

**THE UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA (UGA)
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION/SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK**

**QUAL 8400/SOWK 8166 – SPRING 2008
QUALITATIVE RESEARCH TRADITIONS**

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Class: Wednesdays, 4:40-7:40
Office Hours: Tuesdays, 2:00-4:00
(and by appointment)

Course Description

The purpose of this course is to introduce you to the fundamental concepts, language, design, and implementation of qualitative research. The history, characteristics, philosophy, and evaluation of qualitative research will also be a focus, as will the “habits of mind and heart” (Rossman & Rallis, 2003, p. xii) that guide qualitative researchers. The unique contributions that qualitative research can make to the knowledge base in your field of study (with an emphasis on the social sciences) will be underscored, and the ways the predominant kinds or approaches to qualitative inquiry shape the design of a study will be addressed as well. This course will involve a variety of small and large group discussions and activities, lectures, hands-on activities, and individual papers.

QUAL 8400/SOWK 8166 is a “foundation” course in qualitative research and is the first in a three-course sequence of qualitative research courses taught in the College of Education. As a foundation course, its goal is two-fold: (1) to introduce you to the world of qualitative research, and (2) to foster your development as a *consumer* of qualitative research (i.e., one able to understand qualitative research and evaluate its trustworthiness). Students who aspire to be *producers* of qualitative research will want to take the remaining two courses in the three-course qualitative sequence: QUAL 8410 (Data Collection) and QUAL 8420 (Data Analysis).

Welcome to QUAL 8400/SOWK 8166! I’m delighted that you’re taking this journey into the world of qualitative research!

Objectives

- Provide an introduction to the assumptions, concepts, characteristics, and language of qualitative research.
- Recognize the unique contributions that qualitative inquiry can make to the knowledge base in one’s field of study.
- Understand the major types of qualitative research.
- Acquire basic skills necessary to engage in qualitative research as a novice researcher.
- Evaluate the trustworthiness of qualitative inquiry according to standards congruent with an interpretivist paradigm.
- Examine and analyze exemplars of qualitative research.

Required Texts/Readings (Texts are available at the UGA Bookstore.)

- Bogdan, R. C., & Biklen, S. K. (2007). *Qualitative research in education: An introduction to theory and methods* (5th ed.). Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Creswell, J. W. (2007). *Qualitative inquiry & research design: Choosing among the five approaches* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Readings are available from the UGA Central Library in an electronic format (as PDF files). To access the documents, click on “Search Course Reserves” at GIL (<http://gil.uga.edu>). The password access is **spencer**, and it is case sensitive.
- Additional handouts will be added throughout the semester.

General Information

Course Syllabus

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

Preparation and Participation

Your participation in this collaborative and interactive course is essential so plan to come to class on time, prepared, and ready to be challenged. I anticipate being challenged as well! It is absolutely essential that you read, and be prepared to discuss, the assigned readings for each week. Preparation, participation, and punctuality will be taken into account in your final grade (as detailed on Assignment Sheet #1).

Attendance/Tardiness

You are expected to attend class, arrive on time, and stay for the duration of the class. Although it is understandable that you may need to miss one or two classes, absences in excess of two classes (or more than six hours during the semester) will result in four points subtracted from your final grade for each class missed. It will be necessary for you to identify a “buddy” in the class to provide you with copies of handouts, notes, etc., for any class missed. I retain the right to ask you to withdraw from the course if more than three classes are missed. Tardiness will be taken into account in your final grade. I expect you to model the kinds of professional behavior that are expected in a workplace setting. That is, to arrive on time and to notify me in advance if you are going to miss (or be late) for a class. I can usually be reached, by phone or email, in my office before class.

Students With Special Needs

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (1990), The University of Georgia seeks to provide equal access to individuals with disabilities. Students who have a disability and need specific accommodations and support to facilitate full inclusion of all aspects of the course should make an appointment with me during the first week of the term. To register for services, students may go to Disability Services located in Clark Howell Hall (706-542-8719, TTY 706-542-8778, www.dissvcs.uga.edu).

