COURSE SYLLABUS: MUSIC 612 – Fall 2012
Seminar: Ethnomusicology Fieldwork Theory and Method

Course # 22061; Thursdays 4-6:40pm, M-228
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Office hours: Mondays 11:00-11:50 and Thursdays by appointment

Course Description
This seminar provides an overview of ethnomusicology fieldwork research with attention to: an overview of fieldwork research in ethnomusicology history; fieldwork theory and method; interviewing and ethnographic research; participant-observation; audio-visual documentation of fieldwork projects; musical representation and analysis; fieldwork research hazards and ethics. The final project will be a paper based upon original fieldwork research.

Course Prerequisites
Open to graduate music students who are currently enrolled in or who have completed Music 690. Non-music graduate students in related disciplines may enroll only by instructor’s permission.

Required Course Materials


Learning Outcomes and Objectives
• Students will demonstrate comprehension of history, goals, and basic techniques of ethnographic fieldwork and participant-observation research.

• Students will demonstrate competency of the basic technical techniques associated with digital photography and in situ digital audio and video recording. Students will learn basic properties of various microphone types and the strengths and weaknesses of various technologies used in field recording.
• Students will demonstrate competency in ethnographic interview methodology, including permissions/releases requirements and techniques associated with note-taking, documentation, transcription, and coding.

• Students will demonstrate comprehension of the ethical concerns and dilemmas that fieldworkers may face and demonstrate understanding and rationale of Institutional Review Board (IRB) procedures for research design.

• Students will plan, design, and implement a local fieldwork project and generate a written ethnography from research.

Course Requirements:

Class Discussion
Though the instructor will lecture on certain topics, class discussion is the backbone of this course. Come to class prepared to discuss all readings and any associated listening assignments. Informed, collective discussions (with everyone involved) will truly be where the most important work of this course will occur. Regular, timely, prepared attendance is absolutely essential for this course. Class discussions may involve a diversity of opinions; it is assumed that class discussions will be undertaken in a professional and respectful manner. Disruptive or unprofessional behavior will not be permitted.

Reading Presentation and Abstract/Evaluation
After the first introductory week, seminar participants will be delegated one of the week’s reading assignments to informally present as a means for opening discussion. Presenters should presume that everyone has read the assigned reading and, therefore, give only a brief summary of the important points/concepts of the reading (not a lengthy “blow by blow” repetition of the reading). You should speak no longer than five minutes by way of summary and then close with some topics, opinions, or questions to open discussion. A written abstract of the reading (a descriptive, critical summary) should be emailed to the instructor no later than the evening before our seminar.

Final Project
The course final project shall be a paper based in part on original ethnographic research, including participant-observation, interviews, and some form of audio-visual media documentation (e.g., photographic, audio, video). Musical transcription will be an optional requirement depending on the subject matter. Papers will be twenty to thirty double-spaced pages in length (including references), and be formatted in Turabian/Chicago style. In addition to the paper itself, students will also include a separate paper (two to three pages) reflecting on the ethnographic process (evolution of research, omissions, challenges,
errors, etc.). Papers will be due during at the beginning of class during its final meeting.

Grading

Ungraded Complete/Incomplete required assignments:
  Human Subjects Research Tutorial

The final course grade shall be calculated as follows:
  Discussion and participation    25%  
  Observation/note assignment     10%  
  Written reading critiques (2)   10%  
  Media documentation assignments 5%  
  Interview assignment            20%  
  Final ethnography (20-30 pages) 30%  

Assignments are due in class. Written assignments are penalized if late. Final projects will lose 10% of their possible grade for each calendar day that they are late.

Human Subjects Research Compliance

All Music 612 students will be required to complete an online tutorial (requiring approximately one hour to complete) on ethical practices in research involving human subjects, provided by the Division of Research Affairs at SDSU [http://www-rohan.sdsu.edu/~gra/grad/research/hrppTraining.html]. Passing all the sections of the tutorial is required for human subjects research training certification (any student who plans on using human subjects for research on thesis projects will be required to complete this training certification tutorial before being allowed to submit a research protocol to the IRB for approval). Students who fail to complete the tutorial will receive a grade of Incomplete for the semester.
Media Equipment*

During certain weeks of the semester we will be working with portable audio recording equipment, photographic equipment, and video equipment. Students may own some or all of these types of devices and, in the case of audio recording, may own high quality gear and software. While students are encouraged to invest in their own equipment, this course does not require students to own or purchase any media recording equipment. Digital SLR cameras, digital video cameras, microphones, and portable digital recorders will be made available on a limited basis for student checkout.

*subject to change pending department equipment availability

Blackboard: Readings not found in the required books and additional information will be available on the course Blackboard page. Students should check the course Blackboard site at least weekly for any announcements.

General Class policies:

• This course is a seminar. All participants will be responsible for presentation and discussion of course materials. Regular prepared attendance is absolutely essential for success in this course. Class time is valuable: please do not be late. Excessive absences and frequent lateness or unpreparedness will lower your final grade.

• If you are unable to attend class because of a religious holiday, please inform me by email or phone at least two weeks prior to the class date so that all students affected can make-up the coursework simultaneously.

• If you are unable to attend and participate in class due to an illness or family emergency, inform me as soon as possible. Please be prepared to provide documentation of the illness or emergency if you wish to have the absence excused.

