

Practicing Anthropology: Ethics, Theory, Engagement

Thursdays 7:00 – 9:00, KTH 105

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Office Hours: Thursdays 5:30 – 6:30, or by appointment

Overview and Objectives:

Through experiential learning techniques and engagement with written course materials, you will learn how to use anthropological methodologies to investigate social problems, and to consider how anthropological theories and methods can be applied to positively impact society. You will be placed with a community organization in Hamilton who has identified a discrete problem they would like assistance researching. In consultation with your community supervisor, placement group, instructor and classmates, your project for this semester is to develop an applied research project that yields concrete and implementable suggestions for your community partner's organization.

Course Requirements and Learning Assessments:

You are required to take part in a group field placement. The Experiential Education office has identified community partnerships for students in our class.

Please be aware that this course is time-consuming and requires collaborative and equitable division of labour. You must commit to attending weekly class sessions. Your time commitment outside of class will depend in part on your placement, but the collective objective of this class is to make the placement manageable given your other life obligations.

Your grade will be evaluated based on:

1. **Class participation** 20%
In-class discussion
Group participation (evaluated by fellow group members)

2. **Write-up of field placement and anthropological question** 10%
Where is your placement, and what are the stated objectives of the organization?
What have you been asked to do? What methodologies are you using/
considering?

3. **Field notebook** 10%
Field notes will be submitted with final projects (and will be returned to you).
These should reflect regular note-taking during and/or after participant-
observation at your placement.

4. **Final presentations** 35%
Presentations will be conducted in project placement groups; its form/mode will reflect the needs of the project, and creativity of the group members.
5. **Individual Reflection Paper** 25%
This essay should reflect on the research process, and how the project ties in with class material/discussion

Required texts:

Articles downloaded through McMaster University Library access. Please bring printed copies of the articles—or, second-best, articles on your computer or electronic reader—to class for discussion.

Instructions on how to download articles:

- Go to Mac's library website: <http://library.mcmaster.ca/>
- Click on "Login to LibAccess" from the left tool bar
- Login to access library e-resources
- Click on Google Scholar (you can use any portal, but Google Scholar is easy)
 - Copy and paste the title of the article you are searching for from the course syllabus and into the Google Scholar search bar, and click the search icon
- You will receive a list of hits, with the article you are searching for at the top or near the top. Click on the "get it @ Mac" link to the right
- You will be taken to a list of e-resources at Mac. Click on any of the available options, and you will be taken to a page where you can download the full article as a PDF.

Collaboration and academic honesty:

Much of this course is oriented around group work. However, any portion of an assignment that you represent as your intellectual product (for instance, portions of the final project write-up) must be your own work. Analysis should be written in your own words. Any language taken directly or paraphrased from another source must be properly cited.

Finally, group members will evaluate each other's contributions to ensure fair attributions of course grades.

September 8: First day of class

September 15: Practicing Anthropology

Rylko-Bauer, Barbara, Merrill Singer, John van Willigen. 2006. Reclaiming Applied Anthropology: Its Past, Present, and Future. *American Anthropologist* 108(1): 178-190.

Fisher, R., Fabricant, M., Simmons, L. 2005. Understanding contemporary university-community connections: context, practice, and challenges. *Journal of Community Practice* 12(4): 13-34.

September 22: Methods for Applied Research, I

Kedia, Satish. 2008. Recent Changes and Trends in the Practices of Applied Anthropology. *Annals of Anthropological Practice* 29(1): 14-28.

Shannon, Jennifer. 2007. Informed Consent: Documenting the Intersection of Bureaucratic Regulation and Ethnographic Practice. *PoLAR: Political and Legal Anthropology Review* 30(2): 229-248.

September 29: Methods for Applied Research, II

Lassiter, Luke Eric. 2008. Moving Past Public Anthropology and Doing Collaborative Research. *Annals of Anthropological Practice* 29(1): 70-86.

Williams Paris, Jenell. 2001. "We've Seen This Coming": Resident Activists Shaping Neighbourhood Redevelopment in Washington, D.C. *Transforming Anthropology* 10(1): 28-38.

October 6: The Ethics of Social Science Research

Haggerty, Kevin D. 2004. Ethics Creep: Governing Social Science Research in the Name of Ethics. *Qualitative Sociology* 27(4): 391-414.

Maiter, S., Simich, L., Jacobson, N., & Wise, J. 2008. Reciprocity: An ethic for community-based participatory action research. *Action Research* 6(3): 305-325.

October 13: McMaster Fall Recess

October 20: The “Community” of Community Based Research

Minkler, M. 2005. Community based research partnerships: Challenges and opportunities. *Journal of Urban Health* 82(2) Supplement 2: ii3-ii12.

