

Qualitative Inquiry Program

Course title: **QUAL 9800, 81-692, Qualitative Evaluation**
Instructor: **Melissa Freeman**
Office: **329 River's Crossing**
Phone: **706-542-3613**
Email: freeman9@uga.edu
Office Hours: **Wednesdays 2:30 – 3:30 pm; or by appointment**

Class Times: **Wednesdays 4:40 – 7:40 pm**
Location: **River's Crossing G63**
Spring 2007: **January 10, 2007 – April 25, 2007**
Credits: **3.0**

*"To depend on great thinkers, authorities, and experts is, it seems to me, a violation of the spirit of democracy. Democracy rests on the idea that, except for technical details for which experts may be useful, the important decisions of society are within the capability of ordinary citizens. Not only **can** ordinary people make decisions about these issues, but they **ought** to, because citizens understand their own interests more clearly than any experts."*

(Howard Zinn, 1990, p. 6; emphasis in original)

Course Description

Examination of the concepts and methods employed in the negotiation, design, implementation, and report of qualitative program evaluations. Integration of theory and practice through the conduct of an evaluation study in a supervised setting.

Required Texts (Available UGA Campus Bookstore)

Schwandt, Thomas A. (2002). *Evaluation practice reconsidered*. New York, NY: Peter Lang Publishing. ISBN 0-8204-5705-1

Stake, Robert E. (2004). *Standards-based & responsive evaluation*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. ISBN 0-7619-2665-8

Additional Readings

All additional readings are available at the Reserve Desk at the Main Library, and all have been scanned and are available electronically as PDF files. To access the documents, go to the Course Reserve module in GIL (<http://gil.uga.edu>). The password access is: **eval**.

Nature of this Course

Qualitative evaluation is conducted within specific social contexts; each involving its own social, political, cultural, moral, and economic features, which in turn shape the evaluation. Students will examine first-hand this relationship by engaging in the planning, conducting, analyzing, and reporting of an evaluation of a local educational program (such as a museum or after-school program). Through this project and class readings, students will explore how differing evaluation models and conceptions of the role of evaluation shape the relationship the evaluator establishes with stakeholder groups, the methods employed for data collection, the level of stakeholder inclusion in the design and implementation of the evaluation, and strategies for analysis and reporting. Some class time will be devoted to the evaluation project but students will be expected to devote time outside of class to this work.

Objectives

Students taking this course will:

- Better understand the historical development of qualitative evaluation and its role in educational and social programming
- Become familiar with major approaches in qualitative evaluation
- Be able to design and carry out a qualitative evaluation
- Understand the logic of evaluative thinking
- Be able to identify and understand the kinds of evaluation questions addressed by qualitative approaches

University of Georgia Honor Code and Academic Honesty Policy

All academic work must meet the standards contained in “A culture of Honesty.” All students are responsible for informing themselves about those standards before performing any academic work. Learning to appropriately quote and paraphrase and to cite and attribute sources is a skill that is key to honest and creative scholarship. All students should review the guidelines at the website http://www.uga.edu/ovpi/academic_honesty/culture_honesty.htm. If you have questions about what would be considered violations of the standards, please raise them in class or ask me.

Need for Editorial Assistance

This course requires substantial writing. Students who need editorial assistance are encouraged to make such arrangements. A good place to start is the UGA Writing Center: <http://www.english.uga.edu/~writingcenter/home.html>.

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 are a person with a disability and desire

accommodations to complete your course requirements, please notify the course instructor as soon as possible to discuss your request.

Syllabus Changes

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

Requirements and Grading

1. I expect regular and punctual attendance and will take excessive absences (missing more than 2 classes) into account in the final course grade. If you have a conflict with a session due to a prior commitment, please email or see me privately (so as not to use our limited class time with individual scheduling concerns).
2. Your participation is required in this class and is the determining component of your final grade. Failure to significantly contribute to the final evaluation report will be taken into account in the final course grade.
3. All students are required to use the WebCT services that support this course. Some course material will be available only on the course WebCT site. We will use WebCT to post messages, ask questions, share data collected as well as preliminary analytic reflections, and for sharing resources on specific topics. Assignments are to be submitted on the WebCT site. For access go to: <http://www.uga.edu/> click on "My WebCT," then log in to this course using your UGA MyID.
4. All students are required to complete the following written assignments with the final grade based on the distribution indicated below:

Project	%	Due Date
Evaluation Project	70	
Report Section		Ongoing
Observations/Interview/Focus Group		Ongoing
Final Report		4/25
Participation		Ongoing
Response to Schwandt	15	3/9
Subjectivities Statement/Journal	15	3/30
Total:	100	

Grading

Grading follows the University of Georgia policy:

100 – 93 = A	79 – 77 = C+
92 – 90 = A-	76 – 73 = C
89 – 87 = B+	72 – 70 = C-
86 – 83 = B	69 – 60 = D
82 – 80 = B-	59 – 0 = F

Descriptions of Assignments

1. Evaluation Project

Working as a group, you will design and conduct an evaluation study. Responsibilities for this project will be worked out collaboratively in class.

