

ANTH 375 Anthropology for Consulting and Design

a.k.a., Human-Centered Research Practicum

Spring 2019 topic: Time management

10631R, Tuesdays 2-4:50pm, ~~Kaprielian KAP 148~~, Hedco HNB 120F

How do anthropologists contribute to good design in the real world? How do businesses and nonprofits use ethnographic research (that is, research about people in society) to study real-world problems, and develop innovative designed-based solutions? An answer can be found in the field of Human-Centered Design.

Human-Centered Design starts with the lived experience and perspective of the people you're designing for. Instead of assuming they already understand a situation, design thinkers start by observing and talking to real people. They ask questions like: What kinds of problems or frictions do you experience in your daily life? Are there specific challenges or obstacles that make it difficult to get work done? How can we learn from people's lived experience, to create design solutions that improve people's lives in real, tangible ways?

In this course, students and instructors form a consulting team and take human-centered design research project from start to finish. We will begin with a focused period of background research and orientation, familiarizing ourselves with anthropological thinking and methods, and learning more about our topic. Then, we will use human-centered design research methods to gain the kind of deep insight that can lead to innovative solutions. At the conclusion of the semester, we will assemble our findings and design solutions into a client-focused presentation and a written report.

Our research question for Spring 2019: How do undergraduate students at the University of California understand and grapple with the problem of time and time management?

Course texts

Articles and shorter texts marked (CR) are available PDF form through the course Dropbox folder; a link can be found in Blackboard.

REQUIRED

The following required texts MUST be obtained in hard copy for reference in class. These texts are available at the campus bookstore, and on reserve at Leavey Library.

- Engelke, Matthew. 2018. *How to Think like an Anthropologist*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. 9780691178783
- Kumar, Vijay. 2013. *101 Design Methods: A Structured Approach for Driving Innovation in Your Organization*. Wiley. 9781118083468
- Nathan, Rebekah. 2005. *My Freshman Year: What a Professor Learned by Becoming a Student*. Penguin Books. 9780143037477
- Norman, Donald A. 2013. *The Design of Everyday Things*. Revised and expanded edition. New York: Basic Books. 9780465050659

RECOMMENDED

These additional texts are not required reading, but may provide helpful or interesting insights into applied anthropology:

- Bourgois, et al. 2002. *Exotic No More: Anthropology on the Front Lines*. 1st edition. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Ervin, Alexander M. 2004. *Applied Anthropology: Tools and Perspectives for Contemporary Practice*. 2 edition. Boston: Pearson / Allyn & Bacon.
- Kedia, Satish, and John Van Willigen, eds. 2005. *Applied Anthropology: Domains of Application*. Praeger.

Learning objectives

The structure of the course reflects the “4-Ds of Design Thinking.”*

1. **Discover:** investigate a problem or situation for a specific community.
2. **Define:** use research insights to articulate a specific problem statement for a specific group of users or community members.
3. **Develop:** use the research and problem statement to generate ideas.
4. **Deliver:** propose specific solutions.

Since this is the first time this course will be taught, most of our work this semester will be in the “**discover**” and “**define**” phases, though we will also spend time **developing** our ideas and innovations, and preparing a report and presentation that we can **deliver** to a broader audience.

ASSIGNMENTS & GRADING

Class structure

This is a workshop course, which meets once per week for 2 hours, 50 minutes). Class time will be focused on the following tasks:

- **Seminar-style discussion** of assigned texts.
- **Workshop, review and analysis of research.** Workshop discussion of ongoing research investigations. Analysis of findings.
- **Next-steps planning.** Discuss and develop plans for our next research steps.

As our project progresses, the team will identify specific research goals or tasks, and these tasks may become either “informal” or “formal” assignments for the course (see details below).

Most upcoming assignments will be discussed in class, and guidelines and supporting documents will always be shared electronically.

Weekly reading

Each week, you will be expected to complete an average of 50-100 pages of reading outside of class. You should read carefully, marking and annotating the text itself or typing notes so that you will be well prepared for class discussion.

* <https://medium.com/digital-experience-design/how-to-apply-a-design-thinking-hcd-ux-or-any-creative-process-from-scratch-b8786efbf812>; also Stanford Design School or “d.school”

Note that readings listed on the syllabus may be changed or added to reflect our changing research objectives. Updated reading assignment for the following week will be shared within 24 hours of class, to give everyone enough time to complete the assigned reading.

Informal assignments

Most weeks, you will complete an informal assignment in preparation for class.

Most informal assignments will fit into the following categories:

1. **reading analysis/response**, in preparation for class discussion;
2. **background research**, including library searches or additional reading relating to our research topic;
3. **field research and observations**, including interviews, field notes, observation summaries and reports.

These assignments will be informally graded, generally credit/no credit. Submissions will sometimes be marked *check/check-plus/check-minus*, the highest marks indicating work completed with thoroughness and/or insight, and low marks indicating inaccurate or incomplete work. Do not worry about getting these assignments “right”: if you complete each one with attention and care, you will do fine.

