Syllabus for Design Anthropology

ANTH 4701.008/5110.001 University of North Texas
Dr. Christina Wasson
Fall 2011 ❧ W 6-8:50 ❧ Env 115

Course Description

In recent years, ethnography has become popular with designers of products and technologies as a way of learning about the experience of the users. This research approach has been applied to such diverse problems as:

- How to design office environments that encourage groupwork and collaboration
- How to design websites that fit the "mental models" and usage patterns of their target audiences
- How to design museum exhibits that maximize the engagement between visitors and displays

"Design anthropology" is a rapidly growing field of employment for those who wish to work in applied anthropology as well as design. In this course, students learn the fundamentals of the field. By collaborating on an applied project, they gain practice in applied research methods and video ethnography. They learn to engage in collaborative analysis, and they work with customers to translate their research into practical applications. In addition to the hands-on experience, students conduct readings on topics relevant to the project and to design anthropology in general.

This semester, the class project will be a study of how people use media in the kitchen to enhance their cooking process. The client is Motorola Mobility.

Office Hours and Communication with Instructor

My office is Chilton 330D. My office hours are Mondays 3-5. I would also be happy to meet at other times. You can make an appointment by calling me at 940 565 2752, or emailing me at cwasson@unt.edu.

Online Course Resources

The syllabus and various other course materials will be made available through a website. More information will be provided later.

There is also an email list for the class. Its address is design-anth@unt.edu.

Project Overview: Exploratory Kitchen Media Research

Client: Crysta Metcalf, Anthropologist, Manager of Experiences Research, Applied Research Center, Motorola Mobility Inc.

Description of Project: see Overview and Protocol Documents.

Summary of Research Process:

1. **Data Collection**. Students will work in teams of 2.
   - Each team will be assigned a research participant. Research participants will be identified by a recruiting firm.
   - Each team will follow the data collection process described in the Overview Document.
   - After the interview, the team will write careful fieldnotes. They will **place their fieldnotes, the photos, the "map," and video clips from the interview on the class website**.
   - Students will sign up for a day to present findings from their fieldwork in class.
2. **Data Analysis**. Much of the analysis process will be done in class, as a collective group. Data analysis will follow a trajectory of identifying instances, patterns, and models, and then using the models to develop design recommendations.
3. **Report**. Students will develop a list of topics to cover in the client report. Each student will write a chapter. They will analyze everyone's fieldnotes and videoclips to identify overall patterns regarding the topic of their chapter. Students will also present the information verbally during the final client presentation, with a couple of PowerPoint slides.

Client Meetings: We will have three client meetings during the semester.

1. An initial meeting, in **week 2, Sep 7**. This will be an opportunity for the client to explain the project background and for everyone to meet face-to-face.
2. A meeting halfway through the project to check in, make sure we're on the right track, and get ideas, **week 9, Oct 26**. Crysta Metcalf will visit us in Denton during regular class time.
3. The final client presentation. Crysta Metcalf will visit us in Denton during the **final exam time slot, Dec 14**.

Course Requirements

1. Teamwork and participation (20%).

One of the key skills of a practitioner in applied anthropology is the ability to work well as part of a team. In this class, you will be evaluated on your teamwork skills, including:

- Active and thoughtful participation in class discussions, both about class readings and about the class project
- Staying focused on the client's needs

- Good communication and collaboration with your fieldwork partners
- Equal distribution of work between you and your fieldwork partners
- Carrying out your responsibilities in a timely manner
- Good communication with the team leader/professor

Obviously, if you are absent you cannot contribute to discussions, so a high level of attendance is required for a good grade. If you have more than two unexcused absences, your grade will go down. If you miss the first class, you may be dismissed from class, as there is a waiting list. If you miss two out of the first three classes, you may be dismissed from class.

Students are responsible for all materials and announcements presented in class, whether or not they were there. If you miss a day, you should first obtain class notes from a classmate. If you still have questions after that, you are welcome to contact me. Failure to stay current on all class material and assignments, regardless of attendance, will be cause for dismissal from class.

2. Two take-home essay quizzes (15% x 2).
These quizzes will test you on the readings. Instructions for each will be handed out two weeks before they are due.

3. Class project (50%).
The class project consists of two small activities and two large ones. Together these will add up to 50% of your course grade. For each of the large activities, you will turn in several items. You will receive a grade when you have turned in all items for that activity.

In week 3, each team will sign up for a day to share their interview findings. That date will become your deadline to complete the items under Activity 3.

