

Syllabus of Record

Program: CET Vietnam: Development Studies

Course Code / Title: (HC/DIRR 399) Directed Research

Total Hours: 80

Recommended Credits: 3

Suggested Cross Listings: May be cross-listed with discipline relevant to area of study

Language of Instruction: English

Prerequisites / Requirements: None

Description

Directed Research (DIRR) serves as an opportunity for students to supplement the program's curriculum by conducting guided independent research on a specific area of academic interest. Students are expected to complete a formal research project that can contribute to their future academic and professional goals.

Research is conducted under close academic supervision, with guidance from local subject area experts and training in research methods and ethics. Students complete a formal research proposal, bibliography, and 20-page final paper, presenting their work to peers and program faculty at a final seminar. Throughout the semester, students also meet with their supervising faculty and subject area experts individually and in small groups.

Objectives

Through this course, students gain qualitative research skills, and create a high-quality academic product that they can leverage in their future academic and professional careers, while also gaining deep, nuanced understanding of a facet of their host context.

In particular, students learn to:

- Formulate a viable research question
- Map out a strategy for answering it in a formal research proposal
- Implement that strategy, and modify it as needed
- Ensure that the research is sensitively and ethically conducted with regard to human subjects
- Develop a bibliography to inform and support the research, with guidance and input from subject area experts and the DIRR faculty
- Process and analyze the results of their research
- Structure a 20-page paper to effectively convey their findings
- Present their findings in a presentation to peers

Course Requirements

Students are expected to be academically motivated and self-directed, with a willingness to take direction from subject area experts and DIRR faculty. They are expected to bring a clear sense of

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their own academic interests and a willingness to adjust their expectations according to what is possible and appropriate within the local context and semester-length timeframe.

Most of all, however, students are asked to bring a sense of joy and adventure to their work—this course is not only to train students in conducting high-quality research, it is also to instill in them a love of it.

Specifically, students are expected to attend all class meetings and appointments with subject area experts, complete both required and supplementary reading, and complete all writing assignments. Students must meet the minimum required amount of hours in active research in the field and consulting primary and secondary texts. Be sure to choose a topic you love.

Requirements are as follows:

- Weekly meetings with DIRR faculty and/or subject area experts, as scheduled or required
- Completion of reading and writing assignments
- Preparation for class discussion
- At least two hours weekly of reading and literature review associated with your topic, beyond reading assignments required of the group
- At least three hours weekly of active research. (Again, you are encouraged to choose something you love, and to spend as much time as you can at it!)
- A 3-5 page formal research proposal including: abstract, bibliography, timeline, Human Subjects Research statement and IRB approval if applicable.
- Journal/field log as assigned
- Mid-term report on progress
- 20-page final research paper
- Presentation of research to faculty and peers in final seminar

Grading

The final grade for the course is calculated as follows:

- Academic Preparation: 20%
- Research Proposal: 20%
- Journal/Field Log: 10%
- Annotated Bibliography: 10%
- Final Research Paper: 40%

Readings

In addition to the below selections of readings for class meetings, students develop a bibliography tailored to their research topic in consultation with their DIRR professor.

Nir Avieli, “Local Specialties, Local Identity”, in *Rice Talk – Food and Community in a Vietnamese Town*, Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press 2012.

Ruth Behar and Deborah A. Gordon, eds., *Women Writing Culture*, University of California Press 1996.

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Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb, and Joseph M. Williams, *The Craft of Research*, University of Chicago Press 2008.

Elizabeth Campbell, *Doing Ethnography Today: Theories, Methods, Exercises*. Wiley-Blackwell 2014.

James Clifford and George Marcus, eds., *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography*, University of California Press 2010.

Julia G. Crane and Michael V. Angrosino, "Introduction," "Beginning Fieldwork," *Field Projects in Anthropology: A Student Handbook*, pp. 1-22, Waveland Press 1992.

Marlene de Laine, *Fieldwork, Participation and Practice: Ethics and Dilemmas in Qualitative Research*, Sage Publications 2000.

