

# FELIX AMPADU

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## PROFILE SUMMARY

An anthropologist whose research and teaching examine relationships among people, environments, extractive industries, governance, and community sustainability. My scholarship integrates environmental anthropology, political ecology, development anthropology, and community-based ethnography to explore how environmental and economic transformations influence livelihoods, governance, participation, and social sustainability within communities. My research specifically concentrates on legacy mining communities in Arizona, rural development, disaster recovery, social vulnerability, and community resilience. I conduct ethnographic research in collaboration with community members, local governments, industry stakeholders, and interdisciplinary research teams. As an undergraduate educator, I have taught courses covering ecological anthropology, development, political ecology, applied anthropology, and cultural anthropology. My teaching emphasizes critical engagement with anthropological theories, experiential learning, interdisciplinary perspectives, and the relationship between anthropological scholarship and current environmental and social challenges.

## TEACHING AND RESEARCH INTEREST

Environmental Anthropology | Ecological Anthropology | Political Ecology | Development Anthropology | Participatory Development | Extractive Resources (Mining) | Sustainability in Rural Communities | Community-Based Ethnography | Disaster Recovery | Household Livelihood Security | Southwestern United States [Arizona]

## EDUCATION

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| <b>University of Arizona</b>                                                                                                                                                                    | Tucson, Arizona |
| <i>Ph.D. in Anthropology, Dissertation Title: Beyond the Life of a Mine: The Complex Dynamics of Community Sustainability in Arizona's Legacy Mining Towns.</i>                                 | 2023            |
| <b>Aarhus University</b>                                                                                                                                                                        | Denmark         |
| <i>M.A. Anthropology of Education and Globalization, Thesis: Empowerment in Practice in a Welfare State, A means to Citizenship: Ethnography of an Afro-Empowerment Organization in Denmark</i> | 2016            |
| <b>University of Education, Winneba</b>                                                                                                                                                         | Ghana           |
| B.Ed. Art                                                                                                                                                                                       | 2010            |

## ACADEMIC POSITIONS

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|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| <b>Lecturer, Sociocultural Anthropology &amp; Scholar, Center for the Environment</b> | 2024 – 2026 |
| <i>Department of Anthropology, Washington University in St. Louis</i>                 |             |
| <b>Instructor, Sociocultural Anthropology</b>                                         | 2018 – 2021 |
| <i>School of Anthropology, University of Arizona</i>                                  |             |
| <b>Graduate Teaching Associate/Assistant,</b>                                         | 2016 – 2019 |
| <i>School of Anthropology, University of Arizona, Tucson</i>                          |             |

## TEACHING EXPERIENCE

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### Department of Anthropology, Washington University in St. Louis

Courses Taught: Anthropology and Development | Culture and Environment | Ecological Anthropology | Topics in Anthropology: Sustainability in Extractive Communities | Applied Anthropology | Political Ecology | Topics in Anthropology: Global Corporation and Local Sustainability | Guest Lecture: Cultural Anthropology 2024 – 2026

### School of Anthropology, University of Arizona, Tucson,

**Instructor of Record** – Courses Taught: Ecological Anthropology | Many Ways of Being Human: Anthropological Perspective (An introduction to Cultural Anthropology course) | Applying Anthropology in a Global Context (online and in-person classes) 2018 – 2021

**Section Instructor and Grading** – Courses: Bodies in Medicine: Introduction to Medical Anthropology | Art History of the Cinema | The Africana Experience 2016 – 2019

## RESEARCH AGENDA & EXPERIENCE

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Infrastructure: A Community-Driven Approach to Social Sustainability in Rural Arizona. 2024 – Present

**Principal Investigator**, School of Anthropology, University of Arizona, Tucson 2020 – 2022

Dissertation Research – The Complex Dynamics of Community Sustainability in Arizona's Legacy Mining Towns

Scoping Research – Pursuing Sustainability in Mining Communities in Southern Arizona 2020 – 2021

**Graduate Research Associate** | Bureau of Applied Research in Anthropology (BARA) 2016 – 2023

Projects: Humanitarian Assistant Technical Support program (HATS), USAID-funded and Agricultural development project in part of Brazil, with BARA/USAID

**Agenda:** My research agenda is focused on the intersection of environmental change, political ecology, community sustainability, and governance. Through studies in Arizona and disaster-recovery settings, I examine how communities navigate environmental and economic transformations and how institutions, resource extraction, infrastructure, and development processes shape local prospects for sustainable futures. My ongoing research in rural Arizona expands this agenda by investigating community-led approaches to social sustainability and infrastructure, while also drawing on comparative studies in Zambia and Ghana. This research program provides a foundation for continued scholarship in environmental anthropology and fosters opportunities for undergraduate research, community-engaged learning, and interdisciplinary collaboration across fields such as environmental studies, international studies, urban studies, and sustainability.