Activity	*Items Graded*	*% of Grade*
1. IRB Tutorial	• IRB Completion Certificate	5
2. Kitchen Media Assignment	• Kitchen Media Report	5
3. Interviews	• Field Notes Uploaded to Website • Photos Uploaded to Website • "Map" Uploaded to Website • Interview Video Clips Uploaded to Website • Present Fieldwork Data in Class	20
4. Report	• Chapter of Written Report • Slides for Client Presentation • Verbal Presentation (if relevant)	20

Required Texts

A required set of articles is available through the electronic course reserves at the library, at http://iii.library.unt.edu/search/r. The password is: **design-anth**

The reading assignments for each week are summarized in the course schedule, below, and article references are provided in detail at the end of the syllabus. Readings are **not** optional. Students will be thoroughly tested on them.

Plagiarism Policy

The department of anthropology does not tolerate plagiarism, cheating, or helping others to cheat. Students suspected of any of these will be provided the opportunity for a hearing; a guilty finding will merit an automatic "F" in the course. In addition, I reserve the right to pursue further disciplinary action within the UNT legal system, which may result in dismissal from the university. Plagiarism is defined as misrepresenting the work of others (whether published or not) as your own. It may be inadvertent or intentional. Any facts, statistics, quotations, or paraphrasing of any information that is not common knowledge, should be cited. For more information on paper writing, including how to avoid plagiarism, and how to use citations, see http://anthropology.unt.edu/resources-writingpaper.php. For information on the University's policies regarding academic integrity and dishonesty, see the UNT Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities, http://www.unt.edu/csrr/.

Non-Discrimination Policy

It is the policy of the University of North Texas not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, disability (where reasonable accommodations can be made), disabled veteran status or veteran of the Vietnam era status in its educational programs, activities, admissions or employment policies. In addition to complying with federal and state equal opportunity laws and regulations, the university through its diversity policy declares harassment based on individual differences (including sexual orientation) inconsistent with its mission and education goals. Direct questions and concerns to the Equal Opportunity Office, 940 565 2456, or the Dean of Students, 940 565 2648. TDD access is available through Relay Texas, 800 735 2989. Anthropology does not discriminate on the basis of an individual's disability as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act. The program provides academic adjustments and aid to individuals with disabilities in its programs and activities. If you have a disability, you are strongly advised to contact the Office of Disability Accommodations (UU 318A) or by telephone at 940 565 4323. **It is the responsibility of the student to make the necessary arrangements with the instructors.**

Acceptable Student Behavior

Student behavior that interferes with an instructor's ability to conduct a class or other students' opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated in any instructional forum at UNT. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be directed to leave the classroom and the instructor may refer the student to the Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities to consider whether the student's conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct. The university's expectations for student conduct apply to all instructional forums, including university and electronic classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The Code of Student Conduct can be found at www.unt.edu/csrr.

Course Schedule

	Reading Topics and Assignments	Readings to Complete Before Class	Project Activities During Class
WEEK 1 Aug 31	Introduction and Course Objectives **Receive Instructions for IRB Online Tutorial**	N/A	Introduction to Project
WEEK 2 Sep 7	Kitchen Media Research **Completion Certificate Due for IRB Online Tutorial** **Receive Instructions for Kitchen Media Assignment**	Grimes and Harper 2008 Terrenghi et al. 2007	**Client Meeting**
WEEK 3 Sep 14	Design Anthropology **Kitchen Media Assignment Due**	Wasson 2000 Blomberg et al. 1993	Design Fieldnotes Template and Finalize Interview Guide Choose Partner, Sign Up for Presentations
WEEK 4 Sep 21	Design Anthropology; Interview Methods	Wasson and Squires 2011 Metcalf 2009 Schensul et al. 1999	Training in Interviewing and Video Recording
WEEK 5 Sep 28	Design Anthropology; Data Analysis Methods	Wasson 2002 Ryan and Bernard 2003	Training in Fieldnotes and Analysis
WEEK 6 Oct 5	Psychology in Design Research **Receive Quiz 1 Instructions**	Norman 1988	Three Teams Present Data Class Analyzes Data
WEEK 7 Oct 12	From Psychology to Anthropology in Design Research	Bannon 1991 Sunderland and Denny 2003	Three Teams Present Data Class Analyzes Data
WEEK 8 Oct 19	More Design Research **Quiz 1 Due**	Sanders 2002 Frascara 2002	Two Teams Present Data Class Analyzes Data

