Course Description

As cultural critics, scholars, intellectuals, students and teachers, we continually engage with the production of knowledge. Within this endless process of “making,” the question of “how do we do what we do?” is often forgotten, ignored, or feared especially in media and cultural analysis. Methodology and research methods are the crucial parts of scholarly work. This course is designed to find answers to the question of “how do we produce knowledge?” In this course we study issues and practices of qualitative methods in social and cultural studies at both theoretical and empirical levels. The aim of this course is to help students to develop an understanding of a variety of research methods used in media and cultural studies. Students will be guided by the readings and seminar discussions to choose, articulate and apply methodologies for their research projects.

Format and Requirements:

This course will be conducted as a workshop. Throughout the semester, we will cover a broad range of methodological approaches and each week we will discuss a methodology together with its theoretical basis and practical outcomes.

Discussion questions (%30): For each week, you will write two or three discussion questions to be discussed in class. The questions should combine all the readings assigned for that week. Please send your questions in word document at least two hours before the class via email.

Participant Observation (%20): You will conduct participant observation in any location you choose (e.g. a mosque, a school, a dance club, a shopping mall). You will give a small oral essay (approximately 5-10 minutes) in class based on your participant observation experience.

Final Project (%50): Final project can either be the methodological chapter of your graduate work or a research paper on a topic of your choice. It should be about 10 pages long.
Course Schedule

Week 1
Introduction
Discussing the course material, objectives and requirements. Having a sense of each student’s interests and their research topics.

Week 2
The Hermeneutic Tradition and the Social Sciences
W (58-73), Y (128-170)

Week 3
The Relevance of Cultural Studies: History, Theory & Method
W (151-166), M (395-409), R (69-82), G2 (131-150), H1, H2 (261-274)

Week 4
Questions of Truth, Ethics and the Sokal Affair
X (11-45), V, J, T (245-248)

Week 5
Ethnography: Objectivity & Validity: The Mead Affair
U (11-36), F2 (book), B (book)
Margaret Mead and Samoa (1988) [Documentary]

Week 6
Ethnography: Participant Observation & Interviews
U (39-73), P1 (17-31), N (35-52), F2 (book), B (book)
Example: Ex3

Week 7
Ethnography: Issues of Reflexivity, Positionality and Autobiography
I, S, D (207-221), A, U (74-96), O, F2 (book), B (book)
Examples: Ex4, O

Week 8
Discourse & Discourse Analysis I
C (1-85), U (97-114), K (1-95)
Example: Ex7 (49-82)

Week 9
Discourse & Discourse Analysis II
C (86-177), U (115-152), K (96-212)
Example: Ex1

Week 10
Historical Analysis: Cultural History & Oral History
L (175-192), P2 (193-213)
*Example:* Ex5

**Week 11**
The ‘Big Picture’: Political Economy & The Global Context
U (153-197), E (492-503), G1
*Example:* Ex6 (151-158)

**Week 12**
Researching the Audience: Reception and Beyond
F1 (22-37), Q (175-200)
*Example:* Ex2

**Week 13**
Discussion
Literature Review & Research Proposal

**Week 14**
Discussion
Choosing, articulating and applying multiple methodologies
Focusing on individual term papers

**Week 15**
General Discussion and Evaluation
Focusing on individual term papers
Reading List:


Examples:


