FLR 607 (CRN 25424): SEMINAR FOLKLORE FIELDWORK  
WINTER 2008, W 2:00-4:50, 206 FR

Professor: Lisa Gilman  
E-mail: lmgilman@uoregon.edu  
Office Phone: 541-346-3967  
Office hours: M 1:00-3:00 pm, T 12:00-2:00 pm, and by appointment  
Office: 447 PLC

REQUIRED TEXTS:
- Additional Readings accessible on Blackboard.

RECOMMENDED TEXTS:

COURSE DESCRIPTION:
This course introduces students to ethnographic fieldwork in folklore by integrating research practice with methodological and theoretical readings. Topics include identifying a subject of study, developing appropriate research strategies, initiating fieldwork, establishing rapport, reflexivity, representation, and uses for technology. Each student will conceptualize and execute a fieldwork project while developing practical skills in proposal writing, observation, interviewing, analysis, documentation, and presentation.

GRADING AND COURSE REQUIREMENTS (guidelines for each assignment will be distributed in class):
Ten assignments (50% final grade, 5% each): When possible, assignments should contribute to final project.
- Assignment #2: Observation of worship service at religious institution (church, temple, mosque, etc.), due 1/16: Attend a worship service with which you are not already familiar. Write a 3-4 page detailed description of your observations. Pay attention to spatial, temporal, and interactional dynamics. Take into account such things as numbers of people present, dress, gender dynamics, use of space, class [check out cars in parking lot]...
- Assignment #3: Research Plan for this term, due 1/23: 2-3 pages explaining your research topic, research goals, strategies for accomplishing your goals, timeline, and format for final project.
- Assignment #4: Observation: group exercise using different forms of documentation, due 1/30: Guidelines to be distributed in class.
- Assignment #5: Interview 1 assignment, due 2/6: Conduct one interviewee-driven audio-recorded interview (30-60 minutes long). Design your interview to elicit information about the individual and their engagement with some type of folklore. Your paper should describe the interview process and reflect on the strengths and weaknesses of the interview.
- Assignment #6: Interview transcription, 2/13: Word-for-word transcription of Interview #1
- Assignment #7: Reflexive report of fieldwork thus far, due 2/20: Provide a brief summary of what you have accomplished thus far and reflexively consider your research process, e.g. ethical concerns, positionality, and other methodological issues
- Assignment #8: Interview 2, due 2/27: Conduct a second interview (30-60 minutes long) with an individual (either the same or different from Assignment #2) in which you try new strategies and attempt to improve upon the first interview. 3-4-page paper should describe the interview process and reflect on strengths and weaknesses.
Assignment #9: Critical review of ethnography or ethnographic film, due 3/5: Select a folklore study based in ethnographic fieldwork methods (book or film). Write a 3-4-page paper in which you critically consider the author’s or filmmaker’s fieldwork methodologies.

Assignment #10: Presentation (5% final grade), 3/12: An oral presentation of the final project accompanied by audio-visuals (you may choose to use photography, video, and/or audio recording).

Fieldwork journal/fieldnotes (10% final grade), due 3/17 by 5:00 pm: Students are required to keep a journal of their research this term, documenting their progress, noting details, and reflecting on their strategies. You should write one or more entries per week. Entries should cover fieldnotes and reflections on all significant steps of the research process (making contact, observations, interviews, recordings, successes, failures, and so on). You may include class assignments in your journal as relevant. Format is up to you.

Final Project (40% final grade), due 3/17 by 5:00 pm. Each student will work in conjunction with instructor to identity a fieldwork topic and to complete a fieldwork project during the course of the term. A student’s interest will determine their choice of format for their final product. Options are:
1. Fieldwork report [10 page report detailing process and goals].
2. Conference-length research paper [10 page paper integrating fieldwork and analysis].
3. Draft of prospectus of M.A. thesis or terminal project.
4. Students interested in other presentation formats should discuss options with instructor.

Attendance
- Attendance is mandatory and fundamental to your success in this course.
- If you have to miss class, it is your responsibility to obtain notes and materials. If absence is due to excusable circumstances, you may meet with me (office hours/scheduled appointment) to review missed materials.
- Excusable circumstances include: death in family, serious illness, ill dependents, observance of a religious holiday, and other university recognized conflicts. Be prepared to provide documentation.
- If excusable circumstances prevent your turning in an assignment on time, inform your professor before or within 24 hours after the due date via e-mail, telephone, or a dated note in the professor's mailbox (this requirement will be lifted in extreme circumstances). Papers will drop one letter grade for each day they are late (if unexcused).

