



ANTH324

Doing Ethnography

S2 Day 2014

Anthropology

Contents

<u>General Information</u>	2
<u>Learning Outcomes</u>	3
<u>Assessment Tasks</u>	3
<u>Delivery and Resources</u>	8
<u>Unit Schedule</u>	8
<u>Policies and Procedures</u>	9
<u>Graduate Capabilities</u>	10

Disclaimer

Macquarie University has taken all reasonable measures to ensure the information in this publication is accurate and up-to-date. However, the information may change or become out-dated as a result of change in University policies, procedures or rules. The University reserves the right to make changes to any information in this publication without notice. Users of this publication are advised to check the website version of this publication [or the relevant faculty or department] before acting on any information in this publication.

General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Course Convenor

Sumant Badami

sumant.badami@mq.edu.au

Contact via Email

W6A 600

Thursday 12-1pm (or by appointment)

Course Convenor

Kalpana Ram

kalpana.ram@mq.edu.au

Contact via Email

W6A 604

Thu 2-4 PM (or by appointment)

Credit points

3

Prerequisites

(39cp including (9cp from ANTH units including 3cp from ANTH units at 300 level)) or admission to GDipArts

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

This unit provides an introduction to fieldwork in cultural anthropology. As the primary goal of the unit is to teach students how to do ethnographic fieldwork, over the semester students engage in first-hand research where they regularly participate in and observe a cultural scene of their own choosing. Weekly meetings frame the fieldwork process as students learn anthropological methodology under the guidance of an experienced staff member, and then apply this knowledge to their ethnographic study. These meetings also provide the opportunity for students to share their fieldwork experiences with each other, and discuss the methodological issues and concerns raised by their own studies. Simultaneously students will read several classic ethnographies to develop an understanding of the relationship between ethnographic research and ethnographic writing. The program culminates in a report (or mini ethnography) due at the close of the semester.

Important Academic Dates

Information about important academic dates including deadlines for withdrawing from units are available at <https://www.mq.edu.au/study/calendar-of-dates>

Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, you will be able to:

Understand the use of a variety of ethnographic research methods, including their strengths and the sorts of projects for which they might be most useful.

Attain hands on experience in conducting ethnographic research and gain familiarity with the application of a variety of methodological techniques

Receive regular feedback and have opportunities to discuss what they have learned with peers and instructors.

Prepare a sample research proposal for a feasible participant-observation ethnographic study; for those students considering advanced study this proposal might be a stepping stone.

Acquire the knowledge and confidence to competently discuss and apply field research techniques and seek employment as a field researcher in a variety of occupational fields.

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Due
Ethics Quiz	5%	20 August
Discussion Preparation Guide	10%	Weekly
Participation in seminars	5%	Weekly
Research Proposal	25%	8 September
Research Journal	20%	Week 9
Research Paper	35%	Week 12

Ethics Quiz

Due: **20 August**

Weighting: **5%**

Brief description: Students will take the online ethics module for social science research developed by Wynn, Mason, and Everett (http://www.mq.edu.au/ethics_training/) and the online quiz at the end of the module.

Details: The online ethics module should be done as homework in the second week of the class. Upon completion of the quiz, print the certificate of completion and **bring to class** to turn it in. The module takes about 3-4 hours to complete. Warning: start the quiz well in advance because if you fail any section of the quiz, it will not allow you to proceed to the next section of the quiz until 24 hours have passed, so it's not a good thing to do at the last minute.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Acquire the knowledge and confidence to competently discuss and apply field research techniques and seek employment as a field researcher in a variety of occupational fields.

Discussion Preparation Guide

Due: **Weekly**

Weighting: **10%**

Brief Description: Each week, you must fill out a Discussion Preparation Guide and bring it to class.

Details: A sample Discussion Preparation Guide (DPG) is available on I-Learn; I'll hand out a guide in the first week of class, and after that, you should print and fill one out each week. You will bring this to class and use it to inform class discussions. When you first come to class, you should show it to me so that I can see if it's been completed. You can use it to take additional notes during the seminar discussion. At the end of the day, you will hand in your DPG to the unit convenor. They will be returned the following week in class.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Receive regular feedback and have opportunities to discuss what they have learned with peers and instructors.
- Acquire the knowledge and confidence to competently discuss and apply field research techniques and seek employment as a field researcher in a variety of occupational fields.

Participation in seminars

Due: **Weekly**

Weighting: **5%**

Brief description: Each student should fully participate in class discussions and will take turns leading a discussion of the week's readings.

Details: Each week, all students are responsible for filling out the Discussion Preparation Guide and bringing it to class (see assessment task # 2 above). Each week, we will break up into smaller discussion groups for a portion of the class. The unit convenor will roam from group to group, listening and contributing to discussions.

