

QUAL 8400: Qualitative Research Traditions
Fall 2006

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Course Description

This course examines theories, concepts, and methodological approaches used in qualitative research. The course will survey major theories that govern qualitative research. You will be expected to utilize theory in addressing methodological issues in qualitative research. Primarily, we will study sociological, anthropological, and historical research that employs qualitative methods.

Course Objectives:

By the end of the semester, I hope that each student will be able to:

- 1) Identify major theories and methodological approaches in qualitative research.
- 2) Identify a wide-range of studies in qualitative research and literature.
- 3) Explain the components of a qualitative research study.
- 4) Discern the issues of subjectivity, objectivity, and validity that qualitative researchers encounter.
- 5) Distinguish between various types of qualitative research.
- 6) Develop a plan of research.

Required Texts:

Crotty, M. (1998). *The foundations of social research: Meaning and perspective in the research process*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

deMarrais, K. & S.D. Lapan (Eds.). *Foundations for research: Methods of inquiry in education and the social sciences*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Du Bois, W.E.B. (1899/1996). *The Philadelphia Negro: A social study*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Locke, L.F, Spirduso, W.W., & Silverman, S.J. (2000). *Proposals that work: A guide for planning dissertations and grant proposals*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

Additional Readings:

Alridge, D.P. The dilemmas, challenges, and duality of an African American educational historian. *Educational Researcher*, 32(9), 25-34.

Boote, D.N. & Belle, P. (2005). Scholars before researchers: On the centrality of the dissertation literature review in research preparation. *Educational Researcher*, 34(6), 3-15.

Chaudhry, L.N. (1997). Researching my people, researching myself: Fragments of a reflexive talk. *Qualitative Studies in Education*, 10(4), pp. 441-453.

Morris, J.E. (2004) Can anything good come from Nazareth? Race, class, and African American schooling and community in the urban South and Midwest. *American Educational Research Journal*, 41(1), 69-112.

Roulston, K. (2001). Introducing ethnomethodological analysis to the field of music education. *Music Education Research*, 3(2), 121-142.

I will provide additional reading assignments throughout the semester on WebCT or as handouts.

Attendance:

You are expected to attend class each week. You are allowed one unexcused absence. I will consider the number of unexcused class absences in assigning final grades.

Conceptual Theme of the Course:

I will teach this course primarily from my areas of interest and expertise. Therefore, as an historian who studies the African American experience, a number of the articles that we read in this course will focus on the African American experience. However, I will also cover a wide range of topics in our study of qualitative methods.

Writing:

This course is writing intensive. I view writing as a process that improves with practice and hard work. In addition to the numerous writing workshops we will have in class, I suggest that you also work closely with your assigned group to help you improve your writing. I also suggest that you consider working with the UGA Writing Center (<http://www.english.uga.edu/writingcenter/>) if you are not confident with your writing.

Grading:

Grades in this class will be based primarily on your performance on the written assignments. A's will be reserved for students who exhibit *exemplary* performance on almost all of the written

assignments. Points will not be awarded for effort, but I will take effort into consideration in determining your final grade. Please do not focus too much on grades. My job is to give you as accurate an assessment of your work as possible. In assigning grades, I use the following general rubric:

A= Exemplary

Work on written assignment was *exemplary*. Student *far exceeded* my expectations.

A-=Excellent

Work on written assignment was *excellent*. Student *exceeded* my expectations.

B+= Very good

Work on written assignments was *very good*. Student *nearly exceeded* my expectations.

B= Good

Work on written assignments was *good*. Student *met* my expectations.

B-= Slightly above satisfactory

Work on written assignments was *slightly above satisfactory*. Student *met* my expectations.

C+= Satisfactory

Work on written assignments was *satisfactory*. Student *barely met* my expectations.

C= Unsatisfactory

Work on written assignments was *unsatisfactory*. Student *did not meet* my expectations.

Late work will not be accepted and I do not give incomplete (I) grades.

Assignments:

Class Participation (Attendance, preparation, and discussion)	10%
Group Project	20%
Proposal Draft	30%
Final Proposal	40%

Due Dates:

Please turn in your assignments on the due dates. I will subtract points from your assignment for each day your assignment is late. Also, note that I do not accept e-mail attachments of assigned projects, so please bring your assignments to class on the due dates.

Course Schedule

August 22

Introduction

What is qualitative research?

August 29

Topics: Social Science Research, Historical Research, and Critical Ethnography

Read deMarrais and Lapan, Chapter 10-11

September 5

Topics: Social Science Research, Historical Research, and Critical Ethnography

Read Du Bois, *The Philadelphia Negro*, Introduction-Chapter 3

September 12

Topics: Social Science Research, Historical Research, and Critical Ethnography

Read Du Bois, *The Philadelphia Negro*, Chapters 4-11

September 19

Topics: Social Science Research, Historical Research, and Critical Ethnography, Positivism, Constructionism

Read Crotty, *The Foundations of Social Research*, Chapter 1-3

Read Morris, Can Anything Good Come Out of Nazareth?

September 26

Topics: Social Science Research, Historical Research, and Critical Ethnography, Interpretivism (hermeneutics), Marxism

Read Crotty, *The Foundations of Social Research*, Chapters 4-6

Read deMarrais and Lapan, Chapter 3

Read Derrick P. Alridge, "The dilemmas, challenges, and duality of an African American Educational Historian"

October 3

Topics: Critical Theory, Postmodernism, Feminism, Reflexivity, Subjectivity

Read Crotty, Chapters 7-9

Read Lubna Chaudhry, "Researching 'my people' researching myself"

October 10

Group Work in Library

October 17

Group Presentations

October 24

Group Presentations

October 31

Topics: Proposal Writing and Ethics in Research
Read Locke, Spirduso, and Silverman, *Proposals that work*, Chapters 1-3

November 7

Topic: Review of Literature
Read Boote & Belle, “Scholars before researchers”
Workshop on writing literature reviews

November 14

Writing Workshop in class (In Groups)
Share parts of your proposal with members of your group

November 21

Topic: Ethnomethodology
Read deMarrais and Lapan, Chapter 9
Proposal Draft Due. Provide copies for group members and instructor

November 28

Writing Workshop (In Groups)

December 5

Writing Workshop (In Groups)

December 12

Final Paper Due

All academic work must meet standards contained in “A Culture of Honesty.” All students must inform themselves about these standards before performing any academic work.

The course syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary.

About the Instructor: I received my B.A. and M.Ed. degrees in history from Winthrop College in 1987 and 1992, respectively. Before pursuing a doctorate, I taught history for four years in middle and high schools in Columbia, S.C. I received a Ph.D. (specialization in history of American education) from the Pennsylvania State University in 1997. My research focuses on American educational and intellectual history, historical methodology, and civil rights. As an historian, I approach the study of qualitative research from an interdisciplinary perspective that draws primarily from methods in history, but also from methods in anthropology and sociology. My first exposure to qualitative research came through my readings of W.E.B. Du Bois’s *The Philadelphia Negro: A Social Study* and St. Clair Drake’s and Horace Cayton’s *Black Metropolis*. My work in the area of qualitative research is best exemplified in an ongoing research project that I co-direct called the *Foot Soldier Project for Civil Rights Studies* (<http://www.fsp.uga.edu/>).

