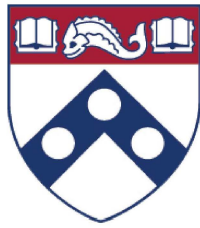


Course Syllabus

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Social Policy & Practice PennNPL

Nonprofit Leadership

The Difficult Art of Listening

NPLD 730

August 31 – October 10, 2021

[Class Zoom Meetings: Tuesdays, 7:00 - 8:30 pm ET](#)

[Weekly Jamout Sessions: Wednesdays, 7:30 - 8:30 pm ET](#)

[Click here to download a PDF version of the syllabus.](#) ↓

(https://upenn.instructure.com/courses/1599989/files/99456328/download?download_frd=1)

Instructor Information

Instructor

Name: Rosemary Clark-Parsons, PhD, Program Manager, Center for Social Impact Strategy

Email: clarkro@upenn.edu (<mailto:clarkro@upenn.edu>)

Weekly Jamout Sessions: We will hold weekly group office hours every Wednesday, 7:30 - 8:30pm ET. More information can be found [here](#).

One-on-One Appointments: Book an appointment to meet with me [here](#).

(<https://calendly.com/rcpphd/npld730>)

Teaching Assistant

Name: Shamichael Hallman

Email: hallmans@upenn.edu (<mailto:hallmans@upenn.edu>)

Video Content

Name: John L. Jackson, Jr. PhD, Walter H. Annenberg Dean, Annenberg School for Communication

Email: JJackson@upenn.edu (<mailto:JJackson@upenn.edu>)

Course Description

The art of listening ethnographically has many benefits. Using a generally anthropological framework to organize sessions, this course attempts to make a case for the productive force (for scholars, policy makers, non-profit leaders and others) of hearing in proactive and nuanced ways. Highlighting the value of acoustemological ways of understanding the world (knowing through hearing), the course asks students to listen in newfangled ways to many of the things they've heard before—while also listening out for things that they've never previously taken note of. Thinking about how listening carefully greases the wheels for successful interpersonal communication and overall cultural understanding, students will be asked to observe themselves listening in ways that might allow for innovative translations of observable/empirical data into knowledge that can be deployed in service to personal, institutional, and structural change.

Course Objectives

The course has three main objectives:

- To enhance students' understandings of anthropological methods, namely ethnography, and its functional use for nonprofit leaders.
 - To provide students with opportunities to practice and reflect ethnographic skills within the context of their work.
 - To reinforce the skills needed for effective listening and communication that are vital for nonprofit leaders.
-

Course Assignments and Grades

The course involves three major assignments: 1) **Weekly Module Quizzes**; 2) **Weekly Field Assignments and Reflections**; and 3) a **Final Self-Reflexive Essay**. You will also be graded on your participation in class. Detailed rubrics for all assignments can be found on Canvas.

Weekly Module Quizzes

Each module includes a short required quiz on the recorded lecture content for that week. These quizzes are intended to encourage you to engage with the recorded lecture content prior to our weekly Zoom session. Doing so will allow us to focus our Zoom time on practice and application rather than lecture. With this in mind, you must complete the quiz **before** our weekly Zoom sessions.

The quiz is only five questions long and you can take the quiz using the lecture slides and video as references. You can take as long as you need to answer the questions and you can retake the quiz as many times as you would like before the deadline.

You can earn up to **5 points** on each quiz. Quizzes constitute **10%** of your final grade for the course.

Weekly Field Assignments and Reflections

These assignments are meant to put the skills from the course into action and give you the opportunity to practice skillsets while learning from each other. Each assignment asks you to put a particular listening skill to work at your organization and then report back to the class through a written reflection posted to a discussion forum. The only requirement is that you answer the prompt fully and to the best of your ability. It is expected that you will read each other's reflections from the field and comment on at least two posts from your classmates. You can earn up to 20 points for each assignment.

