

Sociology 107  
FIELD RESEARCH METHODS  
Professor Sánchez-Jankowski  
Spring 2025

Office Hours: Wednesday 11-1  
in 470 Social Science Building  
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This course is designed to provide training in using participant-observation methodology. The course is divided into two parts. The course is devoted to teaching: (1) the basic assumptions underlying the methodology; (2) the techniques internal to the operationalization of the methodology; (3) ethics of doing this type of research, the practical logistics required before entering the field; (4) the preparations required to create a usable data set before data gathering has begun; (5) executing the research; (6) analyzing the data; and (7) presenting the data. During this period students will read technical materials covering these topics as well as examples of ethnographic research.

**Requirements:**

Each student will be required to have read all the required material thoroughly before class sessions, and be ready to participate in the course discussions through a question-and-answer format, and a short essay quiz. There will be a class research project that everyone will participate in and your final grade will be the joint paper that everyone is responsible for. Your final grade will be the combination of your in-class essay quizzes grades and the final paper grade.

**Books For the Course:**

There will be four books used in this course:

1. Corey Abramson and Neil Gong, *Beyond the Case: How Inequality Shapes Our Final Years* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2021).
2. Kent L. Sandstrom, Daniel D. Martin, Gary Alan Fine, *Symbols, Selves, and Social Reality* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, Third Edition, 2010).
3. Harold Garfinkel, *Studies in Ethnomethodology* (Cambridge: Polity Press,
4. Kenneth Liberman, *More Studies in Ethnomethodology* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2013).

## Readings

**Week 1 (January 21<sup>th</sup>):** Overview of Course.

**READING:** Corey Abramson and Neil Gong, eds., *Beyond the Case: Introduction and Conclusion*.

**Week 2 (January 28<sup>th</sup>):** Participant-Observational: Behavioralist Approaches

**READINGS:** Abramson and Gong, *Beyond the Case: Chapter 1, 2*

**Week 3 (February 4<sup>th</sup>):** Grounded Theory/ Extended Case Method: Principles

**READINGS:** *Beyond the Case: Chapter 7*

Michael Burawoy, *The Extended Case Method*, **Chapters 1, 2, 4**

Abramson and Gong, *Beyond the Case*, **Chapters 5**

**Week 4 (February 11<sup>th</sup>):** Symbolic Interaction Method

**READINGS:** Kent L. Sandstrom, Daniel D. Martin and Gary Alan Fine, *Symbols, Selves, and Social Reality*, **Chapters 1-6, 7, 8**

**Week 5 (February 18<sup>st</sup>):** Ethnomethodology—Principles

**READINGS:** Harold Garfinkel, *Studies in Ethnomethodology*, **Chapters 1.**

Kenneth Liberman, *More Studies in Ethnomethodology*, **Introduction, Chapters 1, 2, 3.**

Joan P. Emerson, "Behavior in Private Places: Sustaining Definitions of Reality in Gynecological Examinations," in Hans Peter Dreitzel, ed., *Recent Sociology No. 2*, Pp.74-97. **Handout**

**Week 6 (February 25<sup>th</sup>):** Question Development, Case(s) Selection(s), Access Issues

**Week 7 (March 4<sup>th</sup>):** Conducting Research: Observation, Note Taking, Data Storage

**Week 8 (March 11<sup>th</sup>):** Analysis

READINGS: Daniel Dohan and Martín Sánchez-Jankowski, "Using Computers to Analyze Ethnographic Field Data: Theoretical and Practical Considerations," *Annual Review of Sociology*, 1998, 24: 477-98. **Handout.**

Sánchez-Jankowski, "Representation, Responsibility and Reliability in Participant-Observation," in Tim May, ed., *Qualitative Research in Action* (London: Sage Publications, 2002). **Handout.**

**Week 9: (March 18<sup>th</sup>)** Discussion of Field Data

**Week 10: (March 25<sup>th</sup>)** Discussion of Field Data

**Week 11: (April 1<sup>st</sup>)** Discussion of Field Data Analysis

**Week 12: (April 8<sup>th</sup>)** Discussion of Presentation of evidence

**Week 13: (April 15<sup>th</sup>)** Problems of Analysis

**Week 14: (April 22<sup>nd</sup>)** Problems Presentation

**Final Paper Due on May 9<sup>th</sup>**