

Qualitative Methods SOC 609

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Course Description:

This methodology course promises to guide students through the processes common within qualitative methodology. With an eye to introducing students to professional research norms, this course will take students through the many joys and struggles of: 1) qualitative epistemologies; 2) history and traditions of qualitative data gathering; 3) techniques of qualitative data gathering; 4) research ethics in qualitative methods; 4) qualitative data analysis techniques, and 5) the art of writing a qualitative manuscript. In addition to guiding students through the phases of qualitative inquiry, students will also walk away with knowledge of how to apply seminal empirical and theoretical literature to their research findings.

To accomplish the goals of this course, our weekly meetings will be formed into an environment of support in which we will help one another embark on data collection, form research questions from our data, organize and find themes in our work. The first hour of each class will be spent diving into the conceptual, epistemological, and theoretical issues presented in the readings. During the first week of class students will sign up to lead reading discussions, which means that they will be responsible for presenting the material to the class in such a way that all students will be drawn into grappling with the literature (feel free to be creative in this regard). I will also offer brief lectures regarding particular research trends and traditions to guide these discussions and frame our debates. The second half of each class will comprise more informal conversations among students regarding the progress of their work. During the second half of the course, we will discuss our research progress and the dilemmas that we have encountered, as well as offer one another helpful suggestions, insights, and support.

Assignments:

Assignment 1: SELF REFLECTION PAPER

In the tradition of “starting where you are,” please write a 2-3 page paper reflecting your life story from your point of view. You can choose to begin your life story wherever you would like. You should, however, spend some time reviewing the origins of your values, experiences, preferences, and professional goals that have led or seem to be leading you towards a research setting. You can be as self reflective and personal or as distant and objective as you wish as a way of helping you understand that qualitative research includes both subjectivity and objectivity.

Assignment 2: CHOOSE RESEARCH SETTING

Based on your personal biography, your progress in the department, and your professional goals, you will choose a research topic to investigate this semester. You will provide me with a one-page description of this topic and some of the goals that you have for researching this subject. This could become the topic of your dissertation (or a chapter of your dissertation), research paper, paper for publication in a peer reviewed journal, or policy brief. From the date that you choose your research setting, you will need to start composing field notes. We will talk about field notes in the class and you will have several readings to help you compose these. Field notes are a central tool in data gathering and analysis, thus you will need to take regular notes.

Assignment 3: FIELD NOTES

After you have selected a research setting, you will begin taking field notes at least two times each week, which means that you need to conduct observations of your setting at least two times per week. During the

first few weeks of the course, your field notes should focus on features of your setting. By the end of the semester, you will be focusing your writing on making connections between your setting and society in general. You will turn in your field notebooks on the last day of class, but you will need to bring your notebooks into class from week 14 to 17. You must place the date that you have taken your notes at the top of each entry and please note the time of day and day of the week when you conducted your observation. Students will sign up for these short presentations during the first week of the class.

Assignment 4: SIGHT WITHOUT SOUND

Write a 2-3 page paper based on your observations of a scene in your setting or some similar setting in which you can see activities, people, and interactions, but in which you can not make out distinct sounds or conversations. Place yourself in or around the context and take in the visual scene and physical layout of the space and the activities, dress, postures, and demeanor of individuals in the situation. Write notes of your observations while you are in the setting.

Please introduce your paper by describing the physical features of your chosen setting including the layout and mood of the space. Then, please describe the people in the situation including their dress, demographic characteristics (age, race/ethnicity, socio-economic status), and behaviors. Next, please spend sometime describing, in a sociological sense, what you can infer from the space and people. For example, what does the intersection of activities, people, and physical space say about our society? Are there some patterns of behaviors that you notice in this scene that might be similar to other situations of leisure and/or work life in America or Hawaii? Do men and women act differently in these settings and do these differences point to larger social distinctions and divisions?