Final Project: Self-Reflexive Essay

Throughout this course, we will discuss the importance of self-reflexivity, or listening to and observing yourself as you navigate everyday interactions. Self-reflexivity allows us to critically examine what is happening in a listening environment or interaction and course correct as necessary. It is one of your most important tools as nonprofit leaders seeking to integrate effective listening into your work. This final assignment asks you to weave together several of the threads we have been discussing over the last month in a short self-reflexive essay about your personal listening style. See the Canvas page for complete details. You can earn up to 60 points for this assignment.

Participation

There are many ways to contribute to our online learning community. Some of us are comfortable speaking during Zoom sessions, while others are more comfortable engaging in smaller group discussions or expressing themselves through writing. During our first Zoom session, we will develop a rubric for grading participation. Using our rubric categories, your final participation grade will be based on both my assessment of your participation and a self-assessment of your own performance.

Course Grading Breakdown

Weekly Module Quizzes: 5 points each, 25 points total - 10% of final grade

Weekly Field Assignments and Reflections: 20 points each, 100 points total - 40% of final grade

Final Self-Reflexive Essay: 60 points total - 40% of final grade

Participation: 10 points total - 10% of final grade

Grading Scale

A Range	B Range	C Range	D Range	F Range
A+ 97 - 100	B+ 87 - 89	C+ 77 - 79	D 60 - 69	F 0 - 59
A 94 - 96	B 84 - 86	C 74 - 76		
A- 90 - 93	B- 80 - 83	C- 70 - 73		

Course Schedule

MODULE 1: INTRODUCTION TO ETHNOGRAPHY

All work for Module 1 is due by the start of class. This week's Zoom class session is scheduled for 7:00 pm ET on Tuesday, August 31, 2021.

Lecture Video: Ethnography as a metaphor (14 min)

Lecture Video: What is ethnography? (8 min)

Discussion Forum: To kick off this discussion, introduce yourself, the organization in which you work, and your organization's main goals and priorities, and the population it serves. Then, reflect on the discussion of culture we had today. What is the culture of your organization? How does this culture impact the ways people listen to each other across levels of the organizations? What could ethnography help you understand about your organization's culture?

Viewing: Ernesto Sirolli: Want to help someone? Shut up and listen. (17 minutes)

https://www.ted.com/talks/ernesto_sirolli_want_to_help_someone_shut_up_and_listen

(https://www.ted.com/talks/ernesto_sirolli_want_to_help_someone_shut_up_and_listen)

Reading: Why listening is so much more important than hearing, *The New York Times*.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2012/11/11/opinion/sunday/why-listening-is-so-much-more-than-hearing.html>

(<https://www.nytimes.com/2012/11/11/opinion/sunday/why-listening-is-so-much-more-than-hearing.html>)

Reading: Fernandez, James W. Anthropology as a Vocation: Listening to voices

Field Assignment and Reflection: Observe the ways in which people across your organization communicate over the course of a day. What was your communication style? What surprised you? How does communication vary across the organization and what does this say about the culture of the

organization? How could ethnography help your organization or help you achieve your leadership goals?

MODULE 2: THE ETHNOGRAPHIC IMAGINATION

All work for Module 2 is due by the start of class. This week's Zoom class session is scheduled for 7:00 pm ET on Tuesday, September 7, 2021.

Lecture Video: The Ethnographic Imagination: 7 Key Characteristics (29 minutes)

Reading: Ciucci, Alessandra. "Proficiency: Listening." Correspondences, *Cultural Anthropology* website, June 19, 2017. <https://culanth.org/fieldsights/1140-proficiency-listening>
(<https://culanth.org/fieldsights/1140-proficiency-listening>)

Reading: Norkunas, Martha. "Teaching to Listen: Listening Exercises and Self-Reflexive Journals." *The Oral History Review*, 38(1), 63-108.

