

**Urban Ethnographic Field School (UEFS)** (30/04/2016)  
**SOCI 480 and ANTH 480 (6 credits of either, or 3 credits of each)**  
2016 Summer Term 1, May 9 to June 16, Mon to Thurs, 9:30am to 12:30pm  
UBC Learning Exchange, 612 Main Street

Instructors: Thomas Kemple Ana Vivaldi  
E-mail: <[kemple@mail.ubc.ca](mailto:kemple@mail.ubc.ca)> <a.vivaldi@ubc.ca>

Teaching Assistant: Mascha Gugganig  
E-mail: <mascha@alumni.ubc.ca>

Course Coordinators: Negar Hooshmand Leanne Huang  
Elizer Erpilla Annie Lam  
E-mail: <field.school@ubc.ca>

### **General Description**

The Urban Ethnographic Field School has three main foci: urban life in Vancouver, ethnographic methodology, and collaborative research. In class we will discuss the intersection of culture and politics to understand the diverse communities in Canada, as well as the epistemological problems of doing ethnographic research, including its application in different social settings and the standpoint of the ethnographer. Students will engage in approximately 50 hours of ethnographic research, organized around volunteering work for a community organization. In bi-weekly workshops we will explore specific techniques and the ethics of ethnographic inquiry in relation to the students' fieldwork experiences. A typical week will be divided into three or four seminar encounters: for discussion of the theory and method of ethnography and its applications; for discussion of social problems related to communities and city life; and for workshops where we will reflect on ethnographic techniques and discuss strategies and conflicts emerging from fieldwork experiences. Other classes will be devoted to guest speakers, films, and fieldtrips.

Community Service Learning (CSL) is a critical part of the field school. Students will volunteer 6-8 hours each week in a pre-arranged placement at a community organization. Students will be expected to take field notes based on their community service learning placements each week (this will be crucial for the work at weekly workshops). Based on preliminary conversations between the instructors and community organizations, students will complete a final project that has relevance to the community organizations. Several times during the course students will consult about their project with the instructors, teaching assistant, course coordinators, and organization contacts. Students will complete a research-based final project (such as a research report, blog, oral histories of a specific organization or community, or a creative media project) that can be shared with community partners. At the conclusion of the course students will make presentations of their findings and organizations will be invited to attend these presentations. Student projects may be posted to the course website: <http://uefs.arts.ubc.ca>

Students will become familiar with a wide range of ethnographic approaches for understanding the urban experience which are informed by an interdisciplinary perspective. Particular attention will be given to: the experience of mobility; the relation between state, culture and communities; transnational connections; everyday practice and transformation of the city; gentrification; cosmopolitanism; and the differences and overlaps between the experience of being a native, a settler, and an immigrant, among others.

## Course Objectives

Students will have three roles in this course: as students, as field researchers, and as volunteers. The tensions around these three practices will be a central part of the learning experience.

UEFS aims to provide students with:

- an opportunity to do hands-on qualitative research
- an experience to collaborate, as social scientists under training, with community organizations and to learn from this experience
- a way to link an area of cross-disciplinary theoretical concern and its applications
- an opportunity to share course projects through public presentations and the course website

The Field School combines course readings, in-class discussion, workshops, and invited speakers with fieldwork. Your contributions to each class and your fieldwork will provide the substance of the course. It is essential that you do the assignments for each class, so **plan ahead**. Typically we will have lectures and discussions on Mondays and Tuesdays; Wednesdays and Thursdays will be for discussion of issues relating to migration, fieldtrips, or workshops. Most weekday afternoons, Fridays, and weekends will be reserved for fieldwork and class preparation.

## Course Evaluation

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|-----|---|
| 10% | Seminar attendance and participation (including scheduled group presentations)  |
| 30% | Three ethnographic write-ups (10% each) DUE May 19, May 26, June 2 (in class)   |
| 20% | One transcribed interview (45-60min) <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Interview guide – 5%--DUE May 27 (by 12 noon on Connect)</li><li>• Brief analysis (2-3pp) and transcription of interview –15%- DUE June 8</li></ul>  |
| 40% | Final project and essay <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 1-page project/essay proposal – 5%-- DUE June 1 (in class)</li><li>• Project presentation (individually or in groups) – June 15 -- 5%</li><li>• Final project/essay—30%-- DUE June 16 (by 5pm at the final event)</li></ul> |

**NOTE:** Late assignments will be marked down 3% for each day late (including weekends), except in the case of a documented medical emergency. Assignments **will not** be accepted via e-mail, unless specifically indicated or permitted. All assignments are due by the start of class for the day indicated, unless otherwise noted. Group and final presentations are required.

## Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is an essential ingredient of any good university, and violations of it will be taken seriously and treated according to University regulations. For official university policies regarding the code of academic conduct, see the following Websites and Resources on Academic Misconduct and Plagiarism:

- Principles and procedures: <http://students.ubc.ca/calendar>
- UBC Plagiarism Resource Centre: <http://www.library.ubc.ca/home/plagiarism>
- Faculty of Arts guidelines: [http://www.arts.ubc.ca/Academic\\_Integrity.89.0.html](http://www.arts.ubc.ca/Academic_Integrity.89.0.html)

## Faculty of Arts Grading Table:

A+	90-100	B+	76-79	C+	64-67	D	50-54
A	85-89	B	72-75	C	60-63	F	0-49
A-	80-84	B-	68-71	C-	55-59		

## Assignments

**Seminar participation:** Regular attendance is required, as are the scheduled group presentations. Notify us in **advance** in case of any illness or conflicts. You will be expected to contribute to each class by actively listening and making informed and thoughtful comments on the assigned readings. You will have opportunities to make contributions in writing through the creation of a class blog or Facebook page for discussion, and you will have a chance to give comments and point to relevant media material on this closed Facebook page. You are expected to maintain an equitable environment in which everyone can participate, both in class and online.

**Field notes:** (required for write-ups and workshops, though not graded):

Each time you attend your field site, you should spend at least one hour writing field notes reflecting on your experience and observations there. Whom did you interact with? What did you observe and what kinds of feelings characterized your interactions? How did your observations relate to issues about mobility, urban life, or other course themes? Each week you should review your field notes and summarize what you have learned and what you would still like to know.

*Note:* Two pages of field notes (selected and highlighted, handwritten or printed, edited or original) **must** be submitted with each ethnographic write-up.

**Ethnographic write-ups:** You are required to submit three written ethnographic write-ups (4-6pp, double-spaced, plus two pages of field notes) that engage with course themes. Your ethnographic write-ups should draw directly on your field notes, **and** also incorporate concepts and arguments from course readings about the dynamics of communities and about ethnographic theory and method. You may include images, photographs and other visuals as part of your ethnographic write-ups. There will be class discussion about these assignments in workshops and seminars.

- **Write-up #1: Neighbourhood portrait**

Describe the setting of your placement: Where is your community organization located and how does it relate to the neighbourhood in which it is located and the larger city? Which communities access the space and how and why do they access it? Describe the characteristics of the built environment, the proximity to commercial and residential spaces, the ease of public transportation, the demographics of the neighbouring communities, etc. On a micro level, pick one block in close proximity to your placement and take the time to observe this on several different occasions; describe what you see.

- **Write-up #2: Community Organization portrait**

Describe your community organization: Which individuals and communities does it actively serve and reach out to? How is institutional space organized? What programs, services and resources are offered? Which seem most popular? Which least popular? Why do you think this is the case? Who works at your community organization? How do workers and participants interact? What do they say they do, and what do they actually do? What types of language (i.e., formal, informal; English, Cantonese, etc.; hierarchical or egalitarian, etc.) do you observe? Describe what you can see and hear.

- **Write-up #3: Program description**

Describe your program placement: What do you do? Who do you work with? What does the program aim to do? How long has it been running? What kinds of people access the program and why? Who makes decisions about how the program is run? How do workers and participants interact with each other? How do participants interact with each other? Do you observe any conflicts or tensions? What can we learn from these tensions?

**Interviews:** Working on your own, you will do one in-depth, semi-structured interview, around 30-40 minutes long, with **either** (1) a community service worker at your neighborhood house or community organization placement, **or** (2) someone who participates in the Neighborhood House or community organization. **You must receive prior approval from your organization supervisor before conducting any interview.** You will first construct an interview guide for the person you are interviewing and submit that for feedback and evaluation from the course instructors, TA, and/or course coordinators. A methodology workshop will provide you with guidelines for conducting your interview, transcribing it, and analyzing your transcript.

