

NSF Summer Institute for
Research Design in Cultural
Anthropology

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Overall Objective

- The overall goal of the Institute is to provide student's with a well grounded and meaningful experience that will have long term implications for the advancement of science in Cultural Anthropology both now and well into the future.

Specific Objectives

- 1.) To provide Ph.D. students in cultural anthropology with a basic understanding of the link between theory and scientific methodology in Cultural Anthropology.
- 2.) To improve a student's ability to develop and write a scientifically well conceived research proposal.

Specific Objectives (Cont.)

- 3.) To provide student's with basic scientific research knowledge and skills for solving a variety of research design problems in the future.
- 4.) To promote and the expand the application of scientific research design in Cultural Anthropology through the process of diffusion (i.e., the students eventually becoming teachers themselves).

Why Do I Need This?

- Graduate student training in research methods and design in cultural anthropology in American universities is by no means standardized (or even available).
- Issues of research design in Cultural Anthropology are particularly vexing in that practitioners utilize a vast repertoire of both theories and methodological approaches in the course of their research.

- NSF dissertation proposals are generally scientifically weak.
- The current state of methodological training in Cultural Anthropology has impacted the ability of graduate students to write well conceived and scientifically informed research proposals.

In 1995 the Cultural Anthropology NSF dissertation panel composed a letter.

- "The research plan should begin with an overview of the research design, relating it to the theoretical orientation. This should be followed by a brief description of the research site. Data collection and analysis methods follow. Theories, setting and methods should be tightly linked: Readers should learn what the researcher is going to do and how the specific activities to be engaged in relate to both theory and setting. Note that a mere listing of a method is not enough to tell a reader what the researcher plans and why.

- The term 'participant observation', for example, is extraordinarily general and should be unpacked into its specific components, each related to the information outcome which is then related to the research design and theory.

- Sampling should be explicitly justified by discussing how the data will generalize to a relevant population or theory. "Snowball sampling", which has various limitations, is not appropriate for some projects and if proposed should be explicitly justified with respect to alternatives.

- Each method, whether it generates qualitative or quantitative data, should be justified in terms of the research aims. The key issue is to impress reviewers that the knowledge from your project will generalize to significant populations and theories (Panel Letter to Applicants, Spring 1995; see Cultural Anthropology Program web site)."

Is there evidence that the Summer Institute is effective?

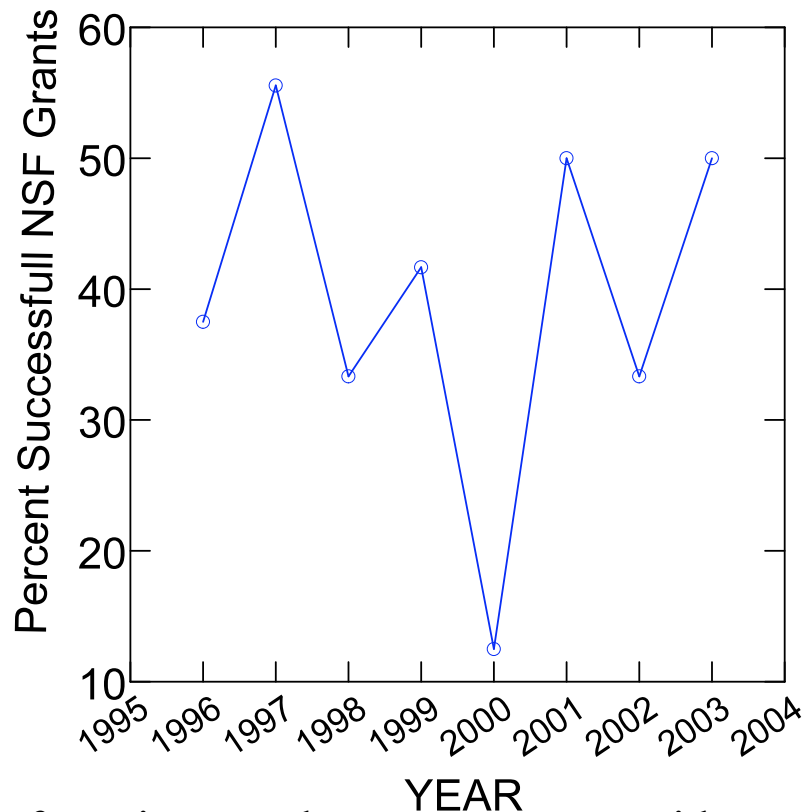


Figure 1. Comparison of Institute student success rates with average success rate for the funding of Dissertation Improvement grants in cultural anthropology from 1996-2003.