WEEK 9 Oct 26	Participatory Design	Ehn 1993	**Client Meeting** Class Analyzes Data
WEEK 10 Nov 2	Conversation Analysis and Activity Theory in Design Anthropology **Receive Quiz 2 Instructions**	Woodruff and Aoki 2004 Engeström and Escalante 1996	Class Analyzes Data Prepare Client Report and Presentation
WEEK 11 Nov 9		N/A	Prepare Client Report and Presentation Assign Chapters
WEEK 12 Nov 16	**Quiz 2 Due**	N/A	Prepare Client Report and Presentation
WEEK 13 Nov 23	**Report Chapter and PPT Slides Due**	N/A	NO CLASS – THANKSGIVING
WEEK 14 Nov 30	**Revisions to Chapter and PPT Slides Due**	N/A	Finalize Client Report and Presentation
WEEK 15 Dec 7		N/A	Rehearse Presentation Send Report to Client
FINALS Dec 14			**Client Presentation**

Readings on Library's Electronic Course Reserves

WEEK 2	Grimes, Andrea and Richard Harper. 2008. Celebratory technology: New directions for food research in HCI. *CHI 2008,* April 5-10, Florence, Italy. Terrenghi, Lucia, Otmar Hilliges and Andreas Butz. 2007. Kitchen stories: Sharing recipes with the Living Cookbook. *Personal and Ubiquitous Computing* 11(5):409-414.
WEEK 3	Wasson, Christina. 2000. Ethnography in the field of design. *Human Organization* 59(4):377-388. Blomberg, Jeanette, Jean Giacomi, Andrea Mosher and Pat Swenton-Wall 1993. Ethnographic field methods and their relation to design. In *Participatory design: principles and practices*, ed. Douglas Schuler and Aki Namioka. Hillsdale: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 123-155.
WEEK 4	Wasson, Christina and Susan Squires. 2011. Localizing the global in the field of technology design. In *Applying anthropology in the global village*, ed. Christina Wasson, Mary Odell Butler and Jacqueline Copeland-Carson. Walnut Creek: Left Coast Press, 251-284. Metcalf, Crysta. 2009. Interviewing methodology. Unpublished manuscript. LeCompte, Margaret Diane. 1999. Chapter 6: In-depth, open-ended interviewing. In *Essential ethnographic methods: observations, interviews, and questionnaires (Ethnographer's Toolkit V.2)*. Walnut Creek: AltaMira Press, 121-148.
WEEK 5	Ryan, Gery W. and H. Russell Bernard. 2003. Techniques to identify themes. *Field Methods* 15(1):85-109. Wasson, Christina. 2002. Collaborative work: integrating the roles of ethnographers and designers. In *Creating breakthrough ideas: the collaboration of anthropologists and designers in the product development industry*, ed. Susan Squires and Bryan Byrne. Westport: Bergin & Garvey, 71-90.
WEEK 6	Norman, Donald. 1988. The psychopathology of everyday things. In *The design of everyday things*. Cambridge: MIT Press, 1-33.

WEEK 7	Bannon, Liam. 1991. From human factors to human actors: the role of psychology and human-computer interaction studies in system design. In *Design at work: cooperative design of computer systems*, ed. Joan Greenbaum and Morton Kyng. Hillsdale, NU: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 25-44. Sunderland, Patricia L. and Rita M. Denny. 2003. Psychology vs anthropology: where is culture in marketplace ethnography? In *Advertising cultures*, ed. Timothy deWaal Malefyt and Brian Moeran. Oxford: Berg, 187-202.
WEEK 8	Sanders, Liz. 2002. From user-centered to participatory design approaches. In *Design and the social sciences: making connections*, ed. Jorge Frascara. London: Taylor and Francis, 1-8. Frascara, Jorge. 2002. People centered design: complexities and uncertainties. In *Design and the social sciences: making connections*, ed. Jorge Frascara. London: Taylor and Francis, 33-39.
WEEK 9	Ehn, Pelle. 1993. Scandinavian design: on participation and skill. In *Participatory design: principles and practices*, ed. Douglas Schuler and Aki Namioka. Hillsdale: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 41-77.
WEEK 10	Woodruff, Allison and Paul M. Aoki. 2004. Conversation analysis and the user experience. *Digital Creativity* 15(4):232-238. Engeström, Yrjö and Virginia Escalante. 1996. Mundane tool or object of affection? The rise and fall of the Postal Buddy. In *Context and consciousness: activity theory and human-computer interaction*, ed. Bonnie A. Nardi. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.