Anthropology 195CE: Ethnography and Experience in Los Angeles

Community and Corporate Internship Course

Contact info for relevant profs & TAs here

Overview

Anthropology is a discipline that explores the diversity of human experience across time and space. It is also a discipline that has grounded its theoretical and analytical interventions in methods that seek to trace the concrete complexities social life in situ. Accordingly, anthropology provides resources to critically engage some of humankind's most vexing problems that range from intractable political conflicts to the consequences of globalization. The theoretical, analytical, and methodological tool kit that anthropologists rely upon is thus one that is, and should be, actively applied to the contemporary world around us, which significantly includes modern workplaces. Anthropology 195CE is a course that seeks to expose students to the concrete practice of anthropology outside of the classroom, in the larger Los Angeles community. Over the course of the 10-week quarter, Anthropology 195CE students draw on foundational examples of anthropological fieldwork to conduct their own analyses and interpretations of experiences in community and corporate internships. Weekly work culminates in a final ethnographic research paper.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students enrolled in this independent study course will have the opportunity to:

- Define and apply the following core methodological and theoretical concepts: civic engagement, social responsibility, experiential learning, including participant observation, reflexivity, situated knowledge, and new economy.

- Apply academic knowledge and critical thinking skills to address situations and challenges that arise in 21st-century work environments.

- Develop and execute a research paper integrating analysis of experiential learning (i.e. an internship) with knowledge gained from an academic discipline.

- Explore how off-campus work experience contributes to an undergraduate's intellectual, personal, and professional development and informs future career choices.

ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENTS:

In order to enroll in Anthropology 195CE, students must have at least a 3.0 GPA and complete a course contract. Follow the steps outlined in the enrollment procedure document. **You must have completed your intake appointment before you fill out your course contract.**
COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

1. Minimum of 80 hours of work at an off-campus internship (and a signed timesheet)
2. Complete CITI training certification
3. Weekly Written Assignments
4. Five one-on-one meetings (your intake meeting, plus four additional meetings)
5. Final Ethnographic Research Paper
6. Liability Waiver

Signed Timesheet

You must submit a timesheet with your final paper, signed by your supervisor and documenting the hours that you have worked this quarter. To pass the course, interns must work at least 8 weeks during the 10 week quarter AND work a minimum total of 80 hours (approximately 8-10 hours/week).

Failure to complete the minimum requirements and submit a signed timesheet will likely result in an automatic grade reduction to C-/NP. If for any reason you find that you must miss more than the equivalent of one week's regular shift at your internship or if you must end your internship early, you MUST inform your coordinator IMMEDIATELY. Your coordinator will consult with your internship supervisor and Center administrators about appropriate steps and may advise you to drop the course if it is determined that you are not in a position to pass. A copy of the timesheet is available on the course website.

CITI Training Certification

To ensure that you are familiar with the core ethical concerns associated with conducting social scientific research, you are required to complete the online CITI (Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative) Course for Social & Behavioral Researchers & Staff. You will need to hand in a copy of your certification for completing the course prior to beginning your internship.

To access the course you will need to create an account within the CITI website:
https://www.citiprogram.org/

Once your account is created be sure to select the instructional module labeled “Social & Behavioral Researchers & Staff.” The course takes an average of 4 hours to complete. More information about CITI certification can be found here: http://ora.research.ucla.edu/OHRPP/Pages/CITITraining.aspx

Weekly Written Assignments (40%):

Each week, you are required to complete a written assignment. This will typically consist of three parts.

