



THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST INDIES

ST. AUGUSTINE

FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

DEPARTMENT OF BEHAVIOURAL SCIENCES

Academic Year – 2017-2018

Faculty:	Social Sciences
Course Title:	<u>Anthropology of Peoples of the Caribbean II</u>
Course Code:	SOCI 2031
Level:	Second-year
Length:	One semester
Credits:	Three (3)
Pre-requisite(s):	SOCI 2010

COURSE DESCRIPTION

‘Anthropology of Peoples of the Caribbean II’ is designed to allow students to move from learning about what anthropology is to doing anthropology in the field. The course builds on the anthropological role-playing exercises from SOCI 1006 and the overview of Caribbean Anthropology in SOCI 2010.

Over the course of the semester students will attend lectures and tutorials while also working on a mini ethnographic project that will be worth **100%** of their final grade. The project topic must include some focus on an aspect of *** TRADITION *** and step-by-step guidelines for your research are provided in lectures, tutorials and this course outline.

Tradition, while a foundational area of research in anthropology (a long time ago the original purpose of anthropology was to venture out of the and study “traditional” societies), is as you will discover this semester, a term everyone assumes they understand, but which is at the same time a term who’s definition is difficult to agree on.

In anthropology there have been two main ways to understand tradition: the passive vs. the active. The first definition, tradition as passive, is to understand tradition as in opposition to modernity, and in this sense many persons speak of folklore, handed-down customs, and time-honoured respected beliefs. This definition of tradition is understood as passive because it sees tradition as connected to social heritage and not subject to much change. The passive definition is often critiqued for suggesting human beings and their behaviours are simply determined by tradition and social heritage rather than environmental realities. The passive definition of tradition ignores the evidence that tells anthropologists that culture is always changing, hence traditions do not exist in a vacuum.

The second definition of tradition sees tradition as an active process. It suggests tradition is more than a storage device for old and respected ways of seeing and understanding the world, and that instead tradition should be understood as a dynamic, innovative, and an active process, which adapts and changes based on the everyday lives, activities and environment realities human beings find themselves in. In this sense tradition is perhaps most usefully understood as a process of transition.

The following definitions could serve as a point of departure for your inquiry, but they must be subjected to critical review based on your observations.

- “For now, the word tradition will refer to agents’ own reification of their way of life, which they regard as unique and usually ancient, which has a sacred element, and to which they are emotionally attached - in other words, as that reification of culture evoked by traditionalism. A tradition in this sense is invented - but not by the anthropologist, rather by the agents themselves.” Thomas Hylland Eriksen, 1992. ‘Multiple traditions and the question of cultural integration’. *Ethnos*, no. 3-4
- “‘Tradition’ like the associated concepts ‘heritage’ and ‘nostalgia’ are the products of modernity, which was itself born of a sense of change and history” – Nelson Graburn. 2001. Learning to consume: What is heritage and when is it traditional? *In Consuming Tradition, Manufacturing Heritage: Global Norms and Urban Forms in the Age of Tourism* (ed). Nezar AlSayyed. London: Routledge
- “A living social tradition, I argue, must engage a group of practitioners who have a sense of community based on a shared identification with a particular past. They must feel linked by collective memories which are transmitted by a variety of means, including written and oral narratives, rituals, commemorative objects, architecture, and particular physical environments. And the group must value continuity. They must feel a sense of custodianship for the tradition’s present and future prospects.” Joseph A. Scars. 1997. ‘A reformulation of the concept of tradition’. *International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy*, Vol. 17 (6) pp. 6-21
- “Just as life has death as its opposite, so tradition is often said to be opposite to innovation. But just as within Christianity and other religions there is life in or after death, so there is a “tradition of innovation,” as in contemporary Western art traditions, or there may equally be the “innovation of tradition,” as in the commonly referred to “invention of tradition.”– Nelson Graburn. 2001. ‘What is Tradition?’ *Museum Anthropology* 24(2/3): 6-11

Further instructions and guidance is built into each week’s lectures and tutorials. The project comprises two coursework components: 1) a written report, and 2) a 1-3 minute video composition or 2-5 minute ethnography slam. All formats require specific planning.

