



Research Design and Ethics

ANTH 3500 (3 Credits / 45 class hours)

SIT Study Abroad Program:
Kenya: Islam and Swahili Cultural Identity

Course Description

The Research Design and Ethics course has three main, interrelated objectives. First, the course introduces students to the multidisciplinary tools and methods of ethnographic field study with an emphasis on qualitative research methods. Research ethics are a second focus of the course, with special attention devoted to the ethics of field study and the processes of Human Subjects Review. The course addresses the specifics of research ethics amongst vulnerable populations, the politics of subjectivity in field research, and the unique aspects of conducting ethical field study in Kenya. The final focus of the course is the creation of a research proposal that serves as a precursor to the ISP. The proposal requires students to create viable and applicable research questions related to Islam and Swahili cultural identity, determine appropriate methods based on the research questions, and, finally, design an initial proposal to address a selected issue.

In addition, emphasis is placed on embracing cultural differences and on documenting, interpreting, and analyzing information directly from primary sources. Discussions, field exercises, and work journal assignments focus on observations, participation, and interviewing. Sessions provide students with opportunities to practice cross-cultural communication approaches and develop new skills in preparation for conducting their own original research during their Independent Study Project.

Course Objectives

Research Design and Ethics is an integrative, interdisciplinary course encompassing 45 academic hours (3 credits). Its main objectives are:

- To learn to identify and approach relevant primary sources in the field and to become aware of, and gain experience with research design and field methodologies for data collection including interviewing, participant observation, questionnaire writing, and basic surveys
- To apply non-judgmental, non-comparative thinking and descriptive terminology to new cultural situations
- To generate an awareness of, and dedication to, ethical research practices

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- To begin to integrate knowledge gleaned from the Islam and Swahili Cultural Identity Seminar with the development of Independent Study Project (ISP) research proposal

Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the Research Design and Ethics course students will be able to:

- Function effectively, independently, and with confidence in Kenya;
- Develop an awareness of the needs and challenges of conducting field research;
- Develop a culturally-appropriate and intellectually-rigorous ISP grounded in current debates and relevant literature;
- Analyze data gathered in the field, and make valid interpretations and conclusions;
- Engage in Independent Study in Kenya using appropriate methods and in an ethical manner.

Course Requirements

Research design classes will be held throughout the semester and include field based activities during orientation week, in Mombasa, and on excursions. Students are expected to prepare for, attend, and participate in all classes, discussions, activities, and field visits. You are likewise expected to complete all assignments in a professional and timely manner. Your final grade will be determined as follows:

Participation & Attendance	20%
Swahili Cultural Analysis Paper (CAP)	25%
Methodology analysis	35%
ISP proposal	20%

Assignments

Participation & Attendance

Attendance during the field study seminars, field visits, and educational excursions is mandatory and your grade will reflect your engaged involvement in and outside class.

Cultural Analysis Paper (CAP)

Focusing on a Swahili cultural issue of your choice (in discussion with the Academic Director), you will employ your choice of three appropriate methods (at minimum) to complete a short research project. Possible topics may include:

- Islam and Swahili Social Movements
- Constitutional Reform
- Social media in Mombasa
- The Lamu Port project and social change
- Somali urban refugees and Swahili relations in Mombasa

While your findings are important (and constitute 25% of your final course grade) the project gives you a chance to try out several research methods prior to the ISP period. You will write a separate analysis of your research methodologies for part 2 of this assignment, below.

DUE DATE: _____

Swahili CAP Methodology Analysis

Consider what factors contributed to the overall success (or not) of different methods employed, and what methods worked well for gathering different kinds of information. Discuss your methodologies in the context of gathering information on your specific topic. Do not simply tell what you did. You must challenge yourself to describe how something worked, lessons learned from different approaches, and how you made decisions about your topic, locations,

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interviewees and methods selected. Analyze your methodologies with attention to how you modified your approaches as time went on, what influenced your selection of different methods (including your personal characteristics), and the effectiveness of your approaches. Comment on ethical considerations of your study, including any ethical questions or issues that arose and how you resolved them. What might you do differently in the future and why?

Your CAP and methodology analysis can be of any length, but must be sufficiently descriptive to clearly convey what you tried, what you modified, and what you learned.

DUE DATE: _____

ISP Proposal

The Independent Study Project is an important part of the Research Design course, so you will receive credit for the work you do in preparation for the ISP and in the creation of your ISP proposal.

DUE DATE: _____

Readings

Excerpts from the following will be assigned:

Batchelder, D. (1993). "The Green Banana" and "The Drop-Off" in Theodore Gochenour (Ed.) *Beyond Experience: The Experiential Approach to Cross-Cultural Education*, 2nd edition. Yarmouth, ME: Intercultural Press. ISBN: 978-1877864247.

Bennett, M.J. (1993). "Towards Ethnorelativism: A Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity" in R. Michael Paige (Ed.), *Education for the Intercultural Experience*. 2nd edition. Yarmouth, Maine: Intercultural Press. ISBN: 978-1877864254.