(a) Report Sections

1. Executive Summary
2. Background and Overview of Program
3. Evaluation Design and Methods
4. Results
5. Discussion and Recommendations

(b) Observations and Interviews

Everyone will be responsible for conducting at least 2 observations (typed up and expanded) and at least one interview or focus group (fully transcribed).

(c) Final Report

Writing up results and reporting back to the program.

2. Subjectivities Statement/Journal

By this time, you will have worked through the general design of your team's evaluation project. You will also have visited the program site and talked to some of the program participants. Write a brief (4 pages maximum) discussion of your thoughts, concerns, and understandings at this stage of your project. For ex: What do you see as the strengths and weaknesses to working in a team? As a result of this experience, what possible issues do you see occurring in participatory or action-oriented evaluation designs? What issues have arisen in regards to access or data collection methods? How were these resolved? Who are you in relation to this project? How has who you are affected your perceptions of the program and your interactions with program participants? What thoughts do you have about yourself as an evaluator and team member as a result of this experience so far?

3. Response to Schwandt

While we read Schwandt, write and bring a 1- 2 page, typed, single-spaced response to the reading for that class. Do not merely summarize the text – select one or two points from the text as your points of departure and question them, argue with them, agree with them, respond to them, or otherwise engage with them. Think about the reading in connection to the evaluation study you are currently engaged in or in connection to the role of evaluation in society. Come to class prepared to share and discuss your response. I will collect all three responses when we have concluded our reading and discussion of this book.

Schedule of Class Meetings

Date	Topic	Readings Due	Evaluation Activities	Assignment Due
PART I: Designing and Conducting a Qualitative Evaluation				
1. 1/10	Characteristics of Qualitative Evaluation		Pass out EE Handouts	
2. 1/17	Responsive and Naturalistic Evaluation	Hood (2001) Lapan (2004) EE History of Evaluation EE Naturalistic Evaluation EE Quant-Qual Debate in Evaluation	Planning for Evaluating Qualitatively	
3. 1/24	Focusing an Evaluation	Stake Chs. 1, 2, 3 & 4 (pp. ix-107)	The Program: What is the program, its history and function?	Check over the program's website and come prepared to discuss and describe its core components.
4. 1/31	Thinking Imaginatively about Evaluation Questions	Stake Chs. 5 & 7 Guba & Lincoln (1989) Ryan et al. (1998)	Preliminary observations and questions – What would relevant stakeholders like to know about the program?	Visit the program and talk to several program stakeholders about what they would like to know about the program?
5.	Ethnographic	Camino (1997)	Developing	

2/7	Methods in Evaluation	Dorr-Bremme (1985) Swanson & Chapman (1994)	Evaluation Questions and Planning Interviews and Observations	
6. 2/14	Quality in Qualitative Evaluation	Knott (1998) Kushner (2001) Rallis & Rossman (2001)	Interviews and Observations	From now till April post your observation notes and transcripts on webct as you complete them.
PART II: Conducting Evaluation in Society				
7. 2/21	Rethinking Evaluation	Schwandt (2002) (pp. 1-74)	Interviews and Observations	Response 1 to Schwandt
8. 2/28	The Role of Understanding in Evaluation	Schwandt (2002) (pp. 77-133)	Interviews and Observations	Response 2 to Schwandt
9. 3/7	Moral, Ethical, and Political Perspectives	Schwandt (2002) (pp. 137-199)		Response 3 to Schwandt All Responses DUE 3/9
10. 3/14	No Class		Spring Break	
11. 3/21	Cultural Issues in Evaluation	Hood & Cassaro (2002) Sengupta et al. (2004) Zulli & Frierson (2004)		
12. 3/28	Evaluation and Democracy	Greene (2006) House (2006)		Subjectivities Statement DUE 3/30
PART III: Analyzing, Synthezing, Writing the Report				
13. 4/4	Analyzing Qualitative Data	Stake Chs. 6 & 8 Thomas (2006)		
14. 4/11	Synthesizing Multiple Perspectives	Stake Chs. 9 & 10 EE Constant Comparative Method		
15. 4/18	Writing Up and Reporting	Scriven (1997) Stake (1997)		

	Results			
16. 4/25	Last Class	Debriefing		Final Evaluation Report DUE

Course Readings

Camino, Linda A. (1997). What can anthropologists offer ethnographic program evaluation? *National Association for the Practice of Anthropology Bulletin*, 17(1), 41-57.

