

SOC 478: Analysis in Field Research Methods (FALL 2016; DRAFT 4.15)

Classroom: Webster Hall Room 102
Class time: Tuesday/Thursday 12:00-1:15
Instructors: Sang-hyoun Pahk (pahks@hawaii.edu; Saunders 241)
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Office Hours: TBD
Prerequisite: SOC 300

Course Description

This course is designed to provide advanced undergraduate sociology majors with an opportunity to practice real qualitative research. The best way to learn qualitative field research is by doing it. However, because semesters are not long enough for students to design and execute a full research project, most methods courses culminate in a research proposal that incorporates only a small amount of data. This course is organized around one large collaborative class project which we (including the instructor) will all contribute to. Through this project, students will learn the techniques common to many qualitative approaches including conducting a literature review, observing and recording social interaction, conducting interviews, and collecting and analyzing textual evidence. A suitably complex but accessible research topic will be chosen early in the semester by the instructor with input from the class. Students will each contribute to data collection, the instructor will compile this data in an online format accessible to everyone, and then students will each produce written analyses using all or part of the data we have collected as a class.

One potential disadvantage of structuring the course like this is that it cannot offer a broad survey of different qualitative approaches (as many methods classes do). Because we are all working on (different aspects of) one large project, we will learn only one method -- institutional ethnography (IE). Not to worry. The skills that students acquire over the course of the semester should translate to other qualitative methods that students may wish to pursue in the future. Moreover, each of these techniques serves a specific purpose in institutional ethnography that helps us understand what kinds of things we look for in observation, what we ask and listen for in interviews, and how we identify and analyze texts. It is a focused practice that facilitates the acquisition of these skills.

Finally, unlike in some other models of scientific inquiry, the writing process itself is a huge part of qualitative research. In other words, the writing process is itself part of the discovery process -- as we "write up" our findings, we come to new insights that help us "see" more in the data we have collected. Thus, this course will not focus only on data collection. Instead, we will take advantage of our numbers to collect adequate data quickly, and focus the second half of the course primarily on writing and revising in order to refine our understanding of our chosen topic. Students should be prepared to give constructive feedback to their classmates and receive it in return.

Student Learning Objectives

1. Students will learn the principles of institutional ethnography (IE) and be able to articulate in writing both the procedures and the theoretical underpinnings of the method.
2. Students will learn techniques for the collection of qualitative data and demonstrate the ability to apply these techniques in the context of the class project.
3. Students will learn how and why we conduct literature reviews and contribute to the production of a literature review.
4. Students will produce clear written analysis of collaboratively collected data in accordance with the principles of IE.
5. Students will actively participate in the design and execution of a large collaborative research project and demonstrate the ability to discuss, collaborate, revise, and present different aspects of that project for and with their classmates.
6. Students will learn to give and receive constructive feedback on their writing. Students will improve as writers.

Writing Intensive Requirements

This course fulfills the University of Hawaii's writing intensive focus requirements. The criteria for these are as follows:

1. The class uses writing to promote the learning of class materials.
2. The class provides interaction between the instructor and students while students do assigned writing.
3. Written assignments contribute significantly to each student's class grade.
4. The class requires students to do a substantial amount of writing -- a minimum of 4,000 words, or about 16 pages.
5. To allow for meaningful professor-student interaction on each student's writing, the class is restricted to 20 students.

Kokua Statement

Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability is invited to contact me privately. I would be happy to work with you, and the KOKUA Program (Office for Students with Disabilities) to ensure reasonable accommodations in my course. KOKUA can be reached at (808) 956-7511 or (808) 956-7612 (voice/text) in room 013 of the Queen Lili'uokalani Center for Student Services

Plagiarism

The following definition of plagiarism comes from the UH-Manoa Student Conduct Code: *Plagiarism includes but is not limited to submitting, in fulfillment of an academic requirement, any work that has been copied in whole or in part from another individual's work without attributing that borrowed portion to the individual; neglecting to identify as a quotation another's idea and particular phrasing that was not assimilated into the student's language and style or paraphrasing a passage so that the reader is misled as to the source; submitting the same written or oral or artistic material in more than one course without obtaining authorization from*

the instructors involved; or "drylabbing," which includes obtaining and using experimental data and laboratory write-ups from other sections of a course or from previous terms.

