

Anthropology 300

The Ethnography of the University: Studying Scholarship in Action

MW 3:45-5:05
205A Maxwell Hall

Teachers:

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The Ethnography of the University: Studying Scholarship in Action will introduce undergraduate students to ethnographic methodologies, institutional analysis, and the research publication process. Students will conduct ethnographic studies of Syracuse University Scholarship in Action projects of their choosing and will have the opportunity to produce their results on the web. All the steps in the research process, from the formation of research questions to the creation of final research papers, will be produced on-line at a collaborative website, Moodle, that has been created at the University of Illinois to facilitate undergraduate ethnography of the university projects. This project is titled the Ethnography of the University Initiative (EUI). Moodle will serve as students' research template and final projects will be stored on-line through the Illinois Digital Environment for Access to Learning and Scholarship (IDEALS) <http://www.ideals.uiuc.edu/handle/2142/755>

Students will be encouraged to make their work public so that their research subjects, fellow students and Syracuse community participants, will be able to comment and provide feedback on their research. The IDEALS on-line archive will enable this process to be recorded for future students in the hope that they will build on present student research. The archiving of "scholarship in action" research for ANT 300 may help Syracuse University better understand the learning outcomes of "scholarship in action" initiatives.

"The Ethnography of the University" is also part of a second, larger project, the "Imaging America Project," a national endeavor housed at Syracuse University that combines the arts, humanities and social sciences to create interdisciplinary discussions about America's future. Imagining America has provided generous support to help create this course.

<http://www.imaginingamerica.org/>

The Ethnography of the University Initiative (EUI) includes several universities and community colleges located in the state of Illinois. All of these schools are public. Syracuse University is the first non-Illinois and first private university to join the group. This class is joining an inter-campus learning community in which many classes from several schools (most, however, are located at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign) explore their universities and colleges ethnographically. In order to explore Syracuse University ethnographically, we need to think about what "the university" is, what "ethnography" is, and what "scholarship in action" is. Broadly, we will explore the university as a composite of prose,

numerical, and visual narratives (don't worry we will explain what this means as we go along).

We will also introduce you to ethnographic methods. The bulk of this class will be devoted to your own ethnographic project on a Syracuse University "Scholarship in Action." A wide variety of social practices and learning processes will likely become part of what you research. These may include student assessment; student writing; diversity, race, and gender issues; students and new technologies; student archiving practices; and globalization and the university.

Assignments and Grading System

1. "Moodle Ethnography." The ethnographic projects produced on the Moodle template projects will be every student's major research work for the semester. All students will begin working on them early in the semester and will present their progress as the semester proceeds. All students will present their final projects during the last week of class. Throughout the semester, both the professor and teaching assistant will comment on the research and give each student feedback. The grade, however, will be a cumulative one. We will regard your work as a portfolio in progress. You will be working in the on-line environment, Moodle, and all members of the class will comment on student work through it. We shall grade the projects at the end of the semester. **60% of final grade.**
2. Short Assignments. You will have **5 short assignments** to complete during the semester. Three of these assignments will be 1-page analytical/reflective essays. These assignments are listed in the syllabus, and they are directed not only to the readings but also to the core analytical concepts of the course. Some of these will be required, and others can be done if students choose. The additional 2 assignments will be fieldwork/research based ones that will require the production of both visual and written materials. These assignments will be done in learning groups, and each group will be asked to present their work to the class as a whole. **20% of final grade.**
3. General Participation in class. **20% of final grade.**
4. Each student is expected to make at least 3-4 extended office visits with Professor Kelleher during the semester. Meeting during office hours is preferred, but alternative times are welcome.

Books to Purchase:

Three books are available for purchase for this course. They are available at the University bookstore.

Rebekah Nathan, *My Freshman Year: What a Professor Learned by Becoming a Student* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2005).

Richard J. Light, *Making the Most of College: Students Speak Their Minds* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001).

Robert M. Emerson, Rachel I. Fretz, Linda L. Shaw, *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995).

Grading Scale:

This course will use a 10-point grading scale with pluses and minuses.

A+	100	B	83-86	C-	70-72	F	0-59
A	93-99	B-	80-82	D+	67-69		
A-	90-92	C=	77-79	D	63-66		
B+	87-89	C	73-76	D-	60-62		

University and Course Policies:**Disability-Related Accommodations**

In compliance with section 504 of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Syracuse University is committed to ensure that “no otherwise qualified individual with a disability...shall, solely by reason of disability, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity...”

