Hunter College - Department of Anthropology - Research Design ANTHC 31400 - Spring 2019

Course faculty:

**Professor Marc Edelman** (course coordinator)
medelman@hunter.cuny.edu 706 North Building
Tel. 212-772-5659
Office hours: Tues. & Fri. 2:30-4:30pm or by appointment

**Professor Christopher Gilbert**
cgilbert@hunter.cuny.edu 725 North Building
Tel. 212-396-6578
Office hours: Tues. & Thurs. 1:00-3:00pm or by appointment

**Professor Thomas McGovern**
thomas.h.mcgovern@gmail.com 701 North Building
Tel. 212-772-5654
Office hours: Tues. 12:00n-1:00pm & Fri. 3:00-5:30pm or by appointment

**Professor Ignasi Clemente**
iclement@hunter.cuny.edu 704 North Building
Tel. 212-772-5424
Office hours: Tues. & Fri. 3:30-4:30pm or by appointment

Course Description:

This team-taught course introduces students to research design and methods in biological, archaeological, cultural, and linguistic anthropology. It consists of four modules, each taught by a specialist in the respective subfield. Each module involves key readings, class lectures and discussions, and hands-on exercises that allow students to generate data and thereby participate in the construction of knowledge. The course will also include practical training in areas common to all subfields of anthropology, such as research ethics and writing funding proposals.

Learning outcomes:

Students will learn to:
- Analyze skeletal and paleontological material in the laboratory
- Carry out and analyze ethnographic and oral historical interviews
- Understand debates about “small N” and “large N” research and grounded theory
- Draft research proposals and search for funding
- Protect human research subjects and apply to an Institutional Review Board
- Determine the age of animal species from remains of their dentition
- Audio and video record in-situ for social research purposes
- Transcribe audio-visual data
- Analyze interactional data

Course Materials: The following books will be on reserve in the Library and also available for purchase:


Course requirements:

Each module will involve a practical research experience and a brief written analysis of the research process and findings. The four research exercises and the deadlines for each are detailed in appendices to this syllabus. Students are strongly encouraged to consult the participating faculty members about possible foci for their projects and any questions that arise in the process of completing these assignments.
Grading Method and Course Requirements: class participation (20%), four research exercises and reports (60%), take-home mid-term examination (10%), and take-home final examination (10%).

For the purposes of this class, the following scale of letter grades is used:

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Policy Information

**Academic Integrity Statement:** Hunter College regards acts of academic dishonesty (e.g., plagiarism, cheating on examinations, obtaining unfair advantage, and falsification of records and official documents) as serious offenses against the values of intellectual honesty. The College is committed to enforcing the CUNY Policy on Academic Integrity and will pursue cases of academic dishonesty according to the Hunter College Academic Integrity Procedures. The Hunter College Anthropology Department has a policy of zero tolerance for acts of academic dishonesty.

**Americans with Disabilities Act Statement:** In compliance with the ADA and with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, Hunter College is committed to ensuring educational access and accommodations for all its registered students. Hunter College’s students with disabilities and medical conditions are encouraged to register with the Office of AccessABILITY for assistance and accommodation. For information and appointment contact the Office of AccessABILITY located in Room E1214 or call (212) 772-4857 /or VRS (646) 755-3129.

**Hunter College Policy on Sexual Misconduct:** In compliance with the CUNY Policy on Sexual Misconduct, Hunter College reaffirms the prohibition of any sexual misconduct, which includes sexual violence, sexual harassment, and gender-based harassment retaliation against students, employees, or visitors, as well as certain intimate relationships. Students who have experienced any form of sexual violence on or off campus (including CUNY-sponsored trips and events) are entitled to the rights outlined in the Bill of Rights for Hunter College.

  a. **Sexual Violence:** Students are strongly encouraged to immediately report the incident by calling 911, contacting NYPD Special Victims Division Hotline (646-610-7272) or their local police precinct, or contacting the College's Public Safety Office (212-772-4444).