Disability: I will do everything possible to assist those with special needs. Please meet with me in the first week of class to discuss how I can accommodate you.

********************************************************************
SCHEDULE OF CLASS READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS

WEEK 1, JAN 9: GETTING STARTED

Topics:
- What is fieldwork?
- Participant observation
- Fieldwork for academic vs. public sector
- Finding a topic
- Identifying a fieldwork community
- Developing Rapport

WEEK 2, JAN 16: RESEARCH GOALS/RESEARCH STRATEGIES

Assignment #1: CITI test successfully completed
Assignment #2: Observation of church service

Topics:
- Discussion of worship service observations
- Research strategies for different types of research
- Project design
- Human Subjects: visits from Juliana Kyrk and Kaija Maggard

Readings (strategic skimming recommended this week):
- Finnegan. Ch. 3 & 5
- Human Subjects: Statement of the American Folklore Society on Research with Human Subjects ([http://www.afsnet.org/aboutAFS/humansubjects.cfm](http://www.afsnet.org/aboutAFS/humansubjects.cfm)). [Blackboard]

WEEK 3, JAN 23: DOCUMENTING

Assignment #3: Research Plan for this term

Topics:
- Observation
- Documenting
  - Fieldnotes
  - Photography
  - Video
  - Audio

Readings (strategic skimming recommended this week):
- Finnegan Ch. 4
WEEK 4, JAN 30: CONDUCTING AN INTERVIEW
Assignment #4: Observation: group exercise, experiment with different forms of documentation

Topics
- Discussion Assignment #4
- Types of interviews
- Practical interview exercise

Readings:
- Anderson and Jack. “Learning to Listen: Interview Techniques and Analyses.” (Gluck and Patai, p. 11)
- Minister, “A Feminist Frame for the Oral History Interview.” (Gluck and Patai, p. 27)

WEEK 5, FEB 6: ADDITIONAL SOURCES AND STRATEGIES
Assignment #5: Interview 1 assignment

Topics:
- Discussion of Interview assignment
- Other research sources:
  - Internet
  - Library
  - Archives
- Processing interviews:
  - Annotation
  - Transcription

Readings:
- Finnegan. Chapter 9 (on transcription)

WEEK 6, FEB 13: THE SELF IN RESEARCH/ETHICS
Assignment #6: Interview transcription

Topics:
- Progress Report
- The self in research

Readings:
- Finnegan, Chapter 10

Choose Two:
- Olson and Shopes, “Crossing Boundaries, Building Bridges: Doing Oral History among Working-Class Women and Men.” (Gluck and Patai, p. 189)
- Patai. “U.S. Academics and Third World Women: Is Ethical Research Possible?” (Gluck and Patai, p. 137)
- Stacey, “Can There Be a Feminist Ethnography.” (Gluck and Patai, p. 111)
WEATHER 7, FEB 20: MANAGING DATA/ANALYSIS

Assignment #7: Reflexive report of fieldwork thus far

Topics:
- Classification
- Identifying patterns
- Analysis

Readings:
- Finnegan, Chapter 8
- Borland, “‘That’s Not What I Said’: Interpretive Conflict in Oral Narrative Research” (Gluck/Patai, p. 63)

---

WEATHER 8, FEB 27: CRITICALLY CONSUMING ETHNOGRAPHIC PRODUCTS

Assignment 8: Interview 2

Topics:
- Discussion of interview experience
- Reading and writing Ethnography

Readings:

---

WEATHER 9, MAR 5: FROM TEXT TO TEXT

Assignment #9: Critical review of ethnography or ethnographic film

Topics:
- Producing texts

Readings:
- Salazar, Claudia “A Third World Woman’s Text: Between the Politics of Criticism and Cultural Politics.” (Gluck and Patai, p. 93)

---

WEATHER 10, 3/12: FINAL PRESENTATIONS

Assignment #10: Students present on final projects

---

FINAL PROJECTS AND FIELDWORK JOURNALS

DUE 5:00 PM ON MONDAY, March 17