

INTRODUCTION TO QUALITATIVE RESEARCH FOR SOCIAL SCIENCES (PSYO380G)

2023 SUMMER TERM 1

Duration: Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Fridays; 12-2:30 PM

Instructor: Kirthana Ganesh

Office: ASC 281

Office hours: By appointment (in-person or virtual)

Mode: In-Person (EME 2111)

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This seminar-style synchronous course is an introduction to qualitative research. After defining qualitative research, discussing its basic features, as well as its salient similarities and differences with quantitative research, we will lay out the steps involved in formulating a qualitative research project. We will explore the most common types of research questions, data collection methods, and analyses used in qualitative research. Students will have the opportunity to engage with all stages of the qualitative research process, including formulating a research question, establishing an epistemological and ontological stance, creating a research design, selecting appropriate data collection methods, and analyzing and writing up results.

Pre-requisites: Six credits of 200-level in a Social Science course. Please contact the instructor before registering if you do not have the necessary pre-requisites.

COURSE FORMAT

This course is designed to offer practical and hands-on experience with qualitative research. There will be seminar-style lectures with the expectation that students will actively participate and engage in class discussion. It is expected that you will give some thought to and develop a research idea that you would want to study using qualitative research. This will enable you to apply the concepts learnt in the course to actual topics that you care about.

Perspective Swapping

On a topic of discussion, students will pick the viewpoint that they are least familiar with or most disagree with. They will then try to flesh out the best argument they can from this viewpoint that is most different from their own. Results will be shared in small groups.

Small Group Discussion

At times we will break into smaller groups of students to facilitate more efficient discussion or development of ideas. We will start with a couple minutes of brainstorming individually, and then students will bring their ideas forward to discuss and flesh out as a small group. The small groups will assign a speaker to report to the class as a whole.

Reflective Writing

Reflective writing is different from most writing assignments as the purpose is the process rather than the end result. At different points you will be asked to engaged in reflective writing as a tool to process,

organize, and understand your thoughts. You can think of it as brainstorming with yourself on paper. They will be useful to prepare you to participate in discussion.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

After completing this course and its units, students will be able to:

- Define and describe the process of qualitative research
- Summarize the historical development of qualitative research
- Identify and articulate their epistemological and ontological stance on various research issues
- Evaluate some of the key philosophical and methodological differences between qualitative and quantitative research
 - Defend the need for both traditions in research
- Formulate research questions suitable for qualitative research
- Select appropriate sampling and data collection methods for a qualitative research project
- Identify the key features of data analysis methods like thematic analysis, content analysis, grounded theory, and ethnography.
- Distil themes from raw data, and construct conceptual frameworks for data analysis
- Integrate themes to provide a cohesive summary of results

EVALUATION CRITERIA, GRADING AND DELIVERABLES

This course is graded on a numeric (percentage) basis. Students will be asked to participate in classroom activities, present on a topic as a group, and write a midterm and submit a final paper for evaluation to demonstrate that they have met the learning objectives.

Participation (20%): Throughout the course students will be given opportunity to participate in various class activities, and graded *only* for engagement. These activities include those described in the course format and general participation within seminars. The grade assigned will be based on active engagement, listening, and when appropriate, preparation for in class activities and discussion.

Reflective Reports (20%): Throughout the course, students will be asked to reflect on different concepts discussed in class. Students will be required to submit **two** reports, up to 1000 words EACH (this will be around 4 pages of double-spaced writing). The reports should include the students' opinions about the topic learnt, how it has affected their perception of research, critical evaluation of the concept, as well as anticipated benefits and challenges of using the same in their own research. Students can select the topics that they would want to write about, as long as it is submitted by the deadlines specified. A detailed rubric of the report and its requirements can be found on Canvas.

Midterm Exam (30%): The midterm exam will consist of multiple-choice questions. Questions will be drawn from seminar content, as well as assigned readings and the textbook.

