The crucial distinction for me is not the difference between fact and fiction, but the distinction between fact and truth. Because facts can exist without human intelligence, but truth cannot.

Toni Morrison

Opening and interpreting lives is very different from opening and closing books.

Dwight Conquergood

**Course Description**

In this course, students will study ethnographic methods including observant participation, interviewing, and oral histories. Archival research will also be conducted. Students will apply the techniques they learn toward an investigation of Black out-migration in San Francisco giving particular emphasis to the Fillmore District, Bayview-Hunter’s Point, and the Tenderloin. This course provides students with skills in critical ethnography by foregrounding the racial politics that shape community-building and policy-making.

**Objectives**

Upon completion of this course students should be able to differentiate between qualitative and quantitative research methodologies, conduct ethnographic interviews, maintain a fieldwork notebook, conduct oral histories, and identify the major components of critical ethnography as a methodology.

**Required Readings**

All readings will be available on Canvas.

**Course Requirements**

**Research Proposal**

Throughout the semester, you will research one of the following questions: Why have Black people moved from Austin? Or why have Black people remained in Austin? To prepare for this research, you will write a research proposal that will include
1. A statement of your research focus (i.e., media representations of gentrification, the impact of the tech industry on gentrification, how entrepreneurs are responding to gentrification, how communities are responding to gentrification)

2. A specific research question that will guide your research

3. A discussion of how your positionality may impact the research

4. The identification of one or two sites where you will conduct observant participation

5. A discussion of at least two scholarly publications that will contribute to answering your research question. These publications must be by reputable thinkers and presented in peer-reviewed print or online venues.

The paper must be 2-3 pages, typed, double-spaced, with your name as a header on each page. Pages should be numbered. Papers are due as indicated on the syllabus at the beginning of class. Papers may be emailed or submitted as hard copies. Late papers will be penalized.

**Fieldwork Notebook**

You will keep a fieldwork notebook that includes

1. citational data: date, time, location, event, people present, attitude,
2. observant participation details/”thick description,”
3. reflections on your positionality,
4. reference to a theory, concept, idea from class readings or discussion,
5. challenges and discoveries encountered during fieldwork, and
6. areas of research for you to pursue.

*Each entry should address each of these six items.*

*Number each entry.*

*There must be at least one entry each week.*

While the notebook may be informally written, it must be typed and double-spaced if submitted online, and should be legible if submitted as a hard copy. There are no page requirements; you should write freely, fully addressing the areas listed above. The notebook will be graded twice during the semester. The notebook is due as indicated on the syllabus at the beginning of class. Late notebooks will be penalized.

**Interview**

Students will prepare five interview questions, conduct an interview of someone relevant to their research project, and offer an in-class analysis of the interview. The presentation should include the five interview questions, the relevance of the person chosen to interview, and an analysis of the interview. The analysis should address 1) what insights you gained the interview; 2) what you learned about your work as an ethnographer; 3) what new questions you will pursue based on the interview. The presentation will be no longer than 10 minutes.
**Oral History**
Students will conduct an oral history of someone relevant to their research project. The person chosen cannot be the same person used for the interview assignment. Students will design three preliminary questions that open the community member to reflection and speculation. Students will meet twice with the community member in order to deepen the insights from the first oral history session. The students will make a presentation about the oral history that includes 1) the three preliminary questions; 2) a verbatim excerpt from the oral history, and 3) a discussion of the significance of the excerpt for the research project. The presentation will be no longer than 10 minutes.

**Ethnographic Summary**
You will write a 8-10-page ethnographic summary of the East Austin communities with whom you conducted your fieldwork. This summary is your answer to a specific research question that you will identify. The ethnographic summary must include

1. a statement of your research question,
2. a specific response/answer to your research question,
3. specific references to fieldwork using “thick description,”
4. at least two scholarly works related to your area of focus that were not discussed in class,
5. at least one theory discussed in class,
6. a self-reflexive discussion of how your positionality shaped your fieldwork and/or research,
7. at least one verbatim excerpt from your interview,
8. at least one verbatim excerpt from your oral history,
9. at least one piece of archival data,
10. a discussion of three lines of inquiry—
   a. geographic references
   b. historical context
   c. colloquial understandings
11. a creative title with a cover page, and
12. a bibliography of sources you used in writing the paper.

The ethnography must be typed, double-spaced, with your name as a header on each page. Number your pages. Papers are due as indicated on the syllabus at the beginning of class. Papers may be emailed or submitted as hard copies. Late papers will be penalized.

**Participation:** You are expected to participate vigorously in class discussions and exercises. Such participation will earn you full credit.

**Attendance:** You are allowed one unexcused absences from class. If you have more than one unexcused absence, your final grade will be lowered by one letter. If you arrive more than 10 minutes late to class, or leave before class has ended, you will be counted as absent. If you have an emergency, notify the instructor as soon as you are able.
**Course Protocols**

* Rules for respectful discussion will be followed. These rules will be established and agreed upon by everyone early in the semester. If a student violates these rules, that student will be counted as absent for the day.

* Students using computers for anything other than taking notes and other class-related activities will be counted as absent for the day.

* Written assignments are due by email by class time on the due date indicated in the syllabus.

* The University of Texas rules and regulations regarding plagiarism and intellectual honesty will be enforced. For details please see: deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/scholdis_plagiarism.php

* Students with disabilities may request appropriate academic accommodations from the Disability Programs and Resource Center at San Francisco State University. http://access.sfsu.edu/content/students

* By UT Austin policy, you must notify me of your pending absence at least fourteen days prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day. If you must miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day, you will be given an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

**Grading Scale**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Research Proposal</td>
<td>10 pts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview Presentation</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oral History Presentation</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fieldwork Notebook (I &amp; II)</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Paper</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-minute essay (5/2 pts.)</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TOTAL** 100 pts.

**Course Schedule**
Introduction to Ethnographic Methods

Jan  29  Definitions and History of Ethnography

Self-Reflexivity/Positionality/Ethics

Feb  5  READ: Madison, 1-17; Pepin & Watts, 1-29

12  VIEW: “Harlem of the West”
    GUEST: Jamie Lawrence, J.D., Zephyr Real Estate
    DUE: Research Proposal Due

*12  TOUR: IDEX, International Development Exchange

19  READ: Pepin & Watts, 29-70; Duany, Plater-Zyberk & Speck

*19  TOUR: The Fillmore District with Damon Packwood

26  READ: Vargas; McIntosh
    HANDOUT: Johnson

Accountability/Dialogic Communication/Thick Description

Mar  4  VIEW: “Take this Hammer” & “Bayview/Hunter’s Point”
    DUE: Interview Presentation

*5  TOUR: Bayview Hunter’s Point

11  READ: Wilkerson
    DUE: Fieldwork Notebook I

18  READ: Mayor’s Task Force Report

25  SPRING BREAK

Apr  1  VIEW: “Losing Just the Same”
    DUE: Oral History Presentation

*2  TOUR: Black Panther Tour, Oakland

Theoretical Frameworks

8  VIEW: Toni Griffin’s TED Talk
    HANDOUT: Woods

15  READ: James; DuBois
22  VIEW: “The One Percent”  
READ: Moore, 9-36  
*23  “dat Black Mermaid Man Lady”  

29  READ: Joseph & Cook  
HANDOUT: Batiste  
DUE: Fieldwork Notebook II

May 6  DUE: Ethnographic Summaries