

PPOL 523 Qualitative Research Methods

Spring 2017

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Office Hours:

Time: TR 9-10:50am
Location:
Course web-site access:
<http://my.oregonstate.edu/>

Credits: 4

Description from Course Catalogue

An introduction to the theory and methods of qualitative research. Students will be exposed to various qualitative research methods through practical field exercises. These include ethnographic field observation, content analysis, interviewing, focus groups and unobtrusive measures. Other commonly used methods of collecting qualitative data are also examined.

Overview

This course is designed as an introduction to qualitative research methods, from data collection through analysis to presentation. By the end of this course not only will you have an understanding of the methodological approaches, but you will have developed your own qualitative research skills. The topics you will be introduced to are 1) design, 2) data collection & 3) analyzing and presenting data.

Each week will rotate between days focused on textbook readings (either from the primary textbooks or selections from others) and days focused on exemplary works. Typically we will begin each week with a textbook reading. We will often then do an in-class exercise linked to the particular research topic, which sometimes involve your assignments. Thursdays we will revisit the issues but through the comparison of exemplary texts. These days will involve a large amount of discussion and explore links between the textbook readings and the exemplary cases.

Learning Outcomes

As a result of fully participating in this course you will:

- Know the historical and theoretical roots of qualitative methods and be able to distinguish the purposes and strengths/weaknesses of such methods from quantitative methods
- Understand ethical issues related to qualitative research and specific issues with researching human subjects
- Gain a familiarity with the various kinds of qualitative methods (e.g., interviews, participant-observation, content analyses, historical/archival analyses) and know when and where to use them
- Develop a reflective understanding of your role as qualitative researcher
- Be able to evaluate academic research based on qualitative research methods
- Create a viable research proposal that employs appropriate qualitative research techniques

Primary Texts¹

Creswell, John. (2013). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* 3rd ed. (on reserve at Valley Library)

Maxwell, Joseph. (2013). *Qualitative Research Design: An Interactive Approach* 3rd ed.

Patton, Michael Quinn. (2014). *Qualitative Research & Evaluation Methods*. (4th edition)

Selected Exemplary Texts

Bourgois, C. & Schonburg, J. (2009). *Righteous Dopefiend*. (Online availability via Valley Library with ONID login)

Lewis, A. (2003). *Race in the schoolyard: Negotiating the color line in classrooms and communities*.

McDonough, P. M. (1997). *Choosing colleges: How social class and schools structure opportunity*.

Lamont, M. (1992). *Money, morals, and manners: The culture of the French and the American upper-middle class*.

Technology Requirements

OPTIONAL:

- Laptops/tablets are welcome but not required in class. Please be respectful of class time and only use for class-related purposes.
- Digital Voice Recorder, microphone are available to check out from the Student Multi-media Services in the Valley Library. Some laptops, tablets and phones also have recording capabilities.
- Qualitative software for coding and data analysis: HyperResearch (free) or try NVivo's 30-day trial.

REQUIRED:

- A paper journal to record thoughts, ideas, memos, examples, observations, questions, illustrations, and plans.

Requirements/Grades

1. **Participation (10%)**. Attendance required. Your full participation will be required for this course. This means being prepared for class discussion of the assigned material and asking insightful questions. If you must miss a session, please check in with instructor and get notes from a classmate. Missing more than two class sessions will result in deductions to your overall participation score.
 - a. **Journaling (5%)** You will also bring a journal with you for occasional in class prompts. Please be sure to have this every single day. You will submit to instructor during the last week. You will receive points for maintaining an active journal throughout the term; however what you write is your business.
 - b. **Discussion leading (5%)** is included in participation. Once during the term you will work with a small group to lead a discussion on days we read exemplary works. Discussion

¹ Some readings will be announced and made available at least one week in advanced to date it is due.

leaders will provide a short written summary of the chapters/articles and come prepared to lead the discussion by posing questions, insights, and addressing specific course concepts. Although we will have discussion leaders *all students* in the class will be expected to come to class prepared to discuss the following questions: What is the reading about? How is the reading linked to particular week's topic, past weeks topics, specific concepts in "textbook"? What insights does this reading provide about qualitative research?

2. **Assignments (55% total).** (Submit all assignments to canvas AND bring to class when noted)

For the class assignments you might want to consider thinking about a piloting a project for your program of research. You can begin to formulate your research ideas, questions, and a design for collecting and analyzing data. You may not be able to focus exclusively on your own research interests for the assignments.