Applying anthropology in the field will provide students with insight into the practical utility of the discipline. It will also provide means of understanding cultural change in practice and the significance of the culture concept in doing qualitative fieldwork. **The final project must be submitted week of April 16th, 2016 at the Department of Behavioural Sciences. No late submissions will be accepted.**

RATIONALE

In the field of anthropology it is agreed that the best way to learn anthropology is through practice. By providing simple packaging that is comprehensive this course will allow students to produce anthropological work that is educative, timely and needed. The projects produced will not only provide a good scientific foundation for the students in the study of culture but they will also capture and record local culture, communities and history that otherwise might not be recorded.

The course sets out to answer these core questions:

- What is the science of ethnography?
- What is the art of anthropology?
- What is the methodology of anthropological fieldwork?
- How is the practice of this fieldwork conducted?
- What do ethnographies of tradition look like?

The course aims to answer these questions by providing students with the opportunity to conduct fieldwork while providing lectures and tutorials that guide them through the fieldwork process

GOALS/AIMS

The general objectives for this course are to:

- 1) expose students to ethnography
- 2) connect students' ethnographic work to the study of tradition
- 3) encourage the development of empathy in students
- 4) understand that research and writing is a recursive process (accomplished, for example, through peer review)
- 5) learn about the history and development of qualitative research skills in anthropology
- 6) understand the importance of ethically informed research
- 7) learn how to document and analyse cultural data

LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the end of the course students will be able to:

- 1) write the methodological steps for a mini-ethnography
- 2) document the study of tradition
- 3) translate fieldwork into a useful format
- 4) summarise the ways in which ethnography has developed over the last 100 years

INSTRUCTOR/TUTOR INFORMATION

Name of Day Instructor: Dr. Dylan Kerrigan
Office address and phone: FSS 224A
E-mail address: Dylan.Kerrigan@sta.uwi.edu
Office hours: Monday 2-4pm

Communication policy: Via email, office hours or appointment by arrangement

Name of Tutor: Ms Tori Sinanan

E-mail addresses: torisinanan@gmail.com

TEACHING METHODOLOGY/STRATEGIES

In this course lectures, tutorials and readings provide a three-level teaching strategy designed to offer guidance on how to conceive, execute and complete your project. The lecture series functions in a step-by-step format and includes guest lectures from anthropologists currently doing fieldwork in the Caribbean. Each lecture will build on the last one. And each lecture covers a progressive element in the ethnographic process. Tutorial subjects have been chosen to connect to each week's lecture. In your tutorials you will apply what was learned from the lecture. This synergy will help move you along each step of the project process.

The lectures are also divided into three sections to further help your conceptualisation of the course and project: The first section of lectures and tutorials for the course concentrates on **the science of anthropology**; the second section on **doing ethnography**; and the third section on **the art of anthropology**. The readings are short, direct and straight to the issues. Each reading is specific to the week's lecture and tutorial topic. A course textbook is provided. Finally, a list of textbooks and websites is also provided. These sources can help to provide further insight into ethnography. At the back end of this syllabus two short guides on doing ethnography can be found.

COURSE CONTENT

The major concepts that will be addressed in this course are:

1. Introduction cultural anthropology: concepts and issues
2. The science of anthropology
3. The art of anthropology
4. Ethnography
5. The ethics of fieldwork
6. Field notes
7. Interviews
8. Coding
9. Representation
10. Applied anthropology

COURSE ASSESSMENT

The purpose of assessment in this course is fourfold:

- 1) To ensure students have applied a scientific methodology to their project.
- 2) To gather evidence that students have applied anthropological ethics to the collection of cultural data.
- 3) To evaluate students' execution of cultural analysis
- 4) To assess the quality of students' work

Assessment breakdown:

- Tutorial and lecture attendance 10%
- Methodology 15%
- Analysis 30%
- Fieldnote Diary 25%
- Presentation (incl video or ethnography slam) 20%

Video Tips:

Your video should be a **maximum** of three minutes and tell an ethnographic story or anecdote that helps people understand the ways you have encountered and come to understand the idea of tradition in your project. It can be an interview, a skit, a song or other – you decide. Videos can be produced using your smart phones as well as more professional equipment should you have access. Storytelling about the way Trinbagonians encounter and understand tradition in a culturally relative way is the main assessment criteria.

