

## Methods Going Global: A New International Cultural Anthropology Methods Program (CAMP) and Community of Practice

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BRIEF REPORT



## Methods Going Global: A New International Cultural Anthropology Methods Program (CAMP) and Community of Practice

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### ABSTRACT

The Cultural Anthropology Methods Program (CAMP) is realizing a goal that anthropologists have shared since Boas—to create a global anthropology with truly international exchanges of research practices. We are now launching CAMP-International, a Community of Practice for methods with 700+ global members. We begin by launching our 15 methods modules and 1 teaching module curriculum on Youtube, with 75+ lectures viewable in English and subtitled in Spanish, French, Portuguese, Chinese, Japanese, Swahili, Bangla, and Guarani—and inviting more lectures from our global partners. We are launching a listserv ([METHODS@asu.edu](mailto:METHODS@asu.edu)) where anthropologists can ask for advice on any methods problem. In the years to come, we hope that CAMP-International will nurture collaborations that facilitate global advances in methods for the conduct of and the teaching of anthropological research.

### PLAIN LANGUAGE SUMMARY

The Cultural Anthropology Methods Program is launching CAMP-International, inviting global participation and collaboration. CAMP-International creates a Community of Practice for anthropologists worldwide to exchange teaching materials, seek advice, and foster collaborations. It has a listserv, online curriculum on Youtube, and partnerships with world anthropology organizations. Anthropologists around the world can join to advance methods instruction, innovation, and practice.

### KEYWORDS

Research methods; international; community of practice

Since the 1960s, the U.S. National Science Foundation has funded methods training programs for cultural anthropologists (see Bernard 2008 and Mantz 2024). The programs included field schools, workshops at national meetings, and three-week summer intensive courses. In 2020, we asked NSF to fund the latest of these three-week intensive courses for doctoral students. In the previous iteration, from 1996 to 2015, we trained some 250 doctoral students in research design, focusing on writing grants for their dissertation work. For the next iteration we proposed increasing the number of instructors from 4 to 40, to expose nationally-selected graduate students to the diversity of research methods in our field.

When the Cultural Anthropology Methods Program (CAMP) grant was funded, just as COVID-19 hit, our pivot to online education

gave us the opportunity to realize a goal that anthropologists have shared since Boas (1904, 1908) and Radcliffe-Brown (1923)—to create a global anthropology with truly international exchanges of research practices. After all, anthropology is taught in universities across the world—not just in high-GDP countries, like Japan, England, China, Taiwan, Australia, Russia and all 27 countries in the European Union. It is taught in countries across Africa, Latin America, and the Pacific. The Ph.D. in anthropology is offered at the National University of Mexico, the University of São Paulo, and the University of Nairobi. Bachelor's degrees in anthropology are offered by the University of Papua New Guinea, the National University of Laos-Vientiane, and the Atenisi Institute Nuku'alofa in Tonga.

And so, over the first three years of the grant, we established a core curriculum of methods in anthropology. The curriculum so far has 15 methods modules, including sampling, research design, ethical research, participatory research, and analyzing qualitative data, and one teaching module. Lectures are contributed by 40 distinguished methodologists (from the U.S., but also from Brazil, Burkina Faso, Peru, Ethiopia, Colombia, Canada, New Zealand, and other global hubs of methodological innovation) who taught in NSF-funded institutes. The lectures are all free to watch on Youtube and to embed in online courses.

All of this has been in preparation for the launch in 2024 of CAMP-International. As part of that launch, we've invited colleagues across the world to join our CAMP-International Community of Practice and to add teaching materials on research methods to the site. The community of practice has about 700 members. We begin with 75+ lectures that can be downloaded and incorporated into courses on research methods—viewable in English and subtitled in Spanish, French, Portuguese, Chinese, Japanese, Swahili, Bangla, and Guarani. We are launching a listserv (METHODS@asu.edu) where anthropologists can ask for methods advice: for example, on sample size, on how to gain access to a new research site, on how to best transcribe data for linguistic analysis, or how to set up a matrix for social network analysis.

The World Anthropological Union (comprising the World Council of Anthropological Associations, and the International Union of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences), the American Anthropological Association, the Society for Applied Anthropology, and MethodsNET, among others, have partnered with us to promote these teaching materials. In the years to come, we hope that CAMP-International will nurture collaborations that facilitate global

advances in methods for the conduct of and the teaching of anthropological research.

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## Notes on contributors

**Amber Wutich** is a President's Professor at Arizona State University, Director of ASU's Center for Global Health, and 2023 MacArthur Fellow. An ethnographer and methodologist, Wutich has authored 200+ publications, co-authored 6 books, edits the journal *Field Methods*, and directs the NSF Cultural Anthropology Methods Program.

**H. Russell Bernard** is director of the Institute for Social Science Research at Arizona State University and Professor emeritus of anthropology of the University of Florida. Bernard was the 2003 recipient of the Franz Boas Award from the American Anthropological Association and is a member of the National Academy of Sciences. ([hrussellbernard.com](http://hrussellbernard.com))

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