Anthropology 711 Seminar in Research Design and Proposal Writing in Anthropology  
Spring 2017 Tuesdays 1:30-4 p.m. Saunders 329

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Course Description

This seminar focuses exclusively on the design of research and the preparation of a research proposal. First, we review how to build a research design: how research proposals are put together, and which criteria are used to evaluate them. We also examine different kinds of research, how research is conceptualized within each genre, and the creation of effective designs and proposals. We will also review and critique examples of funded research proposals. The focus on proposals is useful not only because grant writing is an important skill in its own right, but also because an effective proposal involves all elements of research design—from statement of the problem to data analysis. Finally, each student will write a research proposal. By the end of the course, you should be able to:

- Formulate a feasible research question, and design research to answer it.
- Discuss the ethical implications of research.
- Develop skills to read carefully and critically your peers’ proposal drafts, and articulate questions and suggestions concerning their proposal drafts and planned research in a challenging but constructive manner.
- Think productively about critiques of your work, especially critiques that seem the most challenging, misguided or irrelevant.
- Submit a grant proposal for extramural funding of your dissertation research.

Structure of the Course

To get a sense of how well-planned projects are conceived, organized, and described, we’ll read a selection of submitted grant proposals (funded and unfunded) that cover a wide variety of topics and approaches. Learning to develop concise, productive critiques of other scholars’ work is imperative for becoming a responsible professional. Please remember that I serve as your teacher and guide for this class only. I expect each student to consult closely with her/his advisor throughout the semester about issues and strategies raised in the class concerning research projects.

Assignment and Evaluation

1. Participation (20%)  
Participation in class discussion is a critical component of the course. Please be present, be involved, and engage. Doing the reading, and discussing the reading, is a key piece of the participation puzzle. For each day in class when there are readings assigned, please come to class with notes and an outline of a critical response to the day’s readings. Each day, I expect folks to self-organize a discussion about the week’s topic that incorporates readings (where appropriate). Making observations,
raising questions, and using the readings/topic as a springboard for a broader discussion are all appropriate strategies. The goal here is student-led discussion, rather than instructor-run lectures.

2. Reviewing (35%)
You will learn a lot about writing proposals, and about what makes them successful, by reviewing proposals. One of the most important things you will learn is that people who review proposals often have to do it very quickly, so proposals must be written with the review process in mind. So, in this course we will have two proposal workshops. You will be assigned to read the work of several of your fellow classmates, and will be asked to score the proposals on the basis of several categories, and to provide comments. You will then meet in groups and provide feedback to the authors. I will be evaluating you on your role as a reviewer, on your scores, comments, and the feedback you provide.

Just like in a real fellowship or grant competition, we will collectively have a limited number of awards to distribute, and this will mean making tough choices. In order to insure that we are, in fact, being both tough and fair in our award process, the awarding of points will be blinded (you will not know who has given you what score). As a reviewer, you will be limited in the total number of points that you are able to distribute for each category, across all of the proposals you review. This means you will need to make tough choices, and will need to carefully assess the merit of each proposal.

3. Research Proposal (45%)
Your main product for this course is a research proposal. Several assignments due throughout the semester are part of the process of writing the proposal (i.e., turning in your research question, your bibliography, etc.). One of the ways I will be evaluating your proposal is through the peer review process. Your classmates' reviews or your work will actually count towards your grade on the research proposal! So please do a good job, and have faith in the peer review process. Your fate is not entirely in your fellow students' hands, however. I will take into consideration your efforts to address criticisms of your proposal in your revisions, and will also make note of your improvement and your efforts to do work that is the best you can do when assigning you a grade.

Please note:

1. Your ANTH 711 instructor will guide your construction of a research design but will not help you identify a research topic. To succeed in this class, you must consult regularly with your graduate supervisor about your research topic relevance/feasibility and about the methodologies you wish to use.
2. Absolutely no late assignments will be accepted.
3. No incomplete grades will be given for this course.

