

QUALITATIVE SOCIOLOGY (SOC 7260)
Fall 2016
Thursday: 5:30 to 9:10, State Hall, Room 112
Professor: Dr. Krista M. Brumley

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Office Hours: Monday, 10 to 11 a.m. or by appointment

Department of Sociology: 313-577-2930 (main office number; email is best for contacting me)

Course Description:

This PhD-level course introduces students to qualitative research designs. We explore different techniques (e.g., participant observations, interviews, and archival/content analysis) and issues in the research process (e.g., data collection, ethics, researcher-participant relationship, coding, and data analysis). Students reflect on the issues and dilemmas that arise in designing and conducting qualitative research. Students should begin this course with an idea for a qualitative study so the material is relevant to a particular project. Students in this course should have completed Sociology 7200 or an equivalent course. This course is designed for PhD students who are preparing for their comprehensive exams and dissertation, as well as students in MA programs who plan to conduct qualitative research for their thesis.

Participation in class discussions is mandatory. I expect students to complete all readings and field assignments before class and to be prepared to discuss. Weekly discussions of readings are often combined with the completion of methods exercises in and out of class. If you are not reading and/or keeping up with assignments, then you will have difficulty in this course.

Learning Objectives:

1. To learn about qualitative data collection techniques.
2. To engage with data collection techniques (interviews, observations, archival research).
3. To learn about the stages of conducting qualitative research from designing the study to writing about the study (e.g., forming questions, theoretical frameworks and paradigms, entry and exit to a study site, location-based and issue-based studies, sampling, coding and data analysis, ethics, researcher-participant relationship, etc).
4. To consider the advantages/dilemmas faced in qualitative research.
5. To critically analyze published qualitative research and relate it to concepts in course.

Required Readings: There are four (4) required books, all available at WSU (or online).

Hesse-Biber, Sharlene Nagy and Patricia Leavy. 2017. *The Practice of Qualitative Research* (3rd edition). Sage Publications.

Emerson, Robert M., Rachel I. Fretz, and Linda L. Shaw. 2011. *Writing ethnographic fieldnotes*. University of Chicago Press.

Fetterman, David M. 2010. *Ethnography: Step-By-Step* (3rd edition). Sage Publications.

Weiss, Robert. 1995. *Learning from Strangers: The Art and Method of Qualitative Interview Studies*. Free Press.

There will also be several required peer-reviewed journal articles – available on blackboard or through the WSU article databases.

Additional resources to consult for the research process and sociological methods:

Becker, Howard S. 2007. *Writing for Social Scientists: How to Start and Finish Your Thesis, Book, or Article*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Becker, Howard S. 1998. *Tricks of the trade: How to think about your research while you're doing it*. University of Chicago Press.

Chambliss, Daniel F., and Russell K. Schutt. 2006. *Making Sense of the Social World: Methods of Investigation*. 2nd Edition. Pine Forge Press/Sage Publications.

Creswell, John W. 2006. *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing among Five Approaches*. Second Edition. Sage Publications. [Paperback] ISBN: 978-1412916073.

Creswell, John W. 2009. *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*. 3rd Edition. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Denzin, N. K., and Lincoln, Y. S. (Eds.) 2000. *Handbook of qualitative research* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Holstein, James and Jabere Gubrium. 1995. *The Active Interview*. (*Qualitative Research Methods, Series #37*). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Hill, Michael Ray. 1993. *Archival Strategies and Techniques* (Qualitative Research Methods Series 31). Sage Publications.

Johnson, William A., Jr., Richard P. Rettig, Gregory M. Scott, and Stephen M. Garrison. 2006. *The Sociology Student Writer's Manual*. (5th edition). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson/Prentice Hall.

Luker, Kristin. 2010. *Salsa Dancing into the Social Sciences: research in an age of info-glut*. Boston: Harvard University Press.

Lofland, John and Lyn H. Lofland. 2005. *Analyzing Social Settings: A Guide to Qualitative Observation and Analysis*. 3rd edition. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

Maxwell, Joseph A. 2004. *Qualitative Research Design: An Interactive Approach* (2nd edition). Sage Publications.