Unless otherwise instructed, informal assignments should be *submitted electronically promptly by 1pm on the day of class*, and a hard copy should be brought to class for grading.

Formal assignments

Twice in the semester, you will be required to turn in a formal assignment which will involve a more detailed write-up of your contribution to the team’s research. This will consist of a focused presentation of research data (such as quotations from interviews, descriptions of field observations, etc.), framed by a discussion/analysis of the data presented. This written work may be reviewed by your peers, but it will be formally graded by your instructor.

As a rough guideline, you should expect to prepare a minimum of 8 double-spaced pages for each formal assignment.

Final “client” presentation

Each student will contribute to the final client presentation, which will summarize our team’s research findings in a way that would be clear and meaningful to a client. To prepare, each student will create several detailed slides focusing on a specific aspect of the team’s research. Each student will be expected to speak for a minimum of 10 minutes during their portion of the presentation.

Final Report contribution & Peer Review feedback

The Final Report provides a written summary of the research insights gained over the course of the semester. Each student will be expected to contribute at least 8 double-spaced pages of original writing to the Final Report. Each student will also be expected to proofread and edit two other student contributions to the Final Report.

At the conclusion of the course, each student will be asked to complete a “peer review” feedback evaluation for the other members of the team. *The peer review feedback evaluations will be seen only by me*, your instructor and team leader. I will read these evaluations for insight into how each team member’s contributions were perceived and received by others. While I will consider “peer review” feedback, I will assign grades for this assignment *based on my own assessment* of each student’s contribution.

Grading

Class participation, including attendance and preparation	15%
INFORMAL assignments	30%
2 FORMAL written assignments @ 15% each	30%
Final client presentation	10%
Final report contribution & peer review feedback	15%

CLASS POLICIES

Device-free discussion

As this is a workshop requiring active and engaged participation, **laptops and other personal electronic devices should be put away during class discussion, unless required for our work.** You are not required to bring a laptop to class unless you wish to do so; you can use the instructor's laptop for presentations and file sharing.

You must bring copies of all readings to class, ideally on paper (books, PDF print-outs, and notes) so that you can participate fully in class discussion without using electronic devices.

In classroom discussions and outside assignments, students are expected to listen and respond with respect and consideration to the viewpoints of others.

File sharing

In addition to Blackboard, we will use online cloud-based platforms to collaborate and share files, such as Dropbox, Google Drive, and Slack. To ensure that our documents remain secure and private, always use your USC ID to create accounts and login. Note that your USC login gives you access Dropbox and Google Drive for teams.

Attendance & Participation

Class attendance is mandatory. Students with more than 2 unexcused absences risk an automatic failure for the course.

According to university policy, there are extenuating circumstances that define excused absences in cases such as severe injury, loss of a family member, religious holidays, etc. If the student feels that she/he has missed/will miss a class that falls into this category, the student should *immediately* contact the instructor to arrange completion of missed assignments. Students can review university absence policy. Additionally, it is the student's responsibility to inform the instructor in a timely manner of any missed class due to the observance of a major religious holiday and arrange for the completion of missed assignments.

Ethical Research

Course participants are required to take appropriate measures to protect the privacy and safety of the human subjects who participate in their research. This means first obtaining **informed consent** from research subjects prior to beginning research.

To be clear: you do not need to seek informed consent to document anything that can be passively observed in a public space; or to document your own, personal memory. In every other case, you must ask for and receive permission (that is, **informed consent**) from research subjects. The process is simple:

1. **Inform:** Explain your research project and their potential role in it.
2. **Seek consent:** Ask whether they agree to be interviewed and observed by you for your research. If they do not agree, you should *not* include them in your research. (Of course, people sometimes change their minds, so there is no harm in asking again, at a later time!)

Do not conduct research with anyone who is unable to provide informed consent. This includes children and minors, anyone whose judgment is impaired (e.g. intoxicated), people with mental disabilities, etc.

Privacy and confidentiality

You are also required to take measures, as necessary, to **protect subjects' privacy**, which includes protecting personal and also any group secrets.

A key ethical value in Anthropology is respecting the privacy of our informants. In this class, in addition to sharing "raw" and unanalyzed ethnographic data, we will also discuss our own experiences, in the field and beyond. So that others may feel safe in sharing potentially sensitive information with one another, all class participants are expected to honor each other's right to privacy, as well as the privacy of *their* informants.

Put simply, this means that you should **treat all class discussions that deal with personal information – whether that information comes from fellow classmates or their informants – as confidential**. *Avoid discussing these matters with anyone not in the course, or in places where others might overhear your conversation.*

Academic Integrity

Any evidence of academic dishonesty, including fabrication or misrepresentation of research findings, will be referred to the Academic Affairs office, in accordance with USC's standards for academic integrity.

