

**Honors Seminar in Anthropology (V14.09050.001) Fall 2013**  
**Wednesday 5-7:30; 25 Waverly Place, First floor conference room**

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Office Hours: W 3-5 PM. 25 Waverly Place, Room 701

**Course objectives:** This seminar is intended to assist a small group of thesis writers transform an independent research project into a written thesis that is accessible to both specialist and non-specialist readers. At a minimum, it provides a regular forum in which students can share strategies on research and writing. More practically, in this first semester of a two-semester course, we will be working on the building blocks for designing, executing and presenting a solid project. This includes special instructions on ethical dimensions of research, library skills, and undergraduate research programs at NYU. Upon successfully completing the course, students will have learned how to synthesize their existing knowledge, to work independently and to present and defend their arguments

To meet this goal we rely on assignments related to (among other things): (1) ethics in science (2) mechanics of writing (3) identifying and using resources to help students meet their goals. Students in this seminar will be involved in a mix of projects from across the four sub-fields. This will help us think about the approaches needed for discipline-wide and cross-disciplinary communication.

**Required readings and assignments:** A copy of this syllabus is available on NYU Classes. The required textbook (below) is available on reserve at the Bobst library.

Turabian KL, Booth WC, Colomb GG, Williams JM. 2007. *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

We will make regular use of NYU Classes' Forums and Assignments for exchanging papers, ideas, and comments, and for uploading assignments and other items.

Some assignments will be accompanied by an **annotated bibliography**. For this seminar, annotations for each book or article should follow the following format: (1) summary, (2) evaluation of the text, and (3) applicability to your own research. A summary may include: what the book was about and its main argument, purpose or point, and an example used to advance the argument. You should think about what position the author is arguing against and the substance of his/her argument. It is also helpful to consider the data the author uses to make the argument. You should evaluate how successful the author is in developing his/her argument and why you think so.

**Advisors and readers:** Every student must have an Anthropology faculty member as his/her thesis supervisor as well as a second reader from within the department. It is absolutely essential that you choose an advisor and additional reader as soon as possible and stay in contact with them throughout the thesis writing process.

Please send me copies of their agreement to take on this role from both faculty members stating their agreement to serve as thesis advisor and reader. Both the advisor and second reader provide critically important roles in helping you to develop the substance of your project. Consulting with them regularly is a fundamental aspect of the thesis writing process. **Failure to select an advisor AND additional reader by the end of the semester will result in an automatic loss of two letter grades (e.g., from an A to a C).**

**Evaluation and expectations:** Grading is based on class participation and on written assignments. You should expect to present something relevant to your topic or research interest at every class meeting. This will help keep your project moving forward and allow you to actively explore new research directions throughout the semester. You will benefit from each other's comments and from your input into each other's projects.

Your written assignments will be evaluated with these considerations:

- Did you follow the instructions given for the assignment? Was the assignment completed on time?
- Is there evidence that you searched for new (new to you) knowledge, facts, ideas, concepts, explanations, observations, etc?
- Have you sought out sources that would shed light on and deepen understanding of the research question? And have you given proper attribution to the sources?
- Is the assignment organized well, written well, and formatted according to an accepted and appropriate style (e.g., APA)?

Your participation will be evaluated with these considerations:

- Have you attended each class and come to class prepared?
- Have you demonstrated an effort to improve writing and analytical skills relative to when you entered?
- Have you helped improve the work of others as well as your own through ideas and discussion?
- Have you done so with professionalism?

Written Assignments: 50%

Presentation: 10%

Collegial Editin: 20%

Participation: 20%

**Academic Integrity:** All students are expected to know and adhere to New York University's policies on academic integrity and academic dishonesty, the latter defined as cheating of any kind, including misrepresentation of one's own work, taking credit for the work of others without crediting them and without appropriate authorization, and the fabrication of information. Further information may be found at <http://www.nyu.edu/cas/map/about/academicintegrity.html>.

## Class Schedule

### **September 9: Introduction to the course and colleagues.**

**Required reading:** Read Turabian Chapters 1-5 by the end of the month. The library holds two non-circulating copies and there is a copy on reserve for this class.

