

**MMC 6485: Advanced Qualitative Research Methods**  
**Wednesdays 9:35 a.m.-12:35 p.m.**  
**Turlington 2318**

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Office Hours: Wednesdays 12:40-1:30 p.m. or by appointment

**COURSE DESCRIPTION** There are three main components and stages of qualitative research: research planning and designing, data collection, and data management and analysis. Since you already have some knowledge and practical experiences with various methods of data collection, this graduate seminar will focus on how to design qualitative-oriented research and how to manage, evaluate and analyze qualitative data. Sample topics include: What constitute qualitative data? What is case study and how to think about contexts and contingencies when selecting cases and making inferences from them? How to make methodological choices for explaining variations vs. uncovering commonalities? What are some of the varying mutations of “validity” in qualitative research and how to demonstrate each? How to write about the mechanisms and processes for your research methods? How to conduct different levels of analysis based on qualitative data and develop arguments to link them? Throughout, we will read and discuss the selected methodological texts and research exemplars to explore various tools that can be useful for your own qualitative research design and analysis.

Specifically, our objectives are:

- Learn how to conceptualize and design original research using qualitative methods;
- Master various methods for data analysis and interpretation: such as development of a coding scheme, construction of categories and typologies, and data triangulation and corroboration;
- Be able to identify the methodological trends in the field and critically appraise qualitative research using appropriate terminology and classifications;
- Understand the ethics and to gain a deeper appreciation of qualitative inquiry as part of the larger endeavor of academic research;
- Design and implement your own qualitative project and write a conference-ready paper.

## **REQUIREMENTS**

### **Attendance**

Attendance is required. If you have to miss a class (due to medical conditions, family emergency, jury duty, call to active military duty or other excused absences), please notify the instructor in advance and provide necessary documentation. Being late more than 10 minutes will count as an absence. For each unexcused absence 2.5% will be deducted from your overall grade.

### **Participation**

- Each student is required not merely to attend, but also to participate in each class session. To participate, you must have prepared by completing all of the assigned readings and assignments and by thinking critically about each of those readings and assignments.
- The quality of your experience with this course depends in part on the degree of your participation. Asking questions, making observations, introducing issues for debate, and sharing your research experiences are all good ways to start. By the end of the course, you will be given a grade for your overall participation in class (10% total).
- We will create a safe atmosphere for open discussion. This means both active listening to one another (and not always thinking about what you would say next) and that all members have an opportunity to contribute rather than the discussion being dominated by a few.
- To foster an engaging classroom environment, only use laptops or iPads for readings, readings notes, and in-class exercises. Set up your notebook to take notes during class.

### Class Presentations

- During the first day of class, students will sign up for a total of three presentations. The first presentation will be for the second week, “Qualitative Methods Refresher,” when each student will present a mini-lecture on an assigned method. Students will also choose two additional weekly topics for their presentations. A list of who will present on which topics will be emailed to the class and uploaded to Canvas.
- Each presentation will be 25 to 30 minutes. Details on the requirements and techniques of presentations will be discussed during the first day of class.
- The assigned presenters will need to upload to Canvas a draft of your PowerPoint presentation or an outline of your presentation plan no later than noon on the Sunday before your presentation. I will provide feedback for revisions and refinement. If the students would like input before or during their preparation, I am more than happy to meet for discussion. The final PowerPoint presentation should be uploaded to Canvas no later than noon on Tuesday of your presentation.
- During the class, the presenters will give a brief, synthesized summary of the readings, clarify concepts, raise questions, lead discussion, and conclude with critical comments and observations. They can also bring in data sets (film clips, interview transcripts, etc.) for analyses and demonstrations.
- You will be given a grade for your performance in your presentation, including preparation, creativity, organization, and presentation skills (total 3 presentations, 5% each).

### Assignments

#1. Response paper I (5%). Find two journal articles that employ different qualitative methods dealing with topics similar to your own research project. Write a response paper (no more than two pages, single-spaced) comparing and assessing the formulation of the research problem, the research design and the data collection methods used by the researchers in the two articles. Your evaluation should include, but is not limited to, the following: appropriateness of the research design to answer the research question, scope and feasibility of the research, strengths and weakness of the data collection strategies, validity, and ethical problems. Please upload the two articles you plan to review to Canvas by for instructor’s approval. Your response paper is due February 7<sup>th</sup> by noon on (upload to Canvas). Please be prepared to present your critique in class.

