DPLS 723 Qualitative Research Theory & Design

Summer 2009 3 Credits
Session 1: June 25; Session 2: July 2; Session 3: July 9; Session 4: July 16; Session 5: July 23;
Session 6: July 24; Session 7: July 30
Tilford 115
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COURSE DESCRIPTION
This course introduces students to the development, theories, and issues of qualitative research. Students have the opportunity to identify a researchable question, design data collection, develop observation and interviewing skills, and gain experience in transcribing and analyzing data.

COURSE OBJECTIVES
At the end of this course, students will be able to:
• explain the historical, philosophical and theoretical bases for various approaches to qualitative research;
• distinguish among descriptive, interpretive, and critical approaches to human science research;
• develop a researchable question and strategies for conducting qualitative research;
• demonstrate observation and interviewing skills;
• demonstrate skills in transcribing and analyzing qualitative data;
• demonstrate writing skills appropriate to reporting qualitative data;
• identify ethical issues in conducting qualitative research.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES
The emphasis is on mastery of reading material and on experiences in gathering, analyzing, and reporting qualitative research activities. Group work will focus on mini-research projects such as the Mini-RAP experience, reports on various approaches to qualitative research, and collecting, transcribing and coding qualitative data. Individual projects include reports on the reading assignments and the design of an individual research project that may lead to the actual dissertation.

REQUIRED MATERIALS
Available online or for purchase (see Marnie)


RECOMMENDED RESOURCES


OPTIONAL WEBSITES AND LISTSERVS

- Student Membership in the Society for Applied Anthropology (SfAA) The Society for Applied Anthropology (SfAA) promotes the investigation of the principles of human behavior. SfAA represents the interests of professionals in a wide range of work settings including academia, business, law, education, health and medicine, public and government, etc. who use qualitative research in their work. Student membership is $30.00. Members receive Human Organization, Practicing Anthropology, the SfAA Newsletter as well as other benefits. Enroll on-line at: https://www.sfaa.net/membership/memform.html
- Students are strongly encouraged to at least experiment with a subscription to the listserv QUALRS-L. QUALRS-L is an electronic discussion group for those interested in using qualitative research. The scope and nature of qualitative research is one of the ongoing debates sometimes addressed by users of this list. The label "qualitative research" applies to inquiry that depends on elaborated accounts of what we see, hear, taste, touch, smell, and experience. It has roots in cultural anthropology, field sociology, and the professional
fields. Qualitative research includes field research, case study research, ethnography, document and content analysis, interview and observational research, community study, and life history and biographical studies. Other names sometimes used as synonyms for qualitative research are interpretive, naturalistic, phenomenological, and descriptive. Qualitative research is associated with such theories as symbolic interactionism, constructivism, and ethnomethodology. Qualitative researchers have a lot of fun and this sustains them through the aggravation, frustration, uncertainty, and sheer slipperiness of most of the approaches to inquiry considered qualitative. To subscribe to QUALRS-L, click on the following link http://listserv.uga.edu/cgi-bin/wa?SUBED1=qualrs-l&A=1 and follow the directions. This is a very active list and I suggest selecting the digest option so that you will not receive more than one email a day.

ASSESSMENT

- A: active class participation; complete, thorough, significant, timely, and original development of all parts of the assignment;
- late assignments; any aspect of the criteria lacking or poorly developed;
- B: assignments turned in 30 days or more late;
- I: Incomplete (I) will appear on your transcript until assignment taking more than 30 days to complete is turned in;
- IC: appears on your transcript until the next transcript even if you have turned in a late assignment.

ASSIGNMENT SCHEDULE
BEFORE OUR FIRST CLASS ON JUNE 25, READ:

- Interviews: An Introduction to Qualitative Research Interviewing. Steinar Kval
- [http://www.inside-installations.org/OCMT/mydocs/Microsoft%20Word%20Booksummary_Interviews_SMK2.pdf]

BEFORE OUR FIRST CLASS ON JUNE 25, WRITE:
a. Identify at least one important point from Creswell (2007), Beebe (2001), Stake (1996), and Headland (1990), that you would not want your classmates to miss. You may want to summarize the points in your own words and use short quotes when the wording is special or unique. Please identify the pages where the material is found. Identify differences between Stake and Cresswell. Follow this with one to three sentences of a subjective response to each of the readings, not the individual chapters, but your assessment of the relevance of the readings and their effectiveness in communicating
ideas about qualitative research. Identify a research topic you think would require a qualitative study. Should not exceed 150 words.

b. Interview readings: Write two to four sentences that you will want to keep in mind when you do interviews. Identify the source including the page number. Should not exceed 100 words.

A- Post (a) and (b) on the Discussion Board by 5:00 PM the day before our first class (June 24). If you are not able to post to the Discussion Board prior to class, bring a hard copy to class and a memory stick with your assignment saved as a .rtf file and we will help you post your assignment before or after class.

Please make sure you can log into Blackboard prior to class. Call Computer Support Services 323-5550 if you have a problem.

Session 1: Thursday, June 25
Overview of course; introduction to Qualitative Research; review of various qualitative approaches and their philosophical and anthropological groundings; discussion of readings; small group work with written assignment, discussion of appropriate topics for qualitative research.

Description of and assignments for remaining sessions.

REMAINING SESSIONS TO BE ADDED TO THE SYLLABUS

Session 2: Thursday, July 2
Session 3: Thursday, July 9;
Session 4: Thursday, July 16
Session 5: Thursday, July 23
Session 6: Friday, July 24
Session 7: Thursday, July 30

BIBLIOGRAPHY