Neuman, Lawrence W. 2009. *Social Research Methods*. 6th Edition. Boston, MA: Pearson.

Saldanna, Johnny. 2009. *The Coding Manual for Qualitative Researchers*. Sage Publications.

Strunk, William Jr., and E.B. White. 1959. *The Elements of Style*. New York: Macmillan.

Wolcott, Harry F. 2008. *Writing Up Qualitative Research* (3rd edition). Sage Publications.

Yin, Robert K. 2009. *Case study research: Design and methods* (4th edition). Sage Publications.

Course Requirements:

Students are evaluated on a series of activities designed to give hands-on experience with qualitative methods. Students are also evaluated on their knowledge and application of the methods. Below are assignment descriptions. More detailed instructions are on the blackboard.

I do not review drafts of assignments. I am always available to go over ideas with you if you contact me by 5:00 p.m. on the Monday before an assignment is due.

Class Participation/Facilitation/Attendance (10% of course grade): Class participation is essential to student success in this course. I expect students to come to class prepared to engage in discussions and demonstrate their understanding of the readings. Active classroom participation includes voicing ideas, asking questions, and carefully listening.

I will assign students at least one discussion day on September 1st. Facilitation of discussion includes writing a list of questions focused on key themes and concepts to stimulate discussion in class (see “Guidelines for Facilitating Group Discussion” at end of syllabus). Students are encouraged to think of innovative ways to create discussion in large or small group activities. I will help facilitate discussions, but students should be ready to be in charge of the discussion.

Students MUST submit their facilitation outline to me no later than 72 hours before class – this means no later than 5:00 p.m. on Mondays. I will review your plan and send comments via email. I expect students to be attentive to my feedback and make revisions. Students will be penalized if they do not submit the class plan in advance and/or address my feedback. Students must bring a final copy to class and send it by email to me before class..

NOTE: Students facilitating during the same class session are responsible for coordinating their discussion of the course material so there is no overlap and a logical flow to class.

Attendance is part of class participation – you cannot participate if you are not in class. I record attendance at ALL class sessions, starting on September 1, 2016 and ending on December 8, 2016. **Normal class attendance and participation should get you all points.** You may miss one (1) class during the semester, no questions asked. After this one absence, every subsequent absence affects the final course grade. Students who arrive more than 15 minutes late or leave early more than twice will be penalized by a point deduction in the participation grade. There are NO exceptions to this policy, unless you have a VERIFIABLE emergency and we work something out.

Extended Abstract (0% of course grade): Students will write a one-page extended abstract that describes their dissertation or thesis research project. **This assignment is due on September 1st by 9:00 a.m. There is no grade, but I expect it to be completed before the first day of class. I will give students feedback. See examples on blackboard.**

Qualitative Methods Activities (40% of course grade):

In-depth interview: Students are required to conduct a tape-recorded interview related to their dissertation/thesis research project. Students are to transcribe the interview in its entirety; do not pay someone else to do this work. **The transcribed interview is worth 10% of the course grade and is due on October 6th. Note: your draft interview guide questions are due on September 15th. The transcribed interview is the data for paper #1.**

NOTE: UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES CAN STUDENTS USE DATA COLLECTED DURING THE INTERVIEWS FOR THEIR THESIS, DISSERTATION, OR ANY FUTURE PUBLICATIONS. THIS ASSIGNMENT IS FOR COURSE USE ONLY!

Ethnographic fieldnotes: Students will engage in participant observation and take fieldnotes at a location of their choice (with my approval). Students must engage in at least three points of observation during the week of October 20th, but you can start earlier, if you choose. Confirm with me by October 6th the location of your observations. All fieldnotes must be typed-up and are due by 9:00 a.m. on October 27th. I will select some notes to use in class that evening. **The fieldnotes are worth 10% of the course grade. The notes will be used for paper #2.**

Content analysis: Students will evaluate textual material using content analysis. Students will design a content analysis data collection chart and then collect data based on the chart. Students may choose to collect data from magazines, newspapers, or television shows, but it must be approved by the professor. **The content analysis project is worth 20% of the course grade and is due on December 8th. Data must be from the Reuther Library.**

Qualitative Methods Papers (50% of course grade):

Reminder: the data for this paper are from your fieldnotes and in-depth interview(s).

