



# Writing in Anthropology

ANT 3860

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*"Man is an animal suspended in webs of significance which he himself has created. I take culture to be those webs"* Clifford Geertz

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## *Course Description and Objectives*

The principal objective of this course is to improve the overall writing abilities of students majoring in anthropology. A secondary objective is to familiarize students with the conventions of the discipline, thus better preparing them for upper-division and graduate courses in anthropology and related subject areas.

This course satisfies the 6,000 word Writing Requirement and includes numerous writing assignments of various lengths.

Anthropology today is as much the study of being human as it is the study of human beings. Scholars working in its four major sub-disciplines, cultural, physical, linguistic and archaeological, despite the widely varying loci of their endeavors, generally take a holistic view of the field of anthropology. Indeed, anthropological study is clearly applicable to all areas of inquiry.

Despite the organic quality of the field, writing styles and conventions in the various branches of the discipline do diverge as they are brought to serve the specific demands of the four major areas of study. Thus Writing in Anthropology must of necessity serve the needs of all students regardless of where their interests take them. While some assignments in the course will be of a general character applicable to any student of anthropology, other assignments will be tailored to the needs of individuals making the course, in effect, a tutorial. For example, the annotated bibliography and the essay exam are applicable to all students, whereas the ethnography may have a delimited application.

Work may be revised multiple times thus enabling students to accrue the maximum number of points toward the total; any student who is willing to put in the hard work that writing is, will be assured of a superior grade in the course.

### ***Required Text***

Sunstein, Bonnie Stone and Elizabeth Chiseri-Strater. *Fieldworking: Reading and Writing Research*

### ***Reference Texts***

Zinsser, William. *On Writing Well*.

Strunk, William, Jr., et al. *The Elements of Style*.\*

Grossman, John. *The Chicago Manual of Style*.

Rozakis, Laurie, *The Complete Idiot's Guide to Grammar*. Macmillan. 1997

Cuba, Lee. *A Short Guide to Writing about Social Science*. 3rd Edition. Longman, New York. 1997\*

\* Book will be placed on reserve or loaned from the instructor's library.

### ***Materials***

Each student is asked to bring a pocket stapler to class.

### ***Course Requirements***

Students will be expected to thoroughly familiarize themselves with the readings. It is expected that all assignments will be completed on time. Late assignments will be reduced one half- letter grade per day. This is a writing course and students will be expected to complete writing assignments totaling six thousand words. The principal assignment will be a three thousand-word research paper, which may be conflated with on-going work in another course, if the instructor permits.

### ***Grading***

Course grades will be determined on the basis of a point system on all assignments as well as class attendance and participation. Students will have ample opportunity to revise their written work until all requirements are met. If a student is willing to continue making revisions, he/she can expect to earn full credit for each assignment. Revisions on the research paper will be limited by the time allowed at the conclusion of the course. A brief, oral presentation will also contribute towards the course grade.

The evaluation of written work will be thorough and rigorous, holding students to the highest professional standards. We will use a 1000-point system, the points of which

will be distributed as follows:

Annotated Bibliography	100 pts.
Short Critiques/Analyzes	150 pts.
Short Journal Article	200 pts.
Research Paper	400 pts.
Presentation of Research	50 pts.
Class Participation *	100 pts.
Total Points	1000 pts.

\* includes attendance, punctuality, participation in discussion, and short peer reviews. The operative word is ENGAGEMENT.

If you have any questions regarding cheating or plagiarism, please refer to the University of Florida's policy on cheating and use of copyrighted materials in your student handbook.

### ***Other Student Responsibilities***

You are expected to attend class regularly and punctually. Three absences are allowed after which students' course grades will be reduced one-half letter grade per absence regardless of the reason. Students who arrive late repeatedly may not be admitted to class. You are expected to read all assignments prior to class and are responsible for learning the content of all materials used in the course. Cell phones may not be used in class.