- a. **5pts:** Researcher Identity memo (Exercise 2.1 in Maxwell)
- b. **5pt:** Concept map of your study (Exercise 3.1 in Maxwell)
- c. **10pts:** Developing your research questions (Exercise 4.1 in Maxwell)

Codebook (for assignments d, e & f): As you analyze your data you will begin to create codes to organize the phenomena under study. As you do so, you'll create a codebook, which is a list of the codes and their definitions/descriptions (information that helps you decide if something should be identified with that code or not). You will develop one codebook that functions across all the data you collect, and you will be changing turn in the current version of your codebook along with each assignment (field observation, interview, and artifact analysis).

d. **10pts:** Field observation & codebook

- i. If at all possible, you will gain consent and conduct a preliminary field observation at your selected research site and take field notes in order to help answer your research questions for another project (class). You will describe the setting, what you observed, and insights –if any—you gained from your observations. Discuss your overall impressions of doing and writing up what you noticed as you did the observation, as well as any challenges that emerged during the process. You will provide a coded example of the one observation that includes your observer comments (and your code book to date).

e. **10pts:** Interview (protocol, new interview, transcribe, analyze—details on canvas) & codebook

- i. You will develop an interview protocol (set of questions) that fit the scope of your research project. If you already have started interviews, you must conduct a new interview this term. You will gain consent, conduct, digitally record, transcribe and analyze the interview. You will also note in a memo the setting of the interview, your perception of how the interview went, the rapport you developed with the interviewee, what you learned from this interview in regards to your research, your codes, etc. This assignment requires a copy of the interview, protocol, the coded transcript, your memo, and codebook to date.

- f. **10pts:** Artifact Analysis (e.g., leaflets, flyers, bulletins, handbooks, meeting agendas, website items, photos, video, meeting notes) & codebook

You will collect at least one artifact related to your research project such as (but not limited to leaflets, flyers, bulletins, handbooks, meeting agendas, website items, photos, video, meeting notes). You will code and analyze this artifact to help answer your question. This assignment includes the coded artifact, a memo describing any insights you gained from the artifact, and codebook to date.

3. **Final Project - Research Proposal (35%).** (Exercise 7.1 in Maxwell and additional details posted on Canvas)

Policies

Statement Regarding Students with Disabilities

Accommodations for students with disabilities are determined and approved by Disability Access Services (DAS). If you, as a student, believe you are eligible for accommodations but have not obtained approval please contact DAS immediately at 541-737-4098 or at <http://ds.oregonstate.edu>. DAS notifies students and faculty members of approved academic accommodations and coordinates implementation of those accommodations. While not required, students and faculty members are encouraged to discuss details of the implementation of individual accommodations.

Academic Integrity

Students are expected to comply with all regulations pertaining to academic honesty. For further information, visit Student Conduct and Community Standards, or contact the office of Student Conduct and Mediation at 541-737-3656. See especially OAR 576-015-0020 (2) Academic or Scholarly Dishonesty (you can find this here: <http://studentlife.oregonstate.edu/studentconduct/offenses-0>). A violation of academic integrity in any form is a fundamental offense against the integrity of the entire academic community and is always a threat to the standards of the college and to the standing of every student. In taking tests and examinations, doing homework, laboratory work and writing papers, students are expected to perform with honor.

Other Resources – Qualitative-friendly Journals

Qualitative Inquiry

The Qualitative Report

International Journal of Qualitative Methods

Contemporary Ethnography

Anthropology & Education Quarterly

Ethnography

International Journal of Qualitative Methods in Education

Sociology [British]

Symbolic Interaction

Class Schedule

Note: readings are to be done in advance of the day for which they are listed. Some readings will be announced and made available at least one week in advanced to date it is due.

		Topic	Readings	Assignments
WEEK 1	Tuesday	Introduction to Qualitative Methods	Creswell 1&2 Maxwell 1	
	Thursday	Ethics & Genres	Creswell 3,4,5	
WEEK 2	Tuesday	Design: Goals, frameworks & literature, Research Questions	B&S 1 Lewis 1 & Appendix McDonough 1	
	Thursday		Maxwell 2 3 4 Creswell 6	Due: Researcher Identity Memo/Self reflection
WEEK 3	Tuesday	Design: Research Relationships and Sampling	Maxwell 5 Creswell 7	
	Thursday			Due: Concept Map (bring to class)
WEEK 4	Tuesday	Data Collection: Interviews	Fontana & Frey Patton 7 Selections	Due: Interview Protocol (bring to class) <i>Practice interviews</i>
	Thursday		B&S 2,3,4	Make adjustments (if necessary), Conduct interview

		Topic	Readings	Assignments
WEEK 5	Tuesday	Data Collection: Observation & Artifacts	Spradley P2C2-4 Patton 6 Selections	Conduct observation & Identify and gather artifact(s)
	Thursday		McDonough 2&3 Lewis 2-4	
WEEK 6	Tuesday	Data Management & Analysis	Patton 8 Selections	
	Thursday		Paguyo & Moses McDonough 4-6	
WEEK 7	Tuesday	Data Analysis continued	Creswell 8 Patton 8 Selections Peshkin	Due: Observation (bring to class)
	Thursday		B&S 5-7	
WEEK 8	Tuesday	Data Presentation: Writing about Qualitative Research	Creswell 9 & 11	Due: Interview Coded transcripts (bring to class)
	Thursday		Lewis 5-7	
WEEK 9	Tuesday	Validity in Qualitative Research	Maxwell 6 Creswell 10	Due: Artifact Analysis (bring to class)
	Thursday		B&S 8-Conclusion	Turn in your Journals

		Topic	Readings	Assignments
		Summary		
WEEK 10	Tuesday	Student Presentations /Arguments	Maxwell 7	
	Thursday	Student Presentations /Arguments		
	Friday			Due: Proposal Argument