Assignment 5: SOUND WITHOUT SIGHT

Situate yourself in your setting in such a way that you can hear conversations and sounds but can not see activities or the physical space. Focus on the dialogue in the setting and recount as much of the verbatim dialogue that you can. In your 2-3 page paper, reproduce as much of conversation that you can. Once relating the conversation, please make some interpretations about the scene. For example, what can you glean about the relationships in the setting, the characteristics of the subculture, or any other facets of the setting from the conversation? In other words, how much can we interpret about the world around us from what people say?

Assignment 6: TAKE HOME MIDTERM

A take home exam will be given to you that is based on the readings and discussions. You will have two weeks to complete it.

Assignment 7: CONFERENCE ABSTRACT

Given your topic, you are to compose a 200 word abstract of your work that you plan to present at some upcoming professional conference of your choice. While you do not have to actually submit the abstract, I would encourage you to begin thinking about crafting your research topic into a presentable format.

Assignment 8: METHODS PAPER

You will be required to submit a five-page paper detailing your data gathering techniques during the semester.

Assignment 9: ANNOTATED OUTLINE OF A PROFESSIONAL PRODUCT OF YOUR CHOICE

Depending on your professional goals, you are required to submit an annotated outline of a professional piece of writing. Your annotated outline can be of a data chapter for a book (or your dissertation), a journal article, or a newspaper or magazine article. You can use the positivist, post-positivist (realist and others), public, critical, social justice, postmodern, indigenous, or another paradigm of qualitative research that we covered in class. The main goal of this assignment is for you to begin outlining what you have found during your semester long research project. Using the analysis techniques that we discussed in the last few weeks of the course, you will generate an annotated outline that will provide the basis for a piece of professional writing.

Assignment 10: LEADING READING DISCUSSIONS

On the first day of class you will sign up for at least one week (and perhaps two weeks) to lead the discussion of readings that week. You will be graded on the ability to illicit responses to the readings from fellow classmates and, therefore, are encouraged to use creative techniques to get students to connect the readings with their own research experiences. You will be severely downgraded if you simply provide a powerpoint presentation summarizing the readings. Instead, you need to encourage students to converse with one another.

Assignment 11: INTERVIEWS

Starting in week 12, you will need to conduct one interview per week with a member of your field. Do not worry if you do not have IRB approval to conduct interviews as you are allowed to interview individuals for a class. If you do not have IRB permission, however, your interviews can only be used for a class assignment and not for professional presentation or publication.

Required Texts:

(Lofland et al.) Lofland, John, David Snow, Leon Anderson, and Lyn Lofland. 2006. *Analyzing Social Settings: A Guide to Qualitative Observation and Analysis*. Wadsworth.

(Atkinson et al.) Atkinson, Paul, Amanda Coffey, Sara Delamont, John Lofland, and Lyn Lofland (Eds.). 2007. *Handbook of Ethnography*. Sage.

(Charmaz) Charmaz, Kathy. 2014. *Constructing Grounded Theory*. Sage.

In addition, there will be a series of articles made available to you on-line via the Sinclair electronic reserve services.

SCHEDULE OF ASSIGNMENTS

Week 1: Introduction.

Jan 10

Sign up for discussions

Week 2: History of Qualitative Research Traditions.

Jan 17

Readings Due:

*Charmaz, Chpt. 1

Atkinson et al.:

*Chpt. 1, Deegan, "The Chicago School of Ethnography."

Chpt. 2, Rock, "Symbolic Interactionism and Ethnography."

Chpt. 8, Pollner and Emerson, "Ethnomethodology and Ethnography."

Chpt. 9, Maso, "Phenomenology and Ethnography."

Above and Beyond Readings (good for you to know, but not central to presentations):

Mills, C. Wright, excerpt from *The Sociological Imagination*.

Reading Discussion Leader(s) for Those Readings with "*":

1) _____

2) _____

Week 3: Qualitative Traditions Continued. Getting Into the Field.

Jan 24

Readings Due:

*Lofland et al., Chpts. 1 & 2

Atkinson et al.:

Chpt. 3, Faubion, "Currents of Cultural Fieldwork."

Chpt. 4, Macdonald, "British Social Anthropology."

Chpt. 10, Manning, "Semiotics, Semantics and Ethnography."

