CAST 300/301: Situated Research and Practicum
Fall 2014: Tues/Thurs 9-10:50 am in Rice 100B and Friday 1:30-4:40 p.m. in Rice 17

Professor Evangeline (Vange) M. Heiliger
Office: King 141E, x56255
Email: Evangeline.Heiliger@oberlin.edu
Office Hours: Tues/Thurs 11-12pm
Fri 3:20-4:30. Also by appointment
Meet in Azaria’s for office hours

Teaching Assistant: Madison Bishop
Email: mbishop@oberlin.edu
Office Hours: Sun 1-2 p.m., Thurs 7-8 p.m.
Appointments Available

Situated Research is an interdisciplinary methods course that uses community-based learning pedagogies as a way to reflect on and critically engage with issues of power, ethics, participatory research, and the production of knowledge. This field-based course explores the experiential and analytical aspects of qualitative research through the study of institutional practices and social interaction, with particular attention to issues of gender, race, sexuality, and class. It is also a course that invites students into a deeper engagement with the larger Oberlin and Lorain County communities and brings together scholarship, community service, and community-based research in order to reflect on the ethics, challenges, and methods of qualitative participatory research. Both CAST 300 and CAST 301 (the practicum) are required for all Comparative American Studies majors.

The principal goal of this course is for each student to prepare an interdisciplinary ethnographic report by the end of the semester. In order to meet this goal, Situated Research consists of two components: First, a weekly seminar which provides space to reflect, analyze, and discuss social theory, the production of knowledge, power, ethics, social location, and positionality, as well as mechanics of data collection, analysis and writing of ethnographic texts. And second, the practicum in which each student will volunteer on a weekly basis at a local community organization, agency, grassroots group or research site. Mature, engaged, and responsible participation in both components is absolutely critical in order to complete this course successfully.

This course has applied for and received approval from the Oberlin College Institutional Review Board for Research Involving Human Subjects.

Course Goals:
1) to think critically about issues of method, methodology and epistemology by completing an original interdisciplinary research project
2) to understand ethical issues and power relations in social science research, especially in relation to race, class, gender, and sexuality
3) to develop an analysis of advocacy research, the politics of non-profit social service institutions, as well as educational institutions
4) to link theories of intersectionality to research design and methodology
5) to foster a global and/or transnational sensibility analyzing local phenomena
6) to explore issues of accountability and collaboration in community-based research
7) to become more aware of what northeast Ohio might teach us about the central concerns of the CAS major
**Required Texts**

Online Reader (articles found free on Blackboard course website.)
Textbooks can be purchased at the Oberlin College Bookstore. Additional articles are available on blackboard (BB).

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

**A Note on Class Size, Sections, and Meeting Times:** Due to the increasing number of CAS majors (a great thing!), enrollment in CAS 300/301 Situated Research and Practicum, has become 50% larger than the limit of 12 to the seminar. In order to accommodate all majors this fall, the group will be split into informal sections for seminar discussions, and will meet as a large group for our practicum labs. The schedule details are as follows:

- All Sections meet on Tues, 9-10:50 for lab in Rice 100B
- Section I Seminar meets on Thurs, 9-10:50 a.m. in Rice 100B (Section II will most often use this time at their community research placement site)
- Section II Seminar meets on Fri, 1:30-3:20 for in Rice 17 (Section I will most often use this time at their community research placement site)
- **All students in all sections are REQUIRED to be available to meet during all of the listed times for the course: Tues/Thurs 9-10:50 a.m. and Fri 1:30-4:40 p.m.** During certain weeks, we will meet during every allotted class time in order to complete the requirements of the course
- Students are assigned to a section by the professor, and section assignment will not change.

**Participation and Attendance:** Students are expected to attend and participate in weekly seminars, weekly labs, and in their chosen placement for the practicum. Given the myriad of ethical, political, and personal issues involved in doing interdisciplinary research and working with community partners, it is absolutely essential for all students to engage each other respectfully. The relationships you build with community partners also involve establishing rapport, building trust, and mutual respect. Timely arrival, honest discussion, and respectful engagement are key to your success in the seminar and in your practicum placement.