Students who are in need of disability-related academic accommodations must register with the Office of Disability Services (ODS), 804 University Avenue, Room 309, 315-443-4498. Students with authorized disability-related accommodations should provide a current Accommodation Authorization Letter from ODS to the instructor and review those accommodations with the instructor. Accommodations, such as exam administration, are not provided retroactively; therefore, planning for accommodations as early as possible is necessary. Please note that students are responsible for initiating this process. For further information, see the ODS website, [Office of Disability Services](http://disabilityservices.syr.edu/) <http://disabilityservices.syr.edu/>

Academic Integrity:

The Syracuse University Academic Integrity Policy holds students accountable for the integrity of the work they submit. Students should be familiar with the Policy and know that it is their responsibility to learn about instructor and general academic expectations with regard to proper citation of sources in written work. The policy also governs the integrity of work submitted in exams and assignments as well as the veracity of signatures on attendance sheets and other verifications of participation in class activities. Serious sanctions can result from academic dishonesty of any sort. Students found to cheat will receive an F for that assignment. Students have a right to appeal such decisions. For more information and the complete policy, see <http://academicintegrity.syr.edu>

We expect you to do your own work in this course. Do not copy from WebPages, from books or articles, or from other student work. This course will follow and uphold both the Maxwell School Code of Conduct and the Provost's policy on academic integrity. Students found cheating will be penalized. If any student is found cheating or plagiarizing a second time, that student will fail the class.

Class/Reading Schedule**January****Week 1****12 Introductions and overview of course**

14 What is a university? What is an ethnography of the university?

Short Assignment #1: 1-page writing assignment due: Please write 1-page on the topic “My life as a researcher and writer.” Please hand it in at the end of Wednesday’s class – 2/21.

Readings:

1. Please peruse Boyer Commission on Educating Undergraduates. 1998. *Reinventing Undergraduate Education: A Blueprint for America's Research Universities*. Stony Brook, NY: State University of New York at Stony Brook for the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. <http://naples.cc.sunysb.edu/Pres/boyer.nsf/>
2. Rebekah Nathan, *My Freshman Year*, Ch. 1, pp. 1-18.
3. Richard J. Light, *Making the Most of College*, Ch. 1, pp. 1-12.

Week 2**19 No Class: Martin Luther King, Jr. National Holiday****21 Is there a “student culture”? Comparing AnyU and Syracuse University.**

1. Nathan, pp. 19-66.
2. Light, pp. 13-44.
3. Boyer Commission on Educating Undergraduates, pp. 1-21.

Week 3**26 Community and Diversity at the Research University**

1. Nathan, review pp. 41-66, and read pp. 67-89 .
2. Review Light, 13-44, and pp. 1-21 of Boyer.
3. Presentation of Moodle research template
4. All students should open a Moodle page by the 1/28 class meeting.

28 The Place of Academics in Contemporary Undergraduate Life

1. Nathan, 90-106.
2. Stanley Fish article from NYTimes. *The Last Professor*.
<http://fish.blogs.nytimes.com/2009/01/18/the-last-professor/>
3. **Short Assignment #2:** For the next class, please write a 1-page single spaced essay that tells one of your Syracuse University stories. You might decide to write about how and when Syracuse University came onto your personal/cognitive map, about how you ended up coming here, about your sense of what sort of university this is and where you fit in it, or about your experiences as a student here.
4. All students should have begun their Moodle research page. A tentative title of your project and a paragraph in the “About the Author” box should be entered by February 2nd.
<https://moodle.atlas.uiuc.edu/course/view.php?id=392>
5. Introduction to anthropological understandings of narrative – Handout.

Week 4**February****2 Learning to Use Library Sources to Contextualize Ethnographic Research**

1. The class will meet with Bonnie Ryan, the social science librarian of Bird Library. We shall meet in the Spector Room on the 6th floor of the E.S. Bird Library.
3. Course handouts about forming research questions will be distributed.

4 More on Library Research: Introducing the University Archive

1. The class will meet with Mary O'Brien the Syracuse University archivist in the Spector Room, 6th floor of Bird Library.
2. Please read: "Scholarship in Action: Investing in the Creative Campus." 1 page.
<http://www.syr.edu/chancellor/vision/index.html>
3. Please read: "Investment Focus 3: Engagement with the World."
<http://www.syr.edu/chancellor/vision/investmentFocus3.pdf>
- 4. Short Assignment #3:** Please write a two paragraph reflection on the readings and exercises we have done thus far. Enter this in the "Initial Exercises" section of your Moodle page.
5. Students should meet with Professor Kelleher or Jonathan to discuss their questions within the next week.