Final Submission (30%): Students will be required to work individually on a qualitative research project proposal. **Students are not expected to actually carry out the study proposed;** the goal of the submission is to demonstrate understanding of the steps involved in planning a qualitative research study. It should include:

- Abstract
- Introduction and Background
 - Epistemology and Ontology
 - Purpose
 - Significance
 - Limitations
- Methodology
 - Target Population
 - Research Design
 - Procedure
- Proposed Analysis Method
 - Description
 - Procedure

COURSE SCHEDULE

(Schedule may be subject to change. Students will be informed in advance)

Date	Topics	Readings
Week 1: May 16	Introduction to Qualitative Research	Review of Syllabus Definition of Qualitative Research
Week 1: May 17	Philosophical Considerations: Ontology & Epistemology	Chapter 1: The Foundations of Qualitative Research (pp. 1-5; 11-18)
Week 1: May 19	Historical Foundations of Qualitative Research	Brinkmann, S., Jacobsen, M. H., & Kristiansen, S. (2014). Historical overview of qualitative research in the social sciences. In Leavy, P (Ed.), <i>The Oxford Handbook of Qualitative Research</i> (pp. 17-42). Oxford University Press.
Week 2: May 23		
Week 2: May 24	Indigenous Epistemologies and Qualitative Research	Kovach, M. (2009). Indigenous and qualitative inquiry: a round dance? In <i>Indigenous Methodologies: Characteristics, Conversations, and Contexts</i> (pp. 23-38). University of Toronto Press.
Week 2: May 26	Functions of Qualitative Research	Chapter 2: The Applications of Qualitative Methods to Social Research
Week 3: May 30		

Week 3: May 31	Comparing Qualitative and Quantitative Research Qualitative Research Design and Sample Selection	Yilmaz, K. (2013). Comparison of quantitative and qualitative research traditions: epistemological, theoretical, and methodological differences, <i>European Journal of Education</i> , 48(2), 311-325. Chapter 3: Design Issues <u>Reflection paper 1 due</u>
Week 3: June 2	Qualitative Research Design Sample Selection	Chapter 4: Designing and Selecting Samples (pp. 76-85)
Week 4: June 6	Data Collection: Interviews	Chapter 6: In-Depth Interviews *NOTE: Chapter 7 in some versions of the textbook Optional Reading: Brinkmann, S. (2014). Unstructured and Semi-Structured Interviewing. In Leavy, P (Ed.), <i>The Oxford Handbook of Qualitative Research</i> (pp. 277-297). Oxford University Press.
Week 4: June 7	Other Data Collection Methods	No Required Reading for this week Guest speaker: Studying social media qualitatively Discussing midterm-related queries Optional Reading: Fontaine, S. (2017). What's not to like?: A qualitative study of young women politicians' self-framing on Twitter. <i>Journal of Public Relations Research</i> , 29(5), 219-237. https://doi.org/10.1080/1062726X.2017.1388239
Week 4: June 9	Midterm	
Week 5: June 13	Data Analysis	Chapter 8: Analysis: Practices, Principles, and Processes (up to pp. 203) *NOTE: Chapter 10: Analysis: Principles, Processes in some versions of the textbook
Week 5: June 14	Data Analysis	Chapter 8: Analysis: Practices, Principles, and Processes *NOTE: Chapter 11: Analysis in Practice in some versions of the textbook

Week 5: June 16	Data Analysis: Thematic Analysis	<p>Clarke, V., & Braun, V. (2017). Thematic Analysis. <i>The Journal of Positive Psychology</i>, 12(3), 297-298. https://doi.org/10.1080/17439760.2016.1262613</p> <p>Nowell, L. S., Norris, J. M., White, D. E., & Moules, N, J. (2017). Thematic analysis: Striving to meet the trustworthiness criteria. <i>International Journal of Qualitative Methods</i>, 16, 1-13.</p> <p>Optional Reading: Michel, T., Tachtler, F., Slovak, P., & Fitzpatrick, G. (2020). Young people's attitude toward positive psychology interventions: Thematic Analysis. <i>JMIR Human Factors</i>, 7 (4), 1-18. DOI: 10.2196/21145.</p> <p><u>Reflection Paper 2 due</u></p>
Week 6: June 20	Generalisation and Qualitative Research	Chapter 10: Generalising from Qualitative Research *NOTE: Chapter 12 in some versions of the textbook
Week 6: June 21	Wrap-up, Review, and Project discussion	<u>Final Project Proposal due by midnight the following Wednesday (June 28)</u>