Ethnography Slam Tips:

Like a poetry slam or spoken word slam, the ethnography slam is a chance to present your project orally. You are encouraged to present something creative that draws from the ethnographic work you have produced this semester. Like the 1-3 minute video option it does not have to be your whole project but an aspect of the project that tells the audience how you came to encounter and understand tradition in your project. The format is meant to be a safe space of acceptance and support. You will not be asked any questions. Try a 2-5 minute length and no more.

Further instructions will be given in lectures and tutorials

- The importance of tradition in everyday life
- The how and why's of a time honoured custom and the changes it has gone through
- Social integration and the role of multiple traditions
- Identity and tradition
- Trinidadian Hindu traditions vs. Hindu traditions in India today?
- Tradition and the demands of modern Trinidad and Tobago
- Traditional mas vs. Pretty mas
- Protecting traditions from disappearing
- The role of invented traditions
- Ethnic traditions and state support/lack of support
- Traditional medicine and knowledge becoming obsolete with google
- The social relevance of merging of traditions in a multi ethnic society
- Transitioning from the traditional
- Tradition as social control

Course textbook:

Key Text: Crang, Mike and Ian Cook. 2007. *Doing Ethnography*. London: SAGE Publications

Supplemental suggestions:

Agar, Michael H., 1980. *The professional stranger: an informal introduction to ethnography*. London: Academic Press

Bernard, H. Russell. 2006. *Research methods in anthropology*. Oxford: Altamira Press.
<http://www.antropocaos.com.ar/Russel-Research-Method-in-Anthropology.pdf>

Bowen, Elenore Smith 1964. *Return to Laughter: An Anthropological Novel*. New York: Anchor Books

Crapanzano, Vincent. 1986. 'Hermes' dilemma: the masking of subversion in ethnographic description.' *In Writing culture: the poetics and politics of ethnography*. Berkeley: University of California Press

Fetterman, David M. 1998. *Ethnography: step by step*. London: Sage [used copies available via Amazon for TT\$40]

Fabian Johannes. 1983. *Time and the other: How anthropology makes its object*. New York: Columbia University Press

Goodall, H. L. Jr. 2000. *Writing the New Ethnography (Ethnographic Alternatives)*. Altamira Press [used copies available via Amazon for TT\$36]

E-Journals:

- Ethnography - <http://eth.sagepub.com/>
- Journal of Contemporary Ethnography - <http://jce.sagepub.com/>
- Forum: qualitative social research - <http://www.qualitative-research.net/index.php/fqs> (all articles are available free of charge)

Other useful online resources:

- American Anthropological Association (especially the ethics, programs and student sections): <http://www.aaanet.org/>
- Anthropological theories for students by students <http://www.as.ua.edu/ant/Faculty/murphy/436/anthros.htm>
- Anthropological Glossary http://highered.mcgraw-hill.com/sites/0072500506/student_view0/glossary.html
- Academic Resources on the Web in Anthropology: <http://fatcampus.com/anthropology.htm>

COURSE CALENDAR

Mon 22nd Jan Week 1: Introduction

- Who am I, who are you, what is this class about?
- Overview of syllabus, readings, and assignment.
- Tips for doing well.
- Advice for successful reading practice.
- What is Ethnography: From Travel Writing on the Caribbean to Ethnographies of the Caribbean
- Anthropology of Tradition – What is Tradition?
- The anthropology of everyday life: Examples of possible research projects

READING: Hammersley, Martyn and Atkinson, Paul. 1995. Chapter 1. *In Ethnography: principles in practice*. London. Routledge.

