

Research and Creative Inquiry Course Inventory

Overview

The GE allows students to take a single, 4+ credit course to satisfy a particular GE Theme requirement if that course includes key practices that are recognized as integrative and high impact. Courses seeking one of these designations need to provide a completed Integrative Practices Inventory at the time of course submission. This will be evaluated with the rest of the course materials (syllabus, Theme Course submission document, etc). Approved Integrative Practices courses will need to participate in assessment both for their Theme category and for their integrative practice.

Please enter text in the boxes below to describe how your class will meet the expectations of Research and Creative Inquiry courses. It may be helpful to consult with the OSU Office of Undergraduate Research and Creative Inquiry. You may also want to consult your Director of Undergraduate Studies or appropriate support staff person as you complete this Inventory and submit your course.

Please use language that is clear and concise and that colleagues outside of your discipline will be able to follow. You are encouraged to refer specifically to the syllabus submitted for the course, since the reviewers will also have that document. Because this document will be used in the course review and approval process, you should be *as specific as possible*, listing concrete activities, specific theories, names of scholars, titles of textbooks etc.

Accessibility

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Pedagogical Practices for Research and Creative Inquiry Courses

Course subject & number

CMPSTD5189-S

Undergraduate research is defined by the Council on Undergraduate Research (CUR) as an inquiry or investigation conducted by an undergraduate student that makes an *original* intellectual or *creative* contribution to the discipline. Undergraduate creative activity is the parallel to research, engaging in a rigorous creative process using (inter)disciplinary methods to produce new work.

In the context of the 4-credit GEN Theme High Impact Practice (which, by definition, is a more robust course than a non-HIP 3-credit Theme course—since student will take one 4-credit course instead of taking two 3-credit courses), research or creative inquiry requires a level of rigor and engagement that goes beyond what is routinely already included in a 3-credit Theme course in that discipline. It will generally mean that students are either (1) instructed in and engage in original research and the production and/or analysis of new understanding or data used in the preparation of a final paper, report, or project characteristic of the discipline, *or* (2) they are instructed in and engage in the primary production and performance or display of new creative work characteristic of the discipline.

Further comments and clarifications:

- The Creative Inquiry or Research component should be integrated throughout a *substantial* portion of the course (not just at the very end, for example).
- The Creative Inquiry or Research component should connect to the Theme and to the subject/content of the course. If the course at hand is requesting two Themes, then the research component or creative work should fully pertain to both Themes.

1. Disciplinary expectations and norms: Different disciplines at the university define original research and creative inquiry differently. Please explain what the expectations/norms of your discipline are for original research or creative inquiry. How is new understanding developed in your field? How does the creative process amplify knowledge in the field? (This information should also be readily visible on the syllabus.)

This course teaches students creative inquiry through methods of humanistic ethnography, drawing especially on Folklore Studies, Cultural Anthropology, and allied disciplines in the humanities and arts. As such, original research stems from the researchers' engagement with ethnographic methods such as interviewing, recording field notes, producing audio and visual records, synthesizing themes, and archiving information obtained through the ethnographic endeavor.

New understanding develops from the analysis of this material with theoretical insights or questions posed by disciplinary understandings of cultural expressions and transformations. This class is particularly interested in how people relate to environment through the concept of place, so we rely on theoretical models and questions by folklorists, anthropologists, geographers, historians, among others, who question the meaning of place as a concept in phenomenological, political economic, and ecological terms. These models are applied and tested through ethnographic research to see what new insights, contradictions, and stories might arise from such framing.

Researchers have the ability to bring their own methods into information collection through developing their own interviewing style, ways of recording field notes, and creative practice in documentation. In the discipline at large, researchers also bring their own methodological toolkit and theoretical framing to bear on the project. This class provides that initial framing, but also welcomes student input from their other coursework and life experience. Individual creative practice allows students to demonstrate how their unique positionality and perspective shape their observation of the cultural phenomena at hand, providing new insights and interpretations.