## PUBLICATIONS

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### Articles in Peer-Reviewed Journals

2026 – Ampadu, Felix. “Nostalgic Bonds, Affective Strategies, and Sustainable Actions: Ethnographic Insights from Legacy Mining Communities in Arizona.” *Resources Policy*, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.resourpol.2026.105845>

2025 – Ampadu, Felix. “What are sustainable investments? A case study of Arizona's legacy mining communities and towns.” *Human Organization*, 1–14. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00187259.2024.2440919>

2022 – Ampadu, Felix. “Changing discourse, politics, and the practices of participation in development.” *Development in Practice*, 33(6), 721–727. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09614524.2022.2108764>

### Book Chapter

2019 – Ahmed, Saleh, and **Ampadu, Felix**. “How do the perceptions of natural hazards influence migration decisions among ethnic minority farmers? Insights from coastal Bangladesh.” In *Emerging*

Voices in Natural Hazards Research, 411-426. Butterworth-Heinemann. [doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-12-815821-0.00023-0](https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-12-815821-0.00023-0)

Manuscript in Progress

“Professional Strangers in Rural America”. **Submitted** as a collection of essays for a “special section” of *Anthropology Now*

“Sustainability Trade-offs in Arizona’s Legacy Mining Communities: A Political Ecology Perspective.” To be submitted to the *Journal of Political Ecology*.

“Nature of Disaster Recovery: A case study analysis of the determinants of Hurricane Gilbert in Jamaica.” *HATS Project - BARA, University of Arizona, Tucson*

## RESEARCH PRESENTATIONS & WORKSHOPS

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Society for Applied Anthropology

2025 – 85th Annual Meeting, Portland, Oregon. – Co-chair, “Professional Strangers in Rural America-Ethnographic Assessments of Community Life.”

2024 – 84th Annual Meeting Santa Fe, New Mexico. – “Professional Strangers in Rural America-Ethnographic Assessments of Community Life.” And “Nostalgic Bonds, Affective Strategies, and Sustainable Actions: Ethnographic Insights from Legacy Mining Communities in Arizona.”

2023 – 83rd Annual Meeting, Cincinnati, Ohio. – “Developing Sustainable Investments in Legacy Mining Communities and Towns in Arizona.” And “A case study analysis of Hurricane Gilbert in Jamaica.”

2020 – 80th Annual Meeting, Albuquerque, NM. – “Material Attachments: Inequality and Other Explanations for Extractive Resource Conflicts.”

2018 – 78th Annual Meeting, Philadelphia, PA. – “Mining in Developing Countries: Corporate Social Responsibility in Livelihood Sustainability.”

University of Arizona

2022 – Disaster recovery panel and discussion session facilitated by Humanitarian Assistance Technical Support Project. University of Arizona, Tucson, AZ.

Washington University of St. Louis [Workshop]

2024 – Teaching and Learning Seminar for Early Career Faculty. The Center for Teaching and Learning

## STUDENT MENTORING & RESEARCH SUPERVISION

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University of Arkansas at Little Rock

2006 – Present: John Commey, (Ph.D. Candidate), Dissertation committee member: “The Landscape of Information Technology Base Healthcare Assistance in Ghana: Examining the Current State, Facilitators and Barriers.”

University of Iceland

2026 – Present: Elín Valsdóttir, (Ph.D. Student), School of Social Sciences. Dissertation Committee member: “Green Promises and Local Realities: Community Resistance to Coda Terminal in Iceland.”

Washington University in St. Louis

2026 – Julia Prata, Earth Science and Anthropology Major. Senior Honors Thesis: “Beneath the Reservoir: A Case for a Hydro-social-Morphological Framework in Lake Mead.”

2025 – Alex Herzig, Philosophy-Neuroscience-Psychology. Senior Honors Thesis: “Decolonizing the Mind – An Indigenous Approach to Mental Healthcare.”

2024 – Alden Standley, Anthropology and Environment Major. Senior Thesis Reader: “Climate Change Perspectives in South Africa.”

## **FELLOWSHIPS AND GRANTS**

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2020 – 2022 – Diebold BARA, School of Anthropology, University of Arizona, Dissertation Research Grant

2018 – 2022 – School of Anthropology, University of Arizona, Tucson, Dissertation Research, and Travel Grant

2018 – University of Arizona, Graduate and Professional Student Council Travel Grant

2016 – 2017 – College of Social and Behavioral Sciences, University of Arizona, Tucson [Fellowship]

## **UNIVERSITY SERVICE AND OUTREACH ACTIVITIES**

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Washington University in St. Louis, MO

2026 – Anthropology undergraduate website restructuring

2025 – Served as a local context advisor for the Washington University Institutional Review Board (WUIRB) AND Jury Service, Dean's Award for Graduate Teaching Excellence at Washington University in St. Louis, MO

Society for Applied Anthropology

2025 – Organizing Member, Program Committee.

University of Arizona, Tucson, Arizona

2018 – 2019 – Community Outreach representative – Anthropology Graduate Students (AGUA).

2018 – Grant Proposal Reviewer, Graduate and Professional Student Council

## **PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATION**

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2017 – Present | Society for Applied Anthropology