



Research Methods and Ethics: Youth, Arts-Based Inquiry, Digital Media

ANTH-3500 (3 Credits / 45 class hours)

SIT Study Abroad Program:

Nicaragua: Youth Culture, Literacy, and Media

Course Description

In this research methods course designed to prepare students for the Independent Study Project, students learn how to organize and conduct a research project. Through lectures, readings, and field activities, students study and practice a range of methods appropriate for researching the program's themes. After reviewing some basic qualitative tools, students study arts-based research methods. Arts-based research constitutes a growing field of inquiry within qualitative studies that includes both writing projects and more visual/theatrical projects. These techniques emerged from a desire on the part of mostly social science researchers to write in ways that are accessible to a large audience in contrast to the usual academic modes, which tend to exclude one's research "subjects" from reading/viewing the final results. Much of this work embodies a commitment to reciprocity, social change, and breaking down the division between researchers and those researched. Students also learn basic digital methods for collecting and disseminating research.

They examine the ethical issues surrounding field research related to working with youth and public digital media forms, and they are guided through the World Learning/SIT Human Subjects Review process, which forms a core component of the course. What are the challenges and risks associated with working with young people or peers? How does one prepare for this seemingly more casual sort of research project?

By the end of the course, students will have chosen a research topic, selected appropriate methods and written a solid proposal for an Independent Study Project related to youth culture and varying types of expression.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course, students will have learned about and practiced these methods. They will be able to:

- Define, describe, and reflect upon having practiced these methods with reference to the philosophical and ethical contexts in which they are embedded.

- Recognize and negotiate ethical issues involved in researching youth populations and make informed decisions about which methods are appropriate for which topics and communities of study.
- Have practiced each of the methods discussed and debriefed the human and intellectual aspects of each.
- Assess and choose appropriate methods for the ISP proposal.
- Write an ISP proposal related to the program themes ready to submit to the local research board.

Language of Instruction

This course is taught in Spanish and English.

Course Schedule

***Please be aware that topics and excursions may vary to take advantage of any emerging events, to accommodate changes in our lecturers' availability, and to respect any changes that would affect student safety. Students will be notified if this occurs.**

The different topics of the seminar are imparted through oral presentations, combined with the study of the basic recommended bibliography, active participation by the students, and the organization of debates once the study of each topic is concluded. The majority of classes are based on daily experiences in Nicaragua and Cuba, starting with exercises followed by a written analysis and/or discussions in the seminar. In all aspects of the seminar, the aim is to apply the learning – experience cycle: Concrete Experiences (the active phase); Publication (sharing reactions and observations); Processing (discussing patterns and dynamics); Generalizing (developing principles of the real world); Application (planning the effective use of what was learned).

Reciprocity is a guiding principal of this Research Methods and Ethics Seminar and arts-based inquiry will promote a breaking down of barriers between researchers and those researched. Introductory classes in digital methods for collecting and disseminating research will also be covered.

Summary of the course; Conceptual understanding of experience-based learning; Reciprocity.

1. Drop-Off; Homestays as cultural experiences; Cultural observations; Diary/Digital records; Arts-Based inquiry.
2. SIT Human Subjects Research Policy; Working with youth; Work journals; Action research and grounded theory.
3. Cultural biographies; US patterns and values; Basic qualitative research methods: interview; Observation and participatory observation; Cultural observations: Green Banana.
4. Digital media skills; Working with sound, video, online platforms; PhotoVoice, blogs, Podcasts; Learn by doing: Interview, observation and participatory observation and investigation; Creativity in research.
5. Deepening the experience: The interview- concrete experiences, evaluation of participatory observation as a research method; Does a camera get in the way?; Defining ISP topics and formulating an investigation proposal.

