

**ANTH 234**  
**Advanced Research Methods**

Instructor: Professor R. González  
Semester: Spring 2008  
Meeting Room: WSQ 4  
Meeting Time: TH 6:00-8:45 pm

Introduction

Anthropologists must be able to use a wide range of research methods in order to investigate a variety of real world problems. To help you achieve this, we will build upon basic ethnographic methods including participant observation and ethnographic interviewing—skills which you should have already learned in your undergraduate methods course.

The course should give you the knowledge necessary to design an appropriate methodological plan for conducting research projects. In particular, we will address the following topics:

- participant observation and the ethnographic interview
- methods that elicit "insider" perspectives
- methods for analyzing relationships of power
- techniques for conducting research using archives and other secondary data sources
- the comparative method and historical analysis
- individual life histories and other methods that explore individual lives in depth
- tracing connections (or "networks") linking people, things, and ideas
- non-verbal techniques including spatial analysis
- the relationship of anthropological methods to social science theory
- timeliness in anthropological research

Throughout, we will pay particular attention to integrating different methods and forms of data, presenting information to different audiences, and collecting, analyzing, and presenting data using various technological means.

The course is organized around three simulation exercises in which you will use different methodological approaches. You will read about these methods, discuss them in seminar, and work in small groups to determine how they might be applied to the simulation exercises. The goal is to help you assess the strengths and weaknesses of each particular method, and the conditions in which it is appropriate to use. Finally, you will have the opportunity to discuss different technologies that might be used for data collection, analysis, or presentation.

Although this graduate course is offered within the context of an applied anthropology M.A. program, you should be aware that the division between "applied" and "theoretical" anthropology is arbitrary. Indeed, the division emerged relatively recently (in the 1930s) in the U.S. The goal of this seminar is not so much to train capable applied anthropologists as it is to train capable anthropologists.

Required Readings

The following book is required for the course:

Pertti J. Pelto and Gretel H. Pelto, *Anthropological Research: The Structure of Inquiry* (2nd ed.)  
Jean J. Schensul et al., *Mapping Social Networks, Spatial Data, and Hidden Populations*

This may be purchased at the campus bookstore. In addition, a course reader including photocopied articles to be used in the second half of the course (Weeks 7-15) are available at the King Library reserve desk. You should come to the seminar with photocopies or printouts of the week's materials.

**Additional Recommended Readings**

Some of you may want to have more methods books in your library. I recommend the following:

- H. Russell Bernard, *Research Methods in Anthropology* (now in 4th ed.)
- A.L. Epstein (editor), *The Craft of Social Anthropology*
- Peggy Golde (editor), *Women in the Field*
- James Spradley, *The Ethnographic Interview*
- James Spradley, *Participant Observation*

**Course Format**

This course will be conducted as a student-led seminar. In other words, several times during the semester you (along with a partner) will be responsible for presenting the week's readings to your peers. You and your partner will also be expected to lead a critical discussion of the week's readings.

**Assignments and Weighting of Grades**

Assignments for this course include the following:

1. *Weekly reading summaries.* Each week, you should prepare a 2-page double-spaced summary of the week's readings. You should concisely summarize the main points as well as any criticisms you might have about the reading. Late reading summaries will not be accepted without documentation. Electronic copies will not be accepted. (2 points each; 26 points total)
2. *Technology discussion.* Once during the semester each of you will be responsible for making a brief presentation and discussion (10-15 minutes) to the seminar group about a particular technology and how it is being used by anthropologists today. (3 points for presentation; 3 points total)
3. *Simulation exercises.* You will participate in a series of three simulation exercises to be conducted in teams. Each exercise will focus upon a set of methods covered during a portion of the semester. Teams will be assigned by the instructor and will change from one simulation exercise to the next. Students will assume the role of applied anthropologists in a consulting group commissioned to solve a specific problem related to health and illness, environmental sustainability, immigration, or industry. More information will be given to you later in the course. (15 points for each simulation; 45 points total)
4. *Workshop.* This will be conducted during the scheduled final exam period (refer to course schedule). Each of you will have approximately 15 minutes to present ideas regarding your M.A. thesis or project, particularly possible methodological approaches that you might use in the research. You should also submit a 3-4 page summary of your plan. (10 points total)
5. *Participation.* You are expected to attend seminar each week and to actively participate in discussion. (1 point each week; 15 points total)