**9/9 ASSIGNMENTS: Project Description:** Begin exploring a research topic by consulting the relevant primary (journal articles, etc) and secondary (text books) literature. Describe your project in 3-5 double-spaced pages. Include what you know about this topic and what you more you need to know. What have others written about the topic? Include an annotated bibliography with 4-5 references.

**Upload to Assignments on Classes by 5 pm on September 25.**

**Email me the title of the book or article you plan to review:** Your assignment due on November 20 is a professional book/article review. The work might be directly related to your project, or it might simply be an influential text by someone in your general field. Since this choice could be geared toward helping you with your project goals, the article or book should be considered carefully. See *instructions for the review under November 20.*

**September 18: DURF and Discussion of project statements.** Discussion of DURF program, Dr. Charles Upchurch, Associate Dean for Students. We will discuss funding and sources of support that may be useful to you to complete your research, such as those available from NYU (Dean's Undergraduate Research Fund <http://www.nyu.edu/cas/DURF/>) and elsewhere (e.g., Sigma Xi).

**9/18 ASSIGNMENT:** Read each of your classmates' project statements posted on Classes and post commentary and feedback **by 5 pm on October 2.** We will discuss the importance of peer review for scholarship and see how commentary from others offers valuable feedback on your project.

**October 2: Library Session with Tim Johnson, Anthropology Subject Librarian.** Meet in the 1st floor reference room in Bobst Library. We will also talk about how to write a book or article review for the November 20 assignment.

**\*\*\*THOSE SUBMITTING DURF GRANT APPLICATIONS SHOULD PROVIDE A DRAFT TO THEIR FIRST READER/MENTOR THIS WEEK!**

**10/2 ASSIGNMENT:** Following up on today's class, peruse the resources available in the library databases and upload to the discussion board the titles of three recent articles or books that are relevant to your work. You can include the titles of dissertations as well. Annotate these three, describing briefly what each is about and why it is relevant to your research. In addition, search the Anthropology journals available through Anthrosource as well as other journals in your subfield of anthropology looking for relevant articles, including reviews of relevant books, and create a list of sources and abstracts. This bibliography, including three fully annotated references, is **due by 5 pm on October 9 (uploaded to Classes).**

**10/9 ASSIGNMENTS:** **First**, revised project descriptions **due by 5 pm on October 16**. **Second**, read classmates' revised project descriptions and upload the next round of peer feedback to Classes **by 5 pm on October 23**.

**Required reading:** Read Turabian et al. Chapters 6-15 during the course of the remainder of the semester. Skim the remainder of the book as well.

**October 23:** We will focus on your progress to date in generating a viable research topic. We will discuss each other's research topics and provide feedback. In addition, we will discuss style guidelines and how to write an abstract.

**Required readings:** Landes, K.K. (1951) A scrutiny of the abstract I. Bulletin of the American Association of Petroleum Geologists 35: 1660-1680.  
Landes, K.K. (1966) A scrutiny of the abstract I & II. Bulletin of the American Association of Petroleum Geologists 50: 1992-1999.  
American Psychological Association style guide: <http://nyu.libguides.com/apa>

**10/23 ASSIGNMENTS:** **First**, upload an updated version of your project description, along with a 300-word abstract summary—**due by 5 pm on October 30**. **Second**, review each project description and provide constructive criticisms via the Classes Forums. All comments/critiques are **due by 5 pm on November 6**.

**November 6: Research involving human subjects and the peer review process.** We will meet at 5 pm at the offices of the NYU University Committee on Activities Involving Human Subjects (UCAIHS) to discuss NYU's Institutional Review Board (IRB) and standards of ethical research at **665 Broadway**. Then we will go back to our regular classroom to discuss the peer review process and go over the most recent feedback provided by your peers.

**11/6 ASSIGNMENTS:** Complete NYU's online human subjects tutorial and email me an electronic confirmation of your passing tutorial grade **by 5 pm on November 13**. [<http://www.nyu.edu/ucaihs/tutorial/>]. Even for those of you who are not faced with immediate human subjects considerations, the tutorial is key for understanding languages of vulnerability and legal efforts to regulate and streamline research methods. Upload a revised project **by 5 pm on November 13**.

