Fall 2011
HUMA 5550 Field Research: Theory and Practice

Course instructor: Ma Jianxiong
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Time & Venue: Room 3416, Monday, 19:00-21:50
Office: Room 3340
Office Hours: Wednesday, 14:30-17:30

Descriptions:
In this course we explore theories, methods, and techniques in ethnographic field research. The current discussions on writing ethnography and textural representation are also covered in the course. Students are required to start their field research projects at the beginning of semester. The experiences and problems of students' fieldwork will be examined in the seminar.

Learning outcomes after completion of the course:
- Understand the anthropological approach of conducting field research.
- Understand the advantages and limitations of the anthropological field research method.
- Acquire a holistic perspective in conducting field research.
- Master the basic field research techniques.

Texts:
Crang, Mike and Cook, Ian

Hammersley, Martyn and Paul Atkinson

Davies, Charlotte Aull

Whyte, William Foote

Seminar Topics, Readings, and Assignments:

Week 1 (Sept. 5). Course organization, field work
Assignment: Review an ethnography and write an analysis of how the field data was collected, being used and presented in the ethnography. The review (not more than 5 pages) is due on Oct. 3, 2011.
Readings:
Haviland. Ch. 2.

Week 2 (Sept. 17). Nature of culture; ethnography
Readings:
Geertz, Clifford
Watson, James L. and Rubie S. Watson

Liu, Tik-sang and Siu-woo Cheung

Week 3 (Sept. 19). No class, Fieldtrip (TBA).

Week 4 (Sept. 26). Choosing a field site; research proposal
Assignment due: field notes due on very weekend since week 3.
Readings:
Burgess, Robert G.

Conaway, Mary Ellen

Hammersley and Atkinson, Ch. 3.

Keyes, Charles F.

Week 5. (Oct. 3). Audio-visual recording
Assignment due: The review on an ethnography.

Readings:
Asch, Timothy

Banks, Marcus

Collier, John, Jr. and Collier, Malcolm
Week 6 (Oct. 10). Participant-observation

Assignment due: A map of your field site (legends have to be provided). The map should reveal some forms of social relations. A short description of the map has to be provided (not more than a page).

Readings:
Becker, Howard S. and Blanche Geer

Gans, Herbert J.

Frankenberg, Ronald

Hammersley and Atkinson, Ch. 4.

Whyte, William Foote.

Week 7 (Oct. 17) Field notes
Assignment due: Photos of the field and activities.

Readings:
Burgess, Robert G.

Ottenberg, Simon

Werner, Oswald, and G. Mark Schoepfle

Week 8 (Oct. 24) Interviewing and key informants
Assignment due: Short description of the field site.

Readings:
Burgess, Robert G.

Hammersley and Atkinson, Ch. 5.

Termblay, Marc-Adelard

Whyte, William Foote

**Week 9 (Oct. 31). Life history, oral history and local document (I)**

**Readings:**

Angrosino, Michael V.

Burgess, Robert G.

Grele, Ronald J.

Hammersley and Atkinson, Ch. 6.

**Week 10 (Nov. 7). Life history, oral history and local document (II)**

**Readings:**

Mandelbaum, David G.

Portelli, Alessandro

Watson, I.C.
Faure, David, Bernard H.K. Luk, and Alice Ngai-ha Lun Ng  
1984  “The Hong Kong Region According to Historical Inscriptions.” In From Village to City, pp. 43-54. Eds. David Faure, James Hayes, and Alan Birch. Hong Kong: Centre of Asian Studies, University of Hong Kong.

Week 11 (Nov. 14). Fieldwork ethic  
Assignment due: Oral history report.  
Readings:  
American Anthropological Association  
(http://www.aaanet.org/stmtns/ethstmtnt.htm)  
(http://www.aaanet.org/committees/ethics/ethcode.htm)  
Hammersley and Atkinson, Ch. 10.

Jarvie, I.C.  

Joralemon, Donald  

Thorne, Barrie  

Wax, Murray I.  

Week 12 (Nov. 21). Strategies of analyses  
Readings:  
Geertz, Clifford  

Hammersley, Martin, and Paul Atkinson, Ch. 1.

Pratt, Mary Louise  
Harris, Marvin

Jianixong, Ma
2011 “Marriage and Land Property: Bilateral non-lineal Kinship and Communal Authority of the Lahu on the Southwest Yunnan Frontier, China.” In South East Asia Research, 19, 3, pp. 527-568.

Week 13 (Nov. 28) Writing ethnography
Readings:
Clifford, James

Crapanzano, Vincent

Marcus, George E., and Dick Cushman

Rabinow, Paul

Week 14. (Dec. 5) Project presentations

The research paper is due on Dec. 15, 2011.

III. Course requirements and grading:

Students are required to attend the seminar, to do presentations, to participate in class discussions, and to join fieldtrips. Assignments and the research paper should be submitted according to the schedule. All the assignments have to be typed and in double spacing.

Grading Scheme:

Assignments
Class attendance, presentations, discussions and field notes 20 points
Short description of the field site 5
Research proposal 5
Map of the field site 5
Photos of the field and activities 5
Oral history report 5
Review of an ethnography 5
Field notes and journals 10
Research paper 40
Total: 100 points

Documentary:
Margaret Mead and Samoa, GN671/S2/M37/1988; 51 mins.