Community Field Research and Analysis

This course focuses on the conduct of research at the community level. We will discuss the strengths and weaknesses of alternative social theories of community change as guides for understanding the processes of growth and change occurring in communities, regions and beyond. We will examine some of the most pressing issues and problems involved in the contemporary restructuring of communities. We will examine and employ various methods and combined strategies for conducting research at the community level including immersion, observation, key informant interviewing, survey research, content analysis, and their relation to other methods such as structural, historical and comparative analysis. In particular we will pay special attention to the problem of locating and drawing appropriate boundaries for ethnographic, local community studies in the context of globalizing trends in economy, politics and culture.

Students will work in teams to conduct preliminary research on a field research project on selected topical issues. Students will be assisted in the process of research design, the interpretation and analysis of ethnographic data, and writing research reports. The process will culminate with a research proposal report and a presentation to the class.

The class will be conducted in a seminar-like fashion in which we learn from each other. Thus a successful learning experience requires your attendance and active participation in class to share your questions, observations, concerns and experiences in planning and conducting community field research. In addition, I will ask students to sign up for an assigned reading to present a crucial and/or interesting issue from it regarding the nature of contemporary communities to initiate class discussion.

Texts:
G. D. Andranovich and G. Riposa, Doing Urban Research (It is available electronically at Canvas: CRD 151 001 SQ 2018)

CRD 151 Reader A collection of articles assembled by the instructor. It will be available at Davis Copy Maxx, 232 3rd. St. It is also available electronically at Canvas: CRD 151 001 SQ 2018.
Course Schedule
Outline of Topics and Readings: (Subject to Revision)

Part I: The Changing Global Context of Community Research

April 3  Course Introductions and Preliminary Research Planning
(Recommended: Barber, “Think Globally, Resist Locally: How cities can counter the power of President Trump ” Nation, Feb. 6/13, 2017)

April 5, 10 Locating Transnational Community Research: Contemporary Community Issues, Theories and Context.
Research Planning and Present Readings

Martinez & Garcia, “What is Neo-Liberalism? A Brief Definition”
Sniegocki, John, “Neoliberal globalization: critiques and alternatives”
Sen, Amartya, “How to Judge Globalism”
Harvey, David, “The Right to the City”
Goldberg, “Power to the City: The Progressive Case For Going Local”, Nation, 4/21/14

(Recommended, all on Canvas: Jaffe, “A Tale of One City?” Nation, 2/9/15
Anderson, et. al., “Game changers: How we can unrig the rules and reverse runaway inequality, Nation, 2016
Irwin, “Globalization’s Backlash is Here, at Just the Wrong Time”, www.nytimes.com/2018/03/23
McMichael, Philip, “Globalization: Myths and Realities”

Part II: Conducting Community Research: Investigating Local Actors in Global Context

April 12, 17 Designing Community Research: Exploratory, Descriptive, Explanatory Research. The Case Study, Developing a Research Question. (Lecture)
Research Planning and Present Readings.
Readings:  
Stoecker, “But I Don’t Do Research”  
Yin, “A (Very) Brief Refresher on the Case Study Method”  
Creswell & Poth, “Designing a Qualitative Study”, “Introducing and Focusing the Study”  
Andranovich & Riposa, Chapters 3-4 (Skim chapters 1-2)

(Recommended: Creswell & Poth, “Five Qualitative Approaches to Inquiry”  
Stoecker, “Head and Hand Together: A Project-Based Research Model”; “Evaluation”  
Examples of Exploratory Studies: Gates, “’No One Will Speak for Us”: Empowering Undocumented Immigrant Women Through Policy Advocacy”  
April 19  
Entering the Community; Building Participatory Relationships

Readings:  
(Recommended: Bradbury & Reason, “Issues and Choice Points for Improving the Quality of Action Research”  
Stoecker, “Research Ethics”)  
April 24, 26  
Observing, Taking Field notes; Conducting Elite and Key Informant Interviews (Lecture)

Readings:  
Arthur & Nazroo, “Designing Fieldwork Strategies and Materials” OR  
Neuman, Lawrence, “Field Research”  
Whyte, “Interviewing in Field Research”  
Berg, “A Dramaturgical Look at Interviewing”  
Andranovich & Riposa, Chapter 5

(Recommended, if using as a method: Finch & Lewis, "Focus Groups")  
May 1, 3  
Conducting Surveys (Lecture)  
Research Question and Design Statement Due: May 3 Thursday

Readings:  
Neuman, Lawrence, “Survey Research”  
(Recommended: Harnois, “Feminist Theory and Survey Research”)

