

*Preliminary Version*  
**COURSE SYLLABUS**  
**ETHNOHISTORICAL RESEARCH METHODS**  
**SYD 6901 – W01 Special Topics.**

**Spring 2010. 12:30 – 3:15 PM. Thursdays**

**Wolfsonian museum and research center, Florida International University,**

1001 Washington Avenue, Miami Beach. First Floor Class Room

Offered by the Department of Global and Sociocultural Studies

Open to all FIU Graduate Students or by Instructor Permission

Version of October 16, 2009

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Ethnohistorical research methods enable the compilation and analysis of a wide array of data sources for the production of sociocultural theories, histories, processes and contexts. The student in this course will be immersed in a variety of data sources and taught the skills to combine written texts, material objects, graphic images, interviews and ethnographic fieldnotes. Triangulation of multiple research methods builds a chronological and diachronic interpretation of source materials, validates their integrity, and places them in a social and cultural context. Through the exploration, description, organization and analysis of these data sources the trained researcher using NVivo, a specialized computer software, can bring new explanations and interpretations to the way people adapt to their changing environments in the context of globalization and modernity.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES: What you should be able to do on completion of this course**

1. Use sociocultural theories, methods and data for explaining globalization and modernity.
2. Efficiently locate, access and utilize collections and archives for research purposes.
3. Know the assumptions, validity and reliability of methods and techniques for the study of material objects, texts, photographs, interviews, maps, graphic images, ethnographies, etc.
4. Comfortably triangulate multiple methods for the analysis and presentation of qualitative and quantitative research.
5. Use NVivo software for project management, organization, analysis, and report writing.
6. Enhance your skills for the production of a professional journal publication.

**LOCATION AND RESOURCES:**

Students are encouraged to utilize their own theories, research topics and data from local, national and international archives/collections. Otherwise, FIU's Wolfsonian collections would be the primary location for students to access sources. The world renowned collections of the Wolfsonian contain evidence of globalization processes from 1850 to 1950. These include library and material culture items for understanding the social, cultural and technological transformations in manufacturing, medicine, travel, transportation, the built environment, and the home. A comparative perspective will focus inquiry on the chronicities of modernity that affect identities, social inequalities, health and well-being.

This course was developed with support from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation that the Wolfsonian received to enhance the academic use of the Wolfsonian collections. Students will have privileged access to over 100,000 books, works on paper, paintings, furniture and decorative design objects. Wolfsonian staff time and expertise are dedicated through this grant to support students during this semester. As students develop research topics, Museum staff would individually guide students to items of interest.

## **Syllabus - Ethnohistorical Research Methods**

(Location Continued)

Class meets once a week in the Wolfsonian first floor classroom. One meeting will be held at the Wolfsonian storage annex a few blocks away. Between class meetings each student will become immersed in their selected data sources, guided by Wolfsonian staff. The Wolfsonian library is open on Mondays through Saturdays 9:00 to 5:00 by appointment. Free parking is available on the streets west of Washington Avenue between 7am and 6pm, Monday through Fridays. Paid parking is at meters or at the City Parking Garage two blocks north on 12th Street.

### **COMPUTER SOFTWARE**

Each student would be trained to use NVivo software from QSR International for project management, coding, analysis, and report writing. NVivo has the capacity to digitally incorporate texts, field notes, photographs, interviews, GIS maps, audio and video as data sources. A transcription function facilitates the production of texts from video and audio files. All of these data sources are coded in ways that the researcher considers important. Codes can be categorized and recombined as themes emerge with discourse and content analysis. As the project grows in complexity, data sources can be queried for specific themes producing new hypertexts. Generation of models and matrices represent the theory and data graphically and quantitatively. NVivo software facilitates the testing of theory based hypotheses or the generation of grounded theories.

### **INSTRUCTOR**

Dennis Wiedman, Ph.D. Anthropologist

Associate Professor. Department of Global and Sociocultural Studies.

Office: University Park DM, 336B. 305-348-2262

Office Hours: Thursday following the class at the Wolfsonian,

Wednesdays 11:00 to 12:00 pm at UP or by appointment.

Email: [wiedmand@fiu.edu](mailto:wiedmand@fiu.edu) Web Page: [www.fiu.edu/~wiedmand](http://www.fiu.edu/~wiedmand)

Email communication should be within Blackboard. I try to respond within three days.

### **TECHNOLOGY AND SOFTWARE**

*Required:* Personal lap-top computer operating with Windows XP or later.

With minimum 1.2 GHz Pentium Processor, 1GB memory, 1 GB available hard disk space.

Internet Explorer

Adobe Reader

Microsoft Office with Word and Excel

NVivo – Version 8. - QSR International

*Optional:* Bibliographic software such as Endnote

## SELECTED READINGS

Barber, Russell J, and Frances F. Berdan

1999 *The Emperor's Mirror: Understanding Cultures through Primary Sources.*

Tucson: University of Arizona Press. ISBN 13: 978-0-8165-1848-7

Berkhofer, Robert F.