Students encounter these three aspects of ethnographic inquiry through reading and conducting exercises from a textbook Doing Ethnography Today (2014), as well as critically responding to readings from other ethnographers taking on questions of place and meaning-making, especially in the geographic context in which the students will be conducting ethnographic research.

2. Teaching methods and practices: Which class activities and materials will be used to teach students the research methodology and/or research practices or the methods and practices of creative inquiry typical or relevant in your discipline? How will the potential ethical implications for research or creative inquiry in the field be addressed in the course? (This information should also be readily visible on the syllabus.)

In Part 1 (Weeks 1-9) of the course, we will introduce students to place-based and collaborative ethnographic research through close reading of ethnographies of place in Appalachia (e.g. the work of Mary Hufford, Ann Kingsolver, Meika Polanco, David Todd Lawrence) and a textbook that centers collaborative methodologies in ethnographic fieldwork (Doing Ethnography Today). Through reading these sources, writing responses, and class discussion students will understand how diverse ethnographic methods (e.g. sensory, narrative, political economic) in relationship to place can achieve different results, as well as the influence of positionality and considering subjectivity in research and the importance of contextual geographic and historical research. The students will also read an article specifically about the research methodology of this course and its legacy (Borland, Patterson, and Waugh-Quasebarth 2020).

In Part 1, students will also learn about the ethical implications of human-based research in a large sense by taking the OSU-required CITI and RCR trainings. We will also review, discuss, and devote a written response to considering the field of Folklore Studies own guidelines on Ethical Research. Furthermore, the course textbook will provide written exercises for students on the specific ethical questions raised by collaborative ethnography, which we will discuss in relationship to how we interpret these practices within OSU's institutional structure in the course, i.e. how we assign authorship, obtain consent, and establish fair means of reciprocity in the research.

3. Implementing: Through which class activities and materials will the students be given opportunities to practice disciplinary research or creative inquiry techniques, methods, and skills to create new knowledge or advance praxis? (This information should also be readily visible on the syllabus.)

In Part 2 (Week 10), students will spend a week-long period doing on-site ethnographic fieldwork with community partners during their spring break. As pairs, they will be responsible for conducting an interview each, producing daily fieldnotes, and producing documentation (photographs, video, digitized media, etc.) in line with the collaborative goals of their selected community partner. They will be free to generate their own questions, offer suggestions for best practices with the partner, and exercise the full toolkit of ethnographic methods encountered in Part 1 of the course, while keeping the theoretical framing learned in Part 1. Their questions and fieldnotes will bring theoretical framing to produce new knowledge about place and creative practice in Appalachian Ohio, which will be analyzed and synthesized in their final projects.

In the field, we will conduct daily reflection sessions where students will pose challenges encountered in the course of their work for group discussion and suggestion. While using field recorders, cameras, and other documentation equipment, they will follow best practices for obtaining consent and archiving as they will learn in workshops in Part 1. Issues raised through fieldwork will further refine the projects methodological praxis for future classes, as new experiences, relationships, technological insights, and changing field contexts encountered by the students will necessitate troubleshooting and refining our ethnographic methods.

4. Demonstration of competence: Disciplines develop and share new knowledge or creative work in different ways. Through which activity or activities will students first be taught and then be involved in a demonstration of competence in an appropriate format for the discipline (e.g., a significant public communication of research, display of creative work, or community scholarship celebration)? The form and standard should approximate those used professionally in the field. (This information should also be readily visible on the syllabus.)

