Anthropology 324L (# 31280)
ACTIVIST RESEARCH PRACTICUM
Spring 2011 T-Th 2:00 – 3:30 pm
SAC 4.118

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Office hours: Thursday 1-2 pm

Course Description

In this upper-division seminar, designed especially for anthropology majors, students will learn the basics of anthropological research methods and gain hands-on experience doing "activist research" with an Austin-based organization. Coursework will consider the politics of anthropological research, tracing the evolution from its colonial beginnings, through upheaval and critique in the 1960s and 1970s, to various "post-colonial" responses to these criticisms. After working through conventional research methods, we will focus on "activist anthropology," as one means to confront the problems associated with anthropology's colonial legacy. Together we will explore the complexities of activist research methods, while each student conceives and carries out an activist research project in conjunction with an organization in the Austin area. Once this "practicum" portion of the course begins (roughly February 1), the seminar will meet once rather than twice a week. From February 1 on, students are expected to devote an average of 6 to 8 hours a week to their activist research project.

Texts available at Monkey Wrench Books (110 E. North Loop, Austin, Texas 78751)

Booth, et. al. 2008. The Craft of Research, Third Edition (Chicago Guides to Writing, Editing, and Publishing). University of Chicago Press.

All other readings will be made available either on Blackboard or via the Internet.

Requirements and Grading

- Commit to internship (8 hrs. / week) over at least 12 weeks ---------- 20%
- Preliminary Research Proposal: Due February 15th ---------- 5%
- Final research proposal: Due March 8th ---------- 5%
- Brief reflection piece (3-5 pages) Due April 5--- ---------- 10%
- Final research paper (10 pages):
    - First draft: April 19th ---------- 5%
    - Final version: May 10th-- ---------- 35%
- Seminar attendance and participation---------- 20%

Activist Research Internships--Basic Description

A major portion of your time in this course will be devoted to a "research internship" with an organization of your choice. A rough estimate of your "work time" with the organization is 6 to 8 hours a week. This will typically include both general volunteer work time offered to the organization, in accordance with its needs, *and* time specifically devoted to research activities. It *does not* include the time you will need to spend apart from the actual research activities, to organize the data and write up the results. You will need to begin thinking about your research placement *immediately*. You are required to work with the organization for roughly 12 weeks. Ideally you should start by the week of Feb 3 and wrap up the week of April 21. This will give you two weeks at the end of the semester to work in your final papers.

Choosing a placement

We will hand out possible placements, developed through prior discussions with someone in the organization. If placements are on this list, it means that the organization in question has expressed a willingness, in principle, to take on one or more interns. It does not mean that the placement is guaranteed. You will still need to make contact, hear about the organization's particular needs, and discuss a possible research topic, to make sure that the arrangement is mutually acceptable.

If you prefer to develop a placement based on your own experience or interests, that is fine. All the same basic parameters apply. In addition, if the placement is of your own creation, you need to receive approval from me prior to the February 1 start date.

Working for the organization

Part of the internship agreement involves a commitment for the intern to donate a certain number of hours a week to the organization's general needs. This is justified partly as a gesture of support for the organization, and partly because it is the best way for the intern to learn about the organization and its work. As you discuss this portion of the internship, you should feel free to exercise choice, when appropriate. But you must also keep in mind that these tasks may not always be the most exciting or interesting to you.

Designing the "Activist Research" Project

This is the especially creative part of the internship, which involves putting your rudimentary skills as an anthropologist (or social analyst) to work. The research project should be:

- Designed through discussions between you and one or more members of the organization;
- Focused on a topic that interests you, and also, that has the potential to generate knowledge and analysis that will be useful to the organization;
- Oriented toward new data collection, rather than summary of existing knowledge (although the latter is often crucial to making sense of the new research);
- Designed to use anthropological research methods, including interviews and participant observation.
- *Guidelines for developing your research project and writing the final paper will be provided during the course of the semester.*

Written assignments
You will receive guidelines for written projects (research proposal, reflection paper and final research paper) and they will be discussed in class. All papers are due by 5:00 pm on the due dates VIA EMAIL ONLY. The subject line should read "name of assignment (eg "draft proposal"/your name). If the subject line does not read this way, your paper may be lost.

Class Schedule:

Tuesday, January 18: **Course Introduction**
Reading Assignments:
http://www.utexas.edu/cola/depts/anthropology/programs/activist/
Read: "What is Activist Research?"

And read these brief articles:
http://www.nytimes.com/2007/10/27/opinion/27shweder.html?_r=1&oref=slogin&pagewanted=print
http://www.nytimes.com/2007/10/05/world/asia/05afghan.html
http://concerned.anthropologists.googlepages.com/home

Thursday, January 20: No Class

Tuesday, January 25: Basic Principles
Reading Assignments
(Freire 1970), pp. 19-56
(Hale 2007), pp. 103-127

Thursday, February 27: **Power, Privilege and the "Master's Tools"**
Reading Assignments:
(Lorde 1984), pp. 89-92
(McIntosh 1995), pp. 291-299

Tuesday, February 1: Conventional Research Methods
Reading Assignments on Framing Analytical Questions:
(Booth 2008) pp. 9-16, 35-74

**** Internship Hours to Begin the week of February 1****

Tuesday, February 8: **Data Collection**
Reading Assignments:
(Briggs 1986), pp. 1-30, 61-93
(Johnson 1998), pp. 131-173

Tuesday, February 15: NO CLASS – scheduled meetings to discuss project progress
ALSO: turn in your research proposal and attend Abriendo Brecha!

****February 15: Preliminary Research Proposal Due****

Thurs, February 17- Sat, February 19: Abriendo Brecha Activist Scholarship Conference

Tuesday, February 22: Objectivity
Reading Assignments:
(Weber 1949), pp. 50-112

Tuesday, March 1: Sources, Field Notes and Data Analysis
Reading Assignments:
(Clifford 1990), pp. 47-91
(Booth 2008), pp. 109-149

March 8: Presenting the Research Results
Reading Assignments:
(Booth 2008), pp. 208-262

****Final Research Proposal Due: March 8****

Tuesday, March 22: Challenges: Postcolonialism, Race, Global politics
Reading Assignments:
(Willis 1971) pp. 121-152
(Multiple authors 1971) (Declarations of Barbados)
(Asad 1973), pp. 9-19
(Wolf and Jorgeson 1970), pp. 26-35
(Polgar 1979), pp. 409-418

March 14-18—Spring Break!

Tuesday, March 29: Challenges: Feminism
Reading Assignments:
(Haraway 1988)
(Crenshaw 1991)
(Joseph 1996)

Tuesday, April 5: Reflexivity and Writing Culture
Reading Assignments:
(Clifford 1988), pp. 21-54
(Enslin 1994), pp. 537-568
(Hale 2006)

****April 5: Reflection Paper Due****

Tuesday, April 12: Research Relations: Race, culture and (neo) colonial power
Reading Assignments:
Tuhiwai Smith, pp. 107-162
Pierre (Engaging Contradictions)
Speed (Engaging Contradictions)

Tuesday, April 19: Locating Activist Scholarship: programmatic statements
Reading Assignments:

(Lamphere 2004)
(Lassiter 2005)
(Sanford 2006)
(Fox, R and Field, L. 2007)

****First draft of research papers due: April 19th****

Tuesday, April 26: Locating, cont…
Reading Assignments
(Speed 2007)
(Gilmore 2008)
(Pulido 2008)

May 3- 5: Presentations

****Final paper due: May 10 at 5:00 p.m.****

References

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Lamphere, Louise

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Lassiter, Luke Eric

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