Field Assignment and Reflection: Conduct an ethnography of listening at your organization. Refer back to this week's readings for strategies for ethnographic listening. What sounds are unique to the organization? To the building? To the neighborhood? What do these sounds signal to you? What do you imagine they signal to others? Like the students in Norkunas' article, practice self-reflection and write your own self-reflexivity journal entry: what do you bring to this experience? How do you listen to yourself?

MODULE 3: ACOUSTEMOLOGY

All work for Module 3 is due by the start of class. This week's Zoom class session is scheduled for 7:00 pm ET on Tuesday, September 14, 2021.

Lecture Video: Acoustemology (9 minutes)

Lecture Video: Thick v. Thin Descriptions (4 minutes)

Viewing: Evelyn Glennie - How to Truly Listen

https://www.ted.com/talks/evelyn_glennie_shows_how_to_listen?referrer=playlist-listen_up
(https://www.ted.com/talks/evelyn_glennie_shows_how_to_listen?referrer=playlist-listen_up)

Reading: Rice, Tim (2003). Soundself: An acoustemology of sound and self in the Edinburgh Royal Infirmary. *Anthropology Today* 19: 4 p. 4-9

Field Assignment and Reflection: Reflect on three different instances of listening in your organization (e.g., a discussion of a project, a meeting, a conversation with a colleague). Write up thick descriptions of these instances. What are the things that were heard but not said? How do these instances reflect or fit within the larger institutional culture of your organization? What would an outsider listening in on these instances learn about your organization?

MODULE 4: LISTENING

All work for Module 4 is due by the start of class. This week's Zoom class session is scheduled for 7:00 pm ET on Tuesday, September 21, 2021.

Lecture Video: Listening to Learn (8 minutes)

Lecture Video: Listening is Multi-Sited (8.5 minutes)

Lecture Video: Listening is Multi-Modal (11 minutes)

Reading: Henley, Paul (2007). Seeing, hearing, feeling: Sound and despotism of the eye in "visual" anthropology. *Visual Anthropology Review* 23: 1 p. 54 - 63.

Reading: Feld, Steve and Brenneis, Donald (2004). Doing anthropology in sound. *American Ethnologist* 31: 4, p. 461 - 474.

Field Assignment and Reflection: This week, have a conversation with the purpose of learning about a particular person. Engage someone you consider an acquaintance but may not know very well. This person could be someone at your organization or someone within your life more generally. What ethnographic skills did you engage to learn more about this person? Did this conversation feel different from past conversations you have had with this person? How so? What types of follow-up questions did you ask to learn more? How did this exercise feel?

MODULE 5: LISTENING, POWER, AND SOCIAL CHANGE

All work for Module 5 is due by the start of class. This week's Zoom class session is scheduled for 7:00 pm ET on Tuesday, September 28, 2021.

Listening: *Fresh Air*, NPR, "From Upspeak To Vocal Fry: Are We 'Policing' Young Women's Voices?"

<https://www.npr.org/2015/07/23/425608745/from-upspeak-to-vocal-fry-are-we-policing-young-womens-voices> [_ \(https://www.npr.org/2015/07/23/425608745/from-upspeak-to-vocal-fry-are-we-policing-young-womens-voices\)](https://www.npr.org/2015/07/23/425608745/from-upspeak-to-vocal-fry-are-we-policing-young-womens-voices)

Reading: "The Costs of Code-Switching," Curtney L. McCluney, Kathrina Robotham, Serenity Lee, Richard Smith, Myles Durkee, *Harvard Business Review*

<https://hbr.org/2019/11/the-costs-of-codeswitching> [_ \(https://hbr.org/2019/11/the-costs-of-codeswitching\)](https://hbr.org/2019/11/the-costs-of-codeswitching)

Reading: "These 526 Voters Represent All of America. And They Spent a Weekend Together," Emily Badger and Kevin Quealy, *The New York Times*

<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2019/10/02/upshot/these-526-voters-represent-america.html> [_ \(https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2019/10/02/upshot/these-526-voters-represent-america.html\)](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2019/10/02/upshot/these-526-voters-represent-america.html)

Reading: "Talking With Relatives Across the Political Divide," Madeline Halpert, *The New York Times*

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/13/well/family/talking-with-relatives-across-the-political-divide.html?searchResultPosition=5> [_ \(https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/13/well/family/talking-with-relatives-across-the-political-divide.html?searchResultPosition=5\)](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/13/well/family/talking-with-relatives-across-the-political-divide.html?searchResultPosition=5)

Reading: Murphy, Elizabeth, and Robert Dingwall. "The ethics of ethnography." Handbook of ethnography (2001): 339-351.