**NSF SUMMER INSTITUTE FOR RESEARCH DESIGN
IN CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY**

2004

Tentative Schedule

July 25

Arrival and Social

July 26

Orientation and Introduction

9:00 am-12:00 pm Intro.--Jeffrey Johnson and Susan Weller

- a. Goals and Objectives of the Institute
- b. Elements of Research Design
- c. Challenges to Designing Research in the Anthropological Context
- d. Writing a Research Proposal

1:30 pm-4:30 pm Anthropology and the Scientific Enterprise

4:30 pm--5:30 pm Questions and Discussion

July 27

Theory, Concepts, Hypotheses, Etc.

8:30 am-10:00 am The Relationship between Theory, Grounded Theory,
and Methodological Approach—Johnson and Weller

10:00 am-12:00 The Nuts and Bolts of Research Design
Johnson and Weller

1:30 pm-4:30 pm The Nuts and Bolts of Research Design (Continued)

4:30 pm-5:30 pm Questions and Discussion

July 28

Theory and Method

8:30 am-10:00 am The Link Between Theory and Method
Johnson and Weller

10:00 am-12:00 pm An Example

1:30 pm-4:30 pm Laboratory for Hypothesis Development--Johnson/Weller

4:30 pm-5:30 pm Questions and Discussion

July 29

Introduction to Quantitative Analysis--Johnson

8:30 am-4:30 pm Elementary Statistics: Theory and Concepts

July 30

Hypothesis Testing

8:30 am-12:00 pm Elementary Inferential Statistics (Concepts, Techniques, and Applications)

1:30 pm-5:00 pm Quantitative Lab (SYSTAT)

July 31 & August 1 Weekend Assignment (readings for week 2/proposal)

August 2

Probability and Nonprobability Sampling

8:30 am-12:00 pm Probability Sampling--Weller and Johnson

1:30 pm-4:30 pm Probability Sampling Lab

4:30 pm-5:30 pm Questions and Discussion

August 3

Nonprobability Sampling--Johnson

8:30 am-12:00 pm Nonprobability Sampling in the Ethnographic Context

1:30 pm-4:30 pm Systematic Data Collection and Survey Design--Susan Weller

4:30 pm-5:30 pm Questions and Discussion

August 4

Systematic Data Collection and Survey Design (Continued)

8:30 am-12:00 pm Systematic Data Collection and Management Lab
Weller and Johnson

1:30 pm-4:30 pm Survey Design and Construction

4:30 pm-5:30 pm Questions and Discussion

August 5

Data Collection (Continued)

8:30 am-12:30 pm Survey Design and Construction Lab
Weller and Johnson

8:30 am-4:30 pm Exploratory Methods and Multivariate Techniques
Sue Weller and Jeff Johnson

4:30 pm-5:30 pm Questions and Discussion

August 6 Exploratory and Multivariate Analysis (continued)

8:30 am-12:00 pm Exploratory Methods and Multivariate Techniques
Sue Weller and Jeff Johnson

1:30 pm-4:30 pm Exploratory Lab (ANTHROPAC)—Weller/Johnson

4:30 pm-5:30 pm Questions and Discussion

August 7 & 8 Weekend (Begin to write mini-proposal)

August 9 Text Analysis

8:30 am-4:30 pm Text Analysis--Ryan

4:30 pm-5:30 pm Questions and Discussion

August 10 Text Analysis (continued)

8:30 am-4:30 pm Text Analysis--Ryan

4:30 pm-5:30 pm Questions and Discussion

- August 11** Social Network Analysis
8:30 pm-4:30 pm Introduction to Social Network Analysis—Bernard and Johnson

4:30 pm-5:30 pm Questions and Discussion
- August 12** Social Network Analysis (Continued)

8:30 am-12:00 pm UCINET Lab—Johnson and Bernard

1:30 pm-5:30 pm The Research Proposal
Johnson, Bernard, Gravlee, and other available faculty
- August 13** Summary and Feedback
8:30 am-12:30 pm Proposal Critiques
1:30 pm-5:00 pm Pulling it all together
- August 14** Departure