To generate discussion in class: students will spend 10 minutes at the beginning of each class just talking about their Discussion Preparation Guides with each other. This will hopefully help to

wake you up, it breaks the ice, gets your mouths working and also gives you a little more confidence to talk in class with the other students so that you can maximize your participation marks. The point of the Discussion Preparation Guides is that you also have a clear and concise bit of info that you can refer to in the class.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Attain hands on experience in conducting ethnographic research and gain familiarity with the application of a variety of methodological techniques
- Receive regular feedback and have opportunities to discuss what they have learned with peers and instructors.
- Prepare a sample research proposal for a feasible participant-observation ethnographic study; for those students considering advanced study this proposal might be a stepping stone.
- Acquire the knowledge and confidence to competently discuss and apply field research techniques and seek employment as a field researcher in a variety of occupational fields.

Research Proposal

Due: **8 September**

Weighting: **25%**

Brief Description: Your **1200 word** research proposal should be a formal description of the ongoing project of ethnographic description that you are engaged in for this class. Research proposals will be original project designs for ethnographic research projects.

Details: Undertake a literary search for your chosen topic. Identify a minimum of 6-8 academic texts of high quality, which all cover relevant aspects of the topic (the texts should be suitable for comparison).

The proposal should include the following sections:

Proposal title: provide a short descriptive title of no more than 20 words.

Abstract: This should be a short summary of the project, maximum 100 words.

Background: Discusses the academic literature to set up the research question. What other researchers have tackled this issue? What have they said about the topic? What are the points of difference between theorists? How is your project similar to, or different from, those of other researchers?

Aims: What will this research concretely demonstrate or accomplish?

Methods: This should include a detailed discussions of research methods, rationales for choice of methods, background readings on the research questions as they are relevant to methodology, and a plan for completion.

Significance: What is the significance of this project? What new insight will it shed on the

research question?

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Receive regular feedback and have opportunities to discuss what they have learned with peers and instructors.
- Prepare a sample research proposal for a feasible participant-observation ethnographic study; for those students considering advanced study this proposal might be a stepping stone.
- Acquire the knowledge and confidence to competently discuss and apply field research techniques and seek employment as a field researcher in a variety of occupational fields.

Research Journal

Due: **Week 9**

Weighting: **20%**

Brief description: Students will engage in a small-scale ethnographic research project over the course of the semester. Each student will keep a 'field journal' that documents your own life ethnographically in a series of dated fieldnotes. You should collate completed writing assignments, including observational logs, research diary entries, sketches, diagrams, and other useful data related to the on-going project. You need to demonstrate that you are engaging in a **varied methodology**.

Details: You should begin this journal from week 2.

You are encouraged to treat the journal as a 'field diary,' and to write in it as often as possible (**a minimum of twice a week**). Because there are 10 weeks between week 2 and when the journals are due for marking, I will expect **a minimum of 20 entries to pass**.

You will be picking a narrow area of your daily experience to focus on. This should be a **participant-observation record** of your own experiences. These fieldnotes will form the basis of your research paper and "mini-ethnography".

Please see "Important Points to Remember Regarding Your Research Project" protocol (on ilearn) for more detailed guidelines on how to ethically approach this process of writing about your everyday interactions with others, and give everyone you wish to write about an information sheet (also at the end of this unit outline).

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Understand the use of a variety of ethnographic research methods, including their strengths and the sorts of projects for which they might be most useful.
- Attain hands on experience in conducting ethnographic research and gain familiarity with the application of a variety of methodological techniques
- Receive regular feedback and have opportunities to discuss what they have learned with

peers and instructors.

Research Paper

Due: **Week 12**

Weighting: **35%**

Brief Description: You are to write a 3000 word ‘Mini-Ethnography’ based on the research you have been doing throughout the semester. Your Mini-Ethnography should describe the goals of the project, the methods employed, and what you discovered during the course of your research.

Details: Select a topic that interests you (we will discuss the appropriateness of your projects throughout the course). Narrow it down so that it is suitable for a scholarly interrogation. Keep in mind that most students try too much in their research.

Undertake a literary search for your chosen topic. Identify a minimum of 15 - 20 academic texts of high quality, from the social sciences and/or humanities (books, journal articles – the texts should be suitable for comparison).

When you are writing your paper, make sure the text engages with theory, theoretical concepts and demonstrates their application.

In addition to writing the mini-ethnography, you must also include an appendix (up to 500 words) detailing how you ensured ethical research practice. This appendix should outline the steps you took to ensure (a) informed consent, (b) informant privacy and confidentiality, and (c) secure data collection and storage.