Field Assignment and Reflection: This week, challenge yourself to have a difficult conversation. Engage someone whose view on a topic is different from your own view. This person can be someone from within your organization or within your life more generally. What ethnographic skills did you engage to learn more about where that person was coming from? What types of follow-up questions did you ask to learn more? Did this conversation feel different from past conversations you have had with this person? Could you feel, hear, or otherwise sense systems of power shaping the interaction? How so? How did this exercise feel overall?

READING WEEK - October 4-8










No meeting this week. Final Self-Reflexive Essay is due on Canvas by 3:00 am ET on October 8, 2021.











Course Resources











- **Technical Help and Questions:** Submit requests for technical help to canvas@pobox.upenn.edu (<mailto:canvas@pobox.upenn.edu>). You can also search the [online Canvas documentation for students](http://guides.instructure.com/m/4212) (<http://guides.instructure.com/m/4212>).
- **Course Policies FAQ:** Please make sure you are familiar with the policies for this course.
- **Accessing Penn Libraries Resources:** Learn how to:
 - [Access resources from off-campus](http://guides.library.upenn.edu/c.php?g=476350&p=4905209) (<http://guides.library.upenn.edu/c.php?g=476350&p=4905209>)
 - [Search Franklin Articles+](http://guides.library.upenn.edu/articlesplus) (<http://guides.library.upenn.edu/articlesplus>): Penn Libraries' large collection of ebooks, scholarly journals, newspaper articles, conference proceedings, and more.
 - [Scan and Deliver](https://guides.library.upenn.edu/resourcesharing/scananddeliver) (<https://guides.library.upenn.edu/resourcesharing/scananddeliver>): Enables you to obtain scans of selected book chapters and journal articles in the general, non-Reserve collections of the University of Pennsylvania Libraries for your research.
 - [Get books by mail](https://guides.library.upenn.edu/circulation/vpbooksbymail) (<https://guides.library.upenn.edu/circulation/vpbooksbymail>): A service offered to Penn graduate students and faculty members to facilitate their research while living 75 miles or more away from campus. Eligible participants will be able to request delivery of on-shelf Penn Libraries circulating books via insured carrier to their homes.
- **Weingarten Learning Resources Center** (<https://www.vpul.upenn.edu/lrc/>): Provides professional instruction in university relevant skills such as academic reading, writing, study strategies, and time management. Weingarten also provides services and programs for students who self-identify with

disabilities to ensure equal academic opportunities and participation in University-sponsored programs.

Course Summary:

Date	Details	Due
Tue Aug 31, 2021	 Field Assignment and Reflection: Observation (https://upenn.instructure.com/courses/1599989/assignments/9124860) 	due by 3am
	 Class Zoom Session 1 (https://upenn.instructure.com/calendar?event_id=3352890&include_contexts=course_1599989) 	7pm to 8:30pm
	 NPLD 730-001 2021C The Difficult Art OfListening (https://upenn.instructure.com/calendar?event_id=3330972&include_contexts=course_1599989) 	7pm to 8:30pm
	 Survey: NPLD730 Student Goals, Needs, and Questions (https://upenn.instructure.com/courses/1599989/assignments/9154461) 	due by 7pm
Wed Sep 1, 2021	 Jamout Session 1 (https://upenn.instructure.com/calendar?event_id=3352895&include_contexts=course_1599989) 	7:30pm to 8:30pm
	 Field Assignment and Reflection: Ethnography of Listening (https://upenn.instructure.com/courses/1599989/assignments/9124861) 	due by 3am
Tue Sep 7, 2021	 Class Zoom Session 2 (https://upenn.instructure.com/calendar?event_id=3352891&include_contexts=course_1599989) 	7pm to 8:30pm
	 NPLD 730-001 2021C The Difficult Art OfListening (https://upenn.instructure.com/calendar?event_id=3330973&include_contexts=course_1599989) 	7pm to 8:30pm
	 Module 2 Quiz (https://upenn.instructure.com/courses/1599989/assignments/9165568) 	due by 7pm