Kathleen M. DeWalt and Billie R. DeWalt, "What is Participant Observation?" "Learning to be a Participant Observer," *Participant Observation: A Guide for Fieldworkers*, AltaMira Press 2010.

Robert M. Emerson, Rachel I. Friezt, and Linda L. Shaw, *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes*, University of Chicago Press 2011.

Edward T. Hall, "Consistency and Life," *Beyond Culture*, pp. 41-55, Anchor Books 1977.

Erik Harms, "Neo-Geomancy and Real Estate in Post-reform Vietnam," *Positions*, vol. 20:2. Spring 2012.

Paul Hocking, ed., *Principles of Visual Anthropology*, De Gruyter Mouton 2003.

Kennedy and Williams, *The Past without the Pain: The Manufacture of Nostalgia in Vietnam's Tourism Industry*, Berkeley: University of California Press 2001.

Rosalind Morris, *Photographies East: The Camera and Its History in East and Southeast Asia* (Duke University Press, 2009).

Julian Murchison, *Ethnography Essentials: Designing, Conducting, and Presenting Your Research*, Jossey-Bass 2010.

Huong Nguyen, "Globalization, Consumerism, and the Emergence of Teens in Contemporary Vietnam," *Journal of Social History* 2015.

Minh T. N. Nguyen, "Fictitious Kinship – Intimacy, Relatedness and Boundaries in the Life of Hanoi's Migrant Domestic Workers", *Cambridge Anthropology*, vol. 32 (2) 2014.

Mytoan Nguyen-Akbar, "The Tensions of Diasporic 'Return' Migration: How Class and Money Create Distance in Vietnamese Transnational Family," *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography* 2014.

Edyta Roszko, "From Homes to National Shrines: Religious Traditions and National Building in Vietnam," *East Asia*, no. 29 2012.

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Roger Sanjek, *Fieldnotes: The Makings of Anthropology*, pp. 161-186, Cornell University Press 1990.

Robert Weiss, *Learning From Strangers: The Art and Method of Qualitative Interview Studies*, Free Press 1995.

Outline of Course Content

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| Week 1 | Introduction to Directed Research. Overview of Timeline, Assignments, Evaluation. Role of DIRR faculty and subject area experts. Choosing a topic. Formulating the research question. Research ethics. Do I need an IRB approval? |
| Week 2 | Review of past student research. 1:1 meetings with DIRR faculty to confirm topic. Beginning to think like an ethnographer. The field log, the journal. Ho Chi Minh City as field site. |
| Week 3 | Meetings with subject area expert. Choosing the field site. Preparing the research proposal. |
| Week 4 | Present research proposal. 1:1 meetings with DIRR faculty to discuss and finalize. |
| Week 5 | Entering the field. The art of asking questions. The art of establishing relationships. |
| Week 6 | How does one both participate and observe? The location of the self in field-based research. The voice in which you write. Meeting with subject area expert. |
| Week 7 | What is culture? Us and Them. East and West. Vietnam and the U.S. Insiders and outsiders. Confronting, interrogating assumptions, dichotomies, reactions. Developing nuance. |
| Week 8 | Gender, social stratifications, and boundaries in field research. Feminist, queer, multicultural ethnographies. |
| Week 9 | The ethnographic eye. Principles of Visual Anthropology. Meeting with subject area expert. |
| Week 10 | Encountering roadblocks. Reframing questions. Tweaking and refining the strategy as research moves forward. Midpoint 1:1 with DIRR faculty. |
| Week 11 | Validating your findings: how to know it's 'real'? |
| Week 12 | Capturing historicity in contemporary fieldwork. Meeting with subject area expert. |
| Week 13 | How to trace a line from prior scholarship to yours. How to translate field experience into 'findings.' |
| Week 14 | Analysis and preparation of research. 1:1 Meeting with DIRR faculty. |
| Week 15 | Presentation of research in final seminar |