Academic Honesty

The University of Georgia seeks to promote and ensure academic honesty and personal integrity among students and other members of the University Community. All academic work must meet the standards contained in “A Culture of Honesty.” Students are responsible for informing

themselves about those standards before performing any academic work. All work in this class is expected to be original work, that is work may not be “recycled” (in whole or in part) from another class. Additionally, work submitted must be one’s own, except in instances specified in this syllabus (e.g., editorial assistance if English is not your first language). The penalties for academic dishonesty are severe, and ignorance is not an acceptable defense.

Information about academic honesty can be found online at:

http://www.uga.edu/ovpi/academic_honesty/academic_honesty.htm.

Free and Open Exchange of Ideas: Classroom Climate

A free and open exchange of ideas is expected in an academic environment. I personally believe that it is a requirement for learning. I have opinions and will express them. You are free to express agreement or disagreement without fear of negative consequences. This does not mean that I will not challenge your views or disagree with them. But it does mean that there will not be adverse consequences for disagreeing with me, or with your classmates. It is important that we be sensitive to and respectful of one another, no matter how strongly we may disagree. If you feel that this commitment is being breached in any way, you are expected to arrange an appointment with me to discuss this issue.

Class discussions can become experiences that are uncomfortable if attention is not paid to creating a climate of respect and fairness that extends to everyone. As scholars at a major research university, we must be sensitive in our participation. Numerous studies have found that Whites tend to dominate other races unless many of the discussants are members of those other races. In addition, some students, both male and female and of all races, tend to dominate class discussions, while others participate very little. *You are expected to participate in this class*, and participation can take many forms (e.g., in class, via our class listserv, etc.). Additionally, it is important that we express sensitivity to others by making sure that we do not talk too much, too loudly, or inappropriately (carrying on a conversation while someone is talking). The goal is to create a psychologically safe and respectful space for everyone.

Make-Up Policy and Incompletes

When relevant, the make-up policy for assignments missed is stated on the assignment sheets. Incompletes will be assigned only in cases of illness, accident, or other catastrophic occurrences beyond a student’s control.

Email Accounts

It will be necessary for you to have a UGA email address for purposes of this class. If you do not have one, one can be set up at <http://ugamail.uga.edu> (If you have a personal email address, for example, a Yahoo, Charter, or AOL address, you will need to ensure that your UGA email is forwarded to your personal account.) You are expected to check your email frequently since it will be used to communicate information about this class.

Electronic Devices

As a courtesy to all, you are asked to turn off cell phones and beepers during class.

Assignments

Below are brief descriptions of the assignments in this course. Assignment sheets detailing the guidelines for each assignment will be distributed early in the semester. *There will not be the opportunity to “re-write” an assignment, so you will want to attend carefully to the guidelines for each assignment.* The guidelines also include information as to how your work will be evaluated. You are expected to keep returned assignments through the end of the semester.

All assignments require (unless otherwise instructed on individual assignment sheets):

- 12-point font
- 1-inch margins
- Double-spaced text
- Adherence to the style and format of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (5th ed.). If you have not already done so, you will need to purchase a copy of the manual. For assistance with grammar, please refer to Strunk’s *The Elements of Style*, which is available online at <http://www.bartleby.com/141/>. *If English is not your first language, you are strongly encouraged to recruit an editor outside of class to review your written work.*
- Submission (hard copy) at the end of class on the date due. Scores for assignments turned in after the specified time will be reduced three points for each day late (including the date due, if turned in after class time, and weekends). If you are not going to be in class on the date an assignment is due, you remain responsible for submitting the assignment on time. Late papers will not be accepted without having made prior arrangements with me. Late papers submitted as attachments will be accepted only under rare circumstances (and, again, only with prior approval), and faxed copies of assignments are never accepted.

****Strong writing skills are expected of graduate students. All students, both native and non-native English speakers, are encouraged to investigate the services provided through the UGA Writing Center at <http://www.english.uga.edu/writingcenter/home.html> It is a fantastic resource!****

- As specified in Assignment Sheet #1, you are expected to be an active participant in this class. This includes being thoroughly familiar with the readings each week and coming to class prepared to engage in a discussion of them. *Active participation and engagement in this class entails being punctual as well.* (5 points)

Due: Throughout the semester

- As specified in Assignment Sheet #2, you will write a one-page, single-spaced review of a qualitative research article of your choosing. (10 points)