Paper #1 (interviewing): Students will write a paper based on their transcribed interview. **The initial procedural memo (paper #1) is worth 20% of the course grade and is due on October 13th.**

Paper #2: (observations & interviewing): Students will write a paper that examines the qualitative data collection techniques of observations and interviews. This paper is a comparative fieldwork report--an honest account of the procedures you used and the problems and successes of the two data collection projects. Part I of the paper is a discussion of the techniques, advantages and disadvantages of each, ethics in fieldwork, and strategies for analysis and interpretation. Part II will address topics such as: entry and access to the setting; your role and relationships with persons in setting (e.g., reciprocity, rapport); who your informants were; sampling issues--how you decided what to observe, who to interview; the type/quality of data collected--fieldnotes, interviews (what kind of notes did you take, did you tape record interviews, questions asked in interviews, how they worked, etc.); mistakes and good decisions; emerging themes and the process of analysis--theoretical ideas, memos, and codes. **The analytical memo is worth 30% (paper #2) and is due on November 10th.**

Final Grade:

1. Class participation/facilitation	10 points
2. Extended abstract	0 points
3. Data collection techniques	
a. In-depth Interview	10 points
b. Ethnographic Fieldnotes	10 points
c. Content Analysis	20 points
4. Paper #1: Interviewing (procedural memo)	20 points
5. Paper #2 Observing & Interviewing (analytical)	30 points
TOTAL	100 points

Grade Chart:

100% = A+	88-89% = B+	78-79% = C+	68-69% = D+	0-59% = F
95-99% = A	84-87% = B	74-77% = C	64-67% = D	
90-94% = A-	80-83% = B-	70-73% = C-	60-63% = D-	

Course Policies:

Course policies are designed and implemented to ensure a quality learning environment. As your professor, my responsibility is to create an environment so students can learn; students are responsible for respecting policies and completing all assignments.

1. **Blackboard communication:** All course information is managed through Blackboard. Assignments and course syllabus are posted on Blackboard. Not checking Blackboard regularly is not an excuse for missing assignments or information relevant to this course. **There is now a WSU Blackboard app.** See: <http://computing.wayne.edu/blackboard/>
2. **Email etiquette:** All students have a WSU email account. If you use a different account, forward the WSU email to that alternate account, or minimally make sure my emails are forwarded. **I only use WSU email for communicating.** Emails should be professional, including punctuation, full sentences, correct spelling and grammar. Do not email as if you were sending a text message, and use proper salutations, either “professor” or “Dr.” I will not engage in discussions of substance via email, particularly grades. It is too easy for emails to be taken out of context; the “tone” and meaning received may not be what the sender intended.
3. **Cell phones:** Please turn them off in class. If you have specific needs (i.e., child care or elder care), set your phone to vibrate and simply walk out to take the call.
4. **Grades:** For most assignments, there are grading rubrics. Closely review them to ensure you include all information expected on assignments. I use a 5-level grading scale: exemplary, very good, acceptable, needs improvement, and unacceptable. Grades usually translate as follows: exemplary is the equivalent of “A” work (94-100%), very good is “A-/B+” work (88-93%), acceptable is B work (84-87%), needs improvement is “B-” work (80-83%), and unacceptable is “C” or lower (79 and below).
5. **Plagiarism:** I expect students to abide by the academic honor code. If you use your own words, but the ideas are from someone else, you must give credit to the author(s). If you use someone’s exact words, you must use quotation marks and provide the author’s last name, year, and page number. I take plagiarism seriously and follow WSU procedures if a student violates the integrity of academics. At a minimum, the student receives a zero for the assignment (most likely failing the course); at a maximum I enforce WSU policies on academic dishonesty. See the end of the syllabus for citation format; also on blackboard.
6. **Student Disability Services:** If you have a documented disability requiring accommodations, you must register with Student Disability Services (SDS), located at 1600 David Adamany Undergraduate Library in the Student Academic Success Services department; telephone is [313-577-1851](tel:313-577-1851) or [313-577-3365](tel:313-577-3365) (TTY phone is for hearing impaired students only). Once accommodations are in place, I will be glad to meet with you privately during office hours to discuss your special needs. Student Disability Services’ mission is to assist the university in creating an accessible community where students with disabilities have an equal opportunity to fully participate in their educational experience at WSU.
7. **WSU Registration/Withdrawal policies:** Students must complete registration by January 10th, with no additional fees. After this date, students cannot add this course unless the professor and department approve it. The last day to drop the course is September 14th (with tuition cancellation). If dropped by this date, the course does not appear on the academic record. If dropped between September 15th and September 28th, the course does not appear on the academic record, but students are liable for tuition. Students can drop the course between September 29th and November 13th, but this requires both SMART check, and professor approval (WP or WF will appear on the academic record). **ALL registration and withdrawals are initiated by students through pipeline.** **After November 13th** students cannot withdraw from the course and will receive a grade. See for policies: <http://reg.wayne.edu/students/calendar16-17.php>

