



Urban Ethnographic Field School 2017

About the Urban Ethnographic Field School

The Urban Ethnographic Field School is designed to provide students with the opportunity to refine their research skills by learning how to write an ethnographic account. Throughout the course students will spend class time discussing ethnographic research methods and gaining hands on practice doing ethnographic research. Outside of class, students will read broadly about ethnographic methodology and spend 8-10 hours each week at their community organization where they will complete a project and conduct their own ethnographic study of the organization.

Course Information

Soci 480/Anth 480: Urban Ethnographic Field School

Summer Term 1: May 15-June 22, 2017

Monday-Thursday, 9:30-12:30pm at the UBC Learning Exchange (612 Main Street)

Instructors:	Kerry Greer	Patrick Moore	Emily Truong (TA)
Office Hours:	Tuesday 2-3 (UBC)	Mon & Wed 12:30-1:30pm (LE)	By appointment
Office Location:	ANSO 124	UBC Learning Exchange	
Email:	field.school@ubc.ca		

Learning Objectives

By the end of the UEFS, students should be able to:

- Identify and name key epistemological, methodological, and ethical issues in contemporary ethnographic research;
- Distinguish the main characteristics, uses, strengths, and weaknesses of three qualitative methodologies and techniques employed in ethnographic research, and apply at least three of them (interview, participant-observation, fieldnote taking) to do hands-on qualitative research following a community-based service-learning model;
- Know how to develop a research question amenable to qualitative exploration;
- Organize, schedule, collect, transcribe, and analyze interview data;
- Reflect critically on the value, possibilities, limitations, and standpoint as students of ethnographic methods, and discuss the ethical and political implications of their role as service-learners in training;
- Partner with your community organization and produce a project of value to the members of the participating service-learning organizations;
- Present research findings in a simple and effective manner to a wide audience during a mini-conference.

Required Text and Readings

- Emerson, Robert M., Rachel I. Fretz, and Linda L. Shaw. 2011. *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes*. Second Edition. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Available at the UBC Bookstore.
- Additional assigned journal articles and book chapters are posted on Connect under “Library Course Reserves” and “Course Content”

Course Requirements and Evaluation

	DATES	TOTAL
Ethnography 1: Neighbourhood Description	May 25th	200(20%)
Ethnography 2: Community Organization Portrait	June 5th	200(20%)
Ethnography 3: Program Description	June 12th	200(20%)
Final Ethnographic Account	June 22 nd	300 (30%)
Project	Determined by partner	100(10%)

Final grades will be assigned in the following way (this is standard for UBC):

900-1000	A+	760-799	B+	640-679	C+	500-549	D
850-899	A	720-759	B	600-639	C	0-499	F
800-849	A-	680-719	B-	550-599	C-		

Note that students have to earn the minimum number of points for each letter grade. I do not round up a letter grade.

According to the UBC Guidelines:

An A grade is “Exceptional performance: strong evidence of original thinking; good organization; capacity to analyze and synthesize; superior grasp of subject matter with sound critical evaluations; evidence of extensive knowledge base.”

A B grade is “Competent performance: evidence of grasp of subject matter; some evidence of critical capacity and analytic ability; reasonable understanding of relevant issues; evidence of familiarity with the literature.”

A “D to C” grade is “Adequate performance: understanding of the subject matter; ability to develop solutions to simple problems in the material; acceptable but uninspired work, not seriously faulty but lacking style and vigour.”

NOTE: Late assignments will be marked down 2% for each day late (including weekends), except in the case of a documented medical emergency. Assignments will not be accepted via e-mail, although you may submit it to “stop the clock” (a paper copy must be turned in at the next class meeting). All assignments are due in paper format (except when indicated otherwise) by the start of class on the due date. Students cannot print papers at the UBC Learning Exchange.

Description of Course Requirements

Ethnographic write-ups:

You will be required to submit three written ethnographic write-ups, each worth 20% of your final grade. Detailed instructions will be provided in class, but generally these write-ups will draw directly on your fieldnotes, and incorporate direct references to concepts and arguments from course readings about the dynamics of communities and about ethnographic theory and method.

