

**EDHP 551**  
**APPLIED EDUCATIONAL ETHNOGRAPHY**

*“Gradually I came to feel as unwilling as he was to let a sentence stand if the meaning was not as unambiguously visible as a grizzly bear in a brightly lit kitchen. I discovered what every good writer knows, that getting down one’s exact meaning helps one to discover what one means.”*

*John Gardner*

**Fall 2010**

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WPH 701

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**Course Overview**

This course will focus on qualitative approaches of inquiry for the social sciences. In particular, we will focus on dilemmas and issues that pertain predominantly to higher education. Producing and disseminating good qualitative research necessitates strong writing and speaking skills. We will spend a considerable amount of time focusing on writing and public speaking, by reading examples of good qualitative research, through intensive writing workshops to allow you to focus on your own writing, and by active participation in class and oral presentations of our work.

The course will focus on three major stages of conducting qualitative research:

- 1) Observations and (Group and Individual) Interviews
- 2) Collecting, Analyzing, and Trustworthiness of Data
- 3) Writing up your Data and Developing an Argument

**Course Requirements**

We will focus a great deal on writing. At the beginning of the course, you will be divided into two groups. You will use these groups throughout the semester, both to give feedback on writing and for your final research paper (see below).

The course will revolve around one major research project—we want you to engage in your own research to understand the experiences of students, parents, and teachers with the University of Southern California’s Neighborhood Academic Initiative (NAI). Your first three papers will draw upon individual research while your final paper will ask you to draw upon your classmates’ data for analysis.

- September 29: 5 page observation paper due. You will go “out into the field” and observe your selected subjects. Some events you might choose to observe are morning instruction, after-school tutoring, the Saturday Academy, or parent workshops.
- October 13: Observation paper revisions due. You will receive approximately 20 comments on your observation paper. Five of these comments will be highlighted as “revision required.” You must address the issues raised in these 5 comments and resubmit the revisions by this date.
- October 20: 5 page interview paper due. You will interview your subject 1-2 times over the course of the semester. Each interview will last between 45 and 75 minutes. More details will be provided in class.
- November 3: Interview paper revisions due. You will receive approximately 20 comments on your interview paper. Five of these comments will be highlighted as “revision required.” You must address the issues raised in these 5 comments and resubmit the revisions by this date.
- November 10: 5 page focus group paper due. You will conduct a group interview. The interview group will last between 45 and 75 minutes. More details will be provided in class.
- December 8: 10 page final paper due. For this paper, you will exchange data with your writing group members to generate a final paper. This means that you will provide your group members with your interview transcripts and field notes along with copies of your two papers. You may consider collecting additional data for your individual project. You will also work together to identify appropriate articles for use in the literature review at the beginning of the paper. The majority of your literature review can draw on readings from the course, but you will each bring in one extra article to share with your group members. You must pick at least two of these five articles for use in your paper. **Please note:** Although everyone will draw upon the same data and literature, each student must write their own paper and can focus on different aspects of the interviews.

### **Textbooks and other materials**

Textbooks and a course reader are available for purchase in the USC Bookstore. We will use the following books in the course:

American Psychological Association (2009). Publication manual of the American Psychological Association. (6th ed.). Washington, DC: Author.

Kvale, S. (2007). Doing interviews. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Morgan, D. L. (1997). Focus groups as qualitative research. (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Nathan, R. (2005). *My freshman year: What a professor learned by becoming a student*. New York: Penguin.

Tierney, W.G., & Colyar, J. E. (Eds.). (2006). *Urban high schools students and the challenge of access: Many routes, difficult paths*. New York: Peter Lang.

Venkatesh, S. (2008). *Gang leader for a day: A rogue sociologist takes to the streets*. New York, Penguin.

### **Class Participation**

You are expected to attend and actively participate in every class session. Attendance and participation (or lack thereof) will be reflected in your final grade. Come to class prepared to discuss the day's material. This includes having done the reading and/or having completed any written assignments for that particular day.

Part of in-class participation will include using PRS Clickers to respond during in class assignments. PRS Clickers will be provided at the beginning of each class. You DO NOT need to purchase one from the University Bookstore.

Since timeliness of submitting data to your group members impacts their ability to begin their project, your participation grade will be significantly reduced if you do not come to class prepared with requested materials.

### **Grading**

The instructors will record grades for each assignment; however, grades will not be written on papers when returned to the students. Students will be provided a midterm grade and a final grade. The final grade will be based upon the following assignments:

Class participation and presentations: 15%

Five-page observation paper: 15%

Five-page focus group paper: 15%

Five-page interview paper: 15%

Exercises (rewrites, revisions): 15%

Final paper: 25%

### **Writing Style**

All assignments must be typed and should conform to the style and reference notation format outlined in the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*. The APA manual is a required text for this course and an essential tool for survival in graduate school.

Please study it carefully and refer to it often. If you are unsure about certain APA formatting and citation rules, refer to the manual. Points will be deducted from your papers if they are formatted incorrectly. See the class handout for additional guidance on appropriate style and

formatting.

### **Academic Integrity**

Graduate students and professionals ought not cheat or steal ideas from other authors or sources without giving appropriate credit and recognition to the originators of the work. Thus, any student found in violation of cheating or plagiarism will automatically receive a grade of 'F' in the course.

### **Academic Accommodations**

Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure the letter is delivered to me as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in STU 301 and is open 8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. The phone number for DSP is (213) 740-7766.

### **Incompletes**

IN – incomplete (work not completed because of documented illness or some other emergency occurring after the twelfth week of the semester; arrangements for the IN and its removal should be initiated by the student and agreed to by the instructor prior to the final exam); IX – lapsed incomplete.