Date	Details	Due
Wed Sep 8, 2021	 Jamout Session 2 https://upenn.instructure.com/calendar?event_id=3352896&include_contexts=course_1599989	7:30pm to 8:30pm
	 Field Assignment and Reflection: Three Instances of Listening https://upenn.instructure.com/courses/1599989/assignments/9124856	due by 3am
Tue Sep 14, 2021	 Class Zoom Session 3 https://upenn.instructure.com/calendar?event_id=3352892&include_contexts=course_1599989	7pm to 8:30pm
	 NPLD 730-001 2021C The Difficult Art OfListening https://upenn.instructure.com/calendar?event_id=3330974&include_contexts=course_1599989	7pm to 8:30pm
	 Module 3 Quiz https://upenn.instructure.com/courses/1599989/assignments/9165732	due by 7pm
Wed Sep 15, 2021	 Jamout Session 3 https://upenn.instructure.com/calendar?event_id=3352897&include_contexts=course_1599989	7:30pm to 8:30pm
	 Field Assignment and Reflection: Conversation for Learning https://upenn.instructure.com/courses/1599989/assignments/9124854	due by 3am
Tue Sep 21, 2021	 Class Zoom Session 4 https://upenn.instructure.com/calendar?event_id=3352893&include_contexts=course_1599989	7pm to 8:30pm
	 NPLD 730-001 2021C The Difficult Art OfListening https://upenn.instructure.com/calendar?event_id=3330975&include_contexts=course_1599989	7pm to 8:30pm
	 Module 4 Quiz https://upenn.instructure.com/courses/1599989/assignments/9166180	due by 7pm

Date	Details	Due
Wed Sep 22, 2021	 Jamout Session 4 https://upenn.instructure.com/calendar?event_id=3352898&include_contexts=course_1599989	7:30pm to 8:30pm
	 Field Assignment and Reflection: Difficult Conversation https://upenn.instructure.com/courses/1599989/assignments/9124849	due by 3am
Tue Sep 28, 2021	 Class Zoom Session 5 https://upenn.instructure.com/calendar?event_id=3352894&include_contexts=course_1599989	7pm to 8:30pm
	 NPLD 730-001 2021C The Difficult Art OfListening https://upenn.instructure.com/calendar?event_id=3330976&include_contexts=course_1599989	7pm to 8:30pm
	 Module 5 Quiz https://upenn.instructure.com/courses/1599989/assignments/9166226	due by 7pm
Wed Sep 29, 2021	 Jamout Session 5 https://upenn.instructure.com/calendar?event_id=3352899&include_contexts=course_1599989	7:30pm to 8:30pm
Mon Oct 4, 2021	 Reading Week Starts https://upenn.instructure.com/calendar?event_id=3352902&include_contexts=course_1599989	12am
Tue Oct 5, 2021	 Participation Assessment https://upenn.instructure.com/courses/1599989/assignments/9124868	due by 3am
Wed Oct 6, 2021	 Jamout Session 6 https://upenn.instructure.com/calendar?event_id=3352900&include_contexts=course_1599989	7:30pm to 8:30pm
Fri Oct 8, 2021	 Final Project: Self-Reflexive Essay https://upenn.instructure.com/courses/1599989/assignments/9124867	due by 3am