Qualitative Research – Theory and Design  
DPLS 723-Fall 2014

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Course Information

Course Name: Qualitative Research: Theory and Design
Course Number: DPLS 723
Credits: 3
Day of the Week/Time: Friday, 6:00pm-10:00pm
Dates: September 12, 19; October 3, 10, 24; November 7, 21; December 5
Location: TIL 405
Instructor: JoAnn Danelo Barbour, Ph.D.
Email: barbourj@gonzaga.edu
Phone: 509-313-3630
Office Hours: Please call, email, or ask for an appointment as needed.

Course Description: Goals & Objectives*

*Please Note: This information is preliminary. Final syllabus and all assignments will be posted on BlackBoard. Additionally, the assignments and readings will be discussed the first class day. Texts will not change, however, so the texts noted below will be those read for class.

Course Goals

This course is designed to provide an understanding of the theoretical perspectives underlying qualitative research in the social sciences, an understanding of the relationships between the theories and purpose of qualitative inquiry, and an opportunity for students to develop specific qualitative research skills by participating in qualitative research exercises.

Course Objectives

By the end of the course the student will be able to demonstrate understanding and knowledge of the following:

- Terms and definitions associated with qualitative research.
- The various theoretical, philosophical, and interpretive perspectives and approaches to qualitative research.
- How to formulate a research design: purpose, rationale, questions, methods, methodology, the selection of appropriate researcher roles, and the description of participants and setting/context investigated.
- Practice of a variety of data collection strategies used in qualitative research.
- Different techniques used to analyze data collected during qualitative studies.
- Interpretation and writing the results of data analysis of qualitative research.
- Ethical issues related to the use of qualitative methods.
Reading Materials

Required Texts

  Assignment based on this book is due on the first day of class. See assignment below.

Additional Material

- Additional required readings will be posted on Blackboard.

Supplemental Text


Assignments and Grading

Attendance Policy and Class Participation: Because a large part of each class is participatory, class attendance is expected. If a student wishes to earn a grade of A- or better for the course, he or she must attend the course/group meetings at least 90% of the time the course/group meets. If a student wishes to earn a passing grade of B- or better for the course, he or she must attend the course at least 80% of the time the course meets; thus, if the student misses more than 2 sessions of class, then the final grade would be lower than a B-.

Assignments: Assignments are due when specified. This professor may refuse to accept a late paper. If the late paper or project is accepted, it will incur a lower grade. This professor reserves the right to decide whether to accept the late assignment or not to accept the late assignment. If a student submits more than two assignments late, then the final grade will be lowered 1 grade-step level; thus, if a student earns a final grade of A-, the grade will be lowered to B+.

Grading

* Final grade is based on total points over the entire session in the following percentages: (Total Points Possible By Semester’s End, e.g. “200”) X (Percentage Below) = (Pts. Needed to Earn Grade)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100% - 98%</td>
<td>A+</td>
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<tr>
<td>97% - 94%</td>
<td>A</td>
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<td>93% - 90%</td>
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<td>89% - 88%</td>
<td>B+</td>
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<td>87% - 84%</td>
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<td>79% - 78%</td>
<td>C+</td>
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<td>77% - 74%</td>
<td>C</td>
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*Note: Points, directions, evaluative criteria and a scoring guide are specified for each assignment and/or project.*
Assignment Due Day One: On Looking (See reading materials above.) Note: It is expected that you have read this syllabus, and therefore, know that you will bring a completed paper to class per assignment below.

A description of the book on Amazon includes:

Alexandra Horowitz’s brilliant On Looking: Eleven Walks with Expert Eyes shows us how to see the spectacle of the ordinary—to practice, as Sir Arthur Conan Doyle put it, “the observation of trifles.” On Looking is structured around a series of eleven walks the author takes, mostly in her Manhattan neighborhood, with experts on a diverse range of subjects, including an urban sociologist, the well-known artist Maira Kalman, a geologist, a physician, and a sound designer. She also walks with a child and a dog to see the world as they perceive it. What they see, how they see it, and why most of us do not see the same things reveal the startling power of human attention and the cognitive aspects of what it means to be an expert observer.