  b. **All Other Forms of Sexual Misconduct:** Students are also encouraged to contact the College's Title IX Campus Coordinator, Dean John Rose (jtrose@hunter.cuny.edu or 212-650-3262) or Colleen Barry (colleen.barry@hunter.cuny.edu or 212-772-4534) and seek complimentary services through the Counseling and Wellness Services Office, Hunter East 1123. CUNY Policy on Sexual Misconduct Link: [http://www.cuny.edu/about/administration/offices/la/Policy-on-Sexual-Misconduct-12-1-14-with-links.pdf](http://www.cuny.edu/about/administration/offices/la/Policy-on-Sexual-Misconduct-12-1-14-with-links.pdf)

**Course Content and Schedule follow:**
Course Content and Schedule:

Week 1 – Course introduction (Edelman)
Fri. Jan. 25

Week 2 – (Gilbert)
Tues. Jan. 29 - History of Evolutionary Thought. The Scientific Method


Fri. Feb. 1 - Research and Methods in Primate Behavior
(Ethograms, Behavioral sampling, Lab)


Week 3 – (Gilbert)
Tues. Feb. 5 - Research and Methods in Genetics


Fri. Feb. 8 - Research and Methods in Functional Morphology/Paleontology


**Week 4 – (Gilbert)**

Tues. Feb. 12 NO CLASS

Fri. Feb. 15 - Lab in Functional Morphology/Paleontology


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**Week 5 – Archaeology as a way of knowing, history of method, proxy evidence, and material culture (McGovern)**

Tues. Feb. 19 & Fri. Feb. 22


Fitton, Tom & Stephanie Wynne-Jones.” Understanding the layout of early coastal settlement at Unguja Ukuu, Zanzibar.” *Antiquity* 91 359 (2017): 529–546


https://doi.org/10.1016/j.quageo.2018.07.015


**Week 6 – Archaeology of human dispersal- paleo to recent, extinctions and impacts - (McGovern)**

Tues. Feb. 26 & Fri. Mar. 1


**Week 7 – Holocene transformations- agriculture, hierarchy, intensification and an early Anthropocene, continuity and collapse – FRIDAY WILL BE A HANDS-ON LAB DAY**

_Tues. Mar. 5_


**Fri. Mar. 8. Hands-on Lab Day, 700 Hunter North, Zooarchaeology lab**

**Week 8 – Archaeology of global change, climate, engaging with stakeholders, co-production of knowledge –**

_Tues. Mar. 12 & Fri. Mar. 15_


**Week 9 – Ethnographic methods and oral history - (Edelman)**
**Tues. Mar. 19**


**Fri. Mar. 22**


**Recommended:**


**Week 10 – Integrating documentary and ethnographic research - (Edelman)**

**Tues. Mar. 26**


**Fri. Mar. 29**

**DISCUSSION OF STUDENTS’ ETHNOGRAPHIC/ORAL HISTORY PROJECTS**

**Week 11 – Case studies and problems of inference in cultural anthropology - (Edelman)**
**Tues. Apr. 2 & Fri. Apr. 5**

**Recommended:**


**Week 12 – Writing research proposals and finding funding sources (Edelman)**
**Tues. Apr. 9**


**Recommended:**


**Week 13 – Ethical issues and protection of human subjects - (Clemente)**
**Tues. Apr. 16**


**Fri., Apr. 19 NO CLASS. CUNY RECESS.**
Week 14 - (Clemente)
Tues. Apr. 30 — Protection of human subjects and new research and ethical challenges

Invited speaker from Hunter Institutional Review Board and overview of Ideate system.


