

QUALITATIVE RESEARCH PROGRAM

QUAL 8410: Designing Qualitative Research

Spring 2007

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Course Description

This course on qualitative data collection addresses both theoretical and practical dimensions of conducting qualitative research. Data collection concerns are embedded within the larger processes of qualitative research methods and must be considered in holistic ways. For example, data collection decisions are inherently tied to particular epistemological stances of the researcher as well as the research focus. In addition, data collection processes are interwoven with analysis and often occur simultaneously. Therefore this course examines data collection issues within the larger framework of qualitative research.

I assume that most students enrolled in this course have a desire to acquire the knowledge and methodological skills that are part of qualitative research methods for application within your academic program, for writing a doctoral dissertation and/or for your future career. The course is designed with flexibility so that you will be able to develop projects that will suit your own academic and professional needs. The workload in the course is extensive, however I hope that you will find the course intrinsically interesting and valuable.

An important aspect of the course will be ongoing collaborative interactions with your classmates. You will be working in a collaborative group for many of the class activities and projects. You will be learning a great deal from each other, and will need to make an effort to contribute constructively both to your group work and to the entire class. I view myself as both learner and teacher in the class, and expect each of you will also participate in both of those roles. The quality of your participation both in whole class participation and in your collaborative group will be considered as part of your grade in the course.

Course Objectives

As a learner you will be able to:

1. Conceptualize appropriate research problems and design a qualitative research approach to examining such problems using observation, interviewing, document analysis, or other related methods. You will prepare a proposal for a qualitative project that follows the procedures for a course project as specified by UGA's Institutional Review Board (human subjects review). You will identify the common qualitative data collection methods, specify how data are formulated into units, and discuss the advantages and disadvantages of different methods and formulations.
2. Reflect on the personal and conceptual presuppositions and assumptions that you bring to your proposed research project and compose a subjectivity statement to be reviewed by your peers.
 - a. You will discuss the possible ethical issues and dilemmas that may be associated with various phases of your proposed research and discuss how you expect to handle such challenges.
 - b. You will identify your conceptual frameworks and connect such frameworks to scholarly theories and pedagogies.
3. Reflect on your skills in conducting high quality qualitative research interviews, in taking detailed field notes during observations in field placements, and in collecting and interpreting archival and documentary data. You will design and conduct a plan to improve your skills in these areas. You will select and assess different means for recording qualitative data: prerecorded, recorded (manual and automatic), and non-recorded (from human memory).
4. Apply the qualitative research skills you are developing in critically analyzing your own and others' proposals and completed studies. You will identify and apply the alternative standards used to assess qualitative research.
5. You will work collaboratively in research group design and interpretation activities.

Required Texts (in UGA Campus Bookstore)

- Bentz, V. M., & Shapiro, J. J. (1998). *Mindful inquiry in social research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Emerson, R. M., Fretz, R. I., & Shaw, L. L. (1995). *Writing ethnographic fieldnotes*. Chicago & London: University of Chicago Press.
- Maxwell, J. A. (2005). *Qualitative research design: An interactive approach* (Vol. 41). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Prior, L. (2003). *Using documents in social research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Seidman, I. (2006). *Interviewing as qualitative research: A guide for researchers in education and the social sciences* (3rd ed.). New York and London: Teachers College.

Recommended text

Publication manual of the American Psychological Association (2001). (5th ed.). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

WebCT

Additional resources will be posted on WebCT. Use your UGA MyID to access these.

Discussion List

An electronic discussion list has been created for the duration of the class. Use this as a means of keeping in touch. You may post comments, questions or references which may be of interest to others to the list. **Posting to the list:**

To send mail to the list (i.e., to all list subscribers), send the message to the *list* address, QUAL8410-07@listserv.uga.edu

The default settings for the list are that any replies go to the whole list; and any attachments will be rejected.

Course Activities

This course encompasses a variety of practical activities designed to prepare you to design and conduct an independent research project.

IRB Proposal 10 points

You will construct a research proposal for your project for which you will submit to the course instructor for approval to do research.