In Part 3 (Weeks 11-15) students will develop skills at communicating their research to several different audiences: a final report, an archival accession, an oral presentation, and a public-facing digital gallery hosted on the Center for Folklore Studies Website. The final report will follow the format of reports generated by contract fieldworkers in Folklore Studies public programs. The students will describe in detail their projects, the outcomes of the project, and suggestions for continuing research with their community partner. This report will be archived and used for future courses (all students waive FERPA rights when archiving their work in accordance with OSU Legal recommendations). The course textbook gives specific insight on this task, having been co-authored by a former contract folklorist. Students will conduct an archival accession all of their research documentation (e.g. interviews, transcripts, photographs, etc.) in the Center for Folklore Studies Folklore Archives. In Week 9, a representing of the Folklore Archives will offer a training to the students on proper documentation and archiving practices which they will implement when they return to the field. Students will produce a digital gallery of their work representing their community partner, featuring audio, text, and photographs from their fieldwork, which will be hosted on the CFS website. They will study other public-facing archival pages that focus on Appalachian culture/heritage to consider how they will approach a wide-ranging public audience with many stereotypes and preconceived notions about the region and its inhabitants. Finally, students will provide an oral presentation to the class, summarizing the challenges and successes of translating their ethnographic experience into diverse outcomes. In all cases, students will survey and discuss previous Ohio Field School archived public projects, reports, and archival accessions to understand the specific audiences and stylistic conventions of each output, learning from successes and missteps of past projects.

5. Scaffolding and mentoring: Explain how the creative inquiry or research project will be scaffolded across multiple assignments or one large project broken up across the course (e.g., specific explanations about reviewing literature, developing methods, collecting data, interpreting or developing a concept or idea into a full-fledged production or artistic work). Each pertinent assignment should help students build and demonstrate skills contributing to the larger project. Meaningful feedback and mentoring should be provided by the instructor at regular intervals to inform next steps in the process. (This information should also be readily visible on the syllabus.)

Projects are scaffolded through the division of the semester into three discrete parts: Part 1 (Weeks 1-9) introduces students to the methods employed by the course through discussion, activities, writing exercises, and workshops. They also work with instructors to choose their community partner (recruited by instructors in advance of the course) and begin building relationships and conducting background research. Weekly discussion papers help them reflect on important context, methodological approaches, and begin to develop their personal ethnographic field note style. While giving written and oral feedback on discussion papers, we stress a particular methodological commitment to collaboration and theoretical commitment to place, but emphasize that ethnography is a toolkit to which students should add their own unique skills. Part 2 (Week 10) give students the opportunity to practice methods learned in Part 1. Through a week-long field experience on site in Appalachian Ohio, students conduct original field research with support from on-site instructors who mentor them through the projects, including developing questions and methods for their ethnographic interviews, best practices for field note-taking and documentation, and archiving data. Daily reflections as a group offer a chance for instructors to give feedback on project progress. Part 3 (Weeks 11-15) focuses on synthesizing and archiving raw ethnographic documentation. Students accession information from their field work into the archives, including applying file-naming conventions and transcribing interviews. Once this is complete, they develop their public-facing project and reflect on the entire process through their final report. All work is submitted before the end of the semester, so that instructors can give feedback before formal accession and publication of student work.

6. Reflection: Explain how the course offers students opportunities for reflection on their own developing skills and their status as learners and as researchers or creatives. (This information should also be readily visible on the syllabus.)

Students reflect on their developing skills through three primary means: weekly reflection papers, daily field reflection sessions, and a final report. In Part 1 of the course, we ask students to respond to theoretical and methodological questions in the form of 500 word essays. In addition to questions about course materials, the essay prompts also include questions about how the student as a person responds to the material and how it might influence their personal practice. In Part 2 of the course, we host daily reflection sessions. As a class, we sit in a circle and reflect on the day's work with community partners. Students find this as a time to compare notes about what methods and practices are working for them, what challenges they face as a group and personally, and how the structure of the course might shift to fit their emerging field situation (e.g. a community partner gets sick and cannot be interviewed as planned). Instructors offer mentorship based in their own experience, but other students often chime in as a form of reflection. In Part 3, the students are asked to formally reflect on their experience in the final report in addition to lingering questions and project findings. We recognize that students may not wish to archive all of these experiences, so we also see the oral presentation to class in the last class meeting as a place to reflect on the entire process of the course.