Partial Bibliography


Readings for this seminar will be included in Laulima for the relevant weeks.
Class Schedule

1 Jan 10   **Course Introduction & Personal Introductions**
Review of the course syllabus
Personal introductions and getting to know you

2 Jan 17   **Choosing a Research Topic**
**ASSIGNED READING:** Lipowski 2008; Locke et al. 2014: Chap 1 (online: <http://www.amazon.com/Proposals-That-Work-Planning-Dissertations/dp/1452216851>)
**BRING (COMPLETED) TO CLASS:** 1-paragraph description of your research project (topic, subfield, relevance)

3 Jan 24   **The Research Proposal**
**ASSIGNED READING:** Bernard 2010: Chaps 1 & 3
**BRING (COMPLETED) TO CLASS:** completed “What is a good research question” worksheet
**BRING (COMPLETED) TO CLASS:** First draft of three (3) possible research topics & three (3) research questions for each topic.

4 Jan 31   **Research: Paradigms and Perspectives (& Group Work)**
**ASSIGNED READING:** Babbie 2013; Creswell 2009: Chaps 5 and 7
**BRING (COMPLETED) TO CLASS:** Choose two sheets from ‘Conceptualizing Your Research’ worksheets 1-5 to complete and bring to class.

5 Feb 7    **Putting it All Together: Your Research Idea & Question (& Group Work)**
**ASSIGNED READING:** Locke et al. 2014: Chap 6; Przeworski & Salomon 1995
**BRING (COMPLETED) TO CLASS:** Choose two sheets from ‘Conceptualizing Your Research’ worksheets 6-10 to complete and bring to class.

6 Feb 14   **Case Study: Reverse Proposal**
**ASSIGNED READING:** Mathews 2011: Chapters 1 & 6
**BRING (COMPLETED) TO CLASS:** 3-page (single-spaced) hypothetical research proposal for this project, including all major components of the research proposal. (we will review his NSF proposal in class)

7 Feb 21   **Research Day (no class)**
**ASSIGNED READING:** Creswell 2009: Chap 2; Locke et al. 2014: Chap 4
**BRING (COMPLETED) FOR NEXT WEEK:** Your literature map (following Creswell and hand-out)

8 Feb 28   **Literature Review and Your Literature Map**
**ASSIGNED READING:** Creswell 2009: Chaps 8 & 9
**BRING (COMPLETED) TO CLASS:** Literature Map + Statement of your objectives, methods and research plan

9 Mar 7    **Research Process & Significance (& Group Work)**
**ASSIGNED READING:** Creswell 2009: Chap 6
**BRING TO CLASS:** Short (i.e., ¾ - 1 page) Project Summary due.
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<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Assigned Reading</th>
<th>Assignment Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Mar 14</td>
<td>Ethical and Practical Issues in Research</td>
<td>American Anthropological Association Statement on Ethics; Bendremer and Richman 2006; Creswell 2009: Chap 4 (pp. 87-93); Locke et al. 2014: Chap. 2</td>
<td>IN-CLASS ASSIGNMENT: circulate a digital copy of your 1-2 page double-spaced Ethics Statement that outlines anticipated ethical issues you will face, and how you intend to deal with them.</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Mar 21</td>
<td>Research Day (no class)</td>
<td>Silverman 1991 &amp; 2 proposals in folder</td>
<td>ASSIGNMENT: Complete proposal reviews #1 &amp; #2</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>April 4</td>
<td>Do’s and Don’ts of Proposal Reviewing (Discuss reviews)</td>
<td>Hazelrigg; Moffat 1993</td>
<td>ASSIGNMENT: Spend this week finalizing your proposal</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>April 11</td>
<td>Identifying Funding Sources</td>
<td>Hanalei Abbott (SSRI)</td>
<td>ASSIGNMENT: identify and research three (3) potential funding agencies for your work; bring to class a summary data table that lists each agency, what it funds, its annual submission deadlines, proposal parameters &amp; maximum budget</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>April 18</td>
<td>Group Process: Reviewing Proposals</td>
<td>ANTH 711 student proposals</td>
<td>ASSIGNMENT: Constructive critiques for three class member proposals and reflect on your own proposal.</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>April 25</td>
<td>Student Presentations &amp; Class Feedback</td>
<td>ASSIGNMENT: prepare 10-12 minute ppt presentation that summarizes your proposal</td>
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<td>17</td>
<td>May 2</td>
<td>Discussion and Wrap-up</td>
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*All proposals must be loaded onto Laulima by 1:30 pm on 4/11/17*

*Final proposal must be loaded onto Laulima by Thursday May 11th at 2:00 pm to receive credit for this class*

Please note: we have **NO FLEXIBILITY BUILT INTO THE DUE DATES** for each assignment.