Course Schedule (*subject to change*)

Date	Readings, Assignments, and Events
Introduction to Qualitative Research: Paradigms	
September 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Hesse-Biber, chapters 1-2, and 12 ▪ Weiss, chapter 1 <p style="color: red; text-align: center;">Extended abstract DUE (by 9:00 a.m. via email)</p>
Research Design: Getting Started	
September 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Hesse-Biber and Leavy, chapters 3-4 ▪ Weiss, chapter 2 ▪ Journal article by Andrews* ▪ Journal article by Sue <p style="color: blue; text-align: center;">Student facilitators: xxx and xxx</p>
In-depth Interviewing: the basics	
September 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Hesse-Biber, chapter 5 (chapter 6 is optional) ▪ Weiss, chapters 3-5 ▪ Journal article by Peng ▪ Journal article by Lamont <p style="color: blue; text-align: center;">Student facilitators: xxx and xxx</p> <p style="color: red; text-align: center;">Draft interview guide DUE (bring three copies to class and send via email)</p>
Interviewing: coding, analysis, and interpretation, part I	
September 22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Hesse-Biber, chapter 11 ▪ Weiss, chapter 6 ▪ Journal article by Padavic ▪ Journal article by Malacrida & Boulton <p style="color: blue; text-align: center;">Student facilitators: xxx and xxx</p> <p style="color: red; text-align: center;">Start making arrangements for in-depth interview</p>
Dilemmas in Field Research	
September 29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Journal article by Baca Zinn ▪ Journal article by McCorkel & Meyers ▪ Journal article by Avishai, et al. <p style="text-align: center;"><i>-Review of ethics and challenges in the field</i></p>
Ethnographic Research: the basics	
October 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Hesse-Biber, chapter 7 ▪ Journal article by Sumerau or use the one with Padavic in JCE <p style="color: red; text-align: center;">Transcribed in-depth interview DUE (submit by email)</p> <p style="color: red; text-align: center;">Discussion of interview & coding – what worked, what was less successful</p>
October 13	<p style="color: red; text-align: center;">NO CLASS</p> <p style="color: red; text-align: center;">Paper #1: initial procedural memo DUE by email</p>