University of Hawai'i at Manoa Student Conduct Code (1992), p. 6

Required Texts

All required readings will be available online or distributed in class.

Assignments and Grading

In-class writing assignments, plus attendance and participation (20%)

- The first 5 minutes of every class meeting will be dedicated to in-class writing assignments.
- The topic for these assignments will change every time. I may ask you to report on your experiences in the field, to recall and summarize key points from previous class meetings, to report what you understood or did not understand from the reading assignment, or something else entirely.
- You may hand-write and turn in these assignments on paper, or you may type the assignments on your laptop and upload them.
- I am not looking for "correct" answers for these assignments. They will help us focus on the topic of the day and provide a starting point for class discussions.
- There will be a total of about 30 of these short assignments. I will read all of them, but only grade for completion. Basically, I collect these instead of taking attendance.
- Together, these will comprise 20% of your grade. Come to class, be on time.

Short papers (10%)

- Reflection paper:
 - Write something about being a student. For most of us, our most consistent and direct interaction with an institution comes through our position as students. Write three pages on your experience as a student, focusing on the particular challenges you have faced (perhaps with tuition, financial aid, time management, fulfilling major or gen ed requirements, selecting a major, selecting courses, housing, transportation, access, etc.). Be as specific as you can be, but don't use anyone's name.
 - Length 2-3 pages, graded for completion.
 - Due Thursday August 25.
 - 5% of your final grade.
- IE summary:
 - In this paper, you will demonstrate that you understand the basic principles of data collection in Institutional Ethnography. Consider some of the following questions: What is the purpose of research in IE? What is the role of the researcher? What are some important ethical considerations that come up for IE researchers? What is a standpoint? What is a problematic? What are ruling relations? Why do we care about these concepts?
 - Length 4-5 pages, graded for completion and quality.

- Due Tuesday September 6.
- 5% of your final grade. If you do poorly on this paper, you will have the opportunity to revise it. If everyone does poorly on this paper, I will turn the assignment into an in-class exam.

Texts (10%)

- Identify, collect, and upload key texts that organize the everyday life of our research subjects. Include handbooks, guides, instructions, and especially any and all official forms that subjects must fill out.
 - Due Tuesday September 6.
 - 5% of your final grade.
- Form Analysis writing assignment
 - Analyze one form relevant to your problematic from the perspective of Institutional Ethnography. Consider questions like: How does this form work to turn the person filling out the form into an object legible to the institution? What purpose does this form serve? How does objectifying people in this way work to serve the purposes of the institution? What aspects of the person are important to the institution? What aspects of the person become invisible? What are the potential consequences of the work that this form does?
 - Length 4-5 pages, graded for completion and quality.
 - This is a difficult assignment and most people have a hard time with it on the first try. You will have the opportunity to revise this paper after I grade it and provide feedback.
 - Due Tuesday September 13.
 - 5% of your final grade.

Interview (15%)

- Identify a person to interview. You may choose to work in small groups to conduct a focus group interview. In that case, identify the group.
- Interview questions.
 - Draft due Tuesday September 20.
 - Revised questions due Thursday September 22.
 - 5% of your final grade.
- Transcription of interview in word format, uploaded to the shared folder.
 - Due Thursday October 6.
 - 5% of your final grade.
- Interview Analysis writing assignment.
 - Analyze the interviews that are relevant to your problematic (this does not necessarily have to include the one you conducted, but it probably will). This analysis must be conducted from the perspective of Institutional Ethnography. More detailed instructions will be provided later in the semester.
 - Length 4-5 pages, graded for completion and quality.
 - Due Tuesday October 18.

- 5% of your final grade.