Rojas Durazo, Ana Clarissa, Bierria, Alisa and Kim, Mimi. 2012. Community Accountability: Emerging Movements to Transform Violence. *Social Justice* 37(4).

October 27: Activist Anthropology

Joyner, Laurie M. 2003. Applied Research in the Pursuit of Justice: Creating Change in the Community and the Academy. *Social Justice* 30(4): 5-20.

Glick Schiller, Nina 2011. Scholar/Activists and Regimes of Truth: Rethinking the Divide between Universities and the Streets. *Transforming Anthropology* 19(2): 162-164

November 3: Engaged Anthropology, I

Low, Setha M. and Sally Engle Merry. 2010. Engaged Anthropology: Diversity and Dilemmas, An Introduction to Supplement 2. *Current Anthropology* 51 (supp. 2): S203-S226.

Johnston, Barbara Rose. 2010. Social Responsibility and the Anthropological Citizen. *Current Anthropology* 51 Supplement 2: S235-S247.

November 10: Engaged Anthropology, II

Low, Setha M. 2011. Claiming Space for an Engaged Anthropology: Spatial Inequality and Social Exclusion. *American Anthropologist* 113(3): 389-407.

Falzone, Paul. 2008. Speaking (un)Truth to Power: Fish Tales from the Ethnographic Front. *Transforming Anthropology* 16(1):55-67.

November 17:

Work on projects in-class

November 24: Final Presentations

December 1: Final Presentations

Individual essays and field notebooks due Tuesday, December 6

Course guidelines

1. Late policy:

Please **contact me** if you are unable to submit an assignment on time. I am generally willing to negotiate assignment deadlines in extenuating circumstances. However, **if you do not contact me in advance, late assignments will be docked one-third letter grade for every day late.**

2. Email:

Please ask detailed questions about course material and assignments in person. Please contact me through McMaster mail with matters pertaining to class.

Effective September 1, 2010, it is the policy of the Faculty of Social Sciences that all e-mail communication sent from students to instructors (including TAs), and from students to staff, must originate from the student's own McMaster University e-mail account. This policy protects confidentiality and confirms the identity of the student. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that communication is sent to the university from a McMaster account. If an instructor becomes aware that a communication has come from an alternate address, the instructor may not reply at his or her discretion. Email Forwarding in MUGSI: <http://www.mcmaster.ca/uts/support/email/emailforward.html>
*Forwarding will take effect 24-hours after students complete the process at the above linkemails that do not originate from a McMaster email account.

3. Laptop Policy:

I prefer that you hand-write class notes, and to print out and annotate course readings, rather than reading and taking notes on your computer.

If you strongly prefer to use a computer in class, this will be allowed. However, **please be respectful of the instructor and your classmates, and do not engage in non-class-related activities on your computer.**

You will be asked to cease laptop use if it is apparent that your computer is a source of distraction.

The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check his/her McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

Academic dishonesty consists of misrepresentation by deception or by other fraudulent means and can result in serious consequences, e.g., the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: “Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty”), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university.

It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various kinds of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, Appendix 3, <http://www.mcmaster.ca/policy/Students-AcademicStudies/AcademicIntegrity.pdf>

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

1. Plagiarism, e.g., the submission of work that is not one’s own for which other credit has been obtained. (*Insert specific course information, e.g., style guide*)
2. Improper collaboration in group work. (*Insert specific course information*)
3. Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

(*If applicable*) In this course we will be using a software package designed to reveal plagiarism. Students will be required to submit their work electronically and in hard copy so that it can be checked for academic dishonesty.

MSAF

- The MSAF should be used for medical and non-medical (personal) situations.
- Approval of the MSAF is automatic (i.e. no documentation required)
- Rules governing the MSAF are as follows:
 - The timeframe within which the MSAF is valid has been reduced from 5 days to 3 days.
 - The upper limit for when an MSAF can be submitted has been reduced from ‘less than 30%’ to ‘less than 25%’ of the course weight.
 - The ‘one MSAF per term’ limit is retained.
 - As per the policy, an automated email will be sent to the course instructor, who will determine the appropriate relief. Students must immediately follow up with their instructors. Failure to do so may negate their relief.
- Policy: The MSAF policy can be found in the Undergraduate Calendar under General Academic Regulations > Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work or here: [http://academiccalendars.romcmaster.ca/content.php?catoid=11&navoid=1698#Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work](http://academiccalendars.romcmaster.ca/content.php?catoid=11&navoid=1698#Requests_for_Relief_for_Missed_Academic_Term_Work)

AODA

If you require this information in an alternate/accessible format, please contact Eszter Bell at 905-525-9140 extension 24423 or email bellesz@mcmaster.ca