Fieldnotes:

Detailed fieldnotes are required for ethnographic write-ups and are essential for the successful completion of all the course assignments, including your final ethnography. The primary text for this course (Emerson,

Fretz and Shaw) provides guidance on how to take jottings, write fieldnotes, and transform fieldnotes into ethnographic write-ups. Please read/skim the complete book during the first two weeks of the course.

Each time you attend your field site, you should spend at least one-hour writing fieldnotes reflecting on your experience and observations there. Whom did you interact with? What did you observe and what kinds of feelings characterized your interactions? Each week you should review your fieldnotes and summarize for yourself what you have learned and what you would still like to know.

Ethnography 1: Neighbourhood portrait (20%)

Where is your community organization located, and how does it relate to the neighbourhood in which it is located and the larger city? Which communities access the community space? How and why do they access it? You should also describe the characteristics of the built environment, the proximity to commercial and residential spaces, the ease of public transportation, the demographics of the neighbouring communities, etc. In addition, pick one block in close proximity to the community organization and take the time to observe this on several different occasions; describe what you see.

Ethnography 2: Community organization portrait (20%)

What does your community organization do? Which individuals and communities does it actively serve and reach out to? How is institutional space organized? What programs, services and resources are offered? Which seem most popular? Which least popular? Why do you think this is the case? Who works at your community organization? How do workers and participants interact? What do they say they do, and what do they actually do? What types of language (i.e., formal, informal; English, Cantonese, etc.; hierarchical or egalitarian, etc.) do you observe?

Ethnography 3: Program description (20%)

Describe your program placement in the style of an 'ethnographic memo.' What do you do? Who do you work with? What does the program aim to do? How long has it been running? What kinds of people access the program and why? Who makes decisions about how the program is run? How do workers and participants interact with each other? How do participants interact with each other? Do you observe any conflicts or tensions? What can we learn from these tensions?

Final Ethnography (30%)

Your final ethnography (due in the last day of class) will incorporate the three ethnographies, and incorporate feedback you have received. You will build on these ethnographies by identifying key themes and expanding these themes in ways that allow you to create a narrative of your experience. At the end of the term, you will present your final ethnography, or some aspect from it, at the UEFS Mini-Conference: Service Learning Ethnographies at UBC on June 22nd.

Community Partner Project (10%)

This course emphasizes community based experiential learning, and as participants in this course you represent UBC in the community. Please keep this in mind and use this opportunity to practice and develop your professional skills. Community partners have been given wide latitude to identify projects that benefit their organization in exchange for you to have the opportunity to spend time working "inside" the organization. It is imperative that these projects be completed to the best of your ability and that they be given your best effort.

Your completion of this project will be measured in a couple of ways: (1) through ongoing communications between the instructors, TA, and the community partner, including an end of term assessment completed by your community partner; (2) your regular reporting on a google spreadsheet of hours spent at the community partner site; (3) evidence of your engagement in the project as communicated in your ethnographic reports.

Attendance and Lateness

Attendance for the entire class period is required. You are requested to arrive on time. Repeated tardiness will be penalized. **If you have to miss a class meeting, please discuss it with Patrick or Kerry prior to missing.**

If you miss class, it is your responsibility to find out what you missed from a classmate, and if you need clarification, to come to office hours. While we will sympathize with ill students, we do not wish to see doctor notes—we consider this to be your business. However, if you have a family emergency or a major illness that causes you to miss class, please contact your academic advisor and get in touch with us as soon as possible.

Please exchange your contact information with one of your classmates during our first class meeting.

Accommodation & Mental Health

Accommodation. The University accommodates students with disabilities who have registered with the Access and Diversity office. If you have other needs that might not qualify for formal accommodation, or you are having trouble during the term, please consider discussing this with me during office hours. The University also accommodates students whose religious obligations conflict with attendance or scheduled exams. Please let us know during the first two weeks of class if you require any accommodation on these grounds. Other absences (e.g. varsity athletics, family obligations) are not part of University policy and you should not assume they will be accommodated.