**Grading Distribution**

100	-	97	A+	79	-	77	C+
96	-	93	A	76	-	73	C
92	-	90	A-	72	-	70	C-
89	-	87	B+	69	-	67	D+
86	-	83	B	66	-	63	D
83	-	80	B-	Below 63			F

## Course Policies

All assignments must be completed in order to pass. No late assignments will be accepted unless student presents documentary evidence of illness, death in family, jury duty, etc. No assignments will be accepted via e-mail—I must receive hard copies of all assignments. No makeup exams will be given unless student presents documentary evidence of illness, death in family, jury duty, etc. Cell phones must be turned off during class to avoid disruption. Any student who allows a cell phone to ring during class will first be given a warning. A second infraction of this rule will be promptly reported to the Office of Judicial Affairs.

Plagiarism, cheating, and academic dishonesty will be reported to the University. Your own commitment to learning, as evidenced by your enrollment at SJSU, and the University's Academic Integrity Policy requires you to be honest in all your academic course work. Faculty members are required to report all infractions to the Office of Judicial Affairs (the University's academic integrity policy can be found at <http://www2.sjsu.edu/senate/S04-12.pdf>).

Disabled students with special needs should make arrangements with me as soon as possible. If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of disability, or if you need special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible, or see me during office hours. SJSU Presidential Directive 97-03 requires that students with disabilities register with DRC (Disability Resource Center) to establish a record of their disability.

Laptop computers are not permitted in class unless you have a note from the Disability Resource Center. You should write lecture notes by hand, or else make audio recordings of lectures and transcribe them after class. Cell phones are allowed only if they are silent and kept out of sight.

## Office Hours

Office hours are held Tuesdays and Thursdays from 12:00-2:30 pm in CL 402G. I may be reached by telephone at 924-5715.

## Course Objectives

Students who successfully complete this course will be able to:

1. Develop and assess research questions and problems and to link them to quantitative and qualitative data using specific research designs.
2. Conceptualize problems from a comparative perspective and investigate them under limited time constraints.
3. Locate, appropriately use and assess secondary data sources such as surveys and censuses.
4. Use selected methods of cognitive and linguistic anthropological approaches to elicit multiple perspectives on problems.
5. Use various archival resources (including local media, organizational documents, government documents) to investigate problems.
6. Conduct narrative research approaches (including life history, "day in the life," etc.) and integrate them with other research methods.
7. Conduct network-based research that elicits structures of interconnections among people and that trace the movement of people, artifacts, and ideas.
8. Synthesize the results of research for different audiences using appropriate modes of presentation.
9. Understand the role of information technologies in data collection, analysis, and presentation (including visual anthropology).

## Departmental Objectives

1. Understanding culture as the distinguishing phenomenon of human life, and the relationship of human biology and evolution.
2. Awareness of human diversity and the ways humans have categorized diversity.
3. Knowledge of the significant findings of archaeology, cultural anthropology, and physical anthropology, and familiarity of the important issues in each sub-discipline.
4. Knowledge of the history of anthropological thought and its place in modern intellectual history.
5. Comprehension of migration, colonialism, and economic integration as significant phenomenon shaping global society.
6. Ability to access various forms of anthropological data and literature.
7. Awareness of importance and value of anthropological knowledge in contemporary society, and the ability to apply it to social issues.
8. Knowledge of the research methods of the sub-disciplines of anthropology, and the ability to apply appropriate research methods in at least one sub-discipline.
9. Ability to present and communicate anthropological knowledge and the results of anthropological research to different audiences.
10. Knowledge of political and ethical implications of social research.