**Project presentation:** You will work with other students sharing the same placement (or individually, if permission is granted at least a week in advance) to present your combined insights and perspectives from the course readings and from your community placement to your fellow students, for approximately 5-15 minutes each (to be determined beforehand), in the last week of class. This presentation will draw from the key points of your final projects, and will also serve as the basis for the short presentations you will give at the final Community Event on the last day of the Field School. Any visual materials that you wish to project must be posted on the Connect site by 6pm *the day before* the presentation takes place.

**Final project and essay:** Your final project and essay (due the last day of class at the public event) must draw from six or more sources, including at least three course readings (from Smith, Auyero, and the readings on Connect), as well as from fieldnotes, ethnographic write-ups and course discussions. A 1-2 page proposal is due 2 weeks before the final due date, and must include: a description of the process of working on your project; your general topic, thematic narrative, concepts, and/or methods; the written and/or visual components of the final product; and a working bibliography of sources. In your final project and essay, you will have the opportunity to present what you have learned about the dynamics of urban life in Vancouver from an ethnographic perspective. The final project may take the form of an essay, a blog or website, a video or visual project. Depending on the nature and scope of your final project and field placement, your essay must be between 8 and 15 pages long, double-spaced. If you choose another format for the final project, you must write a brief analysis (4-5 pages, double-spaced) of the project, the process, and its implications. The final product will be shared with Community Organizations and should be something potentially of interest to them as well. Projects, or some portion of them, may be posted to the field school website: <http://uefs.arts.ubc.ca>.

## Course Texts and Required Materials

### 1) Two books:

Auyero, Javier. 2012. *Patients of the State: The Politics of Waiting in Argentina*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Smith, Dorothy E. 2005. *Institutional Ethnography: A Sociology for People*. Lanham, MD: AltaMira Press.

2) A course package of required readings, available on Connect: [www.connect.ubc.ca](http://www.connect.ubc.ca).

3) Other recommended materials will be available on the course website: [www.connect.ubc.ca](http://www.connect.ubc.ca)  
Publication details on recommended and required readings are in the UEFS reading list, also at on Connect.

## **WEEK 1: *Ethnography in “Urban Vancouver”*** (May 9-12)

***Seminar 1 (Monday):*** Introduction and Orientation

**Guests:** Kathleen Leahy, UBC Learning Exchange  
Field School Alumni

Complete the mandatory Course on Research Ethics (CORE) tutorial:  
<http://pre.ethics.gc.ca/eng/education/tutorial-didacticiel/>

**\*\*\* Sign up for UBC Learning Exchange Neighbourhood Walk \*\*\***

***Seminar 2 (Tuesday):***

- Malinowski, “Method and Scope of Anthropological Fieldwork”
- Spradley, “The Ethnographic Research Cycle”

***Seminar 3 (Wednesday):***

- Addams, “The Subjective Value of Social Settlement”

**Guest:** Heather Holroyd, UBC Learning Exchange and former Field School instructor

- Sandercock, “From Nation to Neighborhood: Integrating Immigrants through Community Development”

**Film:** “Where Strangers Become Neighbours”

***Workshop I (Thursday): Participant-Observation and Ethics***

- Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw, “Writing Fieldnotes: At the Desk, Creating Scenes on the Page”
- American Anthropological Association, “Code of Ethics”

**\*\*\* Turn in the ethics tutorial certificate before the workshop \*\*\***

## **WEEK 2: *Ethnography in and for Community Organizations*** (May16-19)

***Seminar 4 (Monday):***

- Smith, “Introduction” and “Part One: Making a Sociology for People”,  
*Institutional Ethnography* pp. 1-45.

**\*\*\* Last Day for UBC Learning Exchange Neighbourhood Walks \*\*\***

***Seminar 5 (Tuesday):***

- Auyero, “Introduction: Tempography: Waiting Now and Then” and “Chapter 1: The Time of the Denizens”, *Patients of the State* pp. 1-35.

***Workshop II (Wednesday): From Field Notes to Reflections***

- Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw, “Analytic Writing: In-Process Memos’ pp. 123-127.
- Balloy, “Spectacles and Specters: Settler Colonial Spaces in Vancouver”  
(Group Presentation #1)

**Seminar 6 (Thursday):** Field trip: In-Site (meeting place: 139 Hastings Street)

- Campbell and Shaw, “Incitements to Discourse: Illicit Drugs, Harm Reduction, and the Production of Ethnographic Subjects” (Group Presentation #2)

**\*\*\* First Ethnographic Write-up DUE beginning of class \*\*\***

**WEEK 3: *Language, Practice and Identities*** (May 24-26. No class Monday, Victoria Day)

**Seminar 7 (Tuesday):**

- Smith, “Part Two: An Ontology of the Social”, *Institutional Ethnography* pp. 49-98.