(Please see “talking about your research project with your informants” protocol on ilearn for more detailed guidelines on what key areas of ethical research practice should be included in this appendix.)

There is a strict 3,000 word limit for the ethnography part of this assignment. See “exceeding the word limit” (in “Penalties and special consideration”) in this unit outline for details. An additional 500 words is allocated for the ethical research appendix (i.e. the appendix is not included in the 3000-word limit for the ethnography).

Please note that, in order to pass this unit, you **must submit a final paper** (“mini-ethnography”). Failure to do so will result in a failing mark, regardless of your performance in other aspects of the unit.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Understand the use of a variety of ethnographic research methods, including their strengths and the sorts of projects for which they might be most useful.
- Attain hands on experience in conducting ethnographic research and gain familiarity with the application of a variety of methodological techniques
- Receive regular feedback and have opportunities to discuss what they have learned with peers and instructors.

- Acquire the knowledge and confidence to competently discuss and apply field research techniques and seek employment as a field researcher in a variety of occupational fields.

Delivery and Resources

Semester and Year: **Semester 2, 2014**

Meets: **Wednesday 11:00-13:00 W6A 708**

Wednesday 14:00-16:00 W6A 708

iLearn will be used to support this Unit.

NB. but echo will not be used.

In order to become a competent ethnographer, one must develop technical, observational, and analytical skills as well as knowledge about ethnographies; in other words, one must *practice* ethnographic research in order to really understand how anthropologists create and use ethnographic knowledge. For this reason, the unit is a **workshop** taking the form of a **seminar** where we can get together and discuss others', and your own, ethnographic practices. Even though the lecturer will deliver some material, the unit is emphatically **not a lecture course** because students necessarily must participate actively to develop their skills. Please note that the timetable for this unit has it is formally scheduled as a lecture and tutorial, but you should consider it a single seminar.

Mandatory attendance and final papers

- Please note that because there will be no recordings of this unit on Echo, in order to pass this unit, you need to attend a **minimum of two-thirds of all seminar sessions** and you **must submit a final paper**. Failure to do either will result in a failing mark, regardless of your performance in other aspects of the unit.

Unit Schedule

Abbreviated Outline of Weekly Topics (and due dates)

Week	Date	Topic
1	6 Aug	Introduction: Studying Culture (Sumant Badami)
2	13 Aug	Choosing a Field Site, Developing a Research Question, and The Ethics of Ethnography (Sumant Badami)
20 August: Ethics Quiz certificates due in class		
3	20 Aug	Participant Observation and Taking Field Notes (Sumant Badami)
4	27 Aug	Unobtrusive Observation (Sumant Badami)
5	3 Sep	Interviewing (Sumant Badami)
10 Sept: Research Proposals due		

6 10 Sep From participant observation to participant listening - Analysing Texts and Cultural Domain Analysis (Sumant Badami)

7 17 Sep Writing Ethnography (Kalpana Ram)

Mid-semester Recess (20 September – 5 October)

8 8 Oct From Fieldwork to Text (Kalpana Ram)

15 Oct: Ethnographic Research Journals Due

9 15 Oct Emic vs Etic Description (Kalpana Ram)

10 22 Oct Politics of Representation (Guest Lecture: Dr. Victoria Loblay)

11 29 Oct Rhetorical styles: Ethnography vs Creative Nonfiction Journalism (Kalpana Ram)

12 5 Nov (Kalpana Ram)

13 12 Nov (Kalpana Ram)

7th Nov: Mini-Ethnographies

Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from [Policy Central](#). Students should be aware of the following policies in particular with regard to Learning and Teaching:

Academic Honesty Policy http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/academic_honesty/policy.html

Assessment Policy <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/assessment/policy.html>

Grading Policy <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/grading/policy.html>

Grade Appeal Policy <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/gradeappeal/policy.html>

Grievance Management Policy http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/grievance_management/policy.html

Disruption to Studies Policy http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/disruption_studies/policy.html *The Disruption to Studies Policy is effective from March 3 2014 and replaces the Special Consideration Policy.*

In addition, a number of other policies can be found in the [Learning and Teaching Category](#) of Policy Central.

Student Code of Conduct

Macquarie University students have a responsibility to be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct: https://students.mq.edu.au/support/student_conduct/

Student Support

Macquarie University provides a range of support services for students. For details, visit <http://students.mq.edu.au/support/>

Learning Skills

Learning Skills (mq.edu.au/learningskills) provides academic writing resources and study strategies to improve your marks and take control of your study.