Purpose: The purpose of this assignment is twofold: 1) Read the book On Looking by Horowitz and 2) Prepare oneself for a Walkabout around the campus of Gonzaga University. 3) Write a reflective commentary on the book On Looking, that demonstrates to the professor that you have, indeed, read the book.

Description/Assignment: Write a 4-5 page (1200-1500 words) reflective commentary after you finish reading the book. The purpose of a reflective commentary is to discuss what you thought about this assigned reading, that is, to report thoughts and reflections about the book On Looking. The suggestions below ought to help guide writing:

• Comment on the book you just read relative to your future work in qualitative research. What general lessons or meanings did you take away from your reading? How has Horowitz helped you become a better researcher from your reading?
• Perhaps you did not like the book. Share your reasons why you did not like the book and make suggestions on how Horowitz could have improved the book. Be specific in your suggestions. For example, in particular chapters, should the experts have shared more or different expertise? –of what sort? –why? What questions should Horowitz have pursued that you think she did not pursue?
• Perhaps you are left with several unanswered questions after reading On Looking. What are those questions? From which chapters did they arise? What sorts of questions might you have for the “experts” in those particular chapters? Why these questions? What do you think they have to do with qualitative research?
• Choose a few chapters or “ways of looking” that were particularly meaningful for you and explain why. How will these ways of looking help you in your research? What research issues were raised in these particular chapters or generally in the book?
• Perhaps Horowitz evoked particular feelings or emotions from your reading. Thus, write what you felt after reading On Looking. Be sure to provide examples that help the reader understand what you mean by a particular feeling evoked. What meaning do these feelings/emotions have to your work as a qualitative researcher?

The written reflection will be evaluated; a scoring rubric is included below.

Writing Specs: NOTE: These specifications are important. Part of one’s grade is the ability to follow directions and specifications. Please read this section carefully. These specs will be followed for all papers in this course.

• Follow the page length requirement. Professor will stop reading after maximum pages, which may vary per assignment.
• Margins: one inch all around.
• Font: Times New Roman, size 12.
• Page numbers: top right hand corner also in Times New Roman, 12 Font.
• No header or footer is needed. Do not add a header or a footer.
• Double space. Do not skip a line between paragraphs.
• Align text to the left.
• All paragraphs should be indented. Indent paragraphs ½” from left margin. Do not skip a line between paragraphs.
• Add a cover page, but do not count or number the cover page. The first page of the narrative is page one. Fix the paragraphing so there is NO added space between sections or paragraphs. (Thus, go to the menu bar: Paragraph. Under the tab Index and Spacing, the “Spacing Before” should be “0”, the “Spacing After” should be “0”, the “Line Spacing” should be “Double”, and the box should be checked that says “Don’t add space between paragraphs of the same style.”)
**SCORING CRITERIA FOR QUALITATIVE RESEARCH THEORY & DESIGN ASSIGNMENTS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gonzaga University</th>
<th>Doctoral Program in Leadership Studies</th>
<th>Professor JoAnn Danelo Barbour</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SCORING CRITERIA</td>
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<tr>
<th>SCORING CRITERIA</th>
<th>ACOMPLISHED</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4 pts.</td>
<td>3-2 pts.</td>
<td>1-0 pts.</td>
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**I. Communicates Effectively: Mechanics**
- Grammar, punctuation, paragraphs, spelling, APA: appropriate, accurate; few to no errors
- Excellent sentence/paragraph construction
- Followed assignment specifications

**II. Communicates Effectively: Structure: Clarity, Organization, Flow**
- Writing is clear, concise, engaging
- Thoughts expressed in a coherent, logical manner; easily understood by reader
- Writing organized, flows well (fluid), not choppy