**Seminar 8 (Wednesday):**

- Auyero, “Chapter 3: Poor People’s Waiting: Speeding Up Time, but Still Waiting”, *Patients of the State* pp. 64-91.

**Workshop III (Thursday): *Examining the Challenges of Interviewing***

- Chiseri-Strater and Stone Sunstein, “The Interview: Learning to Ask”
- Bernard, “Interviewing: Unstructured and Semistructured”

**Guest panel:** Alumni and Graduate Student Ethnographers

**\*\*\* Bring a draft of your interview guide to the workshop \*\*\***

**\*\*\* Second Ethnographic Write-up DUE\*\*\***

**\*\*\* Interview Guide DUE Friday, May 27 at 12 noon \*\*\***

**WEEK 4: *City, Office, Street*** (May 30-June 2)

**Seminar 9 (Monday):**

- Smith, “Part Three: Making Institutions Ethnographically Accessible”, *Institutional Ethnography* pp. 101-144.

**Seminar 10 (Tuesday):**

- Auyero, “Chapter 4: The Welfare Office”, *Patients of the State* pp. 92-127.

**Workshop IV (Wednesday): *Moving towards Analysis***

- Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw: “Creating Excerpt-Commentary Units” pp. 123-127.
- Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw, “Chapter 5: Pursuing Members Meanings”, pp. 129-168.

**\*\*\* Final Project proposal DUE beginning of class \*\*\***

**Seminar 11 (Thursday):**

- Constable, “A Very Tiny Problem” (Group Presentation #4)
- Lassiter, “Collaborative Reading, Writing and Co-Interpretation”

**Film:** “Somewhere Else is Here”

**\*\*\* Third Ethnographic Write-up DUE beginning of class \*\*\***

**WEEK 5: Encounters, Help, Collaborations** (June 6-June 9)

***Seminar 12 (Monday):***

- Smith, “Part Three: Making Institutions Ethnographically Accessible”, *Institutional Ethnography* pp. 145-201.

***Seminar 13 (Tuesday):***

- Auvero, “Chapter 5: *Periculum in mora*: Flammable Revisited,” *Patients of the State* pp. 128-152.

***Seminar 14 (Wednesday):***

- Ross, “Sex and (Evacuation from) the City: The Moral and Legal Regulation of Sex Workers in Vancouver’s West End, 1975-1985” (Group Presentation #5)

**Field Trip:** West End Sex Workers Tour, with Becki Ross and Jamie-Lee Hamilton (meeting place: Little Sisters Bookstore, 1238 Davie Street)

**\*\*\* Interview analysis and transcript DUE beginning of class \*\*\***

***Workshop V (Thursday): Ethnography and Visual Methods***

- Degarrod, “Making the Unfamiliar Personal” (Group Presentation #6)
- Heller, “Becoming an Artist-Ethnographer” (Group Presentation #7)
- Ssorokin-Chaikov, Romanova, and Gavrilova, “Exhibition: The Book of the Scientist” <http://www.anthropologies-of-art.net/news/exhibition1>

**Facilitator:** Mascha Gugganig

**WEEK 6: Communicating Community Engagement** (June 13-16)

***Seminar 15 (Monday):***

- Smith, “Where We’ve Got To and Where We Can Go”, *Institutional Ethnography* pp. 205-222.
- Aueryo, “Conclusion”, “Methodological Appendix,” and “Epilogue”, *Patients of the State* pp. 153-168.

**\*\*\* Work on Presentations and Final Projects \*\*\***

***Seminar 16 (Tuesday):***

- Borges, “The Ethnographer”
- UEFS Website (read and critique a project from previous years) (group presentations)

**\*\*\* Work on Presentations and Final Projects \*\*\***

*Seminar 17 (Wednesday): Our Research*

**\*\*\* Final Project Presentations \*\*\***

in-class presentations individually or in groups

- *Evaluation of the experience, discussion on “giving back”*

*Thursday, 5:00pm-8:00pm, UBC Learning Exchange:*

**\*\*\* Final Project and Essay DUE by 5:00pm \*\*\***

**\*\*\* Evening gathering with Community partners \*\*\***

public presentations of final projects