- First, you will be asked to summarize the reading(s). Within the summary, highlight particular aspects of the reading(s) that will be important to an analysis of your internship field site. (Roughly one double-spaced page.)
- Second, you will be given specific questions to answer about the week's reading(s) in relation to your field site. Your objective is to demonstrate that you have done the in-depth mental work necessary to find and analyze anthropological phenomena occurring in your field site. You will need to include concrete and specific examples from your site. (Roughly 2 double-spaced pages)
- Third, starting in week 2, you will include roughly one page of typed field notes from your internship site. These can be rough and unorganized, and should focus on your own observations, questions, and evolving impressions of the anthropological phenomena (e.g. gender, space,
language, materiality, class, ethnicity, media and mediation) at issue in your internship. (Roughly one single-spaced page but can be more. More thorough field notes will make both your writing assignments and your final paper much easier to produce).

Finally, for each written assignment, please include 1-2 discussion questions based on the readings that you should prepare to discuss in your meeting with your coordinator. These should not be incorporated into the paper, but rather should be included as an addendum.

All assignments must be uploaded to the course website by Saturday at 11:59 pm. Each assignment is worth 10 points. 2 points will be deducted for every day the assignment is late.

**One-on-One Meetings/Participation (20%)**:

Schedule and attend biweekly discussion sessions with your coordinator (me) at the Center for Community Learning at least 5 times, including intake. Come to each 30-minute discussion session prepared to discuss your experiences at your internship, your weekly response papers, and your progress on your research paper. To receive full credit you must be prepared to have an engaged, interactive meeting. Appointments can be scheduled in person at CCL (Murphy A265); by calling CCL at 310-825-7865; or by emailing the front desk at cclmeetings@college.ucla.edu. Since I am not at CCL every day I am unable to schedule appointments personally, and I cannot meet you outside my office hours. Plan accordingly.

You are responsible for making your own appointments and for scheduling your 5 meetings evenly throughout the quarter (biweekly – i.e. every other week). Each meeting is worth 4 points. Showing up late and/or unprepared for a meeting will result in the loss of at least one point. If you arrive more than 10 minutes late, you will be asked to reschedule and the meeting will be worth only half credit. You may schedule only one meeting per week and MUST complete your second meeting by the end of Week 4 or the meeting will be considered late and will be worth only half credit. Repeated cancellation same-day cancellations are unacceptable may also result in a penalty. Any request to schedule meetings in consecutive weeks must be approved by the coordinator IN ADVANCE and may not be granted. Attending regularly scheduled meetings THROUGHOUT THE ENTIRE QUARTER is required in order to pass a 195CE course and failure to meet this expectation will likely result in an automatic grade reduction to C-/NP. You may be advised to drop at any point in the quarter if you are no longer in a position to pass the course and your site will be notified.

**Final Ethnographic Paper (40%)**:

For the final paper, you are producing a mini-ethnography of your field site in which you will try and bring the reader into the world of the place that you have been studying. Choose the two weekly paper topics that you found most interesting throughout the quarter. Find three outside scholarly articles (i.e., peer-reviewed, academic articles that are not on the course syllabus). Using these articles and two from the course, build on the analyses you conducted during the quarter. (GB2 This paper should present a clear thesis about YOUR individual and specific internship fieldsite and it should relate to a more general field of anthropological inquiry we have examined this quarter. You should draw on the concrete examples you used to write your analyses each week. The final paper should be approximately 8-10 pages, double-spaced, and use Times Roman, 12pt. font with 1-inch page margins. You will submit a paper proposal and annotated bibliography in Week 8, and a final draft of your paper during finals week.

**Liability Waiver:**

Available at the Center for Community Learning and required by UCLA for off-campus work.
WEEKLY READING AND ASSIGNMENTS

Week 1: An Introduction to Your Field Site in the New Economy

Readings:


Written Assignment (2 parts this week):

1. Briefly summarize the readings by Sweitzer & King and Joseph, and briefly describe your internship. What do you hope to gain, personally and professionally, through this internship? How do you foresee your role at the site and what steps will you take to make the most of your internship? (This should be roughly one page.)

   In contrast to Joseph, Gusterson and Besteman give us a sense of the wider economic context in which the intern economy operates.

