Required Books (Available at the Graham School Bookstore and Regenstein Reserve):


All articles and book chapters are on Electronic Reserve, accessible by Chalk.

This class will introduce students to the practice of ethnographic fieldwork, or participant observation research. Students will read works on the practice of ethnography and actual ethnographic studies to acquire exposure to a variety of theoretical approaches, empirical topics, and debates. Students will also conduct several weeks of ethnographic research, produce field notes, and write a short final paper based on their research. Each week we will discuss the field notes, which students will have exchanged before each session. The class should appeal to students interested in both the social sciences and the humanities, in part because it concerns the study of and reflection upon the human condition in live situations, and in part because the main theoretical approaches to the practice are rooted in deeper philosophical traditions. So, while becoming familiar with ethnographic theory students will be introduced to philosophical strains such as semiotics, existentialism, pragmatism, and phenomenology.

Grades are based on in-class participation and regular submission of field notes (50%) and a 12 page (12pt double-spaced) final course paper (50%). Beginning in week three, field notes should be submitted at least by the Wednesday of each week to the course website on Chalk (https://chalk.uchicago.edu/). Students are expected to review each other’s notes in time for course meetings sessions.

**September 28**

*Introductions and Course Overview/Access and Ethics*


**October 6**

*Field Notes, In-Depth Interviewing*

1) Emerson, Robert M. *Writing ethnographic fieldnotes*. Chapters 2, 3, 4, 5

*Symbolic Interactionist Approaches*

1) Anderson, Elijah. *A Place on the Corner.*

October 13

Ethnomethodological Approaches
2) Paperman, Patricia.”Surveillance underground: the uniform as an interaction device.” Ethnography Vol 4(3): 397–419
Download at: http://ann.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/595/1/190

Field Notes Discussion

October 20

Grounded theory

Coding Data.
1) Writing ethnographic fieldnotes. Chapter 6
2) Learning from strangers. Chapter 6

Field Notes Discussion

October 27

Extended Case Method and Abduction
1) Burawoy, Michael. “The Extended Case Method,” pp. 271-287 and

Field Notes Discussion
November 3

Reflexivity

Field Notes Discussion

November 10

Writing Ethnography
1) Writing ethnographic fieldnotes. Chapter Seven
2) Learning from Strangers. Chapter Seven
3) Van Maanen, John. Tales of the field: on writing ethnography.

Paper Writing/Field notes discussion

November 17

(All readings for today are in American Journal of Sociology Volume 107, Number 6)
1) Wacquant, Loic J.D. “Scrutinizing the Street: Poverty, Morality, and the Pitfalls of Urban Ethnography.”
3) Newman, Katherine. “No Shame: The View from the Left Bank”

Paper Writing/Fieldnote Discussion

December 1


Paper Writing/Fieldnote Discussion

December 8

Presentations/Paper Writing Discussion