2008 *Fashioning History: Current Practices and Principles.* New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

ISBN: 978-0-230-60868-9

Bernard, Russell

2006 *Research Methods in Anthropology: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches.*

Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press. ISBN 13: 978-0-7591-0869-1

Kenway, Jane, and Johannah Fahey, Editors

2009 *Globalizing the Research Imagination.* London: Routledge. ISBN 13: 978-0-415-41222-3

W. David Kingery, Editor

1996 *Learning from Things: Method and Theory of Material Culture Studies.*

Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press. ISBN: 978-1-56098-883-0

QSR, International

2008 *NVivo Workbook.* Cambridge, MA: QSR International. (Student Package On-line order)

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

A student must complete all of the course requirements in order to earn a passing grade.

**1) Course Research Paper:** A 15 to 20 page essay demonstrates your skills in research methods, analysis and writing. This essay must be based on original primary sources from archives and collections. Topic selection and methods are discussed throughout the course. A two-page essay proposal that includes your research methods and data sources must be submitted by the scheduled date.

**2) Exercises** are in-class and out-of-class assignments that enable students to express their perspectives, course comprehension and research abilities while demonstrating their analytical, writing and presentation skills. Most exercises are essential methodological techniques using NVivo features or short essays. Best scores are awarded to exercises that integrate the course presentations and readings with new research and written with perfect punctuation, format and logic. A written note from a health practitioner is required in order not to receive reduced points for a missed exercise. Late out-of-class exercises follow the deadline noted in "timeliness" below.

**3) Student Presentations:** During each class meeting several students will be assigned to make a presentation on the progress of their research, on a methodological technique, a data source or the required readings and tutorials. Student presenters will lead and promote a class discussion on the major learning points.

**4) Final Project:** This end of the semester project assesses the student's course comprehension and use of Nvivo. This entails the use of data sources to create an Nvivo project, the import of various kinds of data sources, coding of materials, analyzing and reporting. A short narrative essay based on the data sources and submission of the NVivo Project file will be judged on originality, and use of Nvivo features. Data sources and instructions will be posted in Blackboard:Instructions. Selected students will be asked to read and discuss their essay with the class.

***Style and Format:*** All written assignments and PowerPoint Presentations must use the format and style used by the *American Anthropologist*. Follow style guidelines in Blackboard:Instructions: “Writing Professional Research Papers Using the Style of the American Anthropologist.” For essays use MS Word, double space using 1 inch top, bottom, and side margins. Use Times Roman 12 point font. Endnotes and “References Cited” sections should follow text. Do not use footnotes. Simply staple pages together, do not use a binder or fancy cover. Do not use separate cover page. Place name, course title and date single-spaced on top left of first page. Name should appear on the top left of each page. Center page numbers at the bottom of the page.

***Timeliness:*** When specified by the instructor both printed and electronic versions are necessary in order to receive a grade. Printed exercises and essays are due within 10 minutes of the beginning of the class on the due date; electronic versions in Blackboard are due at noon of the due date. Papers received after the due time, but within 24 hours receive one letter grade less than earned, thereafter they receive a letter grade reduction for each week it is late. These are not accepted after two weeks.

***Classroom Etiquette:*** During class time cell phones must be turned off and out of sight. Class discussions demonstrate the student's interest in the course, understanding of the materials, as well as critical thinking and verbal skills. Active, courteous and informed participation is highly desired.

## **ATTENDANCE**

In order to succeed in this course, students are expected to attend every class. Avoid arriving late or leaving early since this disrupts the presentation and student concentration. Course materials, exercises and discussions presented in class are the responsibility of the student. In-class exercises are the instructor’s way of providing regular feedback to students while promoting attendance.

## **Optional Ways to Get a Better Grade**

Students who want to ensure a better grade can 1) produce a PowerPoint presentation based on their research. The instructor then invites selected students to 2) present their PowerPoint research before the class.

### **1) Optional PowerPoint Presentation**

Students can produce a PowerPoint Presentation based on their research to earn up to 2 extra points. This should be professional quality from 15 to 30 minutes in length with at least 10 minutes of discussion. Provide the instructor with the PowerPoint presentation via Blackboard assignments. Be sure to reduce the pixel size of the graphic images so that the file is not too large to submit via Blackboard. CDs or thumb drives are not acceptable given the chance for viruses.

**2) Optional PowerPoint Presentation before the class:** The Instructor will preview the PowerPoint submitted and invite selected students to present their work before the class. Presentations can earn up to three additional points.

## ACADEMIC ETHICS

It is strictly prohibited to submit as one's own work material provided by a professional research agency, the Internet, or other persons. It is considered "plagiarism" to not cite the sources of your information. All sources must be identified in-text and in a "References Cited" section using the style of the American Anthropologist. Student's who violate these principles receive a grade of "F" for the course. Written exercises and papers must be submitted to "Turnitin.com" for an assessment of originality. The instructor has the authority to consider academic misconduct charges that carry considerable penalties. Please consult the University student handbook for further information on plagiarism and its consequences.

