

COURSE SYLLABUS**SOC 478 *Analysis in Field Research Methods***

CRN# 84941 (3 Credits)

University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

Spring 2016

January 11th to May 13th

Instructor: Dr. Michael Dziesinski

Office:	Saunders Hall, Room 208
Office Hours:	Tuesdays 3:30-4:30 p.m. and by appointment.
Email:	dziesins@hawaii.edu
Course Website:	https://laulima.hawaii.edu/
Class Meeting Times:	Tuesday and Thursday, 1:30-2:45 P.M
Class Meeting Place:	Saunders 244

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course examines qualitative research methods used in the social sciences. Students will learn techniques for conducting sociology fieldwork, collecting qualitative data, analyzing, and presenting findings in an academic format. The primary focuses will be upon the techniques of participant observation, interviewing, recording field notes, and the subsequent coding and analysis into clear ethnographic documents. The two primary aims of this course are: A) to provide students with a survey of core qualitative research methods through contemporary approaches, social issues, and case studies, and B) to guide students through the stages needed to complete an independent ethnographic field research project.

II. STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Over the semester, in small groups, through class discussions, and in individual work, students will:

- 1) choose a research topic for fieldwork that can be completed in a single semester,
- 2) situate the topic in a relevant body of academic literature,
- 3) evaluate the ethical implications of the proposed research topic,
- 4) consider explanatory sociological theories for the research topic, and finally
- 5) calculate the impact that the student-as-researcher has on the data, analysis, and production of ethnographic knowledge. At the end of the semester, students will demonstrate their accumulated qualitative research techniques by,
- 6) turning in a final project to the instructor and,
- 7) presenting the results of their independent ethnographic project to an audience of peers.

III. REQUIRED TEXTS

1. Bailey, Carol A., 2007. *A Guide to Qualitative Field Research*, Second Edition. SAGE Publications. ISBN: 9781412936507
2. Emerson, Robert M., Rachel I. Fretz, and Linda L. Shaw. 2011. *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes*, Second Edition. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. ISBN: 9780226206837

IV. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Important: Qualitative sociological field research is a complicated academic activity that demands a considerable investment of time and energy by the investigator. A qualitative researcher needs to acquire a deep understanding of the research topic, while at the same time striving to remain apart from the phenomenon. The reward for diligence in performing qualitative research projects is a rich and multifaceted understanding of the chosen research topic. *In the interests of training students in the mastery of qualitative research methods in sociology, students in this class are expected to devote A MINIMUM OF THREE HOURS PER WEEK outside of class doing independent fieldwork.*

1) Class Participation [Project Progress Reports] (10%)

Class sessions are structured around the expectation that students have completed assigned readings and activities before to the class meeting time. Therefore, students should come to class fully prepared to engage with the assigned materials, classmates, and the instructor. Further, during in-class discussions, students are expected to contribute intelligent and informed observations on the subject matter.

In addition to in-class participation, outside of class sessions, students should be making weekly progress on their independent ethnographic project:

- a. **A major class participation component will be Project Progress Reports (PPRs):** students will write a ½-1 page report on any breakthroughs or obstacles encountered in the qualitative semester project for that week. Good qualitative research cannot be done at the last minute; it must be done over several months to build up an accurate picture of the setting, patterns of behavior, and the meanings subjects attach to their world. Self-assessment helps in monitoring research progress. *These progress reports throughout the term will serve as an auditing system to ensure students are doing work in a cumulative matter.*
- b. Regular progress reports on this student fieldwork project are also *vital* in order to properly contribute to class discussions throughout the semester on issues related to carrying out fieldwork. ***Be prepared to discuss your progress at the start of the first class session each week.***

2) Research Proposal [First Draft 5% & Revised 5%] (10%)

For the final ethnographic research project, early in the term students must submit to the instructor a two (2) page research proposal of 500 words. This proposal should outline the topic matter the student would like to investigate for their final project, their reasons for choosing the research topic, and any personal connection to the community or population subjects that are the focus of the study. Further, students must provide a short, clearly formulated hypothesis on the expected findings from the research population/issue. As the 478 project must be completed in a single semester, the first draft will be returned with instructor feedback/suggestions. If any practicality or feasibility issues are found by the instructor in the first draft, the student is expected to turn in a revised proposal for approval before starting field work. Further details for the expected structure of the proposal will be provided in class.