Literature review (15%)

- Find three relevant peer-reviewed journal articles. Upload them in pdf format to the shared class folder.
 - Graded for completion.
 - Due Tuesday September 27.
 - 5% of your final grade.
- Skim three articles for key excerpts. Copy those excerpts into a word file and submit them to the instructor.
 - Graded for completion.
 - Due Tuesday October 4.
 - 5% of your final grade.
- Literature Review writing assignment:
 - Select a problematic. Write an introduction to your problematic and a short literature review explaining what we know about it. More detailed instructions will be provided later in the semester.
 - Length 4-5 pages, graded for completion and quality.
 - Due Tuesday October 11.
 - 5% of your final grade.

Final Paper (30%)

- For this final paper, you will be able to draw on any of the materials we have collected together, including journal articles, observational data, interviews, and texts.
- Research papers typically include the following sections:
 - Abstract
 - Introduction
 - Literature Review
 - Methods
 - Findings
 - Discussion
 - Conclusion
 - References
- That is a lot. But don't worry, you have working drafts of many of these sections already. The Literature Review writing assignment will form the basis for your introduction and literature review. IE summary paper can be adapted for your methods section. The Interview analysis paper and Text analysis paper can be adapted for your findings and discussion sections.
- As part of the process for revising the paper, you will read one classmate's draft and offer constructive feedback. You will turn in this feedback to the classmate and to me, and be graded on your effort.
- You will receive feedback on your own draft from me and from a classmate.
- Length 20-30 pages, graded for completion and quality.

- First draft due Thursday November 3.
 - Graded for completion and quality.
 - 10% of your final grade.
- Feedback on classmate's draft due Tuesday November 15.
 - Graded for completion and quality.
 - 5% of your final grade.
- Final draft due Thursday December 8.
 - Graded for completion and quality.
 - 15% of your final grade.

Policy on late assignments

I have designed this course to require many smaller assignments instead of one or two large assignments. Keeping up with the assignments is essential for succeeding in the course. Stay on track and you will do well. Falling behind and you will probably fail.

Many assignments are designed as contributions to the collaborative data set or literature review, and are graded only for completeness. I will absolutely not accept late assignments for these. For assignments that are graded for quality, each day late will result in a letter-grade penalty. If you are facing a legitimate emergency, please contact me individually.

Class schedule*

* Subject to change.

Week 1	8/23/2016	8/25/2016
Topic:	Introduction to the course	
Reading:		
Due:		Reflection paper
Week 2	8/30/2016	9/1/2016
Topic:	What is Institutional Ethnography?	
Reading:		
Due:		Select a problematic
Week 3	9/6/2016	9/8/2016
Topic:		
Reading:		
Due:	IE summary; Text collection	
Week 4	9/13/2016	9/15/2016
Topic:	Interviews in IE	
Reading:		
Due:	Text analysis	Select interview subjects

Week 5	9/20/2016	9/22/2016
Topic:	Interviews part 2	
Reading:		
Due:	Draft interview questions	Revised interview questions
Week 6	9/27/2016	9/29/2016
Topic:	Literature Reviews	
Reading:		
Due:	Lit Review articles	
Week 7	10/4/2016	10/6/2016
Topic:	Literature Reviews part 2	
Reading:		
Due:	Lit Review excerpts	Interview transcripts
Week 8	10/11/2016	10/13/2016
Topic:	Analyzing interview data	
Reading:		
Due:	Literature Review Draft	
Week 9	10/18/2016	10/20/2016
Topic:	How to construct an argument	
Reading:		
Due:	Interview analysis	
Week 10	10/25/2016	10/27/2016
Topic:	How to structure a research paper	
Reading:		
Due:		
Week 11	11/1/2016	11/3/2016
Topic:	Connecting your analysis to the literature	
Reading:		
Due:		Final paper draft
Week 12	11/8/2016	11/10/2016
Topic:	Giving and receiving feedback	
Reading:		
Due:	Election Day	
Week 13	11/15/2016	11/17/2016
Topic:		

Reading:		
Due:	Feedback on classmate's draft	
Week 14	11/22/2016	11/24/2016
Topic:		
Reading:		
Due:		Thanksgiving
Week 15	11/29/2016	12/1/2016
Topic:		
Reading:		
Due:		
Week 16	12/6/2016	12/8/2016
Topic:		
Reading:		
Due:		Final paper