### ***Ethics***

Students should consult the University's Code of Student Conduct for any questions regarding plagiarism or other kinds of cheating in any form.

### ***Students with Disabilities***

Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodation.

## **Schedule of Classes and Assignments\***

(Tuesday 4, Thursday 4/5)

### **Part I: Introduction**

Week 1

Tuesday:

Discuss syllabus and objectives of the course.

Thursday:

Discussion of AAA Style Guide and other related style guides. Bookmark and examine.

Writing Diagnostic: Why anthropology? Write a 500 word essay on why you have chosen anthropology as your major.

Due at end of period.

## Week 2

Tuesday:

Discussion of the major journals in anthropology and where to find them.

In-class assignment: Do a web search for an anthropology article in your area of specialization. Print out and edit the article for conformity to the appropriate style guide. In-class work on article. Completed edited article due on Thursday.

Thursday:

Due: Edited journal article.

Workshop on research tools for anthropology by Smathers Library Area Specialist

## Week 3

Tuesday:

Begin preliminary survey of web sites and hard copy library materials that you think could be useful in your

research project. Type a brief statement describing as best you can what your research topic will be. If all you

know at this point is the sub-discipline you intend to work in, name it.

The Short Ethnography

Thursday:

Lecture and Discussion: Introduction to the short ethnography.

Assignment: *Fieldworking*, "Friday Night at Iowa 80". Be prepared for detailed analysis in-class discussion.

## Week 4

Tuesday:

First Half: Detailed class discussion of Zollo's piece.

Second Half: Write a 250 word analysis/critique of Zollo's methods. Form groups and present your critique to the group. Groups to then present to class. Written critique due on Thursday.

Thursday:

Due: Zollo critiques

Lecture and discussion: The structure of an article from physical anthropology.

Assignment: Locate an article on the web from a major journal of physical anthropology. In a 200 word document, analyze the structure and style . Due Tuesday.

## Week 5

Tuesday:

Structure and style in physical anthropology

Due: Analysis of Journal Article in Physical Anthropology for peer review. Revise and hand-in.

Thursday:

Structure and style in archeology

Locate an article on the web from a major journal in archeology. In a 200 word document, analyze the structure and style . Due Tuesday.

## Week 6

Tuesday:

Due: Analysis of article for informal presentation and discussion in groups.

Assignment: Locate an article on the web from a major journal of archeology. In a 200 word document, analyze the structure and style . In-class time allotted for this assignment. Due: Thursday.

Discussion of archeology articles in groups.

## The Human Relations Area Files and the Journal Article

Thursday:

**Introduction to eHRAF. View eHRAF tutorial at Yale site.**

Assignment: Exercise 1.3 on eHRAF Yale site under Teaching HRAF tab. Outline format is acceptable. Due Tuesday.

## Week 7

**Tuesday:**

Lecture and discussion: The scholarly article in a peer-reviewed journal.

Due: eHRAF exercise 1.3

Assignment: Choose a group of people to research on HRAF.

Write a short article on the ethnic group you selected from HRAF. You may focus on any aspect of that culture you choose, but you are encouraged to write on a topic close to your ultimate research interests. Write in the style of a scholarly journal (one-thousand word minimum). Your paper must include an abstract. Follow the format of an appropriate style guide and indicate by your name what style guide you have followed. Your paper should include two sources from peer reviewed journals plus HRAF. Draft due at end of class on Tuesday, one week from today.

Writing an abstract

Assignment: Find three abstracts in scholarly journals, read each one, and note characteristics, i.e. density, sparseness of language; note also the information provided, i.e. topic orientation, thesis (or hypothesis in a science-oriented area), and conclusions.

Discussion of primary sources and the utility of archives.

Thursday:

Field trip to the University Archives and the Department of Special Collections, George A. Smathers Libraries.

## Week 8

Tuesday: Due: Draft of Journal Article for peer review. Revise and hand-in.