Articles Available Through On-Line Reserves:

*Fine, Gary Alan. 1993. "Ten Lies of Ethnography."

Above and Beyond Readings (good for you to know, but not central to presentations):

Whyte, William Foote. 1943/1955. "Introduction: Cornerville and Its People." In *Street Corner Society: The Social Structure of an Italian Slum*.

Reading Discussion Leader(s) for Those Readings with "*":

- 1) _____
- 2) _____

Assignments Due: Discuss self-reflection paper assignment due in two weeks.

Week 4: Data Gathering Techniques—Observing the Field.

Jan 31

Katy will be in Los Angeles for a series of book talks.

Readings Due:

Lofland et al., Chpt. 3

Charmaz, Chpts., 2 & 10

Above and Beyond Readings (good for you to know, but not central to presentations):

Venkatesh, Sudhir Alladi. 2006. "Living Underground." In *Off the Books: The Underground Economy of the Urban Poor*.

Desmond, Matthew. 2007. "Appendix: Between Native and Alien." In *On the Fireline: Living and Dying with Wildland Firefighters*.

Assignments Due: Work on self-reflection paper, choosing a research topic, and evaluating research sites.

Week 5: Data Gathering Techniques & Observations Continued

Feb 7

Readings Due:

*Lofland et al., Chpts. 4 & 5

Atkinson et al.:

*Chpt. 24, Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw, "Participant Observation and Field Notes."

Chpt. 5, Brunt, "Into the Community."

Chpt. 6, Stanley, "Mass Observation's Fieldwork Methods."

Articles Available Through On-Line Reserves:

Adler, Patricia and Peter Adler. "Observational Techniques."

Above and Beyond Readings (good for you to know, but not central to presentations):

Adler and Adler, 1987. "The History and Epistemology of Fieldwork Roles." In *Membership Roles in Field Research*.

Reading Discussion Leader(s) for Those Readings with "*":

- 1) _____
- 2) _____

Assignments Due: SELF REFLECTION PAPER. CHOOSE A RESEARCH SETTING. START WRITING FIELD NOTES. Discuss the sight without sound assignment due next week.

Week 6: Feminist & Critical Research Methods. Introduction to Interviewing.

Feb 14

Readings Due:

*Charmaz Chpt. 3

Atkinson et al.:

*Chpt. 25, Heyl, "Ethnographic Interviewing."
Chpt. 7, Marcus, "Orientalism."
Chpt. 29, Skeggs, "Feminist Ethnography."
Chpt. 19, van Loon, "A Critical Turn in Cultural Studies."

Articles Available Through On-Line Reserves:

Bishop, Russell. "Freeing Ourselves from Neocolonial Domination in Research. A Kaupapa Maori Approach to Creating Knowledge."

Above and Beyond Readings (good for you to know, but not central to presentations):
Stacey, Judith. "Can There Be a Feminist Ethnography?"
Fine, et al. 2004. "Participatory Action Research from Within and Beyond Prison Walls." In *Working Method: Research and Social Justice*.

Reading Discussion Leader(s) for Those Readings with "*":

- 1) _____
- 2) _____

Assignments Due: SIGHT WITHOUT SOUND PAPER.

Week 7: The Post-colonial/Post-Modern Turn. Interviewing Continued.

Feb 21

Readings Due:

*Charmaz, Chpt. 4

*Lofland et al., Chpt. 6

Atkinson et al.:

Chpt. 30, Spencer, "Ethnography After Post-Modernism."

Chpt. 32, Mienczakowski, "Ethnodrama: Performed Research-Limitations and Potential."

Chpt. 33, Lather, "Postmodernism, Post-Structuralism and Post (Critical) Ethnography."

Articles Available Through On-Line Reserves:

Maracle, Lee. 1988/1996. "I Want to Write." In *I am Woman: A Native Perspective on Sociology and Feminism*.

Smith, Linda Tuhiwai. 1999. "Imperialism, History and Theory." In *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*.

Reading Discussion Leader(s) for Those Readings with "*":

- 1) _____
- 2) _____

Week 8: Research Ethics.