**P/NP:** If you are taking this class P/NP, you must fulfill all course obligations to receive credit. Both 300 and 301 are letter graded unless the student applies for a P/NP grading through the Registrar.

**LATE WORK:** All assignments must be completed on time. Papers not turned in at the specified time on the specified date will be considered late and will be penalized 1/3 grade for each day it is overdue. Late assignments will not receive written comments. On the rare occasion I agree to grant an extension on an assignment, you must include a note on the first page stating that you were granted an extension.
and the new due date, as well as the date you submitted the work. If you fail to do so, the assignment will be regarded as late and penalized accordingly.

**ACADEMIC INCOMPLETES** at the end of the semester will not be given except for emergencies.

**HONOR CODE:** The policies described in the Oberlin College Honor Code apply to this class. Written work must include proper citations and must be the product of your own work. You are also required to include the following statement on all written assignments with your signature: "**I affirm that I have adhered to the Honor Code in this assignment.**" If you have any questions about how to cite sources properly or about the Honor Code, please feel free to approach me. For more information on the Honor Code see https://oncampus.oberlin.edu/webapps/portal/frameset.jsp?tab_tab_group_id=_33_1

**CONTENT ALERT:** Please be aware that some issues discussed in this course may provoke difficult reactions for some. I cannot always anticipate those reactions, but will always respect any student’s need to take care of themselves in response to them. For an excellent discussion of trigger warnings, see Andrea Smith, “Beyond the Pros and Cons of Trigger Warnings: Collectivizing Healing,” July 13, 2014. http://andrea366.wordpress.com/2014/07/13/beyond-the-pros-and-cons-of-trigger-warnings-collectivizing-healing/

**STUDENTS NEEDING EXTRA ASSISTANCE or ACCOMMODATIONS:** Please speak with me if you need disability-related or other learning-needs accommodations in this course. Student Academic Services is also an important resource for students needing academic assistance. Please contact Jane Boomer, Office of Disability Services, Peters G27, extension 5-5585. If you have triggers for which you would benefit from specific content-related trigger warnings in order to maintain your health and wellness, please contact me directly in the first week of the semester so we can make arrangements for your needs.

**A SPECIAL NOTE ON EMAIL:** For health reasons, I need to limit the time I spend reading on a computer screen. Please only email me in emergencies, if you are sick, or if you need to set up an appointment outside of office hours, class hours, or the 30 mins before/after class. My email is Evangeline.Heiliger@oberlin.edu

**CAST 300/Research Seminar Assignments**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Seminar participation and attendance</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Situating field research assignments</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research project assignments</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**I. Participation and Attendance in Research Seminars and Practicum Labs**

Weekly seminars provide a space to share the experiences, challenges, concerns and joys of student placements and the research process. Discussing the ethics of research and disclosure are absolutely central to this course, and our first seminar/lab meeting will be dedicated to discussing not only the ethics of research, but also issues of confidentiality. Because each of you will bring reflections of your placements and of the people with whom you work into the classroom, as a class we will establish the
seminar as a confidential space and stress that information, stories, concerns, and issues shared cannot be discussed outside of the seminar.

Weekly seminars will also include a discussion of assigned readings. The reading list will include articles discussing the ethics of research; issues of social stratification and hierarchies based on race, class, gender, sexuality, and ability; the challenges and importance of interdisciplinary and advocacy research; as well as a discussion of other methodologies, including feminist approaches, archival research, survey and content analysis. Course readings will also include ethnographies as a way to think through methodological questions and concerns students will face throughout their placement. An important course goal is for students to be able to identify various methods scholars use, as well as the strengths and weaknesses of various methodologies and to use their deep engagement with ethnographic methods as a way for understanding other methodologies.