Mental Health. During your time in this course, if you encounter medical, emotional, or other personal problems that affect your attendance or academic performance, please notify us, as well as your Academic Advisor. Please refer to the UBC Calendar for a discussion of academic concession. Also, look on Connect (under Course Content) for a list of Wellness Resources.

Early Alert Program. We participate in the Early Alert Program which helps me support students who are facing difficulties that are interfering with school. **If you are feeling stressed, please notify the TA or one of the instructors** and indicate that you would like assistance. While we are not trained to help with personal problems, we can get you help from people who can assist you. Any information that they receive from you or us is strictly confidential and is in the interest of your academic success and wellbeing. For more information, please visit earlyalert.ubc.ca.

Classroom Etiquette and Expectations

This course will consist of a combination of lecture, discussion, experiential learning, and in-class activities. **Students are expected to come to each class meeting** prepared and ready to engage with the course material. This means having read the assigned texts and be actively participating for 8-10 hours per week at their field placement. It is important that we maintain a respectful learning environment, and that each person have the opportunity to contribute to the conversation. For these reasons we ask that students give one another space and time to contribute to discussions. This means that if you are a person who contributes often, consider holding back and letting others talk; if you hesitate to talk, recognize that this is a small class and your contributions are not just encouraged, but required.

The UBC Learning Exchange has specific etiquette expectations, which will be reviewed and discussed during the second class meeting.

Electronic devices can be useful tools; however, they are also very distracting. For this reason we have decided to not allow electronic devices to be used in the classroom, except when they will facilitate an activity. Cellphones are required to be stowed away during class meetings, and brought out only during

breaks. We encourage students to be cognizant of their use of electronic devices while at their placements and strongly suggest that students keep their cellphones stowed away while doing their community-based service learning.

Academic Integrity is the bedrock of the university. Students are expected to know, understand, and follow the codes of conduct regarding academic integrity. For information about the code of conduct:

<http://www.calendar.ubc.ca/vancouver/index.cfm?tree=3,54,111,0> For information about plagiarism, visit: <http://www.library.ubc.ca/home/plagiarism>

Office Hours are times that we have set aside to meet with students. The hours are listed at the top of the syllabus. We encourage you to come and visit during office hours. Come individually, or with friends. It's a chance to talk about the course, assignments, your projects, field placement, or whatever you would like to discuss. You don't have to have a *problem* to visit. If you find yourself having difficulty with the readings or writing assignments, we would like to see you immediately.

Communication Preferences. With three potential people fielding emails, this can be confusing. We request that students send all emails to field.school@ubc.ca. The TA will monitor this site and confer with Patrick and Kerry when a question requires further follow up.

Community Partners. Remember, you represent the University community when you are at your community partner organization. During your first couple of meetings make an effort to have a conversation with your supervisor and agree on times you will be present and expectations about communicating any problems, or if you will be late/absent. In subsequent conversations clarify your understanding of the project, and be sure that the project that you are completing is in alignment with the goals and expectations of the community partner.

Course Schedule

WEEK ONE

Monday, May 15: Introduction and 2017 UEFS Launch Lunch

Due Ethics Certificates/Clear your Background Check

Tuesday, May 16: Context: Understanding the Learning Exchange, Understanding ABCD

Kretzman, John P. and John L. McKnight. 1993. "Asset-Based Community Development: Mobilizing and Entire Community" from *Building Communities From the Inside Out*. ACTA Publications, Chicago, IL.

Lotz, Jim. 2010 [1977]. "What is Community Development?" from *Understanding Canada: Regional and Community Development in a New Nation*. Working Centre Publications: Kitchner, Ontario. (<https://www.theworkingcentre.org/sites/default/files/understanding-canada.pdf>)

Green, Gary Paul and Anna Haines. 2016. "The Role of Assets in Community-Based Development." From *Asset Building and Community Development*, fourth edition. Sage Publications: Thousand Oaks, California.