***PLEASE NOTE THAT THE JOURNAL ARTICLES LISTED ARE TENTATIVE. I MAY MAKE SOME CHANGES.**

Ethnographic Research: entry, access, coding, analysis, and interpretation, part II	
October 20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Fetterman, entire book ▪ Journal article by Estrada & Hondagneu-Sotelo ▪ Journal article by Stewart <p>Student facilitators: xxx and xxx</p> <p>Observation week (confirm location with me by the 6th)</p>
October 27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Emerson, chapters 1-6 (exact pages to be determined) ▪ Duneier appendix <p>Observation fieldnotes (not coded) DUE by 9:00 a.m. (to be used in class)</p> <p>Observation fieldnotes (CODED) DUE by 5:30 p.m.</p>
Content Analysis: the basics	
November 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Hesse-Biber, chapter 9 <p>MEET AT THE REUTHER LIBRARY – presentation of archival research</p>
November 10	<p>NO CLASS in lieu of individual meetings on content analysis with professor</p> <p>Paper #2: analytical memo via email</p>
Content Analysis: coding, analysis, and interpretation, part III	
November 17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Hesse-Biber, chapter 9 ▪ Journal article by Pugh ▪ Journal article by Kimport <p>Student facilitators: xxx and xxx</p> <p>Start collecting data for content analysis</p>
November 24	NO CLASS: THANKSGIVING
Case Study Research	
December 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Hesse-Biber, chapters 8 & 10 ▪ Weiss, chapter 7 ▪ Journal article by Kelly et al. ▪ Journal article by Wyse <p><i>-Comparing and contrasting ethnography, in-depth interviews, & case studies</i> <i>-How are these similar & different from each other?</i> <i>-How are these methods different from quantitative research?</i></p>
December 8	<p>Last class</p> <p>Content Analysis Project DUE via email (presentations – to be determined)</p>

I RESERVE THE RIGHT TO MAKE REVISIONS TO THE SYLLABUS THROUGHOUT THE SEMESTER. IT MAY CHANGE DUE TO CLASS CANCELLATION, CLASS INTEREST, STUDENT PROGRESS, AND OVERALL COURSE PROGRESS, ETC.

Peer-Reviewed Sociology Journals

Sociology journals that publish only qualitative work are:

Qualitative Sociology and Journal of Contemporary Ethnography

These journals also publish qualitative work, but vary significantly in the type of data collection and in the quantity of qualitative research (some still mostly publish quantitative studies):

American Journal of Sociology	American Sociological Review	City and Community
Critical Sociology	Gender and Society	Signs
Journal of Marriage and the Family	Mobilization	Social problems
Social Forces	Sociological Forum	Sociological Inquiry
Sociological Perspectives	Sociological Quarterly	Sociological Spectrum
Qualitative Sociology	Journal of Contemporary Ethnography	Work and Occupations
Urban Affairs Quarterly	International Sociology	Sociology of Education
Sociological Focus	British Journal of Sociology	Journal of Family Issues
Men and Masculinities	Gender, Work and Organizations	Feminist Studies
Women Studies Quarterly	Social Politics	Youth and Society
Journal of Gender Studies	National Women's Studies Association Journal (NWSA)	Sociology
Work, Employment, and Society	Community, Work and Family	
Sex Roles		

***There are obviously more sociology journals, but these are ranked. If there is an article that is KEY to your research, but is not on this list, send me a PDF of the article and I will decide if you can use it for these course assignments.**

Guidelines for bibliography/reference list:

For Books:

Keck, Margaret E. and Kathryn Sikkink. 1998. *Activists Beyond Borders: Advocacy Networks in International Politics*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

For Chapters in an edited Book:

Pye, Lucian W. 1998. "Democracy and Its Enemies." Pp. 21-36 in *Pathways to Democracy: The Political Economy of Democratic Transitions*, edited by James F. Hollifield and Calvin Jillson. New York: Routledge.

For Journal Articles:

Jafar, Afshan. 2007. "Engaging Fundamentalism: The Case of Women's NGOs in Pakistan." *Social Problems* 54:256-273.

Fitzgerald, Kathleen J. and Diane M. Rodgers. 2005. "Radical Social Movement Organizations: A Theoretical Model." *The Sociological Quarterly* 41(4):573-592.

NOTE: When you find journal articles through databases like JSTOR, Sage, Proquest, do not include the internet site in the citation. You're only using the internet as a tool to access journals.

For Internet site:

The World Bank. 2000. "Income Inequality." Retrieved March 15, 2006. (www.worldbank.org).