Crane, J.G. & Angorsino, M.V. (1992). *Field Projects in Anthropology: A Student Handbook*, 3rd edition. Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press, Inc. ISBN: 978-0881336856.

Creswell, J. W. (2009). *Research Design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*, 3rd ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Devereux, S. & Hoddinott, J. (1992). *Fieldwork in Developing Countries*. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers. ISBN: 978-1555873929.

Geertz, C. (1973). Thick Description: Towards an Interpretative Theory of Culture in *The Interpretation of Cultures*. New York: Basic Books, pp. 3-30. ISBN: 978-0465034253.

Gochenour, Theodore (Ed.) 1993. *Beyond Experience: The Experiential Approach to Cross-Cultural Education*, 2nd edition. Yarmouth, ME: Intercultural Press. ISBN: 978-1877864247.

Israel, M. & Hay, I. (2006). *Research Ethics for Social Scientists*. London: Sage Publications. ISBN: 978-1412903905.

Landis, D., Bennett, J.M., & Bennett, M.J. (Eds.) (2004). *Handbook of Intercultural Training*, 3rd edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications. ISBN: 978-0761923329.

Neuman, W. L. (2005). *Social Research Methods: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches* 6th ed. Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Rossman, G. & Rallis, S. F. (2003). Gathering Data in the Field. In *Learning in the Field: An*

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Introduction to Qualitative Research. London: Sage Publications, pp. 169-206. ISBN: 978-0761926511.

SIT/World Learning, *Human Subjects Review Policies and Procedure*.

Weaver, G. R. (2000). *Culture, Communication and Conflict: Readings in Intercultural Relations* 3rd ed. London: Pearson.

PLEASE NOTE: COURSE CONTENTS, LECTURERS AND READINGS MAY BE MODIFIED AS NEEDED. SHOULD ANY CHANGE OF CLASS TOPICS OR LECTURERS BE NECESSARY, STUDENTS WILL BE NOTIFIED.

Week 1:

- Drop-Off and Debriefing
 - Urban: District of Mombasa
 - Rural: District of Malindi
- Begin: Individual ISP meetings with Academic Director
- Begin: Weekly student meetings
- Cross-cultural processing sessions

Week 2:

- Introduction: Research Design and Qualitative Data Analysis
- Assignment: Cultural Analysis Paper (CAP)

Week 3:

- Research Methods: Interviewing
- Assignment: CAP continues, methodology debrief

Week 4:

- Research Methods: Participant Observation
- Assignment: CAP continues, methodology debrief

Week 5:

- Research Methods: Surveys and Quantitative Data
- Assignment: ISP proposal draft due

Week 6:

- Research Methods: Fieldnotes
- Discussion: Men's Panel and Women's Panel

Week 7:

- Issues in Data Collection: Ethics and Responsibilities
- Assignment: Ethics role playing scenarios
- ISP final draft due

Week 8:

- Issues in Data Collection: Fieldwork under time constraints
- Assignment: CAP due, final methodology debrief

Week 9:

- The context of fieldwork:
 - At your site - logistics, security

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- Ethics, integrity, harassment
- Research facilities: libraries, research permits, institutions, human resources, etc.

Week 10:

- Debrief: Zanzibar educational excursion
- Assignment: Analysis of approach in Zanzibar

Evaluation and Grading Criteria

Grading

Papers and presentations will be graded on style and form, content, depth of analysis, and understanding of readings and lectures as demonstrated by their appropriate incorporation into assignment. Participation will be graded by observing attendance, attitude, preparation, active involvement in class discussions and question and answer sessions with lecturers, and culturally appropriate behavior on excursions and with guest lecturers.

Grading Scale: The grading scale for all classes is as follows:

94-100%	A	74-76%	C
90-93%	A-	70-73%	C-
87-89%	B+	67-69%	D+
84-86%	B	64-66%	D
80-83%	B-	below 64	F
77-79%	C+		

Grading Criteria

An “A” grade for an assignment entails superior (not just “very good”) performance in terms of structure and organization of assignments, analysis, logical argumentation and consistency, and the provision of factual, numerical and/or historical evidence. In terms of Class Participation, an “A” grade refers to full attendance, punctuality, attentive listening and active engagement in all lectures, discussions, field trips and other activities. It also means polite and respectful behavior. The level, frequency, and quality of students participation will be monitored and taken into account.

Student Expectations

Class Participation

Participation in class refers to attendance, punctuality, attentive listening and active engagement in all lectures, discussions, educational excursions and other activities. It also means polite and respectful behavior.

Please refer to the SIT Study Abroad handbook for policies on academic integrity, ethics, warning and probation, diversity and disability, sexual harassment and the academic appeals process. Also, refer to the specific information available in the Student Handbook and the Program Dossier given to you at Orientation.

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