The format for a course proposal may be downloaded from the IRB website at:

<http://www.ovpr.uga.edu/forms/Studentclassprojects.doc>

Your research study should meet the following requirements:

- 1. NO MINORS:** The project cannot include minors or any other vulnerable populations like pregnant women, prisoners, those who lack the capacity to consent, non-English speaking individuals, etc.
Exception: Research conducted in established or commonly accepted educational settings, involving normal educational practices, such as: research on regular and special education instructional strategies, or research on the effectiveness of, or the comparison among instructional techniques, curricula, or classroom management methods.
- 2. NO MORE THAN MINIMAL RISK:** "Minimal risk" is the probability and magnitude of harm that is normally encountered in the daily lives of healthy individuals. This also precludes the study of any illegal activities.
- 3. NO DECEPTION:** The project cannot include any deception. Individuals must be fully informed and given the opportunity to voluntarily consent to participation.
- 4. NO PUBLICATION:** Data from student projects approved under this fast track review category cannot be used for publication or for thesis/dissertation research.

- 5. NO VIDEOTAPING:** Audio taping is allowed if the recording is erased upon transcription or no later than the end of the semester.

The IRB has given the instructors of QUAL 8410 the right to grant approval for your research project as part of the course requirements. We will spend time in the early part of the course to ensure that you are clear on your research purposes and questions and that you understand the whole IRB process. You will need to look at the IRB webpage.

A consent form should be included with your application as specified by the IRB (See assignment module for format of proposal and consent form.)

Research Project

You will each propose a research project that will address your needs in the course. Research projects must involve collecting a variety of forms of data and making sense of those data. An example of such project might be a pilot study that "lights the way" for a more developed research project, but is limited in scope.

I have designed assignments in the course to engage you in the activities of interviewing, participant observation and archival data collection and interpretation. Assignments should ideally be connected to your research project. You will be required to collect three forms of data, one primary form of data collection (interviews) and two secondary forms (field notes and archival data).

The final research project report will contain the following components:

- Abstract
- Purpose/Research Question
- Subjectivities Statement
- Literature Review
- Description of Participants and/or Context
- Explanation of Data Collection Process
- Explanation of Data Analysis
- Preliminary Findings
- Response to Research Process

I have constructed the course in this way so that the final report will be a matter of combining much of what you have done during the semester into a final, complete report.

Book review: An ethnographic study

15 points

You are each responsible for reading and writing a critique of this book-length ethnography. What did you learn in this book that would inform your own work? You will include the following elements in your review (6-8 double-spaced pages) of the ethnography:

- Theoretical framework
- Researcher's interest in the site/researcher's subjectivities

- Researcher's role in the setting
- Quality of writing/writing style/ structure of the book
- Ways the researcher was able to capture the emic perspective of the participants in the site
- Ways researcher analyzed and represented the data (visual representations present?)
- Overall quality of the work

<i>Interview Project (Guide/Transcripts/Reflection)</i>	<i>20 points</i>
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You will conduct three one-hour interviews as the primary method of data collection for your research project. This interview project involves creating an interview guide, conducting the interview, transcribing your tapes, and writing a reflection on your process (2-3 double spaced pages). I strongly urge you to transcribe your own interview tapes so as to become intimately involved in your participants' stories. Transcription involves making analytic choices, and many scholars argue that it is the first stage of analysis.

<i>Group Participant Observation/Documentary Project</i>	<i>20 points</i>
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With a group, you will select a "research site" in which to develop and refine your participant observation skills. You will each observe in a setting (which may be related to your research project) for a two-hour time period. You will take condensed field notes (those taken in the field) and expanded fieldnotes (those constructed at your computer immediately following your fieldwork). Observations may be made in one setting, or multiple similar settings.

Within the research site you have chosen, group members will examine archival/artifact data. For example, if you are working in a school setting, there are many forms of artifacts that you could collect and interpret including: mission statements, schedules, teachers' planning books, bulletin board content, student papers, etc. If you are engaged in historical research, your archival data could include court records, letters, diaries, maps, photographs, and similar types of documents. The group will submit a collaborative report of the project (10-12 double spaced pages), including the following items: (1) inventory of data set (field notes & documents); (2) a written interpretation of patterns observed in the observations and archival data sets; and (3) group members' written reflection on the process.

<i>Mid-Point Research Project</i>	<i>15 points</i>
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Introduction to the topic of research

Research question

A well formulated research question(s) that guides your research study.

Literature review

Your review of literature should be written concisely and serve as a framework for your study (4-5 pages). You will need to review 8-10 articles in your area of research interest.