3) Research Timetable and Timeline (5%)

A major challenge of qualitative research is planning for the unexpected in the field while making the most of your time with the research population. As qualitative research is a cumulative process, time management and long term planning are crucial skills. An effective approach is to plan and schedule each stage of field work as thoroughly as possible before going into the field. By crafting a research timetable and timeline, the student researcher will have a road map that will help keep them on target to project completion by the end of semester. At the same time, a research schedule should also ensure that the student isn't tempted to wait until the last minute to attempt data collection or analysis. The research timetable should include a detailed schedule of the days and times that the student plans to perform fieldwork and a timeline when each phase of fieldwork with commence and conclude. Further details for this document will be provided in class.

4) Quizzes (10%)

Five (5) short quizzes will be administered during the semester in order to test student knowledge on assigned readings. Each quiz will offer 1-3 questions about the assigned materials. Students will have 15 minutes to complete each quiz.

5) Literature Review (10%)

After the instructor provides feedback on a student's research proposal, each student is required to write a short literature review in which to situate the proposed field research. This literature review will integrate four to six (4-6) relevant *academic sources* into the research proposal. Additional details on the literature review will be covered in class.

6) Mid-term Project Report (5%)

At the midway point of the term, it is important to determine if each student is on track with their semester research project. For this reason, each student will be required to give a brief mid-term project report in the classroom setting. This report will have three components. First, a typewritten 1-2 page paper in the same format as Project Progress Reports. Second, a 5-10 minute oral report to the class on the project thesis, obstacles, and progress. Third, constructive peer feedback by the rest of the class. This mid-term report serves three purposes. First is as an audit to hold students accountable and so stay on top of 478 coursework before the end of semester rush. Second, oral presentation and a Q&A session will provide students with presentation practice. Third, articulating project progress to classmates can help the student make analytical breakthroughs as well as offer solidarity on common research issues shared by other students.

7) Fieldnotes (10%)

Students should be prepared to submit their project's fieldnote write-ups, a minimum of 500 words, for instructor evaluation. Specific instructions for the format and presentation of the fieldnote submission will be provided in class.

8) Interview Transcription (10%)

Students should be prepared to submit their project's interview transcriptions, several interview sessions a minimum of ten minutes in length, for instructor evaluation. Specific instructions for the format and presentation of the transcription submission will be provided in class.

9) Class Presentation of Project Results (10%)

Students will prepare and present a 15-20 (15-20) minute report on the results of their research project and then field a brief Q&A session with the class. Preparation will include a PowerPoint presentation and class handouts. As with the mid-term, the rest of the class will provide feedback and peer evaluation on each presentation. The presentation can be very useful as any flaws or issues in the research can be corrected before turning in the final project paper on the last day of class. The last several weeks of class sessions in the semester will be set aside for student presentations. Specific instructions for the presentation format and structure will be provided in class.

10) Ethnographic Research Paper (20%)

Due on the final day of class, each student must submit a *final ethnographic research project*, fourteen to sixteen (14-16) pages in length. The final research project is comprised of the research statement, hypothesis, research methodology, literature review, research analysis, and a bibliography. The goal of this assignment is to fully document the student's semester fieldwork research project.