Feb 28

Readings Due:

Atkinson et al.:

Chpt. 23, Murphy and Dingwall, "The Ethics of Ethnography."

Chpt. 14, Hobbs, "Ethnography and the Study of Deviance."

Chpt. 17, James, "Ethnography and the Study of Children."

Articles Available Through On-Line Reserves:

*Duneier, Mitchell. 1999. "Talking to Women." In *Sidewalk*.

*Rios, Victor. 2015. "Decolonizing the White Space in Urban Ethnography." (Dr. Irwin will circulate this article.)

Above and Beyond Readings (good for you to know, but not central to presentations):
Punch, Maurice. 1986. "The Politics and Ethics of Fieldwork: Muddy Boots and Grubby Hands." In *The Politics and Ethics of Fieldwork*.

Reading Discussion Leader(s) for Those Readings with “*”:

- 1) _____
- 2) _____

Assignments Due: MIDTERM HANDED OUT TO STUDENTS.

Week 9: Research Ethics Continued

Mar 7

Assignments Due: CONTINUE WORKING ON MIDTERM

Week 10: Data Collection Continued. Introduction to Data Analysis.

Mar 14

Readings Due:

*Lofland et al., Chpt 7

Atkinson et al.:

Chpt. 11, Charmaz, “Grounded Theory in Ethnography.”

*Chpt. 12, Bloor, “The Ethnography of Health and Medicine.”

Chpt. 13, Gordon, Holland, and Lahelma, “Ethnographic Research in Educational Settings.”

Chpt. 28, Reed-Danahay, “Autobiography, Intimacy and Ethnography.”

Articles Available Through On-Line Reserves:

Bonsu, Samuel K. 2007. “The Presentation of Dead Selves in Everyday Life: Obituaries and Impression Management.”

Above and Beyond Readings (good for you to know, but not central to presentations):

Lareau, Annette. 2011. “Reflections on Longitudinal Ethnography.” In *Unequal Childhoods: Class, Race, and Family Life*.

Atkinson et al., Chpt. 21, Ball and Smith, “Technologies of Realism: Uses of Photography and Film.”

Reading Discussion Leader(s) for Those Readings with “*”:

- 1) _____
- 2) _____

Assignments Due: MIDTERM DUE. Discuss sound without sight paper due next week.

Week 11: Data Analysis Techniques Part 1—Asking Questions & Coding.

Mar 21

Readings Due:

Lofland et al., Chpts. 7 & 8

Charmaz, Chpt. 5

Atkinson et al.:

Chpt. 18, Tilley, “Ethnography and Material Culture.”

Chpt. 22, Wellin and Fine, “Ethnography as Work: Career Socialization, Settings and Problems.”

Articles Available Through On-Line Reserves:

Hammersly, Martyn and Paul Atkinson. 1995. “Recording and Organizing Data.”

Above and Beyond Readings (good for you to know, but not central to presentations):

Stack, Carol. B. 1975. “Appendix B, Outline of Interview Topics.” In *All Our Kin*.

Pettiway, Leon E. “Introduction.” In *Honey, Honey Miss Thang: Being Black, Gay, and On the Streets*.

No Reading Discussions/Data Gathering and Analysis Workshop

Assignments Due: SOUND WITHOUT SIGHT PAPE DUE.

Week 12: HOLIDAY. SPRING BREAK.

Mar 28

Assignments Due: Please conduct one interview per week with a member of your field from week 12 until the end of the course. Think about your interview and the responses you received. Do you need to refine

your interview guide?

Week 13: Data Analysis Traditions Part 2—Focused Coding, Memo Writing, & The Extended Case Method.

April 4

Readings Due:

*Lofland et al., Chapter 9

Charmaz, Chpts. 6 & 7

Burawoy. 1998. "The Extended Case Method." *Sociological Theory* 16 (1998) 4-33. (Dr. Irwin will announce the method to distribute this article).

Atkinson et al.:

Chpt. 20, Keating, "The Ethnography of Communication."

Chpt. 26, Cortazzi, "Narrative Analysis in Ethnography."