Week 5**9 Getting Research Started: Forming Questions about Scholarship in Action**

1. Nancy Cantor, "The Two Way Street of Scholarship in Action."
http://www.syr.edu/chancellor/speeches/2wayst_SIA_University_Address_031808.pdf
2. Students should enter preliminary research questions into their Moodle pages. Students will present and discuss their questions with the class. Students should try to relate their research questions to the assigned readings.
3. Students will be assigned SIA projects on which to report for next week.

11 Scholarship in Action II

1. Nancy Cantor, "Scholarship in Action and the Expansive Mission of Higher Education." http://www.syr.edu/chancellor/speeches/1_07_address.pdf
2. Nancy Cantor, "Individuals, Ethics and Empathy of Mind."
http://www.syr.edu/chancellor/speeches/Chautauqua_presentation.pdf
3. Come to class ready to talk about these representations of Syracuse University. What surprised you about these narratives of SU? Do they make sense to you? Why and how?
4. Initial reports on SIA projects.

Week 6**16 Researching social space: Interviewing and Understanding:**

1. Role Play in class: from Bourdieu, Pierre, The Weight of the World, read pp. 60-76 and be prepared to role play pp. 64-76. Read excerpts from Pierre Bourdieu in the same volume, "Understanding," pp. 612-17. Posted on Blackboard site.
https://blackboard.syr.edu/webapps/login/?action=portal_direct_entry

18 Researching Scholarship in Action Ethnographically

1. Student reports on SIA projects they have surveyed.
2. Each student should form 3 questions on the SIA project they have examined.

Week 7**23 Introducing Students' Ethnography Projects**

This week will be the first week of in-class presentations on your Ethnography projects. By this time, you should have consulted with Professor Kelleher or Jonathan Jackson about your research questions, plan and strategies for solving them. Be prepared to discuss these. You should have at least one question in your Moodle Question section,

preferably two. You should have a **PLAN** for answering your questions nearly completed in your Moodle page by the 22nd. Be prepared to introduce your **PLAN** section and lead a discussion of it. On the 25th students should come to class having revised their **PLAN** sections and prepared to discuss the reasons for the revisions.

25 Revising Plans and Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes

1. Presentation of revised **PLAN**
2. Read: Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw, *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes*. Pp. 1-16.
“Fieldnotes in Ethnographic Research.”

March

Week 8

2 Research Ethics

1. The Institutional Review Board (IRB)

4 Producing Ethnographic Documents

1. Read *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes*, Pp. 17-38.
2. **Short Assignment #4:** Over spring break, wherever you are, write down some ‘jottings,’ and report on them during our March 16th class.

NO CLASSES: SPRING BREAK

Week 9

16 Fieldnotes: From field to desk

1. Read *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes*, Pp. 39-65.
2. Student presentations of spring break ‘jottings.’
3. Students should make a second appointment with either Jonathan Jackson or Professor Kelleher to discuss their projects – possible research paths, supplementary readings on your topic, etc. These individual appointments must take place before March 25th.

18 Creating Scenes through Ethnographic Writing

1. *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes*, Pp. 66-107.

Week 10

23 Initial Research Reports

Students should have entered several documents, either fieldnotes or interview material, in their **DATA** sections by this date. All students will report on their work to date.

25 Research Reports

Week 11

30 Studying Student Culture, Studying Meanings

1. Read: *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes*, Pp. 108-141.

April

1 Representing Student Culture

1. **Short Assignment #5:** All students should enter some ethnographic material that addresses student culture, the meanings students give to their SIA practices. This should be entered in Moodle. **All students will present this material in class. After discussion and suggestions, students will be expected to revise and/or expand their material for next week.**

Week 12

6 More on student culture – reports on revising the meanings of SIA projects for students.

8 Turning Research Data into Ethnographic Texts

1. All students must have at least 1 interview and 1 ethnographic event posted in their data sections by Tuesday, April 7 at 10PM.

Week 13

13 Student Presentations of Ethnographic Progress

Students should identify the themes and trends in their research thus far. All students must have, at least, a second interview posted in their data sections by April 12 at 8PM.

15 More Student Presentations

Students MUST HAVE ETHNOGRAPHIC FIELDNOTES FOR A THIRD EVENT POSTED ON THEIR DATA SECTION BY APRIL 14 AT 8pm.

Week 14

20 Final Presentations Week

During **these final three classes**, all students should share their conclusions and tell the stories of doing the work and making the questions that got them there. It will be important to share reflections on your work. What new questions have come up at the end? What might have you done differently knowing what you now know? Did your research affect the way you understand the university, yourself, the world?

22 Presentations

Week 15

27 Presentations

28 LAST DAY OF CLASSES

May 4: ALL WORK MUST BE COMPLETED.