- [Workshops](#)
- [StudyWise](#)
- [Academic Integrity Module for Students](#)
- [Ask a Learning Adviser](#)

Student Services and Support

Students with a disability are encouraged to contact the [Disability Service](#) who can provide appropriate help with any issues that arise during their studies.

Student Enquiries

For all student enquiries, visit Student Connect at ask.mq.edu.au

IT Help

For help with University computer systems and technology, visit <http://informatics.mq.edu.au/help/>.

When using the University's IT, you must adhere to the [Acceptable Use Policy](#). The policy applies to all who connect to the MQ network including students.

Graduate Capabilities

Capable of Professional and Personal Judgement and Initiative

We want our graduates to have emotional intelligence and sound interpersonal skills and to demonstrate discernment and common sense in their professional and personal judgement. They will exercise initiative as needed. They will be capable of risk assessment, and be able to handle ambiguity and complexity, enabling them to be adaptable in diverse and changing environments.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Understand the use of a variety of ethnographic research methods, including their strengths and the sorts of projects for which they might be most useful.
- Attain hands on experience in conducting ethnographic research and gain familiarity with

the application of a variety of methodological techniques

- Prepare a sample research proposal for a feasible participant-observation ethnographic study; for those students considering advanced study this proposal might be a stepping stone.
- Acquire the knowledge and confidence to competently discuss and apply field research techniques and seek employment as a field researcher in a variety of occupational fields.

Assessment tasks

- Discussion Preparation Guide
- Participation in seminars
- Research Proposal
- Research Journal
- Research Paper

Commitment to Continuous Learning

Our graduates will have enquiring minds and a literate curiosity which will lead them to pursue knowledge for its own sake. They will continue to pursue learning in their careers and as they participate in the world. They will be capable of reflecting on their experiences and relationships with others and the environment, learning from them, and growing - personally, professionally and socially.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Understand the use of a variety of ethnographic research methods, including their strengths and the sorts of projects for which they might be most useful.
- Attain hands on experience in conducting ethnographic research and gain familiarity with the application of a variety of methodological techniques
- Receive regular feedback and have opportunities to discuss what they have learned with peers and instructors.
- Prepare a sample research proposal for a feasible participant-observation ethnographic study; for those students considering advanced study this proposal might be a stepping stone.
- Acquire the knowledge and confidence to competently discuss and apply field research techniques and seek employment as a field researcher in a variety of occupational fields.

Assessment tasks

- Participation in seminars
- Research Journal

- Research Paper

Discipline Specific Knowledge and Skills

Our graduates will take with them the intellectual development, depth and breadth of knowledge, scholarly understanding, and specific subject content in their chosen fields to make them competent and confident in their subject or profession. They will be able to demonstrate, where relevant, professional technical competence and meet professional standards. They will be able to articulate the structure of knowledge of their discipline, be able to adapt discipline-specific knowledge to novel situations, and be able to contribute from their discipline to inter-disciplinary solutions to problems.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Understand the use of a variety of ethnographic research methods, including their strengths and the sorts of projects for which they might be most useful.
- Attain hands on experience in conducting ethnographic research and gain familiarity with the application of a variety of methodological techniques
- Receive regular feedback and have opportunities to discuss what they have learned with peers and instructors.
- Prepare a sample research proposal for a feasible participant-observation ethnographic study; for those students considering advanced study this proposal might be a stepping stone.
- Acquire the knowledge and confidence to competently discuss and apply field research techniques and seek employment as a field researcher in a variety of occupational fields.

Assessment tasks

- Ethics Quiz
- Discussion Preparation Guide
- Participation in seminars
- Research Proposal
- Research Journal
- Research Paper

Critical, Analytical and Integrative Thinking

We want our graduates to be capable of reasoning, questioning and analysing, and to integrate and synthesise learning and knowledge from a range of sources and environments; to be able to critique constraints, assumptions and limitations; to be able to think independently and systemically in relation to scholarly activity, in the workplace, and in the world. We want them to have a level of scientific and information technology literacy.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Understand the use of a variety of ethnographic research methods, including their strengths and the sorts of projects for which they might be most useful.
- Attain hands on experience in conducting ethnographic research and gain familiarity with the application of a variety of methodological techniques
- Prepare a sample research proposal for a feasible participant-observation ethnographic study; for those students considering advanced study this proposal might be a stepping stone.
- Acquire the knowledge and confidence to competently discuss and apply field research techniques and seek employment as a field researcher in a variety of occupational fields.