Dorr-Bremme, Donald W. (1985). Ethnographic evaluation: A theory and method. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 7(1), 65-83.

Greene, Jennifer C. (2006) Evaluation, democracy, and social change. In I. F. Shaw, J. C. Greene, M. M. Mark (Eds.), *Handbook of evaluation: Policies, programs and practices* (pp. 118-140). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Guba, Egon G. & Lincoln, Yvonna S. (1989). The methodology of fourth generation evaluation, chapter 7,. In Guba, Egon G. & Lincoln, Yvonna S., *Fourth generation evaluation* (pp. 184-227). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Hood, Denice Ward & Cassaro, Denice A. (2002). Feminist evaluation and the inclusion of difference. *New Directions for Evaluation*, 96, 27-40.

Hood, Stafford (2001). Nobody knows my name: In praise of African American evaluators who were responsive. In J. C. Greene & T. A. Abma (Eds.), *Responsive evaluation* (pp. 31-44). New Directions for Evaluation 92. San Francisco, CA: Jossey Bass.

House, E. R. (2006). Democracy and evaluation. *Evaluation* 12(1), 119-127.

Knott, Tara D. (1998). A wiz of a way to remember the five guiding principles for evaluators. *American Journal of Evaluation*, 19(1), 135-139.

Kushner, Saville (2001). Culture, standards, and program qualities. In A.P. Benson, D. M. Hinn, & C. Lloyd (Eds.) (2001), *Visions of quality: How evaluators define, understand and represent program quality*. Advances in Program Evaluation, V. 7, (pp. 121-134). JAI Press.

Lapan, Stephen D. (2004). Evaluation studies. In K. deMarrais and S. D. Lapan (Eds.), *Foundations for research: Methods of inquiry in education and the social studies* (pp. 235-248). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

MacNeil, Cheryl & Mead, Shery (2005). A narrative approach to developing standards for trauma-informed peer support. *American Journal of Evaluation*, 26(2), 231-244.

Rallis, Sharon F. and Rossman, Gretchen B. (2001). Communicating quality and qualities: The role of the evaluator as critical friend. In A.P. Benson, D. M. Hinn, & C. Lloyd (Eds.) (2001), *Visions of quality: How evaluators define, understand and represent program quality*. *Advances in Program Evaluation*, V. 7, (pp. 107-120). JAI Press.

Ryan, K., Greene, J., Lincoln, Y., Mathison, S. & Mertens, D. M. (1998). Advantages and challenges of using inclusive evaluation approaches in evaluation practice. *American Journal of Evaluation*, 19(1), 101-122.

Scriven, Michael (1997). Truth and objectivity in evaluation. In E. Chelmsky and W. R. Shadish (Eds.), *Evaluation for the 21st century: A handbook* (pp. 477-500). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

SenGupta, Saumitra, Hopson, Rodney, & Thompson-Robinson, Melva (2004). Cultural competence in evaluation: An overview. *New Directions for Evaluation*, 102, 5-19.

Shaw, Ian F. (1999). Ch. 1 and Ch. 2: Encountering qualitative evaluation and Evaluation theorists and qualitative evaluation: persuasions and persuaders. In Ian Shaw, *Qualitative Evaluation* (pp. 1-41). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Stake, Robert E. (1997). Advocacy in evaluation: A necessary evil? In E. Chelmsky and W. R. Shadish (Eds.), *Evaluation for the 21st century: A handbook* (pp. 470-476). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Swanson, Janice M. & Chapman, Linda (1994). Inside the black box: Theoretical and methodological issues in conducting evaluation research using a qualitative approach. In J. M. Morse (Ed.), *Critical issues in qualitative research methods* (pp. 65-93). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Thomas, David R. (2006). A general inductive approach for analyzing qualitative evaluation data. *American Journal of Evaluation*, 27(2), 237-246.

Wadsworth, Yoland (2001). Becoming responsive – and some consequences for evaluation as dialogue across distance. In J. C. Greene & T. A. Abma (Eds.), *Responsive evaluation* (pp. 45-58). *New Directions for Evaluation* 92. San Francisco, CA: Jossey Bass.

Zulli, Rebecca A. & Frierson, Henry T. (2004). A focus on cultural variables in evaluating an Upward Bound program. *New Directions for Evaluation*, 102, 81-93.