Fri. May 3 — Why Record? Talk as Social Action


Week 15 – Verbal and non-verbal transcription theory and methods - (Clemente)
Tues. May 7 and Fri. May 10


Week 16 – Integration of content and linguistic analyses - (Clemente)
Tues. May 14


Biological Anthropology Module Research Exercise:

Lab groups will be given pieces of a primate skeleton to examine and analyze by looking at qualitative and quantitative data. Students will be required to compare any measurements taken and write down any features that allow an identification of likely locomotor behavior for that specimen. Results and conclusions must be written up in a short paragraph and the whole lab worksheet will be turned in at the end of class.

Archaeology Module Research Exercise:

This will be a lab exercise that analyzes tooth wear stages of sheep mandibles (details to be distributed separately).
Cultural Anthropology Module Research Exercise: Ethnographic or Oral History Interview

Face-to-face contact is one feature of ethnographic research that distinguishes it from other approaches in the social sciences. An ethnographic or oral history interview is one way to get a small taste of one aspect of fieldwork in cultural anthropology. Interviews must have a purpose that is part of a larger research design or that is intended to uncover one or more specific kinds of information. It is useful to think of the information that you would genuinely like to know. Once you identify that, the parameters of the interview will become clearer (the interlocutor or “informant” to consult, the questions to ask, the language you will employ, etc.). For this exercise, you may conduct either (1) an ethnographic interview intended to generate information about a particular social group, practice or phenomenon; or (2) an oral history interview intended to generate information about the biography of an interesting individual, a specific event or an historical period. You will be expected to complete the following steps:

- Develop the research question (the information you hope to obtain and why it’s meaningful);
- Develop and write down specific questions and/or themes to guide the interview;
- Select an interlocutor (possibilities include a fellow student, a grandparent or parent, a professor, a neighbor). Try to choose someone with whom you can follow up after the interview, if necessary;
- Familiarize yourself with your audio recorder’s or smartphone’s microphone and its “record,” “pause” and “save” functions;
- Express interest in your interlocutor’s knowledge or historical experience and request permission for an interview, explaining your objectives as clearly as possible. Obtain informed consent, including consent to record the conversation (remember that she/he/they may not share your views and attitudes; usually an interviewer’s main strategy is to listen rather than to speak a lot, but this can vary). Find out if your interlocutor prefers to maintain their name in confidence and express your willingness to have some parts of the interview be “off the record,” “for background” or “not for attribution,” as well as to turn off your audio recorder if sensitive topics come up. Interlocutors should be encouraged to speak in whatever language they are most comfortable, as long as you understand and speak it adequately;
- Complete one in-depth interview of at least one hour. It’s usually best to think of the interview as a friendly conversation rather than an interrogation. Sometimes interesting topics emerge in the interview that neither you nor your interlocutor have anticipated. You will have to judge how soon to return to your planned questions or interview guide during or after these detours. Don’t neglect to ask follow-up questions geared to your interlocutor’s responses. Sometimes you may want to repeat or paraphrase the response you receive to make sure that you understand it.
- Transcribe selections from the interview (in original language), using a computer and foot pedal.
- Write a brief paper of not more than 1,000 words that analyzes the information obtained and reflects on some relevant aspects of the interview process (e.g., rapport or its absence, the setting, questions that worked well or that didn’t work well, questions you wished you asked, unexpected information that emerged, the tone or pace of your interlocutor’s speech, the presence of or interruptions by other people, the informed consent process, etc.).
Linguistic Anthropology Module Research Exercise:

The goal of the linguistic anthropological exercise is to teach you to observe how, when people talk to each other, whether an interviewer and an interviewee or research subjects talking to each other, they construct meaning collaboratively and interactively. We will focus on two types of organization: simultaneity and sequentiality. Specifically, simultaneity encompasses the verbal and non-verbal resources of the speaker but also of his/her interlocutor, since what an interlocutor does influences what the speaker says/does. Sequentiality encompasses the alternation of speakers as, for instance, when a speaker says something, that talk is a new “action move” that quickly becomes the context/background of the next “action move” when another speaker says something else.