\*\*\*\*\*

## COURSE READINGS AND TOPICS (Subject to change with fair notice)

<u>Week 1</u> (Jan 24)	<u>Introduction and Course Overview</u> Malinowski, "Method and Scope of Anthropological Fieldwork" (distributed by instructor) Evans-Pritchard, "Reminiscences and Reflections on Fieldwork" (distributed by instructor)
<u>Week 2</u> (Jan 31)	<u>Methodological Domains: Concepts, Propositions, Theories, Models</u> Pelto and Pelto, "The Domain of Methodology" (Ch. 1) Pelto and Pelto, "Science and Anthropology" (Ch. 2)
<u>Week 3</u> (Feb 7)	<u>Emic and Etic Perspectives: Insider's and Outsider's Views</u> Pelto and Pelto, "Operationalism in Anthropology" (Ch. 3) Pelto and Pelto, "Emic and Etic Approaches" (Ch. 4)
<u>Week 4</u> (Feb 15)	<u>Research Tools and Research Design</u> Pelto and Pelto, "Tools of Research I" (Ch. 5) Pelto and Pelto, "Tools of Research II" (Ch. 6) Pelto and Pelto, "Notes on Research Design" (Appendix A) <i>Technology Discussion: Pens, Pencils, Paper, and Index Cards</i>
<u>Week 5</u> (Feb 21)	<u>Sampling, Measuring, Statistics</u> Pelto and Pelto, "Counting and Sampling" (Ch. 7) Pelto and Pelto, "Measurement, Scales, and Statistics" (Ch. 8) <i>Technology Discussion: Audio Recorders, Transcription, and Voice Recognition</i>
<u>Week 6</u> (Feb 28)	<u>Analyzing and Interpreting Data</u> Pelto and Pelto, "Art and Science in Field Work" (Ch. 9) Pelto and Pelto, "Research Methods, Relevance, and Applied Anthropology" (Ch. 10) <i>Technology Discussion: Tablet PCs</i>

**SIMULATION EXERCISE #1 AND IN-CLASS PRESENTATION DUE ON FEBRUARY 28**

Week 7  
(Mar 6) Timeliness, Note Taking, and Other Skills  
\*Beebe, "Basic Concepts and Techniques of Rapid Appraisal"  
\*Bernard, "Field Notes: How to Take Them, Code Them, Manage Them"  
*Technology Discussion: Analog Cameras, Digital Cameras, and Photography*

Week 8  
(Mar 13) Mapping and Analyzing Spaces  
\*Cromley, "Mapping Spatial Data"  
*Technology Discussion: Global Positioning System and Geographic Information System*

Week 9  
(Mar 20) Comparative Methods  
\*Sahlins, "The Original Affluent Society"  
\*Nader, "Comparative Consciousness"  
*Technology Discussion: Video Cameras*

**SPRING RECESS—MARCH 24-28**

Week 10  
(Apr 3) Life Histories and "Day in the Life" Analysis  
\*Steward, "Worker in the Cane" (excerpts)  
\*Lewis, "On the Edge of Mexico City: The Sánchez Family"  
*Technology Discussion: Qualitative Data Management and Analysis Software*

Week 11  
(Apr 10) Using Semantics to Explore Cultural Domains  
\*Spradley, "Analyzing Ethnographic Interviews"  
\*Spradley, "Making a Domain Analysis"  
\*Spradley, "Asking Structural Questions"  
\*Spradley, "Making a Taxonomic Analysis"  
*Technology Discussion: Audio and Video Presentations*

**SIMULATION EXERCISE #2 AND IN-CLASS PRESENTATION DUE ON APRIL 10**

Week 12  
(Apr 17) Studying Up, Down, and Sideways: Methods for Analyzing Power  
\*Nader, "Up the Anthropologist—Perspectives Gained from Studying Up"  
\*Nader, "The Vertical Slice"  
*Technology Discussion: Excel, Calc, and Other Spreadsheets*

Week 13  
(Apr 24) Network Analysis, Hidden Populations, and the Global Context  
\*Trotter, "Ethnographic Network Studies"  
\*Singer, "Studying Hidden Populations"  
\*Marcus, "Ethnography in/of the World System"  
*Technology Discussion: Power Point, Impress, and Other Presentation Software*

Week 14  
(May 1) Archival Information and Secondary Data  
**READINGS TO BE ANNOUNCED**  
*Technology Discussion: Creating Websites and Online Presentation Media*

Week 15  
(May 8) Combining and Integrating Different Methods  
Pelto and Pelto, "Building Anthropological Theory: Methods and Models" (Ch. 11)

**SIMULATION EXERCISE #3 AND IN-CLASS PRESENTATION DUE ON MAY 8**

**FINAL EXAM (WORKSHOP)—Thursday, May 15 (5:15-7:30 pm) in regular class meeting room**  
\*Articles marked with an asterisk are included in the course reader on file in the King Library Reserves.