Subjectivity Statement

Include a written subjectivity statement (1-2 pages) based on your particular framework of knowledge (ie. epistemological stance) and reflecting other considerations regarding your personal history, gender, race, ethnicity, cultural history, particular interests, biases, and so forth.

Response to Research Process

This is a reflective summation of the research experience to this point. Describe for your readers exactly how you feel about the research process and if there is anything you might change in conducting future research studies (1-2 pages).

Reference List

The mid-point paper should be 10-12 double-spaced pages in length (excluding references)

<i>Final Research Project</i>	<i>20 points</i>
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Along with the items included in the mid-point research project, add the following sections:

Abstract

Description of Participants and/or Context

This description will be due after you have been immersed in the field for enough time to be able to construct either a portrait of a participant or a portrait of the context in which you are working. The portrait should be 2-3 pages and should be a rich description that engages your readers in your research setting or with your participants.

Explanation of Data Collection Process

This is a detailed description of the data collection methods you used in your research project. Describe for your readers exactly how you went about gaining entry into the field and collecting data from the research setting or from your participants. Your explanation will probably be 1-2 pages in length.

Explanation of Data Analysis

Describe to your readers exactly how you went about analyzing your data (1 page).

Preliminary Findings

This discussion will highlight the preliminary findings resulting from your data analysis (4-5 pages) with supporting evidence (i.e., excerpts from your data set).

Response to Complete Research Process

This final component of your research project will include a reflective summation of the entire research experience. Describe for your readers exactly how you feel about the research process and how you might change it in conducting future research studies (2 pages).

The final paper should be 20-25 double-spaced pages in length (excluding references).

Assessment

The key to doing well in this course is simple. Come to class on time, be well prepared, follow the directions specified in assignments, don't hesitate to ask for clarification if needed, and remember that both content and quality of your written products are important. Let this class be a place to let your creative energies flow freely.

Please complete reading and written assignments by the due date. Points will be deducted for papers submitted after the due date (0.5 points per day). Remember that **both** content and quality of your writing products are very important. If there are extenuating circumstances for which you require an extension, please arrange an appointment to discuss this with me. Extensions will not be granted on the due date of assignments.

All assignments should be submitted electronically via the "Assignment" module in WebCT. I will grade these electronically, and upload your work to the assignment module so you can read comments inserted into the document at your convenience.

Grades will be based on the following scheme:

IRB Proposal	10
Book Review	15
Interview assignment	20
Documentary & participant observation project	20
Mid-point paper	15
Final Research Project	20
<hr/> Total Points	<hr/> 100

Grading policy follows that of The University of Georgia.

The course will be graded on A-E basis. You will receive comments for your consideration for each item of assessment.

A	100-93
A-	92-90
B+	89-87
B	86-83
B-	82-80
C+	79-77
C	76-73
C-	72-70

Policy and Procedures

Attendance and Participation

Please be prompt to class.

I expect regular attendance and points will be deducted from the final grade if there are excessive absences (missing more than 6 hours of a 3-credit course). Your participation in class discussions and course activities is essential. If you have a conflict with a session due to prior commitments, please see me privately (so as not to use our limited class time with individual scheduling concerns).

I expect people to come to class prepared, to contribute to class discussions, and participate in activities. Frequent lack of preparation or failure to contribute will also be taken into account in the final course grade.

You will be expected to share your experiences in the interviewing class with others in the class for discussion and feedback.

Email

All students are required to have and to use an electronic mail account. For urgent messages, the class discussion list should be used. Other email may be facilitated via WebCT, so be sure to check WebCT regularly for messages or postings.

Accommodations for Qualified Individuals with Disabilities

It is the policy of The University of Georgia to make reasonable accommodations for qualified individuals with disabilities. If you have a disability and desire accommodations to complete your course requirements, please notify me as soon as possible to discuss your request.

Tutorial assistance

Assistance with writing and editing is available from The Division of Academic Enhancement at Milledge Hall Learning Center. Ph. 542 7575.

Walk in assistance is also available at the Student Learning Center. See:

http://www.slc.uga.edu/students/writing_center.html

Free and Open Exchange of Ideas: Classroom Climate

As a graduate student at The University of Georgia, the free discourse of ideas should be expected. I believe the open exchange of ideas is necessary for learning. You may find that some of the class readings and discussions challenge your views and theoretical frameworks. I expect openness to difference and a willingness to interpret issues from frameworks that may not be quite so comfortable for you.