6. Reciprocity and investigations; Preparing for the ISP; Drafting of the research proposal and advisors; Challenges for research in Cuba: Testimonies; Revisit Human Subjects Research Policy.
7. Processing the information: Getting information out of the experiences and how to analyze the information; Surmounting obstacles to be able to advance; Review of the research proposal.
8. From ISP Proposal to ISP Research Strategy; Mapping your research; Ethical pitfalls; ISP FAQs; Reciprocity and your ISP.
9. Comparative Analysis; ISP FAQs; Reciprocity and your ISP; Logistical ISP guide: Airing doubts.
10. Máximo Jerez then and now: Lancaster discussion; Dotting the i's and crossing the t's...ISP.
11. Evaluation period: How to apply new intellectual and cultural knowledge; Return to the US: Another stage of cultural shock; What do we take from the experience?; How to be consequential with what we have been given?; Reciprocity and return to the US.

Required Readings:

- Lancaster, R. (2004). *Life is hard: Machismo, dander and the intimacy of power In Nicaragua*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Barone, T., & Eisner, E. W. (2012). *Arts based research*. Los Angeles: Sage Publications.

Other readings will be compiled and available in the program's virtual classroom.

Recommended Readings:

- Bailey, C. (2006). *A guide to qualitative field research*. Thousand Oaks: Pine Forge Press.
- Belli, A., et al. (2006). *The Nicaraguans*. Managua. (photography)
- Bennett, A. (2002). *Researching youth culture and popular music: A methodological critique*. London: Routledge.
- Bennett, A., Cieslik, M., & Miles, S. (2003). *Researching youth*. Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Blackman, S. J. (2007). 'Hidden ethnography': Crossing emotional borders in qualitative accounts of young people's lives. *Sociology*, 41(4), 699-716.
- Cahnmann-Taylor, M., & Siegesmund, R. (2008). *Arts-based research in education: Foundations for practice*. New York: Routledge.
- Josselson, R. (Ed.). (1996). *Ethics and process in the narrative study of lives*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Kvale, S., & Brinkmann, S. (2008). *InterViews: Learning the craft of qualitative research interviewing* (2nd ed.). Los Angeles: Sage Publications.
- Leavy, P. (2008). *Method meets art: Arts-based research practice*. New York: Guilford Press.
- Nagy Hesse-Biber, S. (2011). *The handbook of feminist research: Theory and praxis*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Rossman, G. & Rallis, S. (2003) *Leaning in the Field: An Introduction to Qualitative Research*. (Second Edition) Sage Publications.

Evaluation and Grading Criteria

Evaluation is based upon a series of practice activities for each method presented and the submission of an ISP proposal, which includes undergoing the Local Review Board (LRB) process.

Assessment:

Field research assignments/Work Journals	70%
Arts-based inquiry/presentation	20%
Discussion, LRB process, participation	10%

Grading Scale

94-100%	A	Excellent
90-93% A-		
87-89% B+		
84-86% B	Above Average	
80-83% B-		
77-79% C+		
74-76% C	Average	
70-73% C-		
67-69% D+		
64-66% D	Below Average	
below 64	F	Fail

Expectations and Policies

- Show up prepared. Be on time, have your readings completed and points in mind for discussion or clarification. Complying with these elements raises the level of class discussion for everyone.
- Have assignments completed on schedule, printed, and done accordingly to the specified requirements. This will help ensure that your assignments are returned in a timely manner.
- Ask questions in class. Engage the lecturer. These are often very busy professionals who are doing us an honor by coming to speak.
- Comply with academic integrity policies. No plagiarism or cheating; nothing unethical.
- Respect differences of opinion, including classmates', lecturers, and local constituents engaged with on the visits. You are not expected to agree with everything you hear, but you are expected to listen across difference and consider other perspectives with respect.

Please refer to the SIT Study Abroad handbook for policies on academic integrity, ethics, warning and probation, diversity and disability, sexual harassment and the academic appeals process. Also, refer to the specific information available in the Student Handbook and the Program Dossier given to you at Orientation.