Overview

In this class, we will cover the basic methodological foundations of doing qualitative data analysis. We will address the ethics and potential pitfalls of doing qualitative research. We will spend significant time analyzing qualitative social science data. We will discuss a variety of approaches to qualitative data collection and analysis such as ethnography and grounded theory, postmodern, phenomenological approaches, case studies, design thinking, mixed methods, participant action research and policy analysis.

Qualitative research can be a fascinating, intense and life-changing experience and offer a myriad of useful skills for the future. This course is designed for graduate students who are expecting to use qualitative methods in their research or who are looking towards a career where they will be doing research.

Learning Objectives

When you complete this course, you will be able to:
- Articulate the major philosophic and theoretical foundations supporting qualitative research approaches.
- Identify ethical considerations to doing research with humans.
- Demonstrate how to evaluate qualitative research.
- Compare various approaches and traditions of qualitative research.
- Analyze qualitative data.

Readings

There are five required books for this course that may be found at the college bookstore or online:


Additional course readings, videos, podcasts and materials will be made available to students through D2L or a Google Drive.

The following book will be available for students at the bookstore as optional but highly recommended. Some chapters of this book will be used this semester.


Course Policies
It is my intention to create a classroom community that functions with respect, honesty and self-responsibility in an environment where we each inspire one another to think deeply about the social world. To do this, I have developed three class policies.

Things that distract you, your professor or your colleagues will be kept out of the classroom.

From cell phones to laptops to basic pen and paper, there are a variety of ways that you can distract yourself and others. I ask you to be respectful of the activities you can engage in which distract both the professor and your colleagues. I am distracted by students who are engaged in activities that are not focused on the classroom. Behaviors that fall into this category include: cell phones that ring, text messaging, any laptop activity not related to class, conversations with neighbors, disruptive breaks and tardiness. If there is good reason for you to be distracted, such as a loved one needing attention or a health challenge, please inform the professor.

Respect will be the foundation for interactions with colleagues and your professor.

In this class we will deal with topics that are controversial, thought-provoking and which may challenge your world views. In order to address these issues in a scholarly manner, we will operate with a foundation of respect for all persons, acknowledging that there are a variety of viewpoints to be considered. You are always free to express your own opinions, however you may be asked to consider those opinions using a social science lens. You are always free to disagree with the conclusions of your professor, your peers or the authors you read. Disagreeing with the material does not excuse you from engaging with the material.

You are responsible for your presence in class and the timeliness and integrity of your work.

In this course we are creating a learning community. It is your prepared presence in-class, on time and without distractions that makes the classroom an incubator of discussion, learning and growth. It is by being timely with your homework, papers and exam preparation that allows you to engage with the class as a whole and allows for timely feedback. It is by doing your own work and carefully citing and referencing the ideas of others that brings integrity to your work and gives you confidence in your academic skill.

This is your responsibility and this is not something that I nor any of your colleagues can accomplish for you. Assignments, exams or papers will not be rescheduled unless you discuss the issue with me before the due date.
Because academic integrity is the core of academic life, any breach of the PSU Student Conduct Code will be taken very seriously. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, the following examples: any form of academic deceit; referring to materials or sources or uses devices not authorized by the instructor for use during any quiz or assignment; providing inappropriate aid to another person in connection with any quiz or assignment; engaging in plagiarism.

Plagiarism is the act of claiming someone's work as your own through copying it without giving the creator of the work credit. Plagiarism can also include using another person's theories, ideas, or phrases without proper attribution. The simplest way to avoid plagiarizing is to always cite the sources from which you gather information or develop arguments. Plagiarism is a serious issue and is a violation of the PSU Student Conduct Code http://www.ess.pdx.edu/OSA/osa_b.htm.

**University policy requires instructors to report all instances of plagiarism and penalize the perpetrator(s) according to guidelines set.** Please see me if you have any questions about how to cite your work.

**Evaluation**

**Homework – 10%**

There will be written assignments throughout the semester designed to help you learn the skills of working with and collecting qualitative data. These assignments will be evaluated in terms of engagement with the task and your honest completion of the work.

**Book Discussion Memos – 25% (3 memos @ 5% and lead memo @10%)**

We will be reading four empirical books throughout the semester and for each we will be discussing the text as a class. You will be asked to do three regular memos and one lead memo. For that lead memo, you will be partly responsible for directing class discussion.

In a regular book discussion memo, you will spend between one and two pages (approximately 250 to 500 words) discussing the book’s approach to qualitative analysis and how that method helps the author answer their research question. You will be evaluated on your ability to engage with the book and connect the concepts to course material. These memos are due via email by the start of the class when we will read the book (you are welcome to send them earlier).

In a lead book discussion memo you will do the same as the regular memo but you will also ask between three and four provocative questions of the text that you think would make a good start for a class discussion. In class you will be asked to share these insights in an informal presentation at the start of our book discussion and help to lead the class discussion. You will be evaluated on your engagement with the text and course concepts as well as your ability to pose questions of the text and to lead a class discussion.

Lead memos are due at noon the day before the class (in other words 24 hours in advance) when the book is assigned via email (you are welcome to send it earlier). This is so that the professor can prepare for class with your questions in mind.
**Review Paper – 20%**
You will identify three peer reviewed journal articles that discusses a topic of interest for you. Each of these articles will use a different qualitative methodological approach (e.g. ethnography, case study, participant action research). Your task is to write a paper discussing the three approaches to the topic. You will compare and contrast their methodological choices, the presentation of their methods and offer a critical discussion of the use of these methods for this topic. More information will follow.