**Conditions for Removing a Grade of Incomplete.** If an IN is assigned as the student's grade, the instructor will fill out the Incomplete (IN) Completion form which will specify to the student and to the department the work remaining to be done, the procedures for its completion, the grade in the course to date and the weight to be assigned to the work remaining to be done when computing the final grade. A student may remove the IN by completing only the portion of required work not finished as a result of documented illness or emergency occurring after the twelfth week of the semester. Previously graded work may not be repeated for credit. It is not possible to remove an IN by re-registering for the course, even within the designated time.

**Time Limit for Removal of an Incomplete.** One calendar year is allowed to remove an IN. Individual academic units may have more stringent policies regarding these time limits. If the IN is not removed within the designated time, the course is considered "lapsed," the grade is changed to an "IX" and it will be calculated into the grade point average as 0 points. Courses offered on a Credit/No Credit basis or taken on a Pass/No Pass basis for which a mark of Incomplete is assigned will be lapsed with a mark of NC or NP and will not be calculated into the grade point average.

## **CLASS SCHEDULE**

\* indicates that the reading is in the course reader

NOTE: All class meetings are on Wednesdays from 4:15-6:50 unless otherwise noted

**August 25, 2010**

### **Introduction & Course Overview**

Discussion of *Gang Leader for a Day*

Preview research project

Assign research groups

*1-2 page response to Venkatesh due*

**September 1, 2010**

### **On Qualitative Research and Writing**

\* Pamuk, My Father's Suitcase

\* Burawoy, Teaching Participant Observation

\* Luker, Field (and other) Methods from Salsa Dancing into the Social Sciences

Tierney and Colyar, Chapters 1-2

Nathan, Preface and Chapters 1-3

*Guest Speaker: Kim Thomas Barrios*

## **PART I: OBSERVATIONS AND INTERVIEWS**

**September 7, 2010**

### **Mastering APA**

**\*OPTIONAL CLASS MEETING\***

**11-12pm WPH 700**

**September 8, 2010**

### **Observations**

\* Shank, Observing

\* Merriam, Being a Careful Observer

\* Adler & Adler, Observational Techniques

\* Taylor & Bogdan, Chapter 2: Participant Observation

Emerson, Chapters 1-2

Nathan, Chapters 4-5

**September 15, 2010**

### **Ethics, IRBs and Interviews (Part I)**

\* Taylor and Bogdan, Chapter 3: Participant Observation

\* Taylor and Bogdan, Ethics in the Field

\* Kilbourn, The Art and Structure of a First Paragraph

Nathan, Chapters 6-7 and Afterword

*Annotated bibliography due (minimum of 3 sources)*

**September 22, 2010**

### **Ethics, IRBs and Interviews (Part II)**

\* Geertz, Thick Description

\* Rhoads, Whale Tales, Dog Piles, and Beer Goggles

\* Berkowitz & Padavic, Getting a Man or Getting Ahead

Kvale, Chapters 1-4

*Receive interview protocols*

*Sign up for individual appointments.  
Guest Speaker: Susan Rose*

**September 29, 2010**

**More on Interviews**

\* Tierney, Self and Identity in a Postmodern World  
Kvale, Chapters 5-8

***Midcourse Evaluation***

***Observation Paper Due***

**October 6, 2010**

**Focus Groups**

\* Kitzinger and Barbour, Introduction, The challenge and promise of focus groups

\*Hollander, The Social Context of Focus Groups

Morgan, Focus Groups as Qualitative Research

Tierney and Colyar, Chapters 4-5

**October 8, 2010**

**Mastering APA**

**\*OPTIONAL CLASS MEETING\***

**3-4pm WPH 700**

**PART II: COLLECTING AND ANALYZING DATA**

**October 13, 2010**

**Data Collection**

\* Mathison, Why Triangulate?

\* Kvale, From Speech to Text

Emerson, Chapters 3-4

***Observation Paper Revisions Due***

**October 20, 2010**

**Data Analysis**

Emerson, Chapter 6

Kvale, Chapter 9

Tierney and Colyar, 6-8

***Interview Paper Due***

**October 27, 2010**

**Reliability, Validity, and Trustworthiness, Part I**

\* LeCompte and Goetz, Problems of Reliability

\* Kvale, The Social Construction of Validity

\* Tierney and Clemens, Qualitative Research and Public Policy

Kvale, Chapters 9-12

**November 3, 2010**

**Reliability, Validity, and Trustworthiness, Part II**

\* Wolcott, On Seeking-and Rejecting-Validity

\* Maxwell, Understanding and Validity in Qualitative Research

***Interview Paper Revisions Due***

### **PART III: WRITING UP YOUR DATA AND DEVELOPING AN ARGUMENT**

**November 10, 2010**

#### **Writing and Presentation of Data**

\* Taylor and Bogdan, The Presentation of Findings

\* Creswell, Writing a Qualitative Study

*Guest Speaker: Zoe Corwin*

#### ***Focus Group Paper Due***

*Discuss Initial Findings*

*Post one article to share with your group members for literature review to Blackboard*

**November 17, 2010**

#### **Writing and Presentation of Data**

\* Creswell, Appendix E - An Ethnography

\* Emerson, Chapter 7

Tierney and Colyar, Chapter 3

*Finalize findings*

*Bring half a page write-up of your findings*

**November 25, 2010**

No class - Happy Thanksgiving

**December 1, 2010**

#### **From Draft to Final Text**

\* King, Selections from *On Writing*

Tierney and Colyar, Afterward

*Workshop final papers*

*Plan symposium presentation*

**December 8, 2010**

**Final Project Presentations (Symposium Format)**

***Final Paper Due***