PACS 603  Spring 2006
Researching Oceania:
Creative and conventional methods of interdisciplinary inquiry

Moore 202, T 3-5:30

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PACIFIC STUDIES

Pacific Studies is a unique and dynamic interdisciplinary field that not only provides students with conventional research tools but encourages the exploration and use of creative approaches. Within the Pacific region people have always engaged their worlds through a variety of material, visual, aural and embodied forms and it is crucial that Pacific Studies students be exposed to multicultural literacies and multi-sited knowledge practices across the region. Such approaches constitute “interdisciplinary” research and learning. The difference between Pacific Studies and other disciplines, including indigenous studies, is that we are required to keep the region and increasingly the diaspora in mind. This is potentially difficult in an ocean that is filled with diversity at all levels. The core curriculum of the Center for Pacific Islands Studies (PACS 601, 602 & 603) is designed to give students the tools to engage, research and reflect upon such diversity and the continuing persistence of this regional imaginary “Oceania.”

SEMINAR PURPOSE

Our discussions in PACS 603 will encompass three broad areas: literacy, theory and method. By literacy we refer to reading and writing practices. Pacific Studies requires expanded definitions of what constitutes “reading” and “writing.” Theory encompasses narrative and analytical strategies, frameworks, principles and conceptual tools that can be used to present, approach or investigate an idea. Methodology involves bringing together experience, literacy and theory to systematically investigate an idea or question. Research methods are shaped by a variety of issues and are often limited by resources,
access, location and politics. Students must learn to be flexible and creative with their methods and accept the MA experience as journey or process as much as product.

Our course texts broadly represent creative, conventional and decolonizing approaches to knowledge production. The Judith Bell text illustrates the most conventional methods in Education and the Social Sciences. The Gillian Rose book will help us to “read” and interpret and analyze different sources of knowledge including writing, film, art, photographs and museum displays according to a wide variety of useful theoretical approaches. You were introduced to Linda Smith in PACS 601 and she provides us with some indigenous challenges to conventional research approaches.

At the end of PACS 603 students should be able to apply relevant ideas from 601, 602 and 603 to their MA projects and create a focused plan for completion in the form of an MA research proposal and outline.

**COURSE TEXTS**

Linda Tuhiwai Smith. 1999. *Decolonizing Methodologies*
Gillian Rose. 2001. *Visual Methodologies*
Judith Bell. 1999. *Doing Your Research Project*

All *Contemporary Pacific* articles should be accessed online through Project MUSE at http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/contemporary_pacific/

All other readings are on e-reserves (under Reserves) at the UH library homepage under Teaiwa, PACS 603

**REQUIREMENTS**

Students must have an MA or other graduate research topic in mind when they enter this seminar. Normally PACS 603 is for MA students in the Center for Pacific Islands Studies. Those who have taken PACS 601 must submit the concept paper from that course by week 2 including any revisions you want to make. PACS 603 will allow you to create a project proposal and a detailed outline of the thesis or portfolio project by the end of the semester. Such an outline constitutes a draft or plan and naturally over the next year your project may shift or change. In addition to the proposal and outline students must complete one research exercise, one visual exercise and write two reflection papers on the Rose and Smith texts.

**Attendance is mandatory to all class meetings.** Missed classes without a doctor’s certificate will result in the automatic loss of half a grade point. Ample time is given outside class, including weeks off from meetings to complete assignments.

According to the UH student code of conduct:
**Plagiarism** includes but is not limited to submitting, in fulfillment of an academic requirement, any work that has been copied in whole or in part from another individual's work without attributing that borrowed portion to the individual; neglecting to identify as a quotation another's idea and particular phrasing that was not assimilated into the student's language and style or paraphrasing a passage so that the reader is misled as to the source; submitting the same written or oral or artistic material in more than one course without obtaining authorization from the instructors involved; or "drylabbing," which includes obtaining and using experimental data and laboratory write-ups from other sections of a course or from previous terms. See [http://www.hawaii.edu/student/conduct/imper.html](http://www.hawaii.edu/student/conduct/imper.html).