2. Comparative question: In what ways do the forms of insecurity described by Gusterson and Besteman relate to internship experiences? How might the broader economic contours outlined in Gusterson and Besteman affect your internship, or your visions for future employment? This is a question you can return to at the end of the quarter in your reflection on the internship experience. (Your responses to these questions should be your second and third pages.)

Week 2: Ethnography and Fieldnotes

Readings:


Written Assignment (this will consist of 3 parts most weeks starting now):

1. Summarize the arguments of Geertz & Emerson.

2. Questions: Why do Emerson et al. believe so little has been published about writing field notes? What is the benefit of reviewing such practices? What are the advantages of writing field notes as opposed to keeping a journal? Using your own words, what is meant by participant observation, immersion and resocialization? What is the relationship between field notes and "thick description”? What will it mean to write field notes at your internship?

3. Fieldnotes: Spend 10-15 minutes at your internship site observing and writing field notes and include this as a final page or more of your submitted assignment. Prepare to do this every week. (You can also write these notes once you’veleft your internship, if that makes more sense. But be sure to write them the same day - details are important - and consider jotting notes to yourself during work, to jog your own memory if you’ll write your notes later.) You will draw on this growing file of notes both for the specific examples you give in your reading responses and for your final paper.
Week 3: Ethnography continued — Introduction to Participant Observation

Readings:

- "Ethnographer in the Elevator"
  https://helix.northwestern.edu/blog/2013/04/elevator-ethnographer

Written Assignment:

1. Summarize Russell and Ho readings.
2. Questions: Use Russell’s definition and explanation of participant observation to think about your fieldsite. In what ways are you a participant? An observer? Are the lines between those roles clear? Drawing from Ho’s analysis of elevators, "the culture of hard work" and attention to gender, race and class, can you start to see similar issues in your internship site? Are there important differences?
3. Fieldnotes.

Week 4: Document/ Media Analysis

Readings:


Written Assignment:

1. Summarize readings
2. Questions: Besteman & Gusterson offer a critique of pundits, and beyond pundits, of media soundbites more broadly. What is their critique, and what do they suggest that anthropology offers instead? Boellstorff argues that the digital is not an object of study, but a methodological approach “founded in participant observation.” What does he mean by this? How is ‘the digital’ a research method? How can it be useful to you in your internship?
3. Fieldnotes: for your fieldnotes this week, pick a document or media source from your internship. This can be a website, a newspaper article, a series of advertisements, an employee handbook, or another document / media source of your choosing. Take notes on this source.
Week 5: Personhood, Corporations, Social Responsibility

Readings:

Written Assignment:
1. Summarize readings.
2. Questions: In the introduction, Welker discusses conventional ways of understanding a corporation, and a more anthropological way of understanding a corporation. What is the alternative that she offers? How does she relate that alternative to ways of understanding individual people? In the first chapter she introduces us to Corporate Social Responsibility employees at the Newmont Company. Describe some of their work-related political, ethical, and identity dilemmas.
3. Fieldnotes: In your fieldnotes this week, see if you can apply Welker’s anti-essentialist approach to your place of work. And, what dilemmas do you experience on the job (political, ethical, or in terms of identity) and what dilemmas do you see others face?

Week 6: Structural Violence and Dehumanization

Reading:

Written Assignment:
1. Summarize the reading
2. Questions: What are the three most problematic characteristics on the various forms of structural violence impacting migrant farm workers in the US? Draw on your general knowledge and at least one concrete example to answer the following questions: How do the authors define structural violence?
3. Fieldnotes: Are there any ethnographically discernable ways in which your organization/company rely upon and/or perpetuate forms of structural violence that impact the everyday lives of its workers (whether temporary, part-time, or full-time). Do such structures lead to “dehumanization”? If, so, in what ways? How do conditions differ between different places in the work hierarchy? How would you alleviate these issues?
**Week 7: Gender in the Work Place**

Reading:

Written Assignment:
1. Summarize the reading. What does Schilt mean when she describes transmen as having an "outsider-within" perspective? Why does this make transmen interesting to study when examining workplace discrimination? What kinds of workplace advantages did most of her participants experience after transitioning to male identities? Some participants reported no advantages after transitioning. What limitations characterized the experiences of this group?
2. Questions: How does gender relate to respect and recognition in the workplace? How would you organize a workplace to counteract some of these issues?
3. Fieldnotes: Think about the role of gender in your workplace. Are there any patterns of interaction that vary between male and female workers? Is there an equal representation of genders across different types of jobs or assignments?

**Week 8: Paper Proposal & Finding Outside Sources**

Reading:
- Citation Guidelines and References Search Documents

Written Assignment (2 parts this week):
1. Identify the two weekly assignments that you plan to use to guide your research paper and describe how the fieldwork you did for those assignments links to a larger topic of anthropological inquiry. After identifying your research topic and shaping a research question for the final paper, create an annotated bibliography containing your three outside references**. An annotated bibliography includes the proper citation of the book/article and a 1-2 paragraph summary of the author’s specific argument. Do not simply cut and paste the abstract.
2. In the manner we have done throughout the quarter, how does each of these three outside articles relate to your internship field site and provide context for your ethnographic notes?

**Please bring a hard copy of your three outside sources to your 4th or 5th meeting with your coordinator. As you read through the ethnographies assigned for the class, think about how you may want to structure your final paper. We strongly encourage you to model your own paper after one of them.
**Week 9: Interviews**

Readings:

Written Assignment (1 part this week):
1. Interview one person at your internship site (the individual you choose is up to you, as is the topic, but please make sure the interview is at least 15 minutes long). Please provide documentation of the interview in the form of a direct transcript or a detailed description of what transpired in the conversation. Write an analysis on the topic of your choice incorporating some of the quotes from your interview. Data from your interview should appear in your mini-ethnography. You will need to record your interview to ensure that your quotes are accurate.

**Week 10: Final Papers**

Readings:
- No reading this week.

Written Assignment (just 1 part, but it's a big one):
1. Complete and turn in your mini-ethnography via the course website by **5pm, Friday of week 10**. For every 24-hour period that your paper is late, your (paper) grade will be deducted by one-third of a letter grade (that means that if you upload your paper at 5:10pm on Friday, you will lose 1/3 of a letter grade, from A to A-).
POLICIES REGARDING ACADEMIC HONESTY AND GRADING:

All policies in the UCLA Catalog regarding academic dishonesty apply to 195CE internship courses, including policies regarding plagiarism. When warranted, infractions will be reported to the Dean of Students and may result in disciplinary action and/or expulsion from the university. UCLA's complete policy regarding academic dishonesty can be found at the following website:

http://www.deanofstudents.ucla.edu

The Center for Community Learning makes every effort to accommodate students with disabilities. If you wish to request an accommodation, please contact the Office for Students with Disabilities as soon as possible at A255 Murphy Hall, 310.825.1501 or 310.206.6083 (telephone device for the deaf). Website: www.osducla.edu Students should also notify the internship coordinator about any disability issues at the start of the quarter so that appropriate accommodations can be arranged and coordinated with the OSD well in advance of course assignments and due dates.

Grading Scale

A    94-100
A-   90-93
B+   87-89
B    83-86
B-   80-82
C+   77-79
C    73-76
C-   70-72
D+   67-69
D    63-66
D-   60-62
F    0-59

**NOTE: Students taking the course on a Pass / No Pass basis must earn a C or better (73%) in the class OVERALL in order earn a grade of Pass in the course. Additionally, be advised that your internship will be notified at any point in the quarter if you are in danger of not passing this course-regardless of whether you are taking the course for a letter grade or Pass / No Pass. You should also know that regardless of student performance, all site supervisors are contacted at least twice during the term for mandatory check-ins.**