AND

Crang, Mike and Ian Cook. 2007. Chapters 1&2. *Doing Ethnography*. London: SAGE Publications

Supplemental: Eriksen, Thomas Hylland. 1992. 'Multiple traditions and the question of cultural integration'. *Ethnos*, no. 3-4

SECTION 1 - Part 1: The Science of Anthropology:

Mon 29th Jan Week 2: The scientific method of anthropological research

- Specific features of socio-cultural anthropology
- Why anthropology is not sociology, not psychology
- The subjectivity/objectivity debate
- The importance of culture
- Getting into the literature
- Literature review
- Ethnographic methodology

READING: Reeves, Scott, Ayelet Kuper and Brian David Hodges. 2008. "Qualitative Research: Qualitative Research Methodologies: Ethnography". *BMJ: British Medical Journal*, Vol. 337, No. 7668 (Aug. 30, 2008), pp. 512-514

Supplemental: Sullivan, Sian and Dan Brockington. 2004. Qualitative methods in globalisation studies: or, saying something about the world without counting or inventing it. CSGR Working Paper No. 139/04 April

Ambet, Anne-Marie, Patricia A. Adler, Peter Adler and Daniel F. Detzner. 1995. "Understanding and Evaluating Qualitative Research". *Journal of Marriage and Family*, Vol. 57, No. 4 (Nov., 1995), pp. 879-893

TUTORIAL TOPIC – Background reading and literature reviews

Mon 5th Feb **Week 3: Field methods and producing data**

- Life histories
- Interviews
- Oral history
- Case Studies
- Mapping
- Visual Anthropology

*****SUBMISSION OF A ONE-PARAGRAPH PROJECT PROPOSAL IS DUE IN CLASS*****

READING: Crang, Mike and Ian Cook. 2007. Chapters 4-7. *Doing Ethnography*. London: SAGE Publications

Supplemental: Briggs, Charles L. 2007. Anthropology, interviewing, and communicability in contemporary society. *In Current Anthropology* 48(4):551-580

TUTORIAL TOPIC – Choosing your field method and composing your methodology

Mon Feb 12th **Week 4: No Lecture - CARNIVAL**

Mon Feb 19th **Week 5: Approaches to ethnographic research and an introduction to ethnography of tradition**

- The fieldwork concept
- Units of study
- Styles in the practice of fieldwork
- Participant observation
- Ethnographies of Tradition

READING: Crang, Mike and Ian Cook. 2007. Chapters 2&3. *Doing Ethnography*. London: SAGE Publications

Supplemental: Graburn, Nelson 2001. ‘What is Tradition?’ *Museum Anthropology* 24(2/3): 6-11

TUTORIAL TOPIC – The ethnography/anthropology of Tradition

SECTION 2: Doing Ethnography

Mon Feb 26th **Week 6: Preparation for fieldwork**

- Planning
- Project/research design

- Ethical concerns and anthropology
- Training
- Audio/Visual equipment
- Checklist

READING: Bresler, Liora. 1995. "Ethical Issues in Qualitative Research Methodology". *Bulletin of the Council for Research in Music Education*, No. 126 (Fall, 1995), pp. 29-41

Supplemental: Mills, David. 2003. The ethics of anthropology: debates and dilemmas. In "Like a horse in blinkers": a political history of anthropology's research ethics, Patricia Caplan (ed.) London: Routledge

American Anthropological Association, Code of Ethics

<http://users.polisci.wisc.edu/schatzberg/ps919/AAA,%20Ethics,%202012.pdf>

TUTORIAL TOPIC – Developing your research design

Mon Mar 5th Week 7: The fieldwork experience

- Personal interaction and adjustment
- Informed consent
- Special problems of fieldwork in familiar settings
- Fieldnotes
- Reflexivity and positionality
- Technology

READING: Crang, Mike and Ian Cook. 2007. Chapter 8. *Doing Ethnography*. London: SAGE Publications

Supplemental: Clifford, James. 1990. Notes on Fieldnotes. In Sanjek, Roger (ed.) *Fieldnotes: the makings of anthropology*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press

TUTORIAL TOPIC - Designing interview questions, conducting interviews and keeping fieldnotes