Plagiarism from texts, other’s works and especially the internet will not be tolerated and will result in disciplinary action by the University,

a) **REFLECTION PAPERS (3 pages)**

Your reflection papers on the texts by Smith and Rose should be 3 full pages minimum (double spaced) and include your gut reaction to it (did you hate it or like it), a brief summary of the texts, their relevance to your projects, their relevance to Pacific Studies, your interpretation of their approach, your understanding of literacy, theory and method based on these readings.

b) **IMAGINE YOUR PROJECT AS A FILM (3 pages)**

Academia is geared towards readings and writing as the primary forms of literacy but increasingly the knowledge that is produced and disseminated in our world is visual. In the past Pacific knowledges were mainly produced and exchanged in aural, visual, material and embodied forms. This exercise is meant to inspire alternative approaches to your MA project. Imagine your final project as a film. This guide will help:

1. If your project was a film would it be a documentary, feature film, animation, short film, TV sit-com, TV drama, music video or other cinematic genre?
2. How long would it be?
3. Write a brief synopsis of the film (something like an abstract for a paper).
4. Where would the action take place? Describe the scene or scenes.
5. What actors or players would you require? Describe what they look and sound like.
6. Would your film have a soundtrack, what would it be (i.e. what music would you use)? What would the film sound like? (Lots of nature sounds? Urban sounds? Talking?)
7. What would the camera capture? Would you have lots of close-ups or wide shots? Would it focus on people or the physical environment? Describe some specific shots or frames.

c) **PROPOSAL COMPONENTS (6-8 pages)**

**Title:** *something brief and creative that captures the essence of your work.*
**Statement of purpose:** your research question, purpose of research and what you hope to achieve or find.

**Personal connections:** why this research is meaningful to you.

**Statement of significance:** how does this research contribute to Pacific Studies and scholarship in general? Who is your audience and how do you think your project will make a difference?

**Survey of resources:** survey of materials relevant to your topic. What work has already been done, what debates are relevant, and what resources exist out there for your project?

**Theoretical framework:** what lens, perspective or angle will you take to approach your topic, which particular story-tellers, artists, theorists or thinkers shape your choices and why?

**Methods:** how will you go about learning and gathering or recording information for your project?

**Project medium:** What form will your final project take? Is it a thesis or portfolio project? Is it in text, film, multimedia, performance or art?

**Budget:** how much will your project cost you?

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d) **PROJECT OUTLINE (12-15 pages)**

**Revised proposal:** hand in a revised version of your proposal based on instructor’s and committee members’ suggestions (if you have a committee) and comments.

**Chapter/project outline:** at this stage, what major sections, themes or sub-themes do you envision for your project? If you are creating something other than text what form will it take and how will you organize it? You may submit this as a table of contents with a couple sentences outlining each section.

**Visuals, artwork, dance or music:** will you include this in your final presentation and why and how are they crucial to your topic? Provide music, visuals or other art that are illustrative of or central to your project.

**Annotated bibliography, filmography and discography:** submit a list of at least 15 relevant sources with a brief summary (2-3 sentences) about each of them. Follow the Chicago Style for bibliographic entries (The Contemporary Pacific journal uses this style).

**Potential committee members (at least 3):** if you have a committee please list their names and areas of specialty that are relevant for your project. If you don’t, create a “wish list” of members and their areas.

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e) **RESEARCH EXERCISE (3 pages)**

Students must carry out one research exercise that allows them to put into practice some of the approaches learned in this seminar. The event must lend itself to research, observation, possible interviews, reflection, analysis and representation. Here are some suggestions.
A. Investigation, description and analysis of a particular space or setting

For example: The Bishop Museum, Ala Moana Mall, Waikiki, a heiau, the Polynesian Cultural Center, an outdoor marketplace, Honolulu International Airport, etc.

B. Observation, description and analysis of a cultural event

For example: a UH sports event, a Micronesian birthday party, a music or dance concert, the East-West Center international festival, a St. Patrick’s day celebration in Honolulu, a church event, etc.

C. Review, description and analysis of a body of work, exhibition or collection

For example: exploration of an archival collection, review of an art collection or exhibition, review of a photographic collection, review of writing in a language inaccessible to the general public, etc.

D. Interview, and discussion of the work of a particular scholar, activist or artist.

For example: an in-depth interview with a local filmmaker, scholar or artist including a discussion of his or her work. The Center for Pacific Islands Studies often has visiting scholars and artists as do other departments so keep an eye out for guest presentations.

LIBRARY SESSIONS

Week 3 and week 6 sessions will be held in Hamilton library with Karen Peacock and Jane Barnwell. These sessions will cover both research navigation strategies as well as informational literacy.