Assessment tasks

- Discussion Preparation Guide
- Participation in seminars
- Research Proposal
- Research Paper

Problem Solving and Research Capability

Our graduates should be capable of researching; of analysing, and interpreting and assessing data and information in various forms; of drawing connections across fields of knowledge; and they should be able to relate their knowledge to complex situations at work or in the world, in order to diagnose and solve problems. We want them to have the confidence to take the initiative in doing so, within an awareness of their own limitations.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Understand the use of a variety of ethnographic research methods, including their strengths and the sorts of projects for which they might be most useful.
- Attain hands on experience in conducting ethnographic research and gain familiarity with the application of a variety of methodological techniques
- Receive regular feedback and have opportunities to discuss what they have learned with peers and instructors.
- Prepare a sample research proposal for a feasible participant-observation ethnographic study; for those students considering advanced study this proposal might be a stepping stone.
- Acquire the knowledge and confidence to competently discuss and apply field research

techniques and seek employment as a field researcher in a variety of occupational fields.

Assessment tasks

- Discussion Preparation Guide
- Participation in seminars
- Research Proposal
- Research Journal
- Research Paper

Creative and Innovative

Our graduates will also be capable of creative thinking and of creating knowledge. They will be imaginative and open to experience and capable of innovation at work and in the community. We want them to be engaged in applying their critical, creative thinking.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Understand the use of a variety of ethnographic research methods, including their strengths and the sorts of projects for which they might be most useful.
- Attain hands on experience in conducting ethnographic research and gain familiarity with the application of a variety of methodological techniques
- Receive regular feedback and have opportunities to discuss what they have learned with peers and instructors.
- Prepare a sample research proposal for a feasible participant-observation ethnographic study; for those students considering advanced study this proposal might be a stepping stone.
- Acquire the knowledge and confidence to competently discuss and apply field research techniques and seek employment as a field researcher in a variety of occupational fields.

Assessment tasks

- Discussion Preparation Guide
- Participation in seminars
- Research Proposal
- Research Journal
- Research Paper

Effective Communication

We want to develop in our students the ability to communicate and convey their views in forms effective with different audiences. We want our graduates to take with them the capability to

read, listen, question, gather and evaluate information resources in a variety of formats, assess, write clearly, speak effectively, and to use visual communication and communication technologies as appropriate.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Understand the use of a variety of ethnographic research methods, including their strengths and the sorts of projects for which they might be most useful.
- Attain hands on experience in conducting ethnographic research and gain familiarity with the application of a variety of methodological techniques
- Receive regular feedback and have opportunities to discuss what they have learned with peers and instructors.
- Prepare a sample research proposal for a feasible participant-observation ethnographic study; for those students considering advanced study this proposal might be a stepping stone.
- Acquire the knowledge and confidence to competently discuss and apply field research techniques and seek employment as a field researcher in a variety of occupational fields.

Assessment tasks

- Discussion Preparation Guide
- Participation in seminars
- Research Proposal
- Research Journal
- Research Paper

Engaged and Ethical Local and Global citizens

As local citizens our graduates will be aware of indigenous perspectives and of the nation's historical context. They will be engaged with the challenges of contemporary society and with knowledge and ideas. We want our graduates to have respect for diversity, to be open-minded, sensitive to others and inclusive, and to be open to other cultures and perspectives: they should have a level of cultural literacy. Our graduates should be aware of disadvantage and social justice, and be willing to participate to help create a wiser and better society.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Understand the use of a variety of ethnographic research methods, including their strengths and the sorts of projects for which they might be most useful.
- Attain hands on experience in conducting ethnographic research and gain familiarity with the application of a variety of methodological techniques

- Receive regular feedback and have opportunities to discuss what they have learned with peers and instructors.
- Prepare a sample research proposal for a feasible participant-observation ethnographic study; for those students considering advanced study this proposal might be a stepping stone.
- Acquire the knowledge and confidence to competently discuss and apply field research techniques and seek employment as a field researcher in a variety of occupational fields.

Assessment tasks

- Ethics Quiz
- Discussion Preparation Guide
- Participation in seminars
- Research Proposal
- Research Journal
- Research Paper

Socially and Environmentally Active and Responsible

We want our graduates to be aware of and have respect for self and others; to be able to work with others as a leader and a team player; to have a sense of connectedness with others and country; and to have a sense of mutual obligation. Our graduates should be informed and active participants in moving society towards sustainability.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Understand the use of a variety of ethnographic research methods, including their strengths and the sorts of projects for which they might be most useful.
- Attain hands on experience in conducting ethnographic research and gain familiarity with the application of a variety of methodological techniques
- Acquire the knowledge and confidence to competently discuss and apply field research techniques and seek employment as a field researcher in a variety of occupational fields.

Assessment tasks

- Ethics Quiz
- Research Journal
- Research Paper