## WEB ASSISTED COURSE MATERIALS – CE6/Blackboard.

Regularly check CE/Blackboard for discussions, emails, exercise instructions and deadlines. Student computers need Internet Explorer, MS Word, and Adobe Reader for pdf files.

**Content:** Contains important course information.

**Email:** Send emails to selected individuals using the drop down list.

*Email the instructor only within Blackboard Email.*

**Discussions:** Here you can send your comments to everyone in the class for discussion.

Compose your item within a specific topic or for a new item post it in "Main."

**Announcements:** This is where the instructor communicates with the students.

*It is important to read everything posted here.*

Begin Blackboard by clicking on "CE6/WebCT" from bottom of FIU main page.

### GRADING

|                      |            |
|----------------------|------------|
| Course Paper         | 50         |
| Course Presentations | 20         |
| Final Project        | 10         |
| Exercises *          | 20         |
| <b>TOTAL</b>         | <b>100</b> |

Optional: *Earn points up to*

|                         |            |
|-------------------------|------------|
| PowerPoint Presentation | 3          |
| Presentation to class.  | 5          |
| <b>GRAND TOTAL</b>      | <b>???</b> |

### FINAL GRADE CALCULATION

#### Grand Total Points

|           |            |           |              |
|-----------|------------|-----------|--------------|
| <b>A</b>  | = 95 – 100 | <b>C</b>  | = 74 -76     |
| <b>A-</b> | = 90 – 94  | <b>C-</b> | = 70 – 73    |
| <b>B+</b> | = 87 – 89  | <b>D+</b> | = 67 – 69    |
| <b>B</b>  | = 84 – 86  | <b>D</b>  | = 64 – 66    |
| <b>B-</b> | = 80 – 83  | <b>D-</b> | = 60 – 63    |
| <b>C+</b> | = 77 – 79  | <b>F</b>  | = 59 or less |

\* At the end of the semester the total number of points for the Exercises may be more or less than 20 points. Exercise Points are calculated using the following formula: A) Total points received divided by B) Total possible points times 20 = C) Exercise Points Earned.  
 $(A / B) \times 20 = C$

## **COURSE TOPICS SCHEDULE**

### **Week One: January 7**

Course Overview -

**Topic: Ethnohistory Theory, Methods and Data**

**Topic: From Exploratory to Explanatory Research**

Blackboard Use and Introduction

Professor and Student Introductions

Wolfsonian Collections and Resources

Guest Wolfsonian Staff Member

Course Syllabus, Readings and Requirements

**NVivo Project Management, Field notes and Coding**

**Topic: Course Theme of Globalization and Modernity**

### **Week Two: January 14**

**Topic: Describing, Explaining and Predicting ppt**

**Topic: Triangulation of Multiple Methods and Data ppt**

**Topic: Locating, Accessing and Ethically Utilizing Collections and Archives**

Guest Wolfsonian Staff Member(s):

Use of Wolfsonian Objects and Library

Protocols for Behavior in Collection

**NVivo: Text Coding, Queries and Hypertexts**

### **Week Three: January 21.**

**Topic: Collections, Collectors, Survivals and Sampling**

**Topic: Ethnographies and Ethnographic Collections**

**NVivo: Pictures, Graphic Files and Coding**

### **Week Four: January 28 *Class meets at Wolfsonian Annex. 1538 Lennox***

**Topic: Material Culture Studies: Objects, Artifacts and**

**Topic: Time Dimensions: Longitudinal and Cross Sectional PPT**

**NVivo: Cases and database structures**

### **Week Five: February 4**

**Topic: Interviews, Oral Histories and Content Analysis**

**NVivo: Interview Transcriptions, Coding and Analysis**

### **Week Six: February 11**

**Topic: Event Analyses: Exhibitions, Social Movements and Meetings**

**Course Paper Proposal.** Due within 10 minutes of beginning of class.

**NVivo: Video Files, Segment Coding and Analysis**

### **Week Seven: February 18**

**Topic: Government Documents: Censuses, Reports and Propaganda**

**NVivo: Importing and using statistical and structured databases**

### **Week Eight: February 25**

**Topic: Photos, Photography and Visual Ethnohistory**

**NVivo: Team projects and file sharing**

### **Week Nine: March 4**

**Topic: Spatial analyses using maps, aerial imagery, and architectural drawings**

**NVivo: Maps and GIS files, linking and Coding**

### **Week Ten: March 11**

**Topic: Newspapers, Magazines and Public Media**

**NVivo: Linking to and using Internet web page sources**

**Week Eleven: March 18 – Spring Break – No Class**

**Week Twelve: March 25**

**Topic: Organizational Culture: Institutions, Businesses and Organizations**

**NVivo: Modeling, Visualizing and Interpretations**

**Week Thirteen: April 1**

**Topic: Models and Matrices**

**NVivo: Cases and Matrix Analysis**

**Week Fourteen – April 8**

**Topic: Analysis, Writing and Representations**

**NVivo: Hypertexts, Queries and Report Writing**

**Student Presentations**

**Week Fifteen – April 15**

**Student Presentations:**

**Assessment Week – Week of April 22.**

**End of Term Final Project submitted in Blackboard by noon of April 22.**