Engaged and critical discussion of the readings is absolutely required. I encourage each of you to use the readings to reflect on your experiences as researchers and to bring that analysis to each seminar. In order to facilitate seminar discussion, students will use the discussion board on blackboard to post comments to the readings each Wednesday by 10 p.m. These postings are not graded but are required and are factored into your final participation grade. You may also feel free to use blackboard to continue conversations/debates from class, but you are asked not to discuss matters regarding individual placements in these postings. Students will also develop groups to help lead discussion for one seminar this semester. I have indicated on the syllabus the 4 seminar meetings students will facilitate. Finally, by the third week of class each of you will identify a peer review partner with whom you will work throughout the semester. There are two seminar meetings dedicated to in-class writing workshop (one in October and one in November), and instances when your peer review partner will provide you with written and verbal feedback on your work. You are encouraged to work with your peer review partner beyond these assigned times and to work closely with the TA in the course in your readings and written assignments.

The success of this seminar is contingent on your thoughtful engagement with the texts and with the comments, critiques and issues raised by your classmates and your instructor. Therefore, your attendance, timely arrival, and informed participation in class are absolutely required and constitute 20% of your final grade. If you anticipate missing class, please inform me by email of your absence prior to class. Each unexcused absence will reduce your participation grade by 2/3 (from an A to a B+, for example). If you are arrive once class has begun, you will be considered absent. Finally, missing more than 3 seminars or labs will result in a failing grade for the course.

II. Written Assignments
This class is a writing-intensive course and as such includes a variety of written assignments designed to introduce students to the process of recording field notes, proposal writing and research design as well as ethnographic writing.

A. Situating Your Field Research Assignments
Your ethnographic research this semester is part of a larger body of knowledge, research, and activism. As researchers, it is your responsibility to learn as much as you can about the problem and issues at hand. To this end, you will have several short assignments aimed at providing that context for your project. These assignments will also introduce you to other methods of research (literary, archival,
census data, etc.) Assignments are typically due on Fridays at 5 p.m. and Mondays at 10 a.m. to my mailbox in King 141-E, or Tuesdays at 9 a.m. in class.

1. Field Site Description, September 30th (5%) Provide a detailed description of your placement site. Where is it located? Describe the physical space and its relation to other places nearby. Who works at your placement? What kinds of jobs do they do? Don’t take anything for granted in describing your field site. 500-750 words.

2. Coded Field Notes Memo, October 17th (10%) This assignment identifies the key categories/codes pulled from your field notes that support the central argument of your project, 1000-2000 words.

3. Census Report, November 10th (5%) Provide a narrative of the socio-economic context for your research using demographic data from the U.S. census. 750-1000 words.

4. Literature Review, November 17th (10%) What are the scholarly texts that speak to your central research question? Use peer-reviewed academic journals and book-length monographs to provide an analysis that situates your research in relation to scholarly writing related to your project. 1250-1750 words.

B. Ethnographic Project Assignments

Your field notes will serve as the basis for your final ethnographic paper, which will also incorporate class readings and field research assignments to provide a framework for your project. You will be invited to meet with me in the first few weeks of the semester to discuss your project. Each of you will be required to identify a research question that will serve as the basis for your ethnographic project. Given the intersubjective nature of engaged field research, I suspect (and expect) your understanding of the research question will change over the course of the semester. Final papers should be approximately 20 pages in length.

1. Project Proposal, September 8th (draft, 2%) and October 30th (Section I) or 31st (Section II) (final, 3%) (5% total) Clearly state your research question, your methods for investigating this question, and methodology. This writing assignment is meant to show how to define a research problem and discuss methods and methodology in a clear, succinct fashion. The FINAL version should also include an annotated bibliography of at least 3 sources. 1-2 pages for project description (draft and final); 2-3 pages annotated bibliography (final only)

2. IRB Project, November 4th (P/NP) Complete an IRB application for your project. Your peer review partner will read and review your IRB application by Nov 7th. This assignment is not graded, but failure to complete it will result in reducing your project proposal grade by one letter.