*Chpt. 27, Plummer, "The Call of Life Stories in Ethnographic Research."

Articles Available Through On-Line Reserves:

*Hochschild. 1983. "Exploring the Managed Heart." In *The Managed Heart: Commercialization of Human Feeling*.

Above and Beyond Readings (good for you to know, but not central to presentations):

Atkinson et al., Chpt. 31, Fielding, "Computer Applications in Qualitative Research."

Reading Discussion Leader(s) for Those Readings with "*":

1) _____

2) _____

Assignments Due: Please conduct one interview per week with a member of your field from week 12 until the end of the course. Think about your interview and the responses you received.

Week 14: Data Analysis Techniques Part 3—Grounded Theorizing. Writing Introduced—Methods Sections.

April 11

Readings Due:

*Lofland et al., Chpt. 10

Charmaz, Chpts. 8 & 9

Atkinson et al.:

Chpt. 15, Smith, "Ethnographies of Work and the Work of Ethnographers."

Chpt. 16, Hess, "Ethnography and the Development of Science and Technology Studies."

Reading Discussion Leader(s) for Those Readings with "*":

1) _____

2) _____

Assignments Due: Bring all of your field notes to class. Also, please conduct one interview per week with a member of your field from week 12 until the end of the course. Think about your interview and the responses you received. Discuss conference abstract that will be due in two weeks.

Week 15: Grounded Theory Continued. Writing Introductions and Literature Reviews.

April 18

Readings Due:

Charmaz, Chpts. 11 & 12

Articles Available Through On-Line Reserves:

MacLeod, Jay. "Social Reproduction in Theoretical Perspective." In *Ain't No Makin' It: Aspirations and Attainment in a Low-Income Neighborhood*.

Pascoe, C. J. 2012. "Making Masculinity: Adolescence, Identity, and High School." In *Dude You're a Fag: Masculinity and Sexuality in High School*.

Incite! Women of Color Against Violence. 2006. "The Color of Violence: Introduction." In *Color of Violence: The INCITE! Anthology*.
Venkatesh, Sudhir. 2008. "How Does It Feel to Be Black and Poor." In *Gang Leader for a Day: A Rogue Sociologist Takes to the Streets*.
Also, you should be identifying and reading the seminal literature in your field

Assignments due: Analysis workshops in class. Bring all of your field notes and a transcript of one interview to class. Please remember that you are supposed to be conducting one interview per week with a member of your field from week 12 until the end of the course. Reminder about conference abstract due next week.

Week 16: Grounded Theory Continued. Writing Data Sections.
April 25

Articles Available Through On-Line Reserves:

Miller and White. 2003. "Gender and Adolescent Relationship Violence: A Contextual Examination."
Winn, Maisha T. 2011. "Voices Can Be Heard: Theatre for Incarcerated Girls." In *Girl Time: Literacy, Justice, and the School to Prison Pipeline*.
Best, Amy. 2006. "Race-ing Men: Boys, Risk, and the Politics of Race." In *Fast Cars, Cool Rides: The Accelerating World of Youth and Their Cars*.
Espiritu, Yen Le. 2000. "'Americans Have a Different Attitude': Family, Sexuality, and Gender in Filipina American Lives."

No discussion groups—In-class workshop on analyzing data and writing up findings.

Assignment Due: CONFERENCE ABSTRACT. Bring all of your field notes and transcripts of interviews to class. Remember that you are supposed to be conducting one interview per week with a member of your field from week 12 until the end of the course. Discuss the annotated outline and methods paper due at the end of the semester.

Week 17: Making Theoretical Links with Data. Writing Continued—Conclusions.
May 2

Articles Available Through On-Line Reserves:

Wacquant, Loic. 2009. "Habitus as Topic and Tool: Reflections on Becoming a Prizefighter." In *Ethnographies Revisited: Constructing Theory in the Field*.
Thorne, Barrie. 1999. "Lessons for Adults." In *Gender Play: Girls and Boys in School*.

Assignments Due: ANNOTATED OUTLINE DUE. FIELD NOTES DUE. METHODS PAPER DUE.