• Instances of academic dishonesty (cheating, plagiarism on written work, and other forms of academic dishonesty) will be taken very seriously and will be referred to the university for disciplinary action.

• If you are a student with a learning disability that requires special accommodations, please bring this to my attention within the first two weeks of class. Students must be registered with Student Disabilities Services (Calpulli Center, Suite 3101. It is the student’s responsibility to initiate this process. For more information, please stop by the Student Disabilities Services office or visit their website.
Tentative Class Schedule – Music 612, Fall 2012

Aug. 30 – Course Introduction: Ethnographic Fieldwork, Ethnomusicology


Sept. 6 – Origins and Scope of Fieldwork


Ethnographic Fieldwork, Chapter 3 – “Method and Scope of Anthropological Fieldwork” (Malinowski)

Shadows in the Field, “Forward”

Shadows in the Field, Chapter 1 – “Casting Shadows: Fieldwork is Dead! Long Live Fieldwork!”

Sept. 13: Interviewing I, Fieldnotes I


Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes, Chapters 1–2.

Shadows in the Field, Chapter 13 – “Confronting the Field(note) In and Out of the Field: Music, Voices, Texts, Experiences in Dialogue.”

◊ Observation/Jottings assignment [part 1]
Sept. 20: Interviewing II, Fieldnotes II


Ethnographic Fieldwork, Chapter 10 – “Ethnographic Seduction, Transference, and Resistance in Dialogues about Terror and Violence in Argentina.”

Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes, Chapters 3–4.

◊ Observation/Jottings assignment [part 2, due Sept. 27]

Sept. 27: Fieldnotes III, Fieldworker Identity

Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes, Chapters 5–8.


◊ TURN IN Observation/Jottings assignment

Oct. 4: Fieldworker Identity, Positionality, and Experience


Ethnographic Fieldwork, Chapter 5 – “Fixing and Negotiating Identities in the Field: the Case of Lebanese Shites.”


Shadows in the Field, Chapter 11 – “What’s the Difference? Reflections on Gender and Research in Village India.”

Oct. 11: Time, Place, and Mediation in Research

*Shadows in the Field*, Chapter 15 – “Returning to the Ethnomusicological Past.”


◊ Media Assignment (due Nov. 15)

Oct. 18: Application of Theory; Interviewing III


◊ Interview Assignment (due Nov. 8)
Oct. 25: Feedback and the Other


*Ethnographic Fieldwork*, Chapter 11 – “Custer Died for Your Sins.”

*Ethnographic Fieldwork*, Chapter 12 – “Here Come the Anthros.”

*Ethnographic Fieldwork*, Chapter 13 – “When They Read What the Papers Say We Wrote.”

*Ethnographic Fieldwork*, Chapter 14 – “Ire in Ireland.”


Nov. 1: Reflexivity, Responsibility, and Representation


*Ethnographic Fieldwork*, Chapter 32 – “Fieldwork and Friendship in Morocco.”


*Shadows in the Field*, Chapter 12 – “(Un)doing Fieldwork: Sharing Songs, Sharing Lives.”

Nov. 8: Knowledge, Experience, and Positionality

Shadows in the Field, Chapter 2 – “Knowing Fieldwork.”

Shadows in the Field, Chapter 3 – “Toward a Mediation of Field Methods and Field Experience.”

Shadows in the Field, Chapter 8 – “Working with the Masters.”

◊ TURN IN Interview Assignment

Nov. 15: Fieldwork and Human Relations


Shadows in the Field, Chapter 10 – “Shadows in the Classroom: Encountering the Syrian Jewish Research Project Twenty Years Later.”

Shadows in the Field, Chapter 14 – “The Challenges of Human Relations in Ethnographic Enquiry: Examples from Artic and Subarctic Fieldwork.”

Shadows in the Field, Chapter 16 – “Theories Forged in the Crucible of Action: The Joys, Dangers, and Potentials of Advocacy and Fieldwork.”

Nov. 22: Thanksgiving Holiday – no class meeting
Nov. 29: Ethics, Surveillance, Conflict, and Responsibilities


*Ethnographic Fieldwork*, Chapter 15 – “Ethnology in a Revolutionary Setting.”

*Ethnographic Fieldwork*, Chapter 18 – “Reflections on Managing Danger in Fieldwork: Dangerous Anthropology in Belfast.”


*Ethnographic Fieldwork*, Chapter 20 – “Confronting the Ethics of Ethnography: Lessons From Fieldwork in Central America.”


Browse the AAA statement on ethics: [http://www.aaanet.org/committees/ethics/ethcode.htm](http://www.aaanet.org/committees/ethics/ethcode.htm)

Browse the SEM statement on ethical considerations: [http://www.ethnomusicology.org/?page=EthicsStatement](http://www.ethnomusicology.org/?page=EthicsStatement)

Browse the SEM statement on music and torture: [http://www.ethnomusicology.org/?PS_Torture](http://www.ethnomusicology.org/?PS_Torture)

Browse the AMS website for ethics material: [http://www.ams-net.org/administration/ethics.php](http://www.ams-net.org/administration/ethics.php)

*select at least one of these readings

◊ TURN IN Media Assignment
Dec 6: Final Project Consultations

Consultations

Dec. 13: No Class Meeting

Final Projects Due at 4pm Thursday Dec. 13 as hard copy either in my office or mailbox