3. Rough Draft and Draft report, November 21st (all sections, rough draft, 8%) and November 24th (all sections, draft report, 2%) (10%) You must bring in two printed copies at the beginning of class (one for me and one for your peer review partner). Your rough draft must include all required sections of the final report. You must also submit by November 23rd a 1-2 page report about how you will revise your rough draft based on comments you received from your partner.

4. Practice presentation for Community Research Symposium, Dec 2, 4, or 5. (P/NP) This in-class presentation is an opportunity to practice presenting your research project for to Community Research Symposium.
5. Community Research Symposium, Saturday December 6th (10%) This public presentation is an opportunity to present your research project to community partners and the larger Lorain County community.

6. Ethnographic Report, due Finals Week, Thursday December 19th, 11am (25%)

CAST 301 Practicum Assignments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Practicum Lab Participation and Attendance</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practicum Attendance at Field Site</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field Notes &amp; Critical Analysis Notes</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Practicum Reflection</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CAST 301/Practicum Assignments

1. Practicum Lab Participation and Attendance (10%) Like the seminars, practicum labs provide a space to share the experiences, challenges, concerns and joys of student placements and the research process. Practicum Labs will be dedicated to the nuts and bolts of doing research: how to write field notes, code field notes, conduct critical analysis, give peer review, etc. Some practicum labs will meet in a classroom, while others will meet in the library or off campus at your field site.

Your attendance, timely arrival, and informed participation in class are absolutely required and constitute 10% of your final grade for the practicum. If you anticipate missing class, please inform me by email of your absence prior to class. Each unexcused absence will reduce your participation grade by 2/3 (from an A to a B+, for example). If you are arrive once class has begun, you will be considered absent. Finally, missing more than 3 seminars will result in a failing grade for the course.

2. Attendance at your field site (30%) Each student is required to spend a total of 100 hours in their placement during the semester, or roughly 8-10 hours weekly. You may spend more time than is required at your field site if you choose to do so. You must arrange a placement by September 5th and you must attend weekly. Each student is responsible for 4 weeks of fieldwork over the course of the semester (4 sets/40 pp of required field notes, or a total of 20,000 words). You are required to make up for missed time at your placement, even in the case of excused absences.

2. Field notes (50%) Due each Monday by 10 a.m. beginning Sept 14th

Once you begin working at your chosen field site, each of you will be required to take field notes. Taking, writing, and circulating field notes are a central requirement to this course and will be the basis for your final ethnographic paper. While there are clearly important concerns about the writing of field notes (issues of power, representation, and textuality, to name a few), this course is premised on the notion that there is value in close documentation and observation of different field sites in order to, as homelessness activist/researcher/anthropologist Kim Hopper notes, “render a faithful (“just”) reconstruction” of people’s points of view as one way of effecting lasting social change (Hopper 2003: 9). In order to facilitate this methodological enterprise, each student is required to take daily field notes, at least 10 pages / 5000 words per week. I will read your individual field notes on a weekly basis. I also will provide critical feedback to the class as a group with the goal of helping each of you improve data collection, to engage you with issues of ethics of data collection, and to help you analyze your field
notes in order to construct grounded theory. We will also engage in peer-and-professor review of field notes so that everyone will receive multiple levels of feedback on their individual field notes. I may email individual students prior to class to ask permission to use an especially good example from your field notes in order to show others how a particular thing may be done well. In our weekly Friday labs, we will discuss the mechanics of taking field notes and documentation, and work to use these data to design a research proposal and ultimately write the final ethnographic project. Note: Four sets of field notes (total of 20,000 words) and one set of critical analysis notes (total of 5000-8000 words) will be due.

NB: If you fail to turn your field notes in a timely fashion, this will negatively affect your grade in the course. I typically read field notes within one week of receiving them.