## Part II: Writing the Research Paper: Getting Started

Thursday:

First Half:

Composing the Research Question, Working Title, and Thesis Statement

Write the research question for your research paper for peer review. Revise your research question.

Based on your approved research question, choose a working title for your paper. Write a draft thesis statement for peer review. Print-out revised research question, working title and thesis statement on one sheet of paper and hand-in.

Second Half:

Preliminary Research Skills: The Annotated Bibliography

## Week 9

Tuesday: Discussion of the annotated bibliography.

Assignment: Write a single sample entry of your annotated bibliography.

Due Thursday.

Assignment: Draft of complete annotated bibliography. Due on Thursday, one week from today.

Time allotted for in-class work on annotated bibliography/conferencing

Thursday: Due: Sample entry of annotated bibliography for peer review. Revise and turn-in.

## Week 10

Tuesday: Informal presentation/discussion by each student regarding his/her research progress. In-class revision of work.

Thursday: Due: Draft of your annotated bibliography for peer review. Revise and hand-in.

Assignment: Write a detailed outline of your research paper. Due Tuesday.

## Week 11

Tuesday: Due: Detailed outline of your research paper for peer review. Revise and hand-in.

Thursday:

Assignment: From the journal articles you have worked with this semester, choose an introduction that you feel is effective based on the criteria discussed in class. Be prepared to explain why you feel that it is a strong introduction. Due Tuesday.

## Week 12

Tuesday:

Due: Revised outline of your research paper.

Due: Your example of a good introduction. Discussion.

Discussion: Writing the introduction.

Assignment #1: Write a first draft of your introduction. Include a discussion of methods.

Thursday: Due: First draft of introduction for peer review.

Assignment: Write a first draft of the body of your research paper.

Due at time of conference.

Due: Revised introduction due at time of conference. Sign-up for individual conferences.

### Week 13

Tuesday: No Class: Individual conferences (have revised introduction and draft of body sections ready for perusal)

Thursday: No Class: Individual conferences

### Week 14

#### Graduate School Portfolio

Tuesday: Graduate School Applications.  
Writing the personal statement for graduate school.  
Scheduling of presentations.

Assignment: Write a personal statement (500-700 words). Draft due Thursday.

Assignment: Write a draft resume. Due Thursday.

Thursday: Thanksgiving Holiday

### Week 15

Tuesday: Peer review of personal statements and resumes.  
Draft research paper first draft of conclusion section due for peer review. Revisions due on Thursday.

Assignment: Write an abstract (no more than 100 words) of your research paper. Due Thursday.

#### Presentation of Research

Thursday:  
Due: Revised conclusion section and abstract for peer review.

Tips on giving an effective presentation.  
Presentation of research

### Week 16

Tuesday: Due: Final revised research paper.



## Presentation of research

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### *Useful Links*

[University of Florida Department of Anthropology](#)

### *Professional Associations*

[American Anthropological Association](#)

[American Journal of Physical Anthropology](#)

[Archaeological Institute of America](#)

[Society for Linguistic Anthropology](#)

### *Research*

[Smathers Library Anthropology Reference Page](#)

### *Style Guides*

[Comprehensive List of Style Guides for Scholarly Journals](#)

[AAA Style Guide](#)

[The Society for Historical Archeology Publications Style Guide](#)

[American Journal of Physical Anthropology Style Guide](#)

### *Writing Aids*

[The Student's Practical Guide: Writing Term Papers for Anthropology \(and Related Subjects\)](#)

[Guidelines for Field Notes and Journals](#)

[Anthropology Writing Resources](#)

### *Assignments*

[Introduction](#)

[Article editing assignment](#)

[The Journal Article in Anthropology](#)

[The Personal Statement](#)

[Example of Application Guide](#)

[Timed Writing Exercise](#)

[Annotated Bibliography](#)

[Journal Article Critique](#)

### *Class Notes*

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