V. GRADING CRITERIA

The final grade for the course will be based on the total number of points earned in the ten components of the course. The weight assigned for each component is as follows:

Course Components	Percent of Course Grade
1. Class Participation [Progress Reports]	10%
2. Research Proposal [Prelim and Revised]	10%
3. Research Timetable and Timeline	5%
4. Quizzes	10%
5. Literature Review	10%
6. Mid-term Project Report	5%
7. Fieldnotes	10%
8. Interview Transcription	10%
9. Presentation of Project Results	10%
10. Ethnographic Research Paper	20%
Total Grade: 100%	

Final Grades

97-100%	A+	82-84%	B	69-71%	C-
93-96	A	79-81	B-	65-68	D+
89-92	A-	75-78	C+	62-64	D
85-88	B+	72-74	C	59-61	D-
				0-58	F

Attendance

Attendance is mandatory for this course and will be calculated into the class participation grade. Student attendance is required for performance in planned and unplanned group participation activities designed to test student acquisition of assigned materials. For those students with medical, legal, or personal reasons for absences, and are able to provide documentation, those absences will be excused and not impact the class participation grade.

Deadlines, Late Assignments, and Missed Quizzes

The due date for all class assignments are indicated in the course syllabus. A printed hard copy of each assignment is to be handed into the instructor by the posted due date. Assignments turned in after the due date will be assessed a grade penalty. Late assignments are penalized one letter grade per day after the posted due date until handed into the instructor. As with the attendance policy, if a student has a valid reason for which they are unable to take a quiz during the assigned period, they should be prepared to provide documentation or schedule with the instructor in order to take the quiz. Otherwise, students should not expect make-up quiz sessions and will receive a zero for that missed quiz in their course grade.

KOKUA – Students with Disabilities or Special Needs

For students with disabilities who may feel the need for assistance during the semester, please feel free to contact me in private. Further, we can work with the KOKUA Program to offer additional assistance. If you are not familiar with the KOKUA program, here is their contact information:

<http://www.hawaii.edu/kokua/>

Academic Integrity - Cheating & Plagiarism

Students in this course are expected to comply with the University of Hawaii's Policy on Academic Integrity. *"The integrity of a university depends upon academic honesty, which consists of independent learning and research. Academic dishonesty includes cheating and plagiarism. The following are examples of violations of the Student Conduct Code that may result in suspension or expulsion from UH Manoa."*

The original source, and further detail on these policies, can be found here:

<http://www.catalog.hawaii.edu/about-uh/campus-policies1.htm>

It is the responsibility of each student to know the University of Hawaii code of conduct, and in relevance to this class, the rules regarding, and the consequences of, cheating and plagiarism. Ignorance of these rules will not excuse any misconduct. To quote from page 6 of the University of Hawaii Student Code of Conduct:

"Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, submitting, in fulfillment of an academic requirement, any document 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 material in more than one course without obtaining authorization from the instructors involved; or dry labbing, which includes obtaining and using experimental data and laboratory write-ups from other sections of the course or from previous terms or fabricating data to fit the desired or expected results."

The original source, in full, is here: www2.honolulu.hawaii.edu/sites/www2.../policies-student-conduct.pdf

In particular, ethical breeches of dry labbing will not be tolerated in this course. Borrowing data from another source or fabricating results is a serious offense in academics as it weakens the entire scientific foundation upon which professional research is based. If a student is found to have fabricated or plagiarized any part of their field projects, I will have no recourse but to recommend UH academic disciplinary action.

VI. ETIQUETTE FOR CLASS MEETINGS

In this digital age of instant communication, a room full of active mobile devices in the classroom environment can prove an unwelcome distraction to learning.