REQUIRED READINGS

Students are asked to familiarize themselves with the required readings before class. Articles are listed in the schedule and PDF versions are available on Canvas for students to review at their discretion. Please keep in mind that reading-based questions, and concepts from optional readings are fair game for the midterm exam

TEXTBOOK

Ritchie, J., & Lewis, J. (Eds.). (2014). *Qualitative Research Practice: A Guide for Social Science Students and Researchers*. SAGE Publications.

FINAL PROJECT

The project should be uploaded as a Word document or PDF on Canvas. The proposal should be between 8-10 pages double-spaced, and formatted according to APA 7 guidelines. The rubric for the assignment will be available on Canvas. Students are encouraged to schedule office hours to discuss ideas for their project. The last day of class will set aside some time to discuss any last-minute questions or concerns about the project. Late submissions are strongly discouraged. The mark for the assignment will be reduced by 3% for each calendar day that it is late.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

The academic enterprise is founded on honesty, civility, and integrity. As members of this enterprise, all students are expected to know, understand, and follow the codes of conduct regarding academic integrity. At the most basic level, this means submitting only original work done by you and acknowledging all sources of information or ideas and attributing them to others as required. This also means you should not cheat, copy, or mislead others about what is your work. Violations of academic integrity (i.e., misconduct) lead to the breakdown of the academic enterprise, and therefore serious consequences arise and harsh sanctions are imposed. For example, incidences of plagiarism or cheating may result in a mark of zero on the assignment or exam and more serious consequences may apply if the matter is referred to the President's Advisory Committee on Student Discipline. Careful records are kept in order to monitor and prevent recurrences.

A more detailed description of academic integrity, including the University's policies and procedures, may be found in the Academic Calendar at

<http://okanagan.students.ubc.ca/calendar/index.cfm?tree=3,54,111,0>.

UBC OKANAGAN DISABILITY RESOURCE CENTRE

The Disability Resource Centre ensures educational equity for students with disabilities, injuries or illness. If you are disabled, have an injury or illness and require academic accommodations to meet the course objectives, please contact Earllene Roberts, the Diversity Advisor for the Disability Resource Centre located in Commons Corner in the University Centre building (UNC 227).

UNC 227A 250.807.9263

Email: **earllene.roberts@ubc.ca**

Web: **www.ubc.ca/okanagan/students/drc**

UBC OKANAGAN OMBUDS OFFICE

The Ombuds Office offers independent, impartial, and confidential support to students in navigating UBC policies, processes, and resources, as well as guidance in resolving concerns related to fairness.

UNC 227B 250.807.9818

Email: **ombuds.office.ok@ubc.ca**

Web: **<http://ombudsoffice.ubc.ca/ubc-okanagan-2/>**

UBC OKANAGAN EQUITY AND INCLUSION OFFICE

UBC Okanagan is a place where every student, staff and faculty member should be able to study and work in an environment that is free from discrimination and harassment. UBC prohibits discrimination and harassment on the basis of the following grounds: age, ancestry, colour, family status, marital status, physical or mental disability, place of origin, political belief, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation or

unrelated criminal conviction. If you require assistance related to an issue of equity, discrimination or harassment, please contact the Equity and Inclusion Office.

UNC 227C 250.807.9291

email: equity.ubco@ubc.ca

Web: www.ubc.ca/okanagan/equity

HEALTH & WELLNESS

UBCO Health and Wellness website: www.students.ok.ubc.ca/health-wellness

UBCO Counselling Services: please call 250-807-9270 to book an appointment.

Emergent situations: Please use one of the following telephone numbers

Health and Wellness 250-807-9270 (Mon-Fri, 9am-4pm)

Security 250-807-8111 (emergency)

Security 250-807-9236 (non-emergency)

24 Hour Crisis line 1-800-784-2433 (1-800-SUICIDE)

24 Hour Nurses Help Line 811

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