

Field Methods

University of Colorado at Boulder

Class: Field Methods (Socy: 3401)
Days: Monday-Friday
Time: 11am-12:35pm
Room: KTCH 235
Semester: Summer 2010, Session A

Instructor: Colter Ellis
Office: Ketchum 409
Contact: colter.ellis@colorado.edu
Office Hours: Monday-Thursday from 9:30-10:45am and 12:45pm-1:30pm or by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Social scientists have a variety of methods for collecting data. This course will focus on qualitative research techniques, with an emphasis in ethnography. The specific methods that will be covered are interviewing, participant observation, field notes, and coding. This course is also structured to give students experience writing research proposals and reading full academic articles. The skills you will learn in this class are invaluable in both academic research settings and other more business oriented professions.

Required Text:

Maxwell, Joseph A. 2005. *Qualitative Research Design: An interactive Approach*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Additional readings will be posted on CU Learn.

The reading schedule can also be found on CU Learn.

Evaluation:

Below are basic descriptions of the class assignments. For full descriptions of these assignments please see CU-Learn. (Note: Do not use these assignment descriptions for doing these assignments!)

June 4 th	One Page Proposal <i>A one-page 'project proposal' describing the topic you have chosen for your proposal.</i>	10pts
June 9 th	Conceptual Framework <i>A two-page description of the sociological significance of your research topic.</i>	20pts
June 16 th	Interview Guide <i>An interview guide that you will use during data collection.</i>	20pts

June 29 th	Research Proposal	100pts
	<i>The previous three assignments, combined with your preliminary data collection, will culminate in a lengthy research proposal (approximately 10 pages).</i>	
June29-July 2	Research Presentation	50pts
	<i>A 10 minute academic style presentation that will describe your research project and preliminary findings.</i>	
Ongoing	Reading Responses	5pts each (Approximately 20 pts total)
	<i>Throughout the semester, I will periodically ask you to respond to open ended questions regarding the readings or previous lectures. You will be given 10 minutes to write a response. I will collect and grade your responses on a scale of 0 to 5. A "0" indicates that I cannot tell from your response whether or not you completed the readings. A "3" indicates that your response demonstrates a partial grasp the reading, and a "5" will be given for a response that demonstrates a clear mastery of the concepts. One reading response will be dropped.</i>	
	Approximant Total:	220pts

Classroom Decorum

I absolutely require that everyone behave respectfully within this forum, including giving others the benefit of the doubt, listening attentively, and understanding the effect your words will have on others. Insensitive comments concerning race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexual orientation, religion, ability etc are forbidden.

Classroom Expectations

- Arrive in the classroom prepared to begin on time. Please stay for the entire class period.
- Turn off phones. If you have an emergency, please notify me prior to class and switch your phone to silent/vibrate.
- Do not read newspapers, text message, or otherwise distract from the learning/teaching environment.
- Please participate in the main conversation by being attentive and abstaining from reading other materials, and not carrying on side conversations during class.
- Turn in assignments on time. Adhere to university policies regarding academic honesty.
- Familiarize yourself with CULearn. It is not my responsibility to help you navigate this system. If you have problems or questions please contact ITS at (303) 735-HELP.
- Keep all returned papers and tests until the end of the semester. In the case of a grade dispute or a potentially miss recorded grade, it is the students responsibility to provide the graded paper or test.

Tools for Success

- Attend and participate (if only with your attentive listening). Studies suggest that this is highly correlated with the grade you earn.
- Go to the writing lab! This is a wonderful resource for ALL students, even if you consider yourself a good writer. <http://www.colorado.edu/pwr/writingcenter.html>
- Keep up with the reading. You cannot participate or fully get the class material or have fun with the discussions if you have not done the readings and thought about them.
- Become a person to your instructor. You can do this by asking questions, coming to office hours, and engaging with the material.
- Read and follow instructions carefully.
- Ask for assistance when you need it.
- Speak up and participate in discussions by asking questions, answering questions, giving opinions, or tying together others' comments. Do this even if you do not think you have the right or best thing to say. You will learn something by doing it.

Attendance

There is no attendance requirement for this class. However, you cannot expect to pass this class without attending regularly.

If you must miss a class, first contact a classmate to find out what you missed. If you need further information, please contact me. I do not give out my power point slides.

Record the names and numbers of three classmates here:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

My Policies

Late Policy

Absolutely no late assignments will be accepted without prior approval or an acceptable **and** documented excuse. If you have an excused absence during and miss a reading question, you will be able to answer a different question in my office.

Schedule Conflicts

If you have a religious holiday, family vacation, wedding, or similar engagement that will conflict with the class schedule I expect you to notify me within the first 3 days of class. You have until the start of class June 3rd to notify me of conflicts. If you do not notify me by this date I will be unable to make alternative arrangements for you.

Laptop Computers

As a general rule, I do not allow laptop computers in my classroom. If you would like to use a laptop in my class, you must set up a meeting with me during my office hours to discuss this possibility.

Academic Integrity

All students of the University of Colorado at Boulder are responsible for knowing and adhering to the academic integrity policy of this institution. Violations of this policy may include: cheating, plagiarism, aid of academic dishonesty, fabrication, lying, bribery, and threatening behavior. All incidents of academic misconduct shall be reported to the Honor Code Council (honor@colorado.edu; 303-725-2273). Students who are found to be in violation of the academic integrity policy will be subject to both academic sanctions from the faculty member and non-academic sanctions (including but not limited to university probation, suspension, or expulsion). For other information on the Honor Code, see <http://www.colorado.edu/policies/honor.html> and <http://www.colorado.edu/academics/honorcode/>

Disability Policy

Students with documented disabilities, including non-visible disabilities such as chronic diseases, learning disabilities, head injury, attention deficit/hyperactive disorder, or psychiatric disabilities should see me after class or during my office hours (preferably during the first two weeks of class) to discuss possible reasonable accommodations. For more information, consult The Office of Disability Services, Willard 322 (303-492-8671).

Classroom Behavior

Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. Students who fail to adhere to such behavioral standards may be subject to discipline. Faculty members have the professional responsibility to treat all students with understanding, dignity, and respect, to guide classroom discussion and to set reasonable limits on the manner in which they and their students express opinions. Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, gender variance, and nationalities. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name. I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records. See policies at <http://www.colorado.edu/policies/classbehavior.html> and http://www.colorado.edu/studentaffairs/judicialaffairs/code.html#student_code

Discrimination and Harassment

The University of Colorado at Boulder policies on Discrimination and Harassment (<http://www.colorado.edu/policies/discrimination.html>) Sexual Harassment, and Amorous Relationships apply to all students, staff and faculty. Any student who believes s/he has been the subject of discrimination or harassment based upon race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, religion, sexual orientation, or veteran status should contact the Office of Discrimination and Harassment (ODH) at 303-492-2127 or the Office of Judicial Affairs at 303-492-5550. For information about the ODH and the campus resources available to assist individuals regarding discrimination or harassment, see <http://www.colorado.edu/odh> .