Guidelines for citations in the text:

Paraphrasing an author(s):

Scholars of social sciences have begun to recognize the importance of non-governmental organizations, particularly as advocates for citizenship rights (Alvarez 1998; Lind 2000).

Direct quote using author's name in the sentence:

As Segarra (1997:489) argues the "apparent failure of the state-centered model of development has provoked increasing interest in the role that associations in civil society can play."

Direct quote NOT using the author's name in the sentence:

Former President Salinas (1988-1994) actively sought to diminish the power of NGOs by changing fiscal laws to allow the government "to treat NGOs as private profit-making corporations" (Piester 1997:486).

Guidelines for Facilitating Group Discussion:

On one designated day during the semester, each student will help discuss reading assignments. Students will direct our conversations about the books/articles we have read during the current week. Students' tasks include the following: (1) *briefly explain some of the key themes of the readings;* (2) *identify questions the articles raise so that we can carry out our group discussion;* and (3) *highlight confusing/problematic sections of the readings so that we can clarify their meaning.* Student facilitators are also encouraged to think of innovative ways to create discussion through large or small group activities. This assignment will give students experience in identifying critical issues and themes in scholarly works, and also presentation/teaching experience. Below are some questions to think about when preparing to facilitate discussion. These questions are simply guides; students may discover that there are more important questions to address than the ones I suggest.

Finding Themes in the Articles You Read:

1. What is/are the major research question(s) or theme(s) of the work(s) you have read? Define the theme(s) and come up with an example of each theme you define.
2. What is/are the key findings or conclusions of the book chapters/articles in recent weeks? Can you summarize these findings in one or two sentences? Are these findings controversial and debatable at all?
3. What is/are the connection(s) between readings and lecture topics?

When Thinking of Questions to Discuss with the Class, Perhaps Try to Answer the Following:

1. Can you identify ways in which the researcher(s) could have gone farther in exploring this particular topic?
2. What implications do the authors' findings have for our use of certain research methods?
3. Why did I pick this reading for a "methods" course? Do you think the subject of the readings is appropriate to discuss, or are there more important subjects that we should be discussing?
4. What is most interesting to you about this reading? What is most controversial? Does it make you think differently about methods/certain types of methods?
5. How does your reading fit with or contradict all the other readings assigned for this week/prior weeks?? How are the readings similar to each other and how are they different? Are there any common themes? Do authors of these readings contradict each other?
6. Given the argument that the author(s) present(s), could you play "devil's advocate?" In other words, could we argue the opposite viewpoint?
7. Is the author presenting a biased viewpoint? If so, how do you know? Would you discuss the author's topic differently?
8. Who is the audience for this reading? How does this impact the author's arguments or presentation of the topic?
9. In what ways does this reading make you think deeper about the subjects covered in this class?
10. What might be the most interesting aspect of this reading for individuals in the class – i.e., grad students at Wayne State? How is this reading relevant for us?
11. What argument/theme in the readings did you dislike and why?
12. Based on the readings you have done, do we need to do more research in order to understand sociological methods? In other words, does the research push our knowledge far enough?
13. How can we take authors' conclusions and learn from them? What should we take away from this reading?
14. Based on this reading, what kind of question(s) could appear on the sociology methods exam?

Ideas for Small/Large Group Activities:

1. Have students draft research questions or statements of purpose for their research.
2. Have students actually participate in some sort of data analysis activity.
3. Have students participate in a focus group activity during class.
4. Have students critique a set of existing survey questions or an article's findings.
5. Bring in current event articles that relate to course material for that week, and discuss connections.
6. Brainstorm about how to study a particular topic using certain methods.
7. Pair up students and have them interview each other on a common question and then compare answers/experiences.
8. Bring in examples of research topics that need study, and discuss the pros and cons of research these topics, and using certain methods to study the topics.
9. Make students talk about how they would deal with certain research situations/problems.
10. Come up with your own idea!
~ See me if you have problems or questions about facilitating discussion on your designated day. ~