**November 20: Article/Book Review due.** Your publication-quality review of the book or article you chose the first week of class is due. Please post it to Forums on NYU Classes so that you can read each other's work. If you choose an article, then limit it to 500 words. If it is a book, limit it to 800 words (double-spaced text in both cases). While the former may seem more appealing, the latter gives you more freedom to engage what you think is interesting and important. To prepare for this, visit the library and spend some time reading other reviews to determine what you consider to be the most conventional and/or most desirable genre for a review of this kind in your area. You can also find electronic versions of book reviews in major anthropology journals using Anthrosource or Google Scholar, or by looking through prominent journals in your field. Notice how these reviews are organized, how much they summarize and how much they evaluate the article or book.

Come to class prepared to discuss two testable hypotheses and a possible 'hook' in what you have read. We will discuss further the review process, criticism, and revisions. Be prepared to discuss the types and purposes of different review styles, why you chose the style you did as well as the book/article you reviewed. What makes a book or article effective? We will discuss the use of hypotheses, hunches, theories, and the idea of a "hook" for a book or article. Be prepared to discuss a book or article that you think does a good job of presenting a hypothesis and using an engaging hook to draw you in. We will also address any questions or problems you are confronting in your project for which you would like the group's advice.

**11/20 ASSIGNMENTS: First**, interview at least five graduate students and/or faculty (preferably some of each) in your field in order to gain an understanding of issues and challenges involved in your topic or related topics. What are the key methodological and/or ethical questions that have challenged those at work on your topic or related topics? How do scholars begin a project and how do they decide how to focus their research? Interview at least five graduate students and/or faculty (preferably both) in your field in order to gain an understanding of issues and challenges involved in your topic or related topics. **Second**, post your current project description with an outline of the chapters you plan to write on Classes **by December 4**. We will discuss how to structure and organize chapters in class.

**December 4: Literature Review: Models and constructive criticisms.**

**Post two days before this class (Dec. 2 by 7 pm)** your thesis literature review, of at least seven pages. This should discuss the relevant literature which you are using as the basis for your project and which will be part of your introduction or literature review chapter. It should describe work in the field that was done before your own work and say what your contribution will be. (You can change this, of course, but should be ready to make a claim at this point.) Read each others' statements before the class and come prepared to comment. Come to class prepared to discuss your interviews and what you have found about the kinds of methodological or ethical roadblocks that are relevant for your general topic, and/or the kinds of issues that you are concerned about in your own work ahead this year.

**12/11 ASSIGNMENT: Detailed outline.** Prepare a detailed outline of your thesis, divided into sections or chapters, with discussion of the point/s you will make in each one, the literature/evidence you will use, and the rough page length of each section. The detailed outline should be at least 4-5 pages long. This will be a guide for your writing and will identify potential issues with collecting and analyzing your data in the Spring semester. Post on the discussion board **by December 9** and provide each other with comments. Your advice to each other will be very helpful!

**You should have a second reader lined up by this class.**

**December 11: Presentation.** Prepare and present a 5-7 minute presentation on your project for the class. Explore alternative ways of presenting your data, particularly with visual aids in the form of various images, tables, figures, etc. Powerpoint presentations are recommended but not required.

## Schedule Overview

<u>DATE</u>	<u>ASSIGNMENT DUE</u>	<u>VENUE/FORUM</u>
Sept. 9	Meet and greet your colleagues	Room 612
Sept. 18	Identify thesis supervisor	1 <sup>st</sup> fl. conf. room
Sept. 25	Project description draft	NYU Classes
Oct. 2	Feedback on project draft	Bobst library 1 <sup>st</sup> fl.
Oct. 9	Bibliography and annotated refs.	NYU Classes
Oct. 16	Revised project description	NYU Classes
Oct. 23	Feedback on revised description	1 <sup>st</sup> fl. conf. room
Oct. 30	Project description with abstract	NYU Classes
Nov. 6	Feedback on updated projects	655 Broadway
Nov. 13	UCAIHS tutorial/Revised project	NYU Classes
Nov. 20	Critical article/book review	1 <sup>st</sup> fl. conf. room
Nov. 27	HAPPY THANKSGIVING!	
Dec. 2	Literature review	NYU Classes
Dec. 4	Project description with outline	1 <sup>st</sup> fl. conf. room
Dec. 9	Detailed outline of project	NYU Classes
Dec. 11	Presentation of project	1 <sup>st</sup> fl. conf. room