Read about the history of the UBC Learning Exchange from founder, Margo Fryer: <http://www.margofryer.ca/>

Guests: Kathleen Leahy from the UBC Learning Exchange (TIME: 11am)

Handout: Being a Good Partner

Wednesday, May 17: Context: Understanding the Downtown Eastside // Exploring your Community Partner

- Emerson, Robert M., Rachel I. Fretz and Linda L. Shaw. 2011. "Chapter 1. Fieldnotes in Ethnographic Research." Pp. 1-20 in *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes*. Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press.
- Wong, Jackie. 2013. "Vancouver's Old China Town is Still Here" from *The Tyee*, on April 1, 2013. (Recommended: read all five articles in the series)
- Sutherland, Rory, Jean Swanson and Tamara Herman. 2014. "No Place to Go: Losing Affordable Housing and Community: CCAP's 2013 hotel survey and housing report." Carnegie Community Action Project. Find 2-3 articles from local news about your community partner, and its neighbourhood.

Activities: Neighbourhood Walks with Beverly Allan (10:30)

Thursday, May 18: Context: Food as a lens for doing ethnography

- Poppendieck, Janet. 1997. "Want Amid Plenty: From Hunger to Inequality." Pp. 572-581 in *Food and Culture A Reader* Second edition, edited by Carole Counihan and Penny Van Esterik. Routledge: New York, New York.
- SPARC B.C. 2014. "Who Gets Sustenance: Community Voices Speak About Who Gets Access to Local, Healthy Food." Burnaby, BC (https://gwfoodconnection.files.wordpress.com/2014/10/whogetssustenance_finalreport_29092014.pdf)
- Jackson, Michael. 2010. "From Anxiety to Method in Anthropological Fieldwork." Pp 35-54 in *Emotions in the Field: The Psychology and Anthropology of Fieldwork Experience* edited by James Davies and Dimitrina Spencer. Stanford University Press: Stanford, CA.

WEEK TWO

Monday, May 22: No class in observation of Victoria Day

Tuesday, May 23: The Ethnographic Method

- Becker, Howard S. – "The Epistemology of Qualitative Research," in *Essays on Ethnography and Human Development*, edited by R. Jessor, A. Colby, and R. Schweder. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Angrosino, Michael V. and Kimberly A. Mays de Pèrez. 2000. "Rethinking Observation: From Method to Context." Pp 673-702 in *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, Second Edition, edited by Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln. Sage Publications: Thousand Oaks, California.

Wednesday, May 24: Participant-Observations and Jottings

- Emerson, Robert M., Rachel I. Fretz and Linda L. Shaw. 2011. "Chapter 2: In the Field: Participating, Observing, and Jotting Notes." Pp. 21-43 in *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes*. Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press.
- Geertz, Clifford. "Deep Play: Notes on a Balinese Cockfight." Pp 412-417 in *Interpretation of Cultures Selected Essays*. Basic Books: New York, New York.
- Bestor, Theodore C. "Tokyo's Pantry." Pp 1-50 in *Tsukiji The Fish Market at the Center of the World*. University of California Press: Berkeley, California.

Thursday, May 25: Ethics in Fieldwork: Professional Obligations and Your Relationship to the Community

- Cassell, Joan. 1980. "Ethical Principles for Conducting Fieldwork." *American Anthropologist* 82(1):28-41.
- Allen, Charlotte. 1997. "Spies Like Us: When Sociologist Deceive Their Subjects." *Lingua Franca* 7(9):31-39. American Anthropological Association. 2012. "
- American Anthropological Association, Code of Ethics <http://ethics.aaanet.org/category/statement/>.
- Canadian Sociological Association, Statement of Professional Ethics (<https://www.csa-scs.ca/files/www/csa/documents/codeofethics/2012Ethics.pdf>)

DUE DATE: Ethnography 1 (printed and delivered at start of class)