USC **guidelines concerning academic integrity for graduate students** apply to all students enrolled in this class, and can be found here: <http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/SJACS/forms/GradIntegrity.pdf>. A general FAQ regarding Academic integrity at USC can be found here: <http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/SJACS/pages/students/faq.html>

Disability

If you wish to request an accommodation due to a suspected or documented disability, please inform your instructor *and* contact the Disability Services and Programs (DSP) office as soon as possible: <https://dsp.usc.edu/register/>

Important reminders:

- Course work cannot be submitted late without a written medical excuse.
- *Even when hard copies are required, written work completed outside of class must be also submitted electronically via Blackboard* (www.blackboard.usc.edu) by the deadline in order to receive full credit.
- In-class assignments must be delivered to the instructor before the end of class to receive credit, unless otherwise instructed.
- All written assignments must be double-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman; 1" top, bottom, right and left margins.

Class Schedule

Note that this class is a work-in-progress, and thus the class schedule will change throughout the semester! Updated readings and assignments will be announced both in class and via Blackboard/university email, and via the updated syllabus which can be viewed in the dropbox folder. Students are responsible for staying apprised of changes by checking email and Blackboard regularly.

Remember, if you have any questions, just ask!

	Topic	Class date	Reading	Assignment
Week 1	Intro	Tu. 1/8	Anthropology & “Design Thinking” introduction.	
Week 2	Discover	Tu. 1/15	Journeys – methods workshop	
Week 3		Tu. 1/22	Nathan, Rebekah. 2005. <i>My Freshman Year: What a Professor Learned by Becoming a Student</i> . London: Penguin Books.	Informal Assignment: 2-page (double-spaced) reflection on Nathan.
Week 4		Tu. 1/29	Kumar, Vijay. 2013. <i>101 Design Methods: A Structured Approach for Driving Innovation in Your Organization</i> . Hoboken, NJ: Wiley. - “Introduction,” pp. 1-15. - “Mode 1: Sense intent,” pp. 16-19 - “Mode 2: Know Context,” pp. 51-57 - “Mode 3: Know People,” pp. 87-93 - Skim the “methods” covered in pp. 1-127; read closely (and be prepared to discuss) at least 4 different methods from this section.	Informal Assignment: Choose 2 different “methods” from the text that we might use in our research. Write a paragraph (200 words minimum) for each method, outlining how our team can apply this method to our research.
Week 5		Tu. 2/5	Norman, D. 2013. “1. The Psychopathology of Everyday Things,” IN <i>The Design of Everyday Things</i> . pp. 1-36. Engelke, Matthew. 2018. Chapters 5 & 6. IN <i>How to Think like an Anthropologist</i> , pp. 136-188.	Informal Assignment TBA
Week 6		Tu. 2/12	Norman, D. 2013. “2. The Psychology of Everyday Actions,” IN <i>The Design of Everyday Things</i> . pp. 37-73.	Informal Assignment TBA
Week 7		Tu. 2/19	Norman, D. 2013. “3. Knowledge In the Head and in the World,” IN <i>The Design of Everyday Things</i> . pp. 74-122. Engelke, Matthew. 2018. Chapters 7 & 8, IN <i>How to Think like an Anthropologist</i> , pp. 189-248.	Formal Assignment “A” - TBA
Week 8	Define	Tu. 2/26	Norman, D. 2013. “4. Knowing What to Do: Constraints, Discoverability, and Feedback,” IN <i>The Design of Everyday Things</i> . pp. 123-161.	Informal Assignment TBA

	Topic	Class date	Reading	Assignment
Week 9		Tu. 3/5	Kumar, Vijay. 2013. <i>101 Design Methods: A Structured Approach for Driving Innovation in Your Organization</i> . Hoboken, NJ: Wiley. - "Mode 4: Frame Insights," pp. 129-135. - "Mode 5: Explore Concepts," pp. 195-201. Skim the "methods" covered in pp. 129-292; read closely (and be prepared to discuss) at least 4 different methods from this section .	Informal Assignment: Choose 2 different "methods" from the text that we might use in our research. Write a paragraph (200 words minimum) for each method, outlining how our team can apply this method to our research.
Week 10		Tu. 3/12	NO CLASS: SPRING BREAK	
Week 11	Develop	Tu. 3/19	Norman, D. 2013. "5. Human Error? No, Bad Design," IN <i>The Design of Everyday Things</i> . pp. 162-216.	Informal Assignment TBA
Week 12		Tu. 3/26	Norman, D. 2013. "6. Design Thinking," IN <i>The Design of Everyday Things</i> . pp. 217-257.	Formal Assignment "B" - TBA
Week 13		Tu. 4/2	Norman, D. 2013. "7. Design in the World of Business," IN <i>The Design of Everyday Things</i> . pp. 258-304.	Informal Assignment TBA
Week 14	Deliver	Tu. 4/9	Design solutions workshop	Final presentation & report drafting & editing
Week 15		Tu. 4/16	Design solutions workshop	Final presentation & report drafting & editing
Week 16		Tu. 4/23	Final Presentation	Final presentation & report drafting & editing
EXAMS		Th 5/3	FINAL REPORT DUE @ 5pm	
		Fr 5/4	PEER REVIEW EVALUATIONS DUE @ 5PM	