3. Practicum Reflection (10%) **Due December 19th at 9PM, 4-5 ds pages / approx. 2000 words**
This is an opportunity for you to reflect on your semester’s work and consider what you learned from your practicum experience. Each student will surely face a range of issues related to engaging in qualitative, community-based research; this paper is a space to write about these experiences, including self-evaluation, your thoughts about the relationship between academic research and social change, concerns about social inequality and specifically about membership in the larger Lorain County community. While this assignment is designed to be a personal reflection, please be sure to provide a clear analysis that engages with the themes of the course.

**SUMMARY OF KEY COURSE DEADLINES FOR CAS 300 and CAS 301**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(F) September 5th</td>
<td>Site Placement Final Decisions Due</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(M) September 8th</td>
<td>Project Proposal Due (1st Draft)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(M) September 15th</td>
<td>Field Notes Due (set #1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(M) September 22nd</td>
<td>Field Notes Due (set #2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(M) September 29th</td>
<td>Field Notes Due (set #3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(T) September 30th</td>
<td>Field Site Description Due</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(M) October 6th</td>
<td>Field Notes Due (set #4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(M) October 11th</td>
<td>Critical Analysis Notes Due</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(F) October 17th</td>
<td>Coded Field Notes Memo Due</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 18th - 26th</td>
<td>FALL RECESS—NO CLASS MEETINGS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(R / F) October 30th/31st</td>
<td>Project Proposal Due in seminar (2nd Draft)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(T) November 4th</td>
<td>IRB Project Due</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(F) November 7th</td>
<td>Peer Review of IRB Project Due</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(M) November 10th</td>
<td>Census Report Due</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(M) November 17th</td>
<td>Literature Review Due</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(F) November 21st</td>
<td>Rough Draft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(M) November 24th</td>
<td>Rough Draft Report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 2nd, 4th, 5th</td>
<td>Practice Presentations for CRS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Sa) December 6th</td>
<td>Community Research Symposium (CRS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(F) December 12th</td>
<td>All Practicum Hours Must Be Completed By 5 pm.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(F) December 19th</td>
<td>Ethnographic Report Due 11am</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(F) December 19th</td>
<td>Practicum Reflection Due at 9 p.m.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CLASS READING SCHEDULE

Week 1: Introduction: Defining Ethnography and Situated research
September 2  Organizational meeting, discussion of placements and first assignment.

September 4/5 Histories, Motivations, and Mechanics of Ethnographic Research
   Emerson, “The development of ethnographic field research” (BB); Emerson, Fretz and Shaw, “Field notes in Ethnographic Research” (BB). Discuss Project Proposal Drafts. Recommended: Best, “Introduction” (BB);

September 5  Site Placements Due by 5p.m. to King 141-E

Week 2: Ethnography and Qualitative Research
September 8  Project proposal due by 10a.m.
September 9  Method, Methodology and Epistemology
   Lofland, “Field Notes” (BB); Becker, “The Epistemology of Qualitative Research” (BB); (BB). Discuss taking field notes. Recommended: Gerard Forsey, “Ethnography as Listening” (BB); Harding, “Is There a Feminist Method?” (BB); Nygreen, “Reproducing or Challenging Power in the Questions We Ask and the Methods We Use”

Sept 11/12  Why We Write I: Why Ethnography?
   Behar, “Believing in Anthropology as Literature” (BB); Costa Vargas, “Limits and Possibilities in Times of Black Genocide” (BB); Farmer, “Fighting Words” (BB)

Week 3: Ethics and Academic Research I: History of Research Ethics and Codes of Ethics
September 15  Field Notes, set #1 due by 10a.m.