WEEK THREE**Monday, May 29: Ethics in Fieldwork: Presentation of Subjects**

- 35-54 Goffman, Alice. 2014. "On the Run: Wanted Men in a Philadelphia Ghetto (2009)." Pp 745-764 in *The Urban Ethnography Reader*, edited by Mitchell Duneir, Philip Kasnitz, and Alexandra K. Murphy. New York, New York: Oxford University Press.
- Goffman, Alice. 2014. "Appendix: A Methodological Note." Pp xx in *On the Run: Fugitive Life in an American City*. Chicago, Illinois: University of Chicago Press.
- Tourigny, Sylvie C. 2004. "Yo, Bitch..." and Other Challenges: Bringing High-Risk Ethnography into Discourse." Pp 111-126 in *Anthropologists in the Field: Cases in Participant Observation*, edited by Lynne Hume and Jane Mulcock. New York, New York: Columbia University Press.

Tuesday, May 30: Ethnographic Research Skills: Fieldnotes

- Emerson, Robert M., Rachel I. Fretz and Linda L. Shaw. 2011. "Chapter 3: Writing Fieldnotes I: At the Desk, Creating Scenes on a Page." Pp. 45-88 in *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes*. Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press.
- Emerson, Robert M., Rachel I. Fretz and Linda L. Shaw. 2011. "Chapter 4: Writing Fieldnotes II: Multiple Purposes and Stylistic Options." Pp 89-128 in *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes*. Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press.

Wednesday, May 31: Vancouver Urban Life [Fieldtrip: TBA]

- Robertson, Leslie, 2007. "Taming Space: Drug Use, HIV, and Homemaking in Downtown Eastside Vancouver." *Gender, Place and Culture* 14(5): 527-49.
- Small, Will, David Moore, Jean Shoveller, Evan Wood, and Thomas Kerr. 2012. "Perceptions of Risk and Safety within Injection Settings: Injection Drug Users' Reasons for Attending a Supervised Injecting Facility in Vancouver, Canada." *Health, Risk & Society* 14:307-324.

Thursday, June 1: Ethnographic Research Skills: Logistics and Challenges of Interviewing

- Chiseri-Strater, Elizabeth and Binnie Stone Sunstein. 1997. "The Interview: Learning to Ask," in *Fieldworking: Reading and Writing Research*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Counihan, Carole. 2014. "Women Gender and Agency in Italian Food Activism." Pp 61-76 *Italian Food Activism: Agency, Democracy and Economy*, edited by Carole Counihan and Valeria Siniscalchi. New York, New York: Bloomsbury.
- Kvale, Steinar. 1996. "The Interview Situation." Pp. 124-143 in *InterViews: An Introduction to Qualitative Research Interviewing*. Sage: Thousand Oaks, California.

WEEK FOUR**Monday, June 5: Ethnographic Research Skills: Interpretation**

- Emerson, Robert M., Rachel I. Fretz and Linda L. Shaw. 2011. "Chapter 5: Pursuing Members' Meanings." Pp 129-169 in *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes*. Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press.
- Holmes, Douglas R. and George E. Marcus. 2008. "Collaboration Today and the Re-Imagination of the Classic Scene of Fieldwork Encounter." *Collaborative Anthropologies* 1:81-101.

Due Date: Ethnography 2 (printed and delivered at start of class)

Tuesday, June 6: Curation and Interpretation [Fieldtrip to MOA]

- Narayan, Kirin. 2012. "Voice." Pp. 67-91 in *Alive in the Writing: Crafting Ethnography in the Company of Chekhov*. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press.
- Read [TBA]

Wednesday, June 7: Ethnographic Research Skills: Analyzing and Reporting

- McLellan, Eleanor, Kathleen M. MacQueen and Judith L. Neidig. 2003. "Beyond the Qualitative Interview: Data Preparation and Transcription." *Field Methods* 15(1):63-84.
- Emerson, Robert M., Rachel I. Fretz and Linda L. Shaw. 2011. "Chapter 6: Processing Fieldnotes: Coding and Memoing." Pp 171-199 in *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes*. Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press.
- Kirby, Sandra L., Lorraine Greaves and Colleen Reid. 2006. "Analyzing Data and Reporting." Pp. 219-254 in *Experience Research Social Change: Methods Beyond the Mainstream*. Second Edition. Toronto: Broadview Press.