Due: January 30

- As specified in Assignment Sheet #3, you will have a take-home, early-term exam. (15 points)

Due: February 13

- As specified in Assignment Sheet #4, you will participate in a small group presentation on one of the five predominant approaches to qualitative inquiry. You will instruct the class about the particular approach, as well as critique the exemplar (Appendix in Creswell book, noted on syllabus for corresponding weeks). (25 points)

Due: Throughout the semester

- As specified in Assignment Sheet #5, you will conduct (and audiotape) an interview. You will produce a verbatim transcript of the interview (that you transcribe yourself) and critique your skills as an interviewer. (20 points)

Due: March 19

- As specified in Assignment Sheet #6, you will write a research proposal on a topic of interest to you. This is strictly a plan; you are not expected to collect data, analyze data, present the findings, or discuss what has been found. (25 points)

**Due: April 25
(FRIDAY – 12:00 PM)**

Assessment

The key to doing well in this course is simple: Come to class on time, well prepared, follow the directions specified in assignment sheets, don't hesitate to ask for clarification if it is needed, and remember that both the content and quality of your written products are important. Let this class be a place to let your creative energies flow freely! The grade you earn will be based upon the following scheme:

	<u>Points</u>	<u>Due</u>
Assignment #1 (Participation)	5	Throughout
Assignment #2 (Article Review) =	10	1/30
Assignment #3 (Early-term Exam) =	15	2/13
Assignment #4 (Group Presentation/Critique) =	25	Throughout
Assignment #5 (Interview) =	20	3/19
Assignment #6 (Research Proposal) =	<u>25</u>	4/25 (12:00) (Friday)
Total	100	

A = 93-100, A- = 90-92

B+ = 87-89, B = 83-86, B- = 80-82

C+ = 77-79, C = 73-76, C- = 70-72

D = 60-69; F = Below 60

Because of the number of students in this class and the substantive nature of some assignments, I will need at least two weeks to review your work in order to give it the attention it deserves.

Tentative Course Plan and Readings

B & B = Bogdan & Biklen

C = Creswell

O = Online

H = Handout

Week One

January 9

Introductions

Course Overview

Welcome to the World of Qualitative Research!

Week Two

January 16

Characteristics of Qualitative Research

History of Qualitative Research

Readings:

- B & B = Chapter 1 (“Foundation of Qualitative Research for Education”)
- O = “What is Qualitative Research?”
- O = “Preparing Education Doctoral Students for Epistemological Diversity”
- O = “The Goodness of Qualitative Research”

Week Three

January 23

Philosophical, Paradigm, and Interpretive Frameworks

Major Types of Qualitative Research

Readings:

- C = Chapter 1 (“Introduction”)
Chapter 2 (“Philosophical, Paradigm, and Interpretive Frameworks”)
Chapter 4 (“Five Qualitative Approaches to Inquiry”)
- O = “Major Types of Qualitative Research”
- O = “Shakespeare in the Bush”

Week Four

January 30

Role of the Researcher

Subjectivity in Qualitative Research

Readings:

- O = “In Search of Subjectivity – One’s Own”
- O = “Researcher’s Role”
- O = “Teacher-Researcher: A Long and Winding Road from the Public School to the University”

Due: Article Review (Assignment #2)

Week Five
February 6

Designing a Qualitative Study
Theoretical/Conceptual Frameworks
Research Problems and Questions

Readings:

- B & B = Chapter 2 (“Research Design”)
- C = Chapter 3 (“Designing a Qualitative Study”)
- O = “Framing the Research Study”
- O = “Conceptual Context: What Do You Think is Going On?”
- O = “The ‘What’ of the Study”
- O = “Introduction to Theoretical Frameworks in Qualitative Research”

Week Six
February 13

Designing a Qualitative Study (Cont.)
Problem Statements
Introduction to Types of Qualitative Data

Readings:

- C = Chapter 6 (“Introducing and Focusing the Study”)
- O = “Problem Statement”
- O = “PreStudy Tasks: Doing What is Good for You”
- O = “An Analysis of the Educational Narratives of Reentry Black Women”
- O = “Ways Meaning is Constructed in the Lives of Those Infected with the HIV Virus”

Due: Midterm Exam (Assignment #3)

