

## **Class Syllabus**

Fall 2020

ANG 6930 Research Strategies in Anthropology

Wed. 11:45-2:45 Room:

Instructor: Jeffrey C. Johnson johnsonje@ufl.edu

**Office:** 352-392-1020 Ayers, BEBR, Room 101

**Home:** 252-258-4869

**Office Hours:** 10:00 - 1:00 Tuesday and 11:00-2:00 Monday

**Abstract:** This class focuses on the fundamentals of research design and research strategies in anthropological research. Particular attention will be paid to the relationship between how a study is designed and the valid assessment of study results and conclusions. The linkages between theory, empirical statements or research questions, study objectives, study design, data collection methods (both qualitative and quantitative), data analysis (both qualitative and quantitative) and interpretation, inferences concerning empirical statements or research questions, and finally, drawing conclusions will be emphasized. The principals of various research designs including true experiments, quasi-experiments, and observational studies, particularly ethnographic study designs, will be reviewed with particular emphasis on how each is better or worse at dealing with various issues of both internal and external validity. Class materials will include anthropological examples as well as examples from across the social sciences.

**Class Goals and Objectives:** To give students engaged in anthropological research an understanding of the importance of research design in the valid assessment of research findings.

**Readings:** There are no texts for this class. Readings are assigned on a weekly basis from a variety of sources. All readings can be found at <https://www.jeffreyjohnson.org/cv/readings/>

### **Examples of readings provided:**

J.C. Johnson and D. Hruschka. Research Design and Research Strategies in Cultural Anthropology. In *The Handbook of Method in Cultural Anthropology*. (R. Bernard and L. Gravlee, eds.) Altamira Press (2014).

J.C. Johnson and S. Weller. Elicitation Techniques in Interviewing. (2002) In *Handbook of Interview Research* (J. Gubrium and J. Holstein, eds.), pp 491-514, Sage: Newbury Park.

Chapters from *Research Methods in Anthropology: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches* (5th Edition) Author: H.R. Bernard

Sections of *Systematic Data Collection* 1988 Authors: S.C. Weller and A.K. Romney

All of *Selecting Ethnographic Informants* 1991 Author: J.C. Johnson

Chapters from Not Even Wrong: Margaret Mead, Derek Freeman, and the Samoans Author: Martin Orans

**Tests and Projects:** There will be a mid-term exam and a final class project. The final project involves the development of a research proposal following National Science Foundation guidelines. This is an opportunity for students to develop their PhD dissertation proposal (or at least to begin to think seriously about a proposal) and to express it in a format suitable for submission to the DIG program at NSF. The student's proposal development will be the primary focus of the course. Therefore, the class schedule will be somewhat fluid so that the focus of the course can adapt to the needs of the mix of student topics (e.g., mix of qualitative and quantitative approaches). Students will present their research proposals during the final exam period and their proposals will be discussed and reviewed by fellow students as well as the instructor.

**Assignments:** There will occasionally be short weekly assignments involving some type of problem-solving exercise based on readings for the week. In addition, students will build their proposals on a weekly basis starting with the development of a statement of the problem, followed by research objectives, research questions and so on. These evolving proposals will be presented and discussed in class on an ongoing basis.

**NSF Proposal Processing and Review:**

[https://www.nsf.gov/pubs/policydocs/pappguide/nsf16001/gpg\\_3.jsp#IIIA](https://www.nsf.gov/pubs/policydocs/pappguide/nsf16001/gpg_3.jsp#IIIA)

**Grading:** Grades will be based on exercises, weekly proposal development assignments, tests and the final project.

Exams-25%

Assignments and Proposal Presentations and Discussions-25%

Final Proposal Project-50%

For further information on UF's Grading Policy, see:

<http://www.registrar.ufl.edu/catalog1011/policies/regulationgrades.html>

<http://www.isis.ufl.edu/minusgrades.html>

Tentative Topics in Sequence:

- I. Gaining a healthy skepticism concerning research
- II. Theory and the development of objectives, empirical statements and research questions
- III. Research design and threats to validity
- IV. Design and its relation to the collection and analysis of data (both qualitative and quantitative)
- V. Making inferences and the art of interpretation
- VI. Writing a good research proposal

Week 1

Introduction

Week 2

Developing proposals/Threats to validity

Week 3

Study Objectives and Questions/Hypotheses

Week 4

Student's Study Objectives

Week 5

Study Design/More Discussion of Objectives

Week 6

Qualitative and Quantitative Methods of Data Collection

Week 7

Phases of Research

Week 8

Midterm/Student Presentations

Week 9

Ethnographic Interviewing

Week 10

Qualitative and Quantitative Data Analysis

Week 11

Data Analysis (Cont.)

Week 12

Reviews of Student Proposals

Week 13

Reviews of Student Proposals

Week 14

Reviews of Student Proposals

Week 15

Reviews of Student Proposals

Week 16

Student Presentations