Sept 18/19:  Ethnography Where You Are Brown, Buying into Fair Trade: Culture, Morality, and Consumption. GROUP 1 FACILITATION

Week 4: Promises and Perils of Ethnography
September 22  Field Notes, set #2 due by 10a.m.
September 23: Critical Analysis Lab. Readings TBA
Sept 27/28: Pascoe, Dude, You’re a Fag GROUP 2 FACILITATION

Week 5: Data Analysis and Managing Field Notes I
September 29: Field Notes, set #3 due by 10a.m.
October 2/3:  On your own and with your peer review partner, you will continue to code and analyze your field notes.
Week 6: Data Analysis and Managing Field Notes II
October 6: Field Notes, set #4 due by 10 a.m.
October 7: Discuss coding field notes, themes, etc. Trouble-shoot any issues. Possible Guest Lecture Link to Critical Analysis Notes (due next week)
October 9/10: Activism, Advocacy and Ethnographic Practice
Denton-Mendoza, Homegirls Group 3 FACILITATION

Week 7: Transnationalism and the Politics of Race and Migration
October 13: Critical Analysis due by 10 a.m.
October 14: Project Proposal Workshop / Possible Guest Lecture
Oct 16/17: Kang, The Managed Hand GROUP 4 FACILITATION
October 17: Coded Field Notes Memo Due by 5 p.m. to King 141-E

Week 8: Fall Break- No Class or Lab Meetings

Week 9: Developing a Project Proposal, Census Data, and IRB Application
October 28: Library Trip for Census Workshop
MEETING IN MUDD 113
October 30: Project Proposal Due for Thursday seminar
Oct 30/31: IRB Workshop in Class. Students will work with their peer review partners on their IRB applications. Please bring hard copies of your IRB application draft, the IRB review document, as well as your project proposal to exchange with your peer review partner.
October 31: Project Proposal Due for Friday seminar

Week 10: Ethics and Academic Research II: Power and Representation
November 4: IRB Proposal Due in class
November 4: Meeting in Library for Literature Review Workshop
MEETING IN MUDD 113
Nov 6/7: Cauce and Nobles, “With All Due Respect” (BB); Islam, “Research as an Act of Betrayal” (BB); Cox, “Moving the Field: Young Black Women, Performances of Self and Creative Protest in Post-Industrial Spaces” (BB)
November 7: Peer Review of IRB due at 5 p.m.

Week 11: Making Scholarly Connections
November 10: Census Report Due
November 11: Readings TBA
Nov 13/14: On your own and with your peer review partner you will research and write your literature review

Week 12: Approaches to Ethnographic Writing and Presentation of Findings
November 17: Literature Review due by 10 a.m.
Nov 20/21: Writing Workshop Bring your computer or hard copies of all your writing assignments to class. Rough Draft Due at the end of class.
November 21: Rough Drafts due at 5 p.m. to King 141-E
Week 13: Reflections on Community-Based Academic Research
November 25: Cammarota, “A Map for Social Change” (BB); Agnotti and Sze “Environmental Justice Practice” (BB). Guest Lecture

Week 14: Ethics and Accountability-Preparing Your Community-Based Academic Research for the Community
December 2: Practice giving symposium presentation
December 4: Practice giving symposium presentation
December 5: Practice giving symposium presentation
December 6: Community Symposium, 9 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Community Symposium Saturday December 6th 9AM-4PM

Week 15: Why We Write II: Why Ethnographers Do What They Do
December 9: Discussion re: Community Symposium
Dec 11/12: Zavella, “Tenemos que Seguir Luchando,” (BB); Davis, “Knowledge in the Service of a Vision” (BB)

Practicum Hours must be completed by the end of the day, Friday, December 12th.

THURSDAY DECEMBER 19th, FINAL ETHNOGRAPHIC REPORT DUE at 11AM to King 141-E
THURSDAY DECEMBER 19th, FINAL PRACTICUM REFLECTION DUE at 9 PM to King 141-E

Include total # of practicum hours on the front page of your final ethnographic report.
This should be at least 100 hours
BIBLIOGRAPHY for Online / BlackBoard Reader


