Course Description

The goal of this course is to introduce students to the range of qualitative research methods associated with cultural studies. As such, the course covers a spectrum of methodological tools, including narrative inquiry, interviewing, ethnography, participant observation and oral history. Over the course of the semester, we will:

* Produce and fine-tune our research questions
* Conceptualize their scholarly field
* Develop suitable methodological strategies
* Decide on a system and rationale for analyzing data

Throughout, we will think through the controversies and challenges that surround each methodology, drawing attention to our own positionality and the ethics of research.

Materials

All of the course readings are gathered in a single packet, available at xxx

Requirements

The goal of this course is to accompany students through the small-scale research project that they will conduct during the semester. The evaluation criteria outlined below is meant to reflect the various stages along this process.

Participation & Discussion Questions (15 points)
Attendance and participation are a must for this course, as each week’s readings will be situated and analyzed through classroom discussions. To facilitate this process, each student will be responsible for developing one discussion question in reaction to each week’s readings. These questions will be emailed to the group by Monday midnight, and the day’s discussion will begin with these questions. Students may be also asked to lead class discussion on selected readings.

Revised Version of Research Questions (10 points)
Revision of the student’s preliminary (ungraded) research question.

Preliminary Literature Review (15 points)
This 5-page paper will be a preliminary paper that outlines the scholarly literature relevant to the student’s research question.

Preliminary Method Statement (15 points)
This 5-page paper will be a preliminary method statement that outlines the manner in which the student will collect data and the rationale behind this choice.

_Preliminary Data Analysis_ (15 points)
This 5-page paper will be a preliminary attempt at analyzing the data that the student has amassed.

_Final Paper_ (30 points)
This 20-page paper will consist of the compilation and further development of each of the previous sections, further refining the research’s questions, its “field”, methods and analysis.

**Tentative Course Schedule**

**Week 1**

Introduction

Tu, Feb 6th
Introduction to Cultural Studies & Qualitative Research

**Week 2**

_Practicalities I: Research Design_

Tu, Feb 13th
Pickering, “Experience and the Social World”
Booth, Colomb and Williams, _The Craft of Research_ (Ch. 1, 2, 3, 4)
Rossman, _Designing Qualitative Research_ (Ch. 3)
* Bring Preliminary Version of Research Questions to Class

**Week 3**

_Orality, Speech and Discourse_

Tu, Feb 20
Ong, _Orality and Literacy_ (Excerpts)
Austin, _How to do Things with Words_ (Excerpts)
Goffman, “On Face-Work”
Students’ summary of discourse analysis

**Week 4**

_Narrativity and Personal Narrative_

Tu, Feb 27
Lawler “Stories and the Social World”
Langellier, “Personal Narratives: Perspectives on Theory and Research”
Scott, “Experience”
Laub, “Bearing Witness or the Vicissitudes of Listening”
* Bring Second Version of Research Questions to Class

**Week 5**

_Practicalities II: Interviewing_

Tu, March 6th
Seidman, _Interviewing as Qualitative Research_ (Ch. 2, 6, 7, 8)
Briggs, _Learning How to Ask_ (Ch. 3, 5)
Ruth First: _The Barrel of a Gun: Political Power in Africa and the Coup D’état_ excerpts
Week 6  

*The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography*

Tu, March 13th  
Geertz, “Thick Description: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture”  
Clifford, “Partial Truths”  
Kandiyoti “Pink Card Blues: Trouble and Strife at the Crossroads of Gender”

Week 7  

*Positionality and the Ethnographer*

Tu, March 20th  
Abu-Lughod, “Writing Against Culture”  
Rosaldo, “The Use and Abuse of Anthropology”  
Narayan, “How Native is a Native Anthropologist?”

*Bring Preliminary Literature Review to Class*

Week 8  

*Practicalities III: Participant Observation*

Tu, March 27th  
O’Reilly, “Participating and Observing”  
Emerson, Fretz and Shaw, *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes* (Ch. 1, 2)  
Edmondson, “‘Saving Whiteface’ in Tanzania”  
Nightingale “Why Observing Matters” (Chapter 6 in Pickering)

Week 9  

*History and Memory*

Tu, April 3rd  
Foucault, “Nietzsche, Genealogy, History”  
Nora, “Between History and Memory”  
Connerton, “Bodily Practices”

Week 10  

*Oral History: Conflicts and Challenges*

Tu, April 10th  
Portelli, “The Death of Luigi Trastulli: Memory and Event”  
Borland, “That’s Not What I Said”  
Leyla Neizi “Exploring Memory through Oral history in Turkey” or “Oral History and Memory Studies in Turkey”

*Bring Preliminary Method Statement to Class*

Week 11  

*SPRING BREAK*

Week 12  

*Practicalities IV: Data Analysis and Ethics*

Tu, April 24  
Alasuutari, *Researching Culture* (Ch. 11, 12, 13)  
Fine, “Ten Lies of Ethnography”  
Deacon “Why Counting Counts” (Pickering chapter 5)

Week 13  

*Work on data collection*
Tu, May 1\textsuperscript{st}

**Week 14**  
*Thinking About Cultural Criticism*

Tu, May 8\textsuperscript{th}  
Foucault, “What is Critique?”
Hall, “Cultural Studies: Two Paradigms”
De Certeau, “Walking in the City”
Abu-Lughod, “The Romance with Resistance”

**Make-up class**  
*Reaching for Terms: Resistance, Agency and Freedom*

To be scheduled  
Foucault, “The Subject and Power”
Butler, “Implicit Censorship and Discursive Agency”
Mahmood, “The Subject of Freedom”

*Bring Preliminary Data Analysis to Class*

**Final Paper Due:** TBA