COURSE OVERVIEW

This course is an introduction to the qualitative method of in-depth interviews. The course begins with a very brief introduction to the use of qualitative methods in sociological research and some differing approaches to qualitative methods within sociology. E.g.: What types of research questions are best answered using qualitative methods? What is the link between theory and research when using qualitative methods?

After this introduction, we move into “doing” qualitative research, specifically, in-depth interviewing. We will explore research design issues including developing research questions, selecting samples, and the ethics of research. We will then examine the collection, analysis, and presentation of qualitative interview data, using exercises and your own research projects to illustrate these processes. We will be concerned with practical issues that arise at different stages of the research process.

The best way to learn qualitative methods is to “do” them. Thus, the majority of this course involves doing qualitative interview research and discussing research issues and questions with each other. As outlined below (and in the separate Soc585-00P assignment documents), the requirements for this course revolve around conducting a research project on a topic of interest.

There is a Blackboard site devoted to this course (Soc585-00P: Qualitative Methods - Fall 2011). This site will include all materials that we hand out in class (the syllabus, instructions for written assignments, etc.). Any important announcements will also be posted on this site.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS (See separate Soc 585-00P assignment documents)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirements</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6 Assignments (these will contribute to your final paper):</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation &amp; Presentations</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Research Paper</td>
<td>50%</td>
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RESEARCH PROJECT

The requirements for the course all revolve around a qualitative research project that you will be conducting.

- You may choose your own research question on a topic of your choice. You may use a research project that you are conducting for another class or program/requirement.
- This project **must include data collection, data analysis, and a final written paper**.
- The qualitative data collection will involve **in-depth interviews**. You will be required to **conduct 5 interviews for your project**.
- The 6 assignments will be components of your project. I will hand out separate instructions for each assignment and the final paper.
REQUIRED READING

Required texts – available at the Emory University Bookstore:


Reserve Readings


PLEASE NOTE: Some of the individual readings listed in the syllabus come from this report (abbreviated: NSF Report), which is uploaded as one PDF file:


National Science Foundation. 2008. Workshop on Interdisciplinary Standards for Systematic Qualitative Research. Report prepared by: Michèle Lamont, Harvard University; Patricia White, National Science Foundation for the National Science Foundation: Cultural Anthropology, Law and Social Science, Political Science, and Sociology Programs.

Various articles.

These additional required readings will be available as PDF files on our BLACKBOARD site.

The Reserve Readings are marked with an asterisk (*) in the Class Schedule below.
CLASS SCHEDULE (Subject to Change)

WEEK 1 (Aug 30): What is Qualitative Research?
What is Qualitative Research?

Distinctions between Qualitative and Quantitative Research
Ragin & Amoroso. Chapter 2: The Goals of Social Research

WEEK 2 (Sept 6): Ethics of Qualitative Research
Researcher Roles and Ethical Issues in Qualitative Research
Ragin & Amoroso. Chapter 4: Ethics of Social Research

Discussion of Emory IRB Process
Review IRB process documents and examples on BlackBoard

WEEK 3 (Sept 13): Qualitative Research Design I: The Research Process
Qualitative Research Design: Overview

Linking Theory and Research: The Research Process
Ragin & Amoroso. Chapter 3 & Chapter 5.

WEEK 4 (Sept 20): Qualitative Research Design II: Population & Sample
DUE: Assignment 1: Research Question and Theoretical Framework
Choosing a Research Site/Population and Gaining Entry

Sampling and Recruiting
Weiss, Chapters 1-2.
*Miles and Huberman. Chapter 2, pp. 16-39.*
WEEK 5 (Sept 27): Data Collection: Preparation, Interviewing, Issues  
DUE: Assignment 2: Conceptualization  
  Weiss, Chapters 3-5.  

WEEK 6 (Oct 4): Data Collection: In class exercises/discussion  
DUE: Assignment 3: Methods, Recruiting Strategy, Data Collection Instruments  
  Class presentations about research topic and interview guide  
  Lofland et al. Chapters 6-8 – SKIM as relevant for your project


Oct 11th – Fall Break: No Class

WEEK 7 (Oct 18): Guest Speaker: Karyn Lacy  

WEEK 8 (Oct 25): Data Collection: Interviewing  
DUE: Assignment 4: Interview Summary  
  Class presentation/discussion about your interview/observation (Assignment 4)  
  Review Readings from Weeks 5 & 6
WEEK 9 (Nov 1) Analyzing Interview Data: Thematic Analysis and Coding

Introduction to Analysis

Doing Data Analysis: Coding and Memos
*Miles and Huberman. Chapter 4; Chapter 5A (pp. 90-101) and 5E (pp. 127-141); Chapter 7A (172-177).

Doing Data Analysis: Strategy and Verification
*Miles and Huberman. Chapter 10.

WEEK 10 (Nov 8) Analyzing Qualitative Data: Continued

Assignment 5: Transcription and Developing Initial Coding Key
Workshop on the use of MAXqda for coding, sorting, and analyzing qualitative data

WEEK 11 (Nov 15) Analyzing Qualitative Data: Continued

Class exercises on projects and coding issues

Nov 22: Class Cancelled! Enjoy Thanksgiving Week!

WEEK 12 (Nov 29): Validity, Reliability, and the Insider/Outsider Problem

Assignment 6: Analyzing and Coding
*Miles and Huberman. Chapter 10.

WEEK 13 (Dec 6): Writing

Class presentations on projects
Weiss. Chapter 7: Writing the Report

December 14th: Final Paper Due by 5pm