Week Seven
February 20

Evaluating Qualitative Research
Triangulation

Readings:

- C = Chapter 10, pp. 201-213 (“Standards of Validation and Evaluation”)
- O = “Assessing and Evaluating Qualitative Research”
- O = “Why Triangulate?”
- H = “How Cultural Values Shape Learning in Older Adulthood: The Case of Malaysia”

Week Eight
February 27

Collecting Qualitative Data
Entering the Field
Interviews

Readings:

- B & B = Chapter 3 (“Fieldwork”)
Chapter 4 (“Qualitative Data”)
- C = Chapter 7 (“Data Collection”)
- O = “Interviewing Women: Issues of Friendship, Vulnerability, and Power”
- H = “Interviewing the Incarcerated: Personal Notes on Ethical and Methodological Issues”
- O = “Learning to Interview in the Social Sciences”

Week Nine
March 5

Collecting Qualitative Data (Observations)
Approach to Inquiry Presentation (Narrative)

Readings:

- O = “Field Notes: An Example”
- C = Chapter 5, pp. 86-88 (“A Narrative-Biographical Study”)
Appendix B, pp. 251-263 (“On the Bus with Vonnie Lee”)
Chapter 9, pp. 183-187 (“Narrative Research Structure”)
Chapter 10, pp. 213-215 (“Narrative Research”)

Week Ten
March 12

Spring Break!!
(No Class)

Week Eleven
March 19

Collecting Qualitative Data (Documents)
Approach to Inquiry Presentation (Phenomenological)

Readings:

- C = Chapter 5, pp. 88-89 (“A Phenomenological Study”)
Appendix C, pp. 265-283 (“Cognitive Representations of AIDS”)
Chapter 9, pp. 187-189 (“Phenomenological Structure”)
Chapter 10, pp. 215-216 (“Phenomenological Research”)

Due: Interview (Assignment #5)

Week Twelve
March 26

To Be Announced

Week Thirteen
April 2

Analyzing Qualitative Data
Approach to Inquiry Presentation (Grounded Theory)

Readings:

- B & B = Chapter 5 (“Data Analysis and Interpretation”)
- C = Chapter 8 (“Data Analysis and Representation”)
Chapter 5, pp. 90-91 (“A Grounded Theory Study”)
Appendix D, pp. 285-308 (“Constructions of Survival ...”)
Chapter 9, pp. 189-192 (“Grounded Theory Structure”)
Chapter 10, pp. 216-217 (“Grounded Theory Research”)
- O = “Making Sense as a Personal Process”
- O = “Things to Remember ... When you Analyze Data”

Week Fourteen
April 9

Ethical Considerations in Qualitative Research
Approach to Inquiry Presentation (Ethnographic)

Readings:

- O = “Great Ethical Divides: Bridging the Gap Between Institutional Review Boards and Researchers”
- O = “Doing Harm: An Unintended Consequence of Qualitative Inquiry?”
- C = Chapter 5, pp. 91-92 (“An Ethnographic Study”)
Appendix E, pp. 309-336 (“Rethinking Subcultural Resistance”)
Chapter 9, pp. 192-195 (“Ethnographic Structure”)
Chapter 10, pp. 217-218 (“Ethnographic Research”)

Week Fifteen
April 16

Ethical Considerations in Qualitative Research (cont.)
Tradition of Inquiry Presentation (Case Study)

Readings:

- H = “You Never Know When You Might Want to be a Redhead in Belize”
- C = Chapter 5, pp. 92-93 (“A Case Study”)
Appendix F, pp. 337-353 (“Campus Response to a Student Gunman”)
Chapter 9, pp. 195-197 (“Case Study Structure”)
Chapter 10, pp. 218-219 (“Case Study Research”)

Week Sixteen
April 23

Writing it Up
Pulling It All Together
Turning the Story

Readings:

- B & B – Chapter 6 (“Writing it up”)
- B & B – Chapter 7 (“Applied Qualitative Research for Education”)
- C = Chapter 5, pp. 93-96 (“Differences Among the Approaches” and “Summary”)
Chapter 9, pp. 177-183 (“Writing a Qualitative Study”)
Chapter 11 (“Turning the Story” and Conclusion”)
- O = “Top Ten Pieces of Advice to a Graduate Student Considering a Qualitative Dissertation”
- O = “Elegant Communications: Sharing Qualitative Research With Communities, Colleagues, and Critics”
- O = “Sample Paper I”
- O = “Sample Paper II”

Additional Resources for Novice Qualitative Researchers

Internet

American Educational Research Association < <http://aera.net/>>

This is the official web site for the American Educational Research Association (AERA), a professional association dedicated to educational research. Student membership is \$35. This year's Annual Meeting will be in New York City, March 24-28, 2008. If at all possible, you don't want to miss this conference!

