

## **COURSE OUTLINE**

### **Anthropology 9201B - Research Methods in Sociocultural Anthropology**

***Winter 2019***

**Lectures:** Friday 9:30 am–12:30 pm

**Classroom:** SSC-3102

**Instructor:** Dr. Adriana Premat

**Office:** SSC-3425

**Office hours:** By appointment

**Email:** apremat@uwo.ca

**Credit value:** 0.5 credit

#### **Course Description:**

This seminar will introduce students to the basics of research design and the techniques and methods used in data collection and analysis in anthropology. Throughout the term, students will be working (individually and in small groups) through a series of assignments as part of “The WAGS Coffee Project,” which aims to better understand the relation Western anthropology graduate students have with coffee. Assignments will familiarize students with standard anthropological field practices, including participant observation, material culture analysis, interviewing, survey work, spatial analysis, and qualitative and quantitative data analysis. Students will also be introduced to software commonly used in anthropology (such as Excel, NVivo, Survey Monkey, Google Earth, and ArcGIS) and they will explore different forms of knowledge communication, including report writing and website design.

#### **Learning Outcomes:**

Upon successful completion of this course, students will:

- Be familiar with anthropological research design.
- Appreciate diverse anthropological field practices.
- Have working knowledge of data analysis software commonly used in anthropology.
- Be conversant in different forms of knowledge communication.

### **Course Materials:**

Registered students will have access to a list of reading resources on OWL.

### **Evaluation:**

Your final grade will be based on the following:

- Assignment on qualitative data analysis (due February 1) (20%)
- Assignment on material culture (due February 15) (20%)
- Project report (due March 22) (30%)
- Group project website (due April 19) (30%)

#### *Assignment on qualitative data analysis (due February 8) (20%)*

This assignment has two parts. During the first portion of the assignment (worth 10% of the grade), students will need to spend time exploring their group's research topic by conducting participant observation while taking coffee breaks by themselves or with other anthropology graduate students on campus. Students will note the day, time, and place of each participant observation session(s), will jot down any information that might seem relevant (content of conversation, gestures, attire, smells, tastes, sound, objects in use, layout of space, overall atmosphere, number of people involved, money exchanged, etc.), and will take pictures, if appropriate. Students will write up their field notes following each participant observation session and then use those notes to produce a **~500 words narrative (vignette)**. To get full credit for this part of the assignment, students will have to **import their vignette and any relevant photos** taken into NVivo, as well as **submit a hard copy of their field notes** in the Department's Assignments Drop Box. For the second part of the assignment (worth 10% of the grade), students will read the narratives produced by other students in the class and **code and analyze them** using NVivo. Each student will be expected

to import and code one relevant scholarly article and webpage which could include a magazine or newspaper article. Once the coding and analysis is done, students will **write a ~1500-words essay summarizing the insights** they have gained from reading, coding and analyzing other peoples' narratives, photographs, and other additional material.

*Assignment on material culture (due March 1) (20%)*

For this assignment, students will spend time exploring their group's research topic by collecting data on the physical aspect of the architecture and objects that surround people in at least three coffee outlets on campus. Observations can focus, among other things, on the physical location of the coffee shops (distance from department), physical setting, general layout, branding, sounds, smells, general maintenance of facilities, cleanliness, clients, staff, behaviours, language, peak hours, objects on display, objects on sale, consumables on sale, prices, caloric content, organic, socially-responsible, or sustainable options, reuse or recycling incentives, etc. Students will have to visit those coffee shops prepared—having identified a set of variables they wish to observe and equipped with material to take notes efficiently—, yet they should also conduct their field work with an open mind, ready to add or drop variables, as required. Students will bring their data to class on February 8, conduct quantitative analysis (and qualitative, if relevant), and write a ~2000-words text summarizing the insights they have gained from collecting material culture data on coffee outlets and reflecting on the process of quantitative data analysis. The paper should include tables, graphs, and pictures, as required. Please submit a hard copy of your paper in the Department's Assignments Drop Box (12pt font, double-spaced).

*Project report (due March 22) (30%)*

Students will prepare an individual ~3000 words-long report in which they will present their research questions, describe the research methods they used to document those questions, and summarize the results of their investigations, highlighting the strengths and limitations of each method. The report should include insights gained from as many methodological approaches as is relevant (participant observation, material culture analysis, interview, survey work, spatial analysis, etc.), and should include qualitative and quantitative data analyses. The report should include tables, graphs, and pictures, as required. Please submit a

hard copy of your paper in the Department's Assignments Drop Box (12pt font, double-spaced).

*Group project website (due April 19) (30%)*

Each group of students will prepare a website using [Google Sites](#). The website can include as many pages as required, and should (1) present the group's research questions, (2) discuss the research methods used to document those questions, and (3) present the research results. The website can include, among other things, information drawn from the participant observation and material culture assignments, information from the interviews, survey work, and spatial analysis, and results from qualitative and quantitative data analyses carried out throughout the term. The website can include tables, graphs, word clouds, pictures, voice recording, or videos, etc., as required.

On April 5, group of students will present their website to the class. Presentations should be ~30 minutes in length. Note that until that point, only the group members will have access to their website. Following the presentations, the websites will be published. Students will then be able to link their own website to pages or to specific contents from other groups' websites. Students will also add a final page to their website, drawing insights from the volume of data gathered by other groups of students through different methodological approaches. It is this final version of the websites that will be graded by the instructors.

**Institutional Statements and Policies:**

All students should familiarize themselves with Western's current academic policies regarding accessibility, plagiarism and scholastic offences, and medical accommodation. [These policies are outlined with links to the full policies on the Anthropology website.](#)