Thursday, June 8: Standpoint, Power, and Privilege

- Alcoff, Linda. 1991. "The Problem of Speaking for Others." *Cultural Critique* 20:5-32.
- Desmond, Matthew. 2007. "Appendix: Between Native and Alien." Pp 283-end in *On the Fireline: Living and Dying with Wildland Firefighters*. Chicago, IL: Chicago University Press.
- Campbell, Marie L. 1998. "Institutional Ethnography and Experience as Data." *Qualitative Sociology* 21: 55-75.
- McCorkel, Jill A. and Kristen Myers. 2003. "What Difference Does Difference Make? Position and Privilege in the Field." *Qualitative Sociology* 26(2):199-231.

WEEK FIVE**Monday, June 12: The Reflexive Researcher**

- Cerwonka, Allaine. 2007. "Nervous Conditions: The Stakes in Interdisciplinary Research." Pp. 1-40 in *Improvising Theory: Process and Temporality in Ethnographic Fieldwork*. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press.
- Simpson, Bob. 2006. "'You Don't Do Fieldwork, Fieldwork Does You': Between Subjectivation and Objectivation in Anthropological Fieldwork." Pp. 125-137 in *The SAGE Handbook of Fieldwork*, edited by D. Hobbs and R. Wright. London, Thousand Oaks and New Delhi: SAGE Publications.

Due Date: Ethnography 3 (printed and delivered at start of class)

Tuesday, June 13: Artistic Approaches to Ethnographic Research and Knowledge Translation

- Pratt, Geraldine and Caleb Johnston. 2009. "Translating Research into Theatre: Nanay: A Testimonial Play." *BC Studies* 163: 123-132.
- Diamond, David. 2007. "Feedback Loops" and "The Art of Interactive Theatre" Pp 62-85 in *Theatre for Living: The art and science of community-based dialogue*. Trafford: Victoria, BC.

Visiting Scholar: David Ng

Wednesday, June 14: Ethnographic Research Skills: Writing an Ethnographic Account

- Emerson, Robert M., Rachel I. Fretz and Linda L. Shaw. 2011. "Chapter 7: Writing an Ethnography." Pp 201-242 in *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes*. Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press.
- Narayan, Kirin. 2012. "Postscript: Writing to Be Alive." Pp. 111-121 in *Alive in the Writing: Crafting Ethnography in the Company of Chekhov*. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press.

Thursday, June 15: Vancouver Urban Life II

Lee, Jo-Anne. 2007. "Gender, Ethnicity, and Hybrid Forms of Community-Based Urban Activism in Vancouver, 1957-1978: The Strathcona story revisited." *Gender, Place and Culture* 14:381-407.

Miewald, Christiana and Eugene McCann. 2014. "Foodscapes and the Geographies of Poverty: Sustenance, Strategy, and Politics in an Urban Neighborhood." *Antipode* 46:537-556.

WEEK SIX**Monday, June 19: Ethnographic Research Skills: Generating Theories**

Becker, Howard S. 1998. "Concepts." Pp 109-145 in *Tricks of the Trade: How to Think about your Research While You're Doing It*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Bourdieu, Pierre. 2004. "The Peasant and His Body." *Ethnography* 5: 579-599.

Tuesday, June 20: Can Ethnography Inform Public Policy?

Becker, Howard S., Herbert J. Gans, Katherine S. Newman and Diane Vaughan. 2004. "On the Value of Ethnography: Sociology and Public Policy: A Dialogue." *ANNALS* 595: 264-276.

Wednesday, June 21: Exiting the Field

Iversen, Roberta Rehner. 2009. "'Getting Out' in Ethnography." *Qualitative Social Work* 8: 9-26.

Thursday, June 22: Sharing Knowledge with Communities: UEFS Mini-Conference at IKLBC

Due Date: Final Ethnography (*printed and delivered at start of conference*)