Mon Mar 12th Week 8: Ethnographical Analysis: Analysing your Data

- Coding
- Sequential analysis
- Sorting
- Databases or indexes
- Concepts and theories

READING: Crang, Mike and Ian Cook. 2007. Chapter 9. *Doing Ethnography*. London: SAGE Publications

Supplemental: Saladaña, Johnny. 2012. Chapter 1. *The Coding Manual for Qualitative Researchers*. London:Sage

TUTORIAL TOPIC – Coding and developing themes

SECTION 3: The Art of Anthropology

Mon Mar 19th **Week 9: Data into text and going beyond the written word**

- The interpretive paradigm
- The author as anthropologist
- The relevance of fiction for anthropology
- Writing styles
- Making your 1-3 min videos / ethnography slam
- Video presentations, audio podcasts and websites
- Community development projects
- Writing ethnography for social change

READINGSs: Crang, Mike and Ian Cook. 2007. Chapter 7. *Doing Ethnography*. London: SAGE Publications

Grimshaw, Anna. 2001. Teaching Visual Anthropology. Notes from the Field. *In Ethnos*, 66(2):237-258

Supplemental: Eriksen, Thomas. Hylland. 1994. The Author as Anthropologist: Some West Indian Lessons about the Relevance of Fiction for Anthropology [<http://folk.uio.no/geirthe/Author.pdf>]

TUTORIAL TOPIC – Shaping a discussion – using your codes and themes; scripting ethnographic data for video and audio presentations

SECTION 4 – PROJECT WORK

For this section students will work on their projects

There are no tutorials during section 4

Mon Mar 26th **Week 10: NO LECTURE. WORK ON PROJECTS. Students can meet by appointment with lecturer.**

Mon Apr 2nd **Week 11: NO LECTURE. WORK ON PROJECTS. Students can meet by appointment with lecturer. (ALSO EASTER MONDAY – the UWI IS CLOSED)**

Mon Apr 9th **Week 12: NO LECTURE. WORK ON PROJECTS. Students can meet by appointment with lecturer**

Mon Apr 16th **Week 13: Ethnography Slam! ALSO PROJECT HAND IN WEEK**

ALL PROJECTS MUST BE HANDED IN TO THE DOBS OFFICE NO LATER THAN Thursday 19th April 2017 at the Department of Behavioural Sciences no later than 5:00pm

Project Instructions and guides:

There is absence of an elaborative knowledge base of the cultural lives of peoples of the Caribbean. Many cultural practices have been handed over to successive generations via socialization, word of mouth and imitation. These practices were never fully subjected to intellectual investigation, analysis or recording and need to be collected. There is also a need for snapshots of the everyday lives of people in the Caribbean: their jobs, their home lives, their concerns and the things that bring them joy, in order to provide a better cultural picture of the quality of experience individuals and groups experience

Ethnographic researchers can capture these lives and experiences by using research techniques such as oral history, interviewing and participant observation to record the past or engage the experiences of communities in the present.

For this course project we want you two provide to forms of anthropological documentation: 1) a written report and 2) a short video.

If you think you may require an authorization letter from the university to conduct your study please contact the lecturer for the course to discuss.

How to Do Ethnographic Research: The bullet point version

Step 1 – Select a community/group and an area/aspect of culture in that community you want to study. You must also consider how this activity or behaviour of the group extends into Tradition

Step 2 – Do some background reading

Step 3 – Get permission to study the community you have chosen

Step 4 – Project Design

Step 5 – Discuss design with lecturer

Step 6 – Go into the field, establish rapport

Step 7 – Collect data: observe, participate, and interview

Step 8 – Analyse data for patterns/themes/insights

Step 9 – Turn data into text

Step 10 – Turn data into a short video

Step 11 – Submit project

How to Do Ethnographic Research: A Simplified Guide

(<http://www.sas.upenn.edu/anthro/CPIA/methods.html>)

The following section was authored by Barbara L. Hall and is intended to provide general, simplified information about how to conduct and write up the results of ethnographic research.