I have opinions, and will express those. You are free to express either agreement or disagreement without fear of consequences. This does not mean of course, that I may not challenge your views or disagree with them. But it does mean that you will experience no consequences for disagreeing with me. If you feel that I am violating this commitment, please arrange an appointment to discuss the issue.

Please be sensitive in your class participation by not unfairly dominating discussions. My goal is to create a psychologically safe space in which everyone feels that they can participate in the discussion. This does not mean people cannot disagree. This does not mean people cannot have emotions connected to their words. What it does mean is that we all need to be sensitive, appreciative, and respectful, no matter how strongly we might disagree.

Academic Honesty

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.

"I will be academically honest in all of my academic work and will not tolerate academic dishonesty of others." UGA Student Honor Code

The University of Georgia seeks to promote and ensure academic honesty and personal integrity among students and other members of the University community. Academic honesty is defined broadly and simply -- the performance of all academic work without cheating, lying, stealing, or receiving assistance from any other person or using any source of information not appropriately authorized or attributed. All students must comply with an appropriate and sound academic honesty policy and code of honest behavior. All members of the University community are responsible for and involved in bringing about an honest university, and all must work together to ensure the success of the policy and code of behavior. Where suspected violations of the academic honesty policy occur, appropriate procedures are designed to protect the academic process and integrity while ensuring due process. All students are responsible for maintaining the highest standards of honesty and integrity in every phase of their academic careers. The penalties for academic dishonesty are severe and ignorance is not an acceptable defense.

I take academic honesty seriously, and plagiarism will not be tolerated. Quality academic writing includes accurate reference to others' ideas with appropriate acknowledgement.

Further Information

<http://www.uga.edu/ovpi/honesty/acadhon.htm>

A Note on the Human Subjects & IRB

Data from research involving human subjects that is collected during qualitative research courses, or used in project-based work in qualitative courses in the College of Education (whether taken by students inside or outside the COE), must either be approved for research under an existing UGA Institutional Review Board (IRB) approved application or under the IRB-approved class project application submitted by the instructor of the class.

Students who plan to use data generated in QUAL 8410 in their dissertations MUST have IRB approval for their project prior to the commencement of the course.



Your instructor

I am an associate professor in the Qualitative Research program, which is one of three programs in the Department of Lifelong Education, Administration, and Policy. In 2001 I took a tenure-track position at UGA after spending one year as a post-doctoral fellow in the Qualitative Research program. Prior to moving to the US, I taught music education in elementary schools (P-8) in Queensland, Australia, and was adjunct instructor in pre-service teacher education programs at the University of Southern Queensland, Queensland

University of Technology, and the University of Queensland. I have a Bachelor of Music Education from the Queensland Conservatorium of Music (1985), a Masters of Music Education (Kodály emphasis) (1992) from the University of Calgary, Canada, and a PhD in Education (2000) from the University of Queensland. I completed my doctoral program in the Graduate School of Education because I wanted to learn more about qualitative research methodology. I'm still learning! My research interests include the study of qualitative research methodology, including ethnomethodological and conversation analytic approaches to research, and the study of topics in music education. Selected publications are listed at:

<http://www.coe.uga.edu/leap/faculty/roulston/index.html>

Note:

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

Course Schedule

Week 1. January 10 Introductions and research interests

- Overview of course
- Qualitative research design
- Preparing for the IRB proposal
- Sign up list for discussion questions

Week 2. January 17 Qualitative research design

Maxwell, Chapters 1-4 (pp. 1-78)

Week 3. January 24 Methods & research proposals

Maxwell, Chapter 5-7 (pp. 79-158)

Institutional Review Board Proposal Due (first draft)

Week 4. January 31 Theory & research design I

Bentz & Shapiro, Chapters 1-6 (pp. 1-95)

Week 5. February 7 Theory & research design II

Bentz & Shapiro, Chapters 7-12 (pp. 96-168)

Institutional Review Board Proposal Due

Week 6. February 14 Interviewing in qualitative research

Seidman, Chapters 1-5 (pp. 1-77)

Week 7. February 21 Interviewing in qualitative research

Seidman, Chapters 6-8 + appendices (pp. 78-144)

Week 8. February 28 Participant observation & field notes

Emerson, Fretz & Shaw, Chapters 1-4 (pp. 1-107)

