

**ATA 688**  
**ETHNOGRAPHIC METHODS**  
**Spring 2009**

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This course is particularly intended for students who are (or are interested in) working on a contemporary topic for their master thesis/dissertation and who need to conduct field research and interviews for their study. Those students who do not belong to this category but who are interested in learning about field research and qualitative methods through practice are also welcome.

Class readings and discussions will form the basis of our discussions on issues of access, relations, positionality and ethics in field research. Each seminar participant will formulate a research project, ideally related to their larger project/thesis and conduct a series of research assignments including document analysis, participant observation and interviewing. There will be no class during some of the week when students are conducting their research. Throughout the semester, each member will submit a written report/paper on their research assignments and deliver a presentation in class. We will together discuss each other's project and reflect on the problems encountered in research and possible ways of overcoming them. Students will be graded on the basis of class participation and research assignments/papers.

Participation in Class Discussion 30 %

Effort Devoted to Fieldwork: field exercises, in class presentations and written reports 40%

Final Paper 30 %

**Book:**

Martin Hammersley and Paul Atkinson. 2007. *Ethnography: Principles in Practice*. Routledge.

Karen O'Reilly. 2005. *Ethnographic Methods*. Routledge.

**I- Introduction: Ethnography and Research Design**

M. Hammersley and P. Atkinson. "What is Ethnography." Pp: 1-20.

M. Hammersley and Paul Atkinson. "Research Design." Pp: 20-41

Karen O'Reilly. "Where to Begin." Pp: 25-59.

Jennifer Mason. "Planning and Designing Qualitative Research." In *Qualitative Researching*. Pp: 9-35.

## **II- Field Relations, Ethics and the Role of the Researcher**

M. Hammersley and P. Atkinson. "Access" and "Field Relations." Pp: 41-97.

M. Hammersley and P. Atkinson. "Ethics." Pp: 209-230

Ayşe Saktanber. 2002. "Prologue" and "Story of the Field: They'll Never Let You in" In *Living Islam*. I.B. Tauris

Rayna Rapp. 1999. "How Methodology Bleeds into Daily Life." In *Testing Women, Testing the Fetus*. Routledge.

***\*First Draft of Research Proposal Due***

## **III- Preparing for Fieldwork: Working with Documents**

M. Hammersley and P. Atkinson. "Documents and Other Artefacts, Real and Virtual." Pp: 121-140

Karen O Reilly. "Visual Data and Other Things." Pp: 157-175.

Jennifer Mason. "Documents and Visual Data: Logic and Rationale." In *Qualitative Researching*. Pp: 71- 81.

***\*Final version of Research Proposal Due.***

***\*Document Analysis Due***

## **IV- Participant Observation and Fieldnotes**

Karen O'Reilly. "Participating and Observing." Pp: 84-112.

Robert Emerson et al. 1995. *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes*. (Selection).

M. Hammersley and P. Atkinson. "Recording and Organizing Data." Pp: 140-158.

## **V- Interviewing**

M. Hammersley and P. Atkinson. "Oral Accounts and the Role of Interviewing." Pp: 97-121.

Karen O'Reilly. "Interviews" and "Practical Issues in Interviewing" Pp: 112-157.

H. Russell Bernard. 2000. "Unstructured and Semistructured Interviewing." In *Social Research Methods*. Sage Publications.

James Spradley. 1979. "Locating the Informant" and "Asking Descriptive Questions." In *The Ethnographic Interview*. Pp: 45-55; 78-92.

John Lofland and Lyn Lofland. 1984. "Data Logging in Intensive Interviewing." Pp: 53-62.

**\*Class Discussion: Bring to class a list of your interview questions for discussion**

\*Check Out: *Handbook of Interview Research : Context & Method*. Eds. Jaber F. Gubrium, James A. Holstein.

\*Additional Readings on Life Story and Oral History Interviews if necessary

## **VI- Analysis and Writing**

Readings to be Arranged.

### **LIST OF RESEARCH ASSIGNMENTS**

-Formulate a research project and submit a research proposal

-Preparation for field research: document analysis etc....

-Establish initial contact with your subjects and start to make research arrangements/set up appointments etc...

-Field exercise: Participant Observation

Submit Field Notes and Reflection Paper on Participant Observation.

In-Class Presentations and Discussions on the field exercise

-Field exercise: Conduct interviews

Submit Transcribed Interviews and Reflection Paper on Interviews

In Class Presentation and Discussion on Interviews

-Analysis of Data

In class presentation of preliminary analysis and discussion of ideas for the final paper

-Final Paper