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May 8, 10  

**Return to Issues and Context. The New Urban Landscapes: Affluence and Poverty, Social Inequality, Excluded Communities. “Accumulation by Dispossession”**

**Scheduling of Student Oral Presentations**

**Readings:**  
Dreier, Mollenkopf & Swanstrom, “Place Still Matters”
https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2018/03/19
Florida, Richard, ("Rise of the Creative Class"), “More Losers than Winners in America’s New Economic Geography”  
Kotkin, “Richard Florida Concedes the Limits of the Creative Class”  
Blackwell & Fox, “Regional Equity and Smart Growth: Opportunities for Advancing Social and Economic Justice in America”  
Blackwell & Treuhaft, “Regional Equity and the Quest for Full Inclusion”  

Peck, “Struggling with the Creative Class,” (Initially skim, read more closely “Florida Recount”, pp. 755-768)  
Causa Justa, “Development Without Displacement: Resisting Gentrification in the Bay Area”  
Abramsky, “The Urban Revival, From the Asphalt Up, Ten Progressive Experiments Reshaping American Cities”, Nation  
Krajeski, “Dream Team, Muslim American Community Activists are Revitalizing Detroit.” Nation, August 14/21, 2017  
Simmons, “Opportunities for Community Organizing in the Realm of Economic Justice and Low Wage Worker Struggles”  
Tomczak & Rofuth, “Full Employment as a Permanent Response to Poverty”  
Harris, “Can the Left Find Its Voice in the 21st Century?” Nation, 10/28/16

**Select an article relevant to your project.**

May 15  

**Interpreting and Analyzing Ethnographic Transcripts**

**Readings:**  
Neuman, Lawrence, “Analysis of Qualitative Data”

May 17  

**Reporting Field Research: Value of Case Study and Levels of Analysis.**  
*(Lecture)*

**Readings:**  
Orum, Feagin & Sjoberg, “Case Study” and “Conclusion”  
Burawoy, "Global Ethnography: Reaching for the Global"

**(Recommended:** Neuman, Lawrence, “Writing the Research Report”

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Part III: Oral Reports and Developing Writing Strategies - Tentative Schedule

May 17  Student Reports - Oral Presentations
May 22  Student Reports - Oral Presentations
May 24  Student Reports - Oral Presentations
May 29  Student Reports - Oral Presentations
May 31  Student Reports - Oral Presentations
June 5   Student Reports - Oral Presentations
June 7   Student Reports - Oral Presentations

Course Summary and Conclusions; Your Stories from the Field.

Final Research Proposal Report Due:  11 June Monday

Course Requirements and Grading:

1. **Class participation, response papers, research planning.** To facilitate participation you are required to write several short, written responses, and will have a quiz on selected course readings. Further details and due dates of these responses and quiz will be discussed in class. I will also ask students to sign up for and present an assigned reading to initiate class discussion. Your classroom participation in team planning of research, and actual conduct of community research is required. You are required to attend office hours with the instructor and/or TA’s at least twice with your team for planning/progress sessions. (30%)

2. **A research question and research design statement** for your proposed team project. Further details about the research design statement will be discussed in class and a research design prompt will be provided.  **Due date: May 3 Thursday**  (20%)

3. **An oral class presentation** on your team project and preliminary research findings.  (10%)

4. **A final field research proposal report.** Your report will include a discussion of your research question or problem; your field site; the conduct of your study; the methods you employ; anticipated or experienced problems in conducting your research and how you dealt with them; preliminary findings; what you would do differently and/or future directions of your study. Further details about the report will be discussed in class, and an outline prompt for the report will be provided.  **Due date: 11 June Monday**  (40%)
Student Code of Conduct

All students should be familiar with the Student Code of Academic Conduct that is located here [http://sja.ucdavis.edu/cac.html](http://sja.ucdavis.edu/cac.html). Please review this carefully and ask your instructor, if you have any questions. Remember the instructor is obliged to refer you to Student Judicial Affairs in all cases of violation or suspected violation.

In addition to the well-known problems of plagiarism and cheating on examinations, it is also a violation of the Code of Conduct to use your own written materials from papers prepared for other classes, unless you take the following points into consideration.

It is permissible to use materials and texts from other class projects, within CRD or in other departments, under these conditions:
(1) You inform the instructor beforehand.
(2) You clearly identify the portions where you quote yourself (or collaborative work).
(3) You provide a copy of the previous work you have submitted in the other class to the instructor.
(4) To ensure that you receive a good grade make sure that the quoted or reused parts fit seamlessly into the assignment for THIS class.
(5) If you have any doubts about the extent to which you can use already written materials, please speak with the instructor or the TA prior to making any submission.