The information that follows falls into three general areas: guidance through the steps necessary to plan and conduct an interesting and appropriate ethnographic term project, even in a class that does not devote much or any time to teaching ethnographic methodology, help in making sense of what is learned through the research, both with regards to the field site in question and to anthropological theory, and assistance in rendering the both research process and what was learned through it accessible to readers through established conventions for writing ethnographic research papers.

The steps below are arranged in a loose order which can take you step-by-step through the research and writing process involved in ethnography.

Novice ethnographers are encouraged to read through the following in its entirety before beginning a project.

Objectivity, Ethnographic Insight and Ethnographic Authority

Students learning about ethnography for the first time are often tempted to promise fervently to be "objective" in their research and to learn what is "really" happening in the field. However, anthropologists have long since acknowledged that ethnographic research is not objective research at all.

The following are some of the reasons for this conclusion:

Ethnography is an interpretive endeavor undertaken by human beings with multiple and varied commitments which can and do affect how the research is done and reported. We all have backgrounds, biographies, and identities which affect what questions we ask and what we learn in the field, how our informants let us in to their lives, and how our own interpretive lenses work.

Not all fieldsites are "foreign" for ethnographers in the same way. Some ethnographers are native to the communities in which they study, whereas some enter as complete strangers with no obvious common ground. Even though they may learn somewhat different things, both kinds of researchers are legitimately able to undertake ethnographic research.

Ethnography is not replicable research (like many kinds of science).

Ethnography is not based on large numbers of cases (like quantitative research). How can any research done under such circumstances, which is not even pretending to be objective, have any worth at all? In other words, how can we claim ethnographic insight into cultural practices? What is the basis of ethnographic authority under these conditions? Anthropologists have seriously considered these charges, and concluded that there are several ways in which insight and authority in ethnographic research can be persuasively claimed:

Anthropologists generally subscribe to some form of cultural relativism, meaning that we believe that there is no one standpoint from which to judge all cultures and ways of being in the world. Because of this, we are conditioned to see various perspectives as "positioned" (Abu-Lughod 1991), and the things that we learn in the field as "partial truths" (Clifford 1986). Therefore, there is not one single truth in a research situation to be uncovered; there are many.

Ethnographers are expected to be "reflexive" in their work, which means that we should provide our readers with a brief, clear picture of how the research we have done has been or could have been affected by what we bring to it. This can take the form of revealing details of our own experience or background to readers up front.

Ethnographers should have more than one way to show how we arrived at the conclusions of our research; we expect to have a collection of fieldnotes, interviews, and site documents (where possible), which work together to support our claims. This is called triangulation.

Ethnographic research takes place in depth and over a great deal of time, often months or years for professional ethnographers. Ethnographic conclusions are, therefore, arrived at only after lengthy consideration.

Sanjek (1990) recommends that readers and writers of ethnography focus on what he calls the "validity" of ethnography. In this way, we can judge the clarity with which decisions regarding the application of theory to data are explained as well as follow ways in which events in the text are persuasively linked in making the conclusions presented there.

Guiding Questions

One of the first things we need early on in order to conduct a successful ethnographic project is an appropriate guiding question. Having a guiding question before beginning fieldwork is a good idea because it gives you some way to focus your attention productively in early visits to your fieldsite. Of course, this question might change in the course of the research as more is learned; this happens often and can be a step towards especially insightful research!

Guiding questions are aimed at the basic point of ethnography: gaining the worldview of a group of people. Common formats for guiding questions might be:

How do members of a particular group perceive of or understand a certain social or cultural phenomenon? (This is often seen through behaviour of some kind.)

Examples:

- How do some tertiary level students in raised in rural Trinidad conceive of arranged marriage?
- How is a certain social or cultural tradition socially constructed among members of a certain group?
- How are traditions around Christmas changing?
- What is the role of family traditions in creating disharmony amongst different family members?

