



Indraprastha College for Women

University of Delhi

Work Plan for ODD SEMESTER – 2026

Course Name:	BA(H) Sociology
Paper Title:	Field and Field Work
Unique Paper Code:	2302104701
Semester:	VII
Faculty(s):	Priyanka Danu
Year:	2026

Work Plan			
Unit No.	Learning Objective	Lecture No.	Topics to be Covered
I	To trace the historical evolution of ethnographic fieldwork, from its early anthropological foundations to contemporary developments in the discipline.	12	Histories of Fieldwork
	To introduce the methodological and epistemological foundations underlying fieldwork as both a scientific and interpretive practice.		Foundations of Fieldwork
II	To examine first-person accounts of fieldwork and the practical, personal and analytical challenges encountered during field research.	12	Experiences of Fieldwork
	To critically engage with key debates on representation, power and voice in the practice of ethnographic fieldwork.		Practices and Critiques of Fieldwork
III	To understand reflexivity as a methodological tool for examining the researcher's role, assumptions and influence in the production of ethnographic knowledge.	09	On Reflexivity
	To examine how the researcher's identity, gender and social position shape access, interaction and knowledge production in the field.		Positionality in Fieldwork
IV	To introduce strategies of ethnographic writing, including thick description, translation and the interpretation of cultural meaning.	12	Description, Translation and Interpretation
	To explore how ethnographers represent people, places and lived experience in written accounts, and the ethical and narrative choices this involves.		Representation in Ethnographic Writing

Unit	Contents/Syllabus
I	(12 Hours) Fieldwork: Histories and Foundations This unit examines the historical development of ethnographic fieldwork, from its foundational methodologies to contemporary developments. a. Histories of Fieldwork b. Foundations of Fieldwork
II	(12 Hours) Fieldwork: Experiences and Practices This unit addresses key critiques related to the issues around representation and power in field research. a. Experiences b. Practices
III	(9 Hours) Reflexivity & Positionality This unit examines how questions of identity, subjectivity and gender relations shape ethnographic practice and knowledge production. Additionally, it highlights the significance of reflexivity in fieldwork. a. On Reflexivity b. Positionality in Fieldwork
IV	(12 Hours) Writing Ethnography and Representing the Field This unit examines the process of documenting and transforming fieldwork observations into ethnographic texts. It focuses on different writing strategies and the role of interpretation in ethnographic writing. a. Description, Translation and Interpretation b. Representation
S. No.	Name of Authors/Books/Publishers
1.	Malinowski, B. (1922) 'Subject, Method and Scope', in Argonauts of the Western Pacific. New York: Routledge and Kegan Paul, pp. 2-25.
2.	Godina, V.V. (2003) 'Anthropological Fieldwork at the Beginning of the 21st Century: Crisis and Location of Knowledge', Anthropos, 98(2), pp. 473-487.
3.	Jarvie, I.C. (1967) 'On Theories of Fieldwork and the Scientific Character of Social Anthropology', Philosophy of Science, 34(3), pp. 223-242. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
4.	Atkinson, P. (2006) 'Why do Fieldwork?', Sociologisk Forskning, 43(2), pp. 128-134.
5.	Van der Geest, S. (2017) 'The Freedom of Anthropological Fieldwork', Etnofoor, 29(1), pp. 101-112.
6.	Madan, T.N. & A. Beteille (1975) Encounter and Experience: Personal Accounts of Field Work. New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House, Chapters 2, 7 and 11.
7.	Srinivas, M.N., A.M. Shah & E.A. Ramaswamy (eds) (2004) The Fieldworker and the Field: Problems and Challenges in Sociological Investigation. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, pp. 19-28, 38-57, 184-199.
8.	Clifford, J. & G.E. Marcus (eds) (1986) Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography. Berkeley: University of California Press, 'Introduction: Partial Truths', pp. 1-26.

9.	Narayan, K. (1993) 'How Native is a "Native" Anthropologist?', American Anthropologist, 95(3), pp. 671-686.
10.	Aunger, R. (2004) 'A Crisis in Confidence', in Reflexive Ethnographic Science, pp. 1-20. Walnut Creek: AltaMira Press.
11.	Jacobs-Huey, L. (2002) 'The Natives Are Gazing and Talking Back: Reviewing the Problematics of Positionality, Voice, and Accountability among "Native" Anthropologists', American Anthropologist, 104(3), pp. 791-804.
12.	Benz, T. (2013) 'Flanking Gestures: Gender and Emotion in Fieldwork', Sociological Research Online, 19(2), 15, pp. 1-8.
13.	Emerson, R., R. Fretz & L.L. Shaw (2011) Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes, 2nd ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, Chapters 2, 3 and 7, pp. 17-65, 169-210.
14.	Asad, T. (1986) 'The Concept of Cultural Translation in British Social Anthropology', in J. Clifford & G.E. Marcus (eds) Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography. Berkeley: University of California Press, pp. 141-164.
15.	Geertz, C. (1973) 'Thick Description: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture', in The Interpretation of Cultures. New York: Basic Books, pp. 3-30.
16.	Jeffrey, Craig (2010) Timepass: Youth, Class, and the Politics of Waiting in India. Stanford: Stanford University Press, Chapter 1 'India Waiting', pp. 1-36.
17.	Srinivas, Tulasi (2018) The Cow in the Elevator: An Anthropology of Wonder. Durham: Duke University Press, Chapter 1 'Introduction: Wonder, Creativity and Ethical Life in Bangalore', pp. 1-32.

Paper Components			
Credits	Lecture (L)	Tutorial (T)	Practical (P)
	3	1	Nil
Assessment Scheme			
S.No.	Component	Marking Scheme	Total Marks
1	Internal Assessment - Assignment/Quiz/Project/Presentation - Class Test - Attendance		30
		12	
		12	
		6	
2.	Continuous Assessment (Tutorial) - Activity 1 - Activity 2 - Attendance		40
		15	
		20	
		40	
3.	Practical - Continuous Assessment - End Term Written/Practical		

	Exam	
	Viva	
4.	End Semester Examination	90