PRESENTATIONS ON RESEARCH TOPICS

In weeks 12, 13 and 14 students will each get 20 minutes to discuss their progress and obtain some feedback on the post-proposal phase of their research. Prepare this as a formal presentation (i.e. script it or rehearse it) with visuals and handouts if relevant to your project.

MEETINGS WITH INSTRUCTOR

Each student must meet with the instructor to discuss their projects at least once in the semester before final outlines are due in May.
GRADING

Reflection papers on Smith and Rose  20%  Due weeks 7 and 9
Imagine your project as a film  10%  Due week 9
Research proposal  20%  Due week 11
Research exercise  10%  Due week 13
Presentation of project in class  10%  Weeks 15-16
Thesis or portfolio outline  30%  Due week 18

Total:  100%

Translation of points:
95-100% = A+, 90-95% = A, 85-90% = A-, 80-85% = B+, 75-80% = B, 70-75% = B-
65-70% = C

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

WEEK 1    Jan 10    INRODUCTIONS AND COURSE OVERVIEW

Introduction and reflections: What is graduate school about and why am I seeking an MA in Pacific Is. Studies? What did I learn in PACS 601 and 602? What do I expect from PACS 603? What challenging issues am I facing right now with respect to my project? What am I willing to do to complete my project on schedule?

WEEK 2    Jan 17    PEER REVIEWS AND PROJECT DISCUSSION

In this session each student should turn in their concept papers with any revisions. You should also come with an abstract describing your project, three main themes you want to explore in your research and 5 keywords on a separate sheet. We will then do an in-class peer review exercise and exchange ideas on how projects might be generated and investigated more specifically. This exercise will also help prepare you for the upcoming library sessions.

Readings

WEEK 3    Jan 24    LIBRARY SESSION—meet in Hamilton library

Library session with Karen Peacock, Jane Barnwell and Lynette Furihashi.

Readings
Start reading Smith, Bell and Fernandez for Week 5
WEEK 4    Jan 31    NO CLASS

I suggest you use this week strategically to keep reading Smith, Bell and Fernandez and start thinking about your “thesis as a film project”

WEEK 5    Feb 7    CONVENTIONAL METHODOLOGIES

Discussion leaders:

Readings
Smith Ch. 1-5
Bell Ch.1-7
Ramona Fernandez, Imagining Literacy, 2001: Ch. 1-2

WEEK 6    Feb 14    LIBRARY SESSION—meeting in Hamilton library

Library session with Karen Peacock, Jane Barnwell and Lynette Furihashi.

Reading
Start Week 7 readings, keep working on “thesis as a film” project.

WEEK 7    Feb 21    DECOLONIZING METHODOLOGIES

* Reflection paper on Linda Tuhiwai Smith’s Decolonizing Methodologies due.

Discussion leaders:

Reading
Smith Ch. 8-10
Rose Ch. 1-4
Teresia Teaiwa, “A Pacific Studies take on Cultural Studies and the Diaspora,” and the “Introduction” to Indigenous Diasporas and Dislocations

WEEK 8    Feb 28    CREATIVE INTERDISCIPLINARY METHODS

Discussion leaders:
Readings

WEEK 9 March 7 YOUR PROJECT AS A FILM

* “Imagine your project as a film” due.
* Reflection paper on Rose due.

Readings
Rose Ch. 5-8

Guest speaker: Jan Rensel on referencing systems

WEEK 10 March 14 NO CLASS

Work on MA project proposal

WEEK 11 March 21 PROJECT PROPOSALS

*Project proposals due.

Discussion of research exercises
Discussion of “Human Subjects Clearance.”
Putting together an MA committee

WEEK 12 March 28 SPRING BREAK

WEEK 13 April 4 NO CLASS- INDIVIDUAL MEETINGS

*Research exercise due to instructor
WEEK 14  April 11  NO CLASS-WORK ON PROJECTS

WEEK 15  April 18  PROJECT PRESENTATIONS

Students:

WEEK 16  April 25  PROJECT PRESENTATIONS

Students:

WEEK 17  May 2  FINAL CLASS

Class meeting, discussion, guest speakers.

Guests: Terence Wesley Smith and David Hanlon discussing project/thesis outline organization, research strategies and timeline issues.

WEEK 18  May 9  PROJECT OUTLINE DUE

* Project outline and images, music, annotated bibliography/discography/filmography due in Moore 215 by 5:00 pm.