text 11
Th 4/14 Analysis Meetings

WEEK 15

Tu 4/19 Analysis Meetings
Th 4/21 Data Analysis & Conclusion draft edit

WEEK 16

Tu 4/26 Individual Defense
 Final Data Analysis and Conclusion
Th 4/28 Individual Defense

FINAL WEEK

Tuesday 5/3 at 4:30 – 7 P.M.