**III. Introduction**
- Explanation of issues or background as needed
- Thesis statement, focus of essay clearly stated

**Conclusion(s), Implications, Consequences**
- Clearly stated
- Objectively reflects upon own assertions
- Connection to evidence/position clear & relevant

**IV. Discussion of**
- Section is informative and accurate
- Contains salient information
- Is comprehensive and does not contain contradictions

**V. Argument & Evidence**
- Specific, nuanced, interpretive thesis appropriate to the assignment
- Clear, compelling connections and analysis
- Argument is supported by and convincingly interprets the data
- Thoughtful, productive selection and use of evidence from interviews and/or documents and/or other data
- Does not omit data because it is inconvenient but also does not include data irrelevant to the report's thesis/focus

**Comments:**
Schedule of Topics, Reading Assignments, and General Assignments*

*This syllabus will be finalized and posted on BlackBoard after the first class day. Please note, there will be writing assignments due each class, from 3-5 pages; sometimes the writing will be reflective, sometimes fieldnotes or interview transcripts, and there will be a final paper based on research conducted during the semester. It is important for the student to understand that the class will be applied and experiential in scope and tone, wherein we practice the methods of qualitative research. There will be a qualitative research project conducted on the campus of Gonzaga University, to be explained the first night of class; thus, each student should be prepared to allow time during the semester to observe, interview, gather archival documents, and gather notes on site on campus at Gonzaga. [Note: Course outline, readings, and/or assignments may change slightly depending on student and/or professor needs.]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session #</th>
<th>Topic/Assignments</th>
<th>Readings Due*</th>
<th>Assignments Due</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tr>
<td>#1 9/12</td>
<td>TOPIC: Preparation/Research Design</td>
<td>Horowitz: Book Willis: Ch. 1, 9</td>
<td>Read book; Reflective Commentary.</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>#2 9/19</td>
<td>TOPIC: Observing / Fieldnotes</td>
<td>Willis: Ch. 2,6 Creswell: Ch. 1,3,6 Schostak: Ch. 1,2 Wolcott: Ch. 1,2,3</td>
<td>Observation; maps. Design: Plan/Questions to go forward.</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#3 10/3</td>
<td>TOPIC: Interviewing</td>
<td>Willis: Ch. 3 Creswell: Ch. 2,4,5 Schostak: Ch3,6,7 Wolcott: Ch. 4</td>
<td>Interview protocol.</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>#4 10/10</td>
<td>TOPIC: Coding</td>
<td>Willis: Ch. 4 Creswell: 7 Schostak: Ch. 4,5 Wolcott: Ch. 5</td>
<td>Submit rewrite of observation/ description.</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>#5 10/24</td>
<td>TOPIC: Writing Findings</td>
<td>Willis: Ch. 5 Creswell: 8 Schostak: Ch. 8,9 Wolcott: Ch. 6,7: (skim)</td>
<td>Conduct / transcribe interviews. Submit two complete coded transcripts.</td>
<td>20</td>
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<td>#6 11/7</td>
<td>TOPIC: Discussing: Analyzing &amp; Interpreting #1 Validity; Reliability Difficulty with analysis/interpretation</td>
<td>Willis: Ch. 7, 8 Creswell: 9,10,11</td>
<td>• Submit analysis of interview findings.</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#7 11/21</td>
<td>TOPIC: Discussing: Analyzing &amp; Interpreting #2 Validity; Reliability</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Come to class with draft to discuss in class: analysis, interpretation of findings.</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>#8 12/5</td>
<td>TOPIC: Reporting Written / Verbal Research Report Due Final Presentations</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Course Evaluation. Submit final research paper to Prof. Presentations of Findings: Each student: 15 mins. (max) to present research findings</td>
<td>50</td>
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Participation points (5pts. per day x 8) | 40

TOTAL POSSIBLE POINTS | 200

*NB: Please note additional pdf-readings may be posted on BB or distributed in class per each session. Additionally, points will be updated by the beginning of the semester, discussion topics will be finalized, and readings (after session one) will be finalized and updated.