QUALRS-L

This listserv is for those interested in lively discussion regarding all aspects of qualitative research. Subscribers to this listserv are also some of the most helpful (and nicest) people you will ever “meet.” For information about this listserv, go to:

<http://www.lsoft.com/scripts/wl.exe?SL1=QUALRS-L&H=LISTSERV.UGA.EDU>

International Institute for Qualitative Methodology <<http://www.ualberta.ca/~iiqm/>>

This Canadian web site provides rich resources related to qualitative research, including links to other qualitative research sites around the world.

Books

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

Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (Eds.). (2000). *Handbook of qualitative research* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Glaser, B. G., & Strauss, A. L. (1967). *The discovery of grounded theory: Strategies for qualitative research*. New York: Aldine.

- Glesne, C. (1999). *Becoming qualitative researchers: An introduction* (2nd ed.). New York: Longman.
- LeCompte, M. D., Millroy, W. L., & Preissle, J. (1992). *The handbook of qualitative research in education*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Maxwell, J. A. (2005). *Qualitative research design*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Merriam, S. B. (1998). *Qualitative research and case study applications in education*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Merriam, S. B., & Associates. (2002). *Qualitative research in practice: Examples for discussion and analysis*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Padgett, D. K. (1998). *Qualitative methods in social work research: Challenges and rewards*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Patton, M. Q. (1990). *Qualitative evaluation and research methods*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Rossmann, B. G., & Rallis, S. F. (2003). *Learning in the field: An introduction to qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Rothe, J. P. (2000). *Undertaking qualitative research: Concepts and cases in injury, health, and social life*. Boston: Houghton.
- Schwandt, T. A. (1997). *Qualitative inquiry: A dictionary of terms*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Silverman, D. (2000). *Doing qualitative research: A practical handbook*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Silverman, D. (2001). *Interpreting qualitative data: Methods for analyzing talk, text, and interaction* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Van Maanen, J. (1988). *Tales of the field: On writing ethnography*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Wolcott, H. F. (2001). *Writing up qualitative research* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Journals

Action Research International
Discourse Processes
Discourse Studies
Educational Action Research
Field Methods
Electronic Journal of Sociology
Ethnography
The Grounded Theory Review
International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education
International Journal of Social Research Methodology Theory & Practice
Journal of Contemporary Ethnography
Journal of Social and Personal Relationships
Narrative Inquiry
Qualitative Family Research
Qualitative Health Research
Qualitative Inquiry
The Qualitative Report
Qualitative Research

Qualitative Social Work: Research and Practice
Qualitative Sociology
Quality and Quantity: International Journal of Methodology
Research & Reflection: A Journal of Leadership and Organizations
Sociological Research Online
Social Research Update

Class Rules

Have ideas that no one has ever had before. You can, you know.

Whatever you are doing, never stop growing, developing, seeking, inquiring, and sensing. Seize life with ferocity and maximize every moment.

Encourage the growth and development of others. Stifling the growth of anyone (child, spouse, parent, lover, neighbor, stranger, student, teacher) is a crime against humanity. When any one person grows, we all grow.

Grow in many directions. Learn to reason, learn to play, learn to work hard, learn to strive, and learn to just sit and relax. Learn to love yourself and others. Keep your body, your mind, and your spirit in tip-top shape.

Be responsible. Come to class, and come on time. Come prepared to challenge and be challenged. Task yourself, your peers, and your teacher.

Travel. See the world. Meet as many people as you can. Make many friends. Have a few very, very close friends.

Keep a journal. Communicate with yourself. Write letters to your friends, your former teachers, and your elected representatives.

When you think there is nothing left to learn or that you know it all, you have stopped growing. Seek help immediately! ☺