**Final Analysis Paper – 25%**
Your final assignment will be a paper that asks you to analyze qualitative data and to present preliminary findings using an approach we have discussed in class. More information will follow.

**Participation and Professionalism – 10%**
To encourage a collegial and professional atmosphere, your grade will have a participation and professionalization component. Since our goal is to create a community of learning, your prepared participation in class is important to not only your own educational experience but also that of your colleagues. In the classroom we will have activities, discussions and lectures that help us synthesize material and bring concepts into greater clarity. What we do in the classroom cannot be duplicated and will rely upon your preparation and participation. Your attendance and my assessment of your overall contributions to our learning community will make up this portion of your grade.

**Assessments**

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**Grading Scale**

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Your Professor
It is my intention to be available to you regarding your work in this course. That said, I am an adjunct faculty member so being on campus on days other than Thursday is challenging. The best way to talk to me on a day other than Thursday is to set up time via email for an online meeting. If you talk with me about a time to meet after class, it is important that you double check the time/date via email to make sure it's on my calendar. If it’s not on my calendar, I won’t remember.

There are times when I will be unavailable to meet with you or to respond to your inquiries as quickly as you might like. For this reason, if there is a question you want to make sure I address before a deadline, I encourage you to give me at least 24 hours to respond.

Accommodations
If you are struggling in the class or have a compelling challenge facing you, I encourage you to come speak with me about this BEFORE it affects your grade. I am much more likely to be able to help you if we discuss an issue in advance of the deadline. If your class performance is affected because of an uncontrollable life event (ie, an act of God/nature), you are responsible for informing me via email of the challenge and your proposed resolution. Do this as soon as possible.
Schedule
Readings are to be read for the day they are written on the syllabus.
All assignments are subject to revision with advance notice.

[L] The reading is from the Luker text.
[O] The reading is from another source and can be found in our drive.
** Indicates that the reading is recommended.

Week 1 - Thursday, January 10, 2019

This week:
! There will be no in person class this week as the professor is traveling.
! Please fill out the Pre Course Assessment via the link in your professor’s email by Tuesday, January 15th.
! Do the Writing Like a Camera Exercise. Bring your writing to class printed out/written out next week.

Reading:
• Course Syllabus

Week 2 - Thursday, January 17, 2019
Overview of Qualitative Analysis

This week:
! Writing Like a Camera Assignment is Due at the start of class.

Reading:
• [L] Luker, Kristin. “Salsa Dancing in the Social Sciences” - Chapters 1 through 5

Week 3 - Thursday, January 24, 2019
Ethnography, Observation and Grounded Theory

Reading:
• **[O] Emerson, Fretz and Shaw – Chapter 3 “Writing up Fieldnotes I: From Field to Desk” pp. 39-63.
Week 4 - Thursday, January 31, 2019
Research Ethics

This week:

! Book discussion memos for The Convert are due via email at the start of class.
! Take the CITI Human Subjects Program at https://www.citiprogram.org/

Reading:
• [O] Berg, Bruce L. “Ethical Issues” from Qualitative Research Methods for the Social Sciences”

Book Discussion:

Week 5 - Thursday, February 7, 2019
Coding Qualitative Data

This week:

! Pick a computer package to work with that will help you with coding your qualitative data from the list in our Google drive. Spend some time installing it on your computer and reading online material to help you understand how the package works.
! Bring this installed package on a laptop with you to class. If this is a challenge for you, please contact me.

Readings:

Week 6 - Thursday, February 14, 2019
Listening to People

This week:

! Complete the Five Things Assignment before coming to class and come prepared to talk about it.
Book discussion memos for Between Good and Ghetto are due via email at the start of class.

Reading:
- [O] Emerson, Fretz and Shaw. Chapter 5 – “Pursuing Member’s Meaning” pp. 108-141

Book Discussion:

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**Week 7 - Thursday, February 21, 2019**

*Oral History, Narrative and Case Study Methods*

This week:
- Listen to between three and five edited StoryCorps interviews on the website before coming to class. Spend some time reflecting on what you heard in these stories.

Reading:

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**Week 8 - Thursday, February 28, 2019**

*Spatial, Phenomenological and Postmodern Methods*

This week:
- Book discussion memos for Thrice Told Tale are due via email at the start of class.

Reading:
• **[O] Thomas S. Eberle. 2014. "Phenomenology as a Research Method" In Uwe Flick The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Data Analysis


Book Discussion:

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**Week 9 - Thursday, March 7, 2019**
Mixed Methods, Design Thinking and QCA

This week:

! The professor will give you a number of design thinking websites. Spend some time reviewing the methods on these websites with an eye to the kind of data they would produce, the reasons for gathering this data and how it could be analyzed.

Readings:

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**Week 10 - Thursday, March 14, 2019**
Participant Action Research and Policy Analysis

This week:

! Book discussion memos for Meaningful Resistance are due via email at the start of class.

Readings:
• To be announced.

Book Discussion:

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**Week 11 – Finals Week**

This week:

! We will meet to discuss your final papers and to conclude the course.
Additional References