- **Unless otherwise instructed for a class exercise, cell phones are expected to be silenced or off and put away in bags during class meeting times as a courtesy to your classmates and instructor.** Also, please turn off the phone's vibrate features so they don't buzz in bags.
- **Laptops and tablets used during class sessions are to be used for academic purposes only.** Bear in mind that every student sitting behind you can see you web-surfing, which is disruptive to their attempts to pay attention to the lecture and disrespectful to your instructor. And sitting in the back row of class with a laptop open only flags you for special attention on this matter. If a student does not have the self discipline to resist the urge to text, browse Facebook or Twitter, or check ESPN on these devices during our short weekly class sessions, they will be asked to put them away and use the 19th century equivalent of pen and paper. *If this class disruption becomes a pattern, the student may be asked to leave the classroom for the day.*
- **During the discussion of class topics, controversial stances or opinions may arise.** In the interest of engaging in academic analysis of societal issues and social inequality it is asked that, in the context of the classroom, that students keep an open mind and respect the diversity of views and life experiences of others.

VII. COURSE SCHEDULE

Week	Content	Assignments
1	Introduction, Overview of the Course Bailey, Chapter 1: Introduction to Qualitative Field Research (1-13)	Watch <i>Sidewalk</i>
2	Bailey, Chapter 2: Ethical Issues in Qualitative Field Research (15-31) Emerson et al., Chapter 1: Fieldnotes in Ethnographic Research (1-20)	Prelim Proposal Due <i>Ethics Certification</i>
3	Ethics Activity Bailey, Chapter 3: Prelude to Qualitative Fieldwork (33-47)	Project Timeline Quiz #1
4	<u>Emerson et al, Chapter 2: In the Field: Participating, Observing, Jotting Notes (21-43)</u> Bailey, Chapter 4: The Infrastructure of Qualitative Field Research: Paradigms (49-61)	Research Proposal Due <i>Jotting Field Excursion</i>
5	Bailey Chapter 5: Methodology (63-78) Emerson et al., Chapter 3: Writing Fieldnotes 1: At the Desk, Creating Scenes on a Page (45-74)	PPR#1
6	Bailey Chapter 6: Observation: Planning Observations (79-94) Emerson et al., Chapter 3: Writing Up Fieldnotes I: (74-87)	Quiz #2
7	Bailey Chapter 7: Interviews (95-111) Emerson et al., Chapter 4: Writing Fieldnotes II (89-109)	PPR#2 <i>Interview Activity</i>
8	Bailey, Chapter 8: Field Notes and Leaving the Field: Guidelines for Writing Field Notes (113-123) Emerson et al., Chapter 4: Writing Fieldnotes II (109-127)	Literature Review Due Mid-term Project Report

Week	Content	Assignments
9	Bailey, Chapter 9: Coding Memoing, and Descriptions (125-141) Emerson et al, Chapter 5: Pursuing Members' Meanings (129-169)	PPR#3 <i>Coding Activity</i> Quiz #3
10	Bailey, Chapter 10: Typologies, Taxonomies, Visual Representations, and Themes (143-160) Bailey, Chapter 11: Storytelling, Critical Events, and Analytic Induction (161-178)	Fieldnotes Due
<i>SPRING BREAK (non-instructional holiday) 3/21- 3/25</i>		
11	Emerson, Chapter 6: Processing Fieldnotes: Coding and Memoing: (171- 188) Watch <i>Confessions of a Superhero</i>	PPR#4 <i>Watch Docu.</i>
12	Bailey Chapter 12: Evaluation Criteria and Final Manuscript (179-195)	Quiz #4
13	Emerson, Chapter 6: Processing Fieldnotes: Coding and Memoing (188- 199) Emerson Chapter 7: Writing an Ethnography (201-229)	PPR#5 Interview Transcription Due
14	Emerson Chapter 7: Writing an Ethnography (229-242); Emerson Chapter 8: Conclusion: (243-248)	
15	Student Presentations Peer evaluation feedback for each presentation Student Presentations Peer evaluation feedback for each presentation	Quiz #5
16	Student Presentations Peer evaluation feedback for each presentation Final Day of Class	Ethnographic Paper Due

PPR= Project Progress Report

****Please note that details and assigned readings for this syllabus may be revised. The final revision of the course syllabus will be provided on the first day of class.***