Mid point paper due

Week 9. March 7 Participant observation & field notes

Emerson, Fretz & Shaw, Chapters 5-8 (pp. 108-216)

Spring Break March 12-16

Week 10. March 21 Documents in social research

Prior, Chapters 1-5 (pp. 1-106)

Week 11. March 28 Documents in social research

Prior, Chapters 6-9 (pp. 107-173)

Documentary and participant observation project due

Week 12. April 4 Representing ethnographic inquiry: Book circles
(Own choice ethnography)

Book reviews due

Week 13. April 11 Individual work week: NO CLASS

Week 14. April 18 Analysis, interpretation and reporting
Interview project due

Week 15. April 25 Class Presentations

Final projects due 7 May

Due dates for projects

<u>Item</u>	<u>Date due</u>
IRB proposal: 1 st draft	January 24
IRB proposal	February 7
Mid point Paper	February 28
Documentary & Participant Observation Project	March 28
Book Review	April 4
Interview Project	April 18
Class presentations	April 25
Final project	May 7

Own Choice Ethnographies

The following books are available on line at sources such as Barnes & Noble and Amazon.com, or you might like to borrow them from the library. Everyone in the class will read a different book, so you will need to sign up for a particular book.

Adler, P. A. (1993). *Wheeling & dealing: An ethnography of an upper-level drug dealing and smuggling community*. NY: Columbia University Press.

Aretxaga, B. (1997). *Shattering silence: Women, nationalism, and political subjectivity in Northern Ireland*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Cintron, R. (1997). *Angels' town: Chero Ways, gang life and rhetorics of the everyday*. Boston: Beacon Press.

Dei, G. J.S.; Mazzuca, J.; McIsaac, E; Zine, J. (1997). *Reconstructing 'drop-out: ' A critical ethnography of the dynamics of Black students' disengagement from school*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Doucet, A. (2006). *Do men mother? Fatherhood, care, and domestic responsibility*. University of Toronto Press.

Duneier, M. (1994). *Slim's table: Race, respectability, and masculinity*. University of Chicago Press.

Fine, M. (1991). *Framing dropouts: Notes on the politics of an urban public high school*. Albany: State University of New York Press.

Jackson, J. L. (2001). *Harlem world: Doing race and class in contemporary black America*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Lanehart, S. L. (2002). *Sista, speak! Black women kinfolk talk about language and literacy*. Austin: University of Texas Press.

Lareau, A. (2003). *Unequal childhoods: Class, race, and family life*. University of California Press.

Luttrell, W. (2003). *Pregnant bodies, fertile minds: Gender, race, and the schooling of pregnant teens*. New York: Routledge.

Markham, A. N. (1998). *Life online: Research real experience in virtual space*. Walnut Creek: Altamira Press.

Ogbu, J. & Davis, A. (2003). *Black American students in an affluent suburb: A study of academic disengagement*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Owen, B. (1998) "*In the mix:*" *Struggle and survival in a women's prison*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Perry, P. (2002). *Shades of White: White kids and racial identity in high school*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Peshkin, A. (1991). *The color of strangers, the color of friends: The play of ethnicity in school and community*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Peshkin, A. (1997). *Places of memory: Whiteman's schools and Native American communities*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Pollock, M. (2005). *Colormute: Race talk dilemmas in an American school*. Princeton University Press.

Proweller, A. (1998). *Constructing female identities*. Albany: State University of New York Press.

- Rhodes, L. (1995). *Emptying beds: The work of an emergency psychiatric unit*. University of California Press.
- Rogers, R. (2003). *A critical discourse analysis of family literacy practices*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Spradley, J. (1970). *You owe yourself a drunk: An ethnography of urban nomads*. Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland.
- Spradley, J. P. & Mann, B. J. (1975). *Cocktail waitress woman's work in a man's world*. NY: McGraw Hill.
- Wacquant, L. (2004). *Body and soul: Notebooks of an apprentice boxer*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Waterson, A. (1999). *Love, sorrow, and rage: Destitute women in a Manhattan residence*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- Weis, L. (2004). *Class reunion: The remaking of the American white working class*. Routledge.
- Wolcott, H. F. (1973). *The man in the principal's office: An ethnography*. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.
- Wright, J. M. (1998). *Lesbian step families: An ethnography of love*. NY: Harrington Park Press.