

Qualitative Research Writing Retreat  
ELAN/ERSH 8550: Writing Up Qualitative Research  
Amicalola State Park, Maymester 2005, May 15-21, with JoBeth Allen

Come to the mountains to write!

The Qualitative Research Writing Retreat will provide intensive support for graduate students who are writing qualitative research studies, including dissertations. The retreat will be helpful to you if you have already collected and analyzed qualitative data. It will provide daily one-to-one and small group writing conferences, exploration of differing models of writing within qualitative research traditions across and within disciplines, and a setting and structure that will allow students to focus on writing for five days without interruption. The retreat will be held at Amicalola State Park, far enough away to “retreat” from family, friends, and email; close enough to drive in under two hours. We have reserved four 2-bedroom-plus-kitchen cabins (4 to a cabin) as well as a conference room where you can set up your computer (or if you have a laptop you can rove through the woods or by the waterfall to write). You do need to bring a computer. Your total cost (not counting tuition) will be around \$150 for meals, meeting room, and cabin rental. We’ll need a \$75 deposit, non-refundable, immediately to reserve the cottages.

There will be a two-hour meeting on campus a few weeks before the retreat to 1) begin to get to know each other as a writing community, 2) select a work of finely crafted “popular ethnographic nonfiction” t read before the retreat such as *Praying for Sheetrock*, *Love, Sorrow, and Rage : Destitute Women in a Manhattan Residence*, *A Hope in the Unseen*, etc. (I will provide a bibliography), 3) make cabin/food/transportation arrangements, and 4) address any questions you have.

We will arrive on Sunday May16 by 6:00 p.m., and meet from 7:00-10:00 to lay the foundation for the week. We have our final meeting Saturday morning from 9:00-12:00. We will follow this daily schedule Monday-Friday:

Throughout the day, find time to exercise – the area is beautiful, with many hiking trails, and a trek up the falls will definitely get your heart-rate up – and to read examples of qualitative research we’ll bring with us.

7:00-8:00 breakfast, walk, read

8:00-5:00 writing at personal computers, 30’ individual conference with JoBeth

5:00-6:00 peer conferences in which you exchange what you have written that day for written and oral feedback from a partner

6:00-7:00 dinner

7:00-9:00 whole group sharing of portions of the day's writing, problem solving, and discussion of writing processes; sharing and discussion of exemplary qualitative research writing (one dissertation, one article or book, which you'll bring with you)

Okay, so different people work on different schedules – but this gives you an idea of the expectation: that most of your day is spent writing. We do have the occasional sleep-late-work-all-night writer (but of course I'd never mention Leslie by name) and that's fine too. The schedule is intense, but each student should complete a draft of at least one chapter or article-length manuscript – at least past classes have and I'm sure you will be as focused, articulate, and insightful. The course will be cross-disciplinary, open to anyone who has analyzed qualitative data and is ready to write (recognizing that much analysis also takes place through the process of writing). In the past we have had people working in many departments in the College of Education as well as sociology, journalism, family and child development, and other fields. Because we will be reading and listening to outstanding examples of qualitative research writing from a variety of fields, students will expand their repertoire of academic writing styles.

If you are interested, please email JoBeth Allen ([jobethal@uga.edu](mailto:jobethal@uga.edu)) describing what you would be working on during the retreat: what is your research, where are you in terms of analysis, what are you thinking about as a product (article, dissertation chapter, etc.).

If it looks like the retreat is for you, I will need a \$75 deposit by January 15 to reserve your spot. I'll send all the money to Amicalola (they require a large deposit within 30 days); this will be approximately half of the total cost of the retreat, with the other half due the day you check out. The deposit is only refundable if there is someone who can take your spot. I look forward to talking with you! JoBeth