Modern ethnographies focus on a central guiding question that connects the local field site to larger anthropological questions about how culture works. Guiding questions should encode larger questions regarding culture or social practice within them. Since everyone is cultural, the ways of life of all groups - familiar, unfamiliar, rich, poor, popular, unpopular - are potential ethnographic topics. While many ethnographies have focused on the poorest or most disenfranchised populations in societies, students are encouraged to "study up" as well. This refers to studying powerful groups and institutions. How and

why do these groups gain, maintain, and exercise power? Note that since groups of people are not homogenous or static, it is often most effective to study a social process at work over time.

In choosing a guiding question, be sure first that it is answerable through ethnographic research. It may be helpful to review the description of ethnography provided to make sure that your question is appropriate. Remember that quantitative research, public policy research, and journalism may seem similar but are importantly distinct from ethnography. It is also a good idea to show the guiding question to the professor for help in deciding whether or not it is appropriately anthropological and able to be addressed by ethnographic means.

Fieldsites

Traditionally, anthropologists have undertaken ethnographic research in small, bounded villages while living among the village's relatively few inhabitants. These ethnographers may have been one of few non-natives in that part of the world and may have been one of the first non-natives that the villagers had ever seen. It may have taken these researchers a year or more in the field to gain the language skills necessary for communication before becoming able to fashion appropriate guiding questions. These long stretches away from their homelands may have been very stressful.

Today, however, fieldsites can be nearly anywhere. Research may still focus on village life, but it is also increasingly likely to take place in urban locales or in the native language of the ethnographer. Sometimes the "group" among whom one wants to study does not live in one location, and our main fieldsite will be a workplace (like a bank) or a religious center (like a mosque) or a generic meeting room where some group meets regularly (like a library meeting room where Alcoholics Anonymous meetings, but also other things also take place) or even in cyberspace (like a chat room). "Multi-sited" fieldwork, which allows ethnographers to engage in research in more than one locale for comparative purposes, is also possible.

It is possible to choose a fieldsite first and then to make a guiding question appropriate to the site. It is also possible to start with a question about a certain cultural process and to find a site where that question might be appropriate. Either method for setting up a project can work, as long as the site and the question are relevant to one another. In other words, be careful that your research questions hit on something important about social and cultural life and practices in the group you have chosen.

Once a potential fieldsite has been selected, ethnographers must negotiate entry. This involves getting permission to visit the site for research purposes from members and often from a person in authority in the site or groups as well. If this proves difficult or questions arise about how to best approach a group, students should consult their professors for advice or assistance. Sometimes it is possible for a professor to help a student gain entry by providing official assurances regarding the project and its purposes to complement that which students provide.

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OTHER INFORMATION

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is a form of academic dishonesty. I take plagiarism and academic dishonesty very seriously, and I am required to report cases to the Head of the Behavioural Sciences Department, whose policy is to fail students for the course or expel them from UWI completely. Please be sure to ask me if you have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism.

In writing papers, you must properly cite all sources (1) directly quoted, (2) paraphrased, or (3) consulted in any fashion. Sources include all printed material as well as the Internet. Proper citation means using a standard citation format: MLA, APA, or Chicago. Quoted and paraphrased material should be “sandwiched,” a clear beginning and ending to the material should be indicated by quotation marks, or, in paraphrases, by the source name at the beginning and the citation at the end.

It is also considered plagiarism if you merely rework source material, placing an author's thoughts in other words without contributing your own ideas. For that reason, you must include some kind of source note whenever drawing on someone else's interpretation. A source note can be a sentence or more in your paper, or it can be a footnote. A source note should clarify the extent to which your interpretation is indebted to your source, explaining both (1) what you use and (2) where you depart or differ from the source.

It is also considered plagiarism to submit drafts, response papers, and other informal assignments without properly citing sources and acknowledging intellectual debts. Failure for the course is the typical sanction in such cases.

You must receive prior permission from me if you want to submit a paper or part of a paper that you have written for a previous class.

I expect all work that you do to be your own original work. And let's be as clear as possible. If you are caught plagiarising

YOU WILL BE CALLED OUT ON IT WITH ALL THE SERIOUS REPERCUSSIONS THIS ENTAILS.

Please do not hesitate to ask your lecturer and tutor for further information and official UWI regulations should you still feel unsure.