#2. Research design (10%). This is a preliminary step towards your final paper for this class. The paper is due February 14<sup>th</sup> by noon on (upload to Canvas). Here are the key elements that should be included (a total of no more than three pages, single-spaced):

- Provide a tentative title that captures the essence of your topic and an abstract (75-100 words) that summarizes the main elements of your proposal.
- Explain context of your research and then carefully frame your research questions (should be important, novel, and answerable; should be clear, unambiguous, and easily understandable)
- Justify the method(s): name the method(s) you will use and explain why it is (or they are) the most appropriate method (s) to answer your research questions (cite relevant literature to justify your methodological choice)
- Identify the data: if interview or focus group, identify, explain and justify the demographic criteria for choosing participants (e.g., age, educational and professional background, gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion, political affiliation, nationality); if field observation, identify the site for your fieldwork and explain (cite relevant literature to justify the site selection); if textual analysis/discourse analysis, identify and explain which texts will be selected (type of medium, type of text, time frame, number of text sources, etc.).
- Describe the procedure: if interview, describe how to get access to and recruit the possible interviewees; if field observation, describe how to get access to the field and observation strategies; if textual analysis/discourse analysis, describe how you would locate, retrieve and organize the texts, and how you will analyze the texts (inductive vs deductive; open coding vs focused coding, etc.).
- Explain the measure: if interview and focus group, justify if you would use structured or semistructured or unstructured questions, compose possible questions, and group them into different topical areas or theoretical categories; if field observation, explain what particular areas you would like to focus on (e.g., for newsroom observation, you could focus on editor-reporter relationships, socialization and professionalization through daily practices, gender dynamics in the newsroom, etc.); if textual analysis/discourse analysis, design a “coding scheme/protocol” in a qualitative sense and explain what you will look for in analyzing the texts (e.g., theme, metaphor, journalistic tradition, discursive strategies, intended message).
- Describe validity strategies: identify and describe in detail at least three strategies to improve validity for both data collection and data analysis (e.g., reflexivity, triangulation, peer review, participant feedback, extended fieldwork, etc.)
- Reflection: describe possible holes in the research design and challenges you expect; explain your “rescue” or “backup” plan.

# 3. Response paper II (5%). You are going to read one of your classmate’s research designs and write a two-page, single-spaced constructive criticism. Evaluate the appropriateness of the research design, scope and feasibility of the research, strengths and weakness of the data collection strategies, validity, and possible ethical problems. The paper is due February 21<sup>st</sup> by noon on (upload to Canvas). Please also send a copy to the author, and you will discuss your criticism with the author during the meeting.

# 4. Response paper III (5%).

You are going to analyze a focus group data set. Instructions and links will be in Canvas. The paper is due March 27<sup>th</sup> by noon on (upload to Canvas).

# 5. Final paper and presentation (50%). Following the research design you proposed earlier in the semester, you will carry it out and write up as a research paper (18-22 page, double spaced). The research paper will include: a title, an abstract (75-100 words), introduction (including research statements or research questions), review of relevant literature, selection of research method(s) and data collection, data analysis, and conclusion and discussion of the results. Detailed instruction will be given in class. Submit the draft of your paper to Canvas. Also send the draft to one assigned class member by noon, April 19<sup>th</sup> (Friday). You will then present your paper in class on April 24<sup>th</sup> , and we will have a detailed discussion of each of your papers. Revise your paper based on the comments and suggestions by the class and submit your final paper to Canvas May 1<sup>st</sup> by noon.

### **Academic integrity:**

Academic honesty is fundamental to the activities and principles of a university. All members of the academic community must be confident that each person's work has been responsibly and honorably acquired, developed and presented. Any effort to gain an advantage not given to all students is dishonest whether or not the effort is successful. Breaches of academic integrity include – but are not limited to – the following:

- Use of materials (whether verbatim or paraphrased) from another author without citation or attribution.
- Extensive use of materials from past assignments without permission of your instructor.
- Extensive use of materials from assignments in other classes without permission of your instructor.
- Fabricating information for assignments, whether for publication or not.
- Fabricating sources for assignments, whether for publication or not.
- Fabricating quotes in assignments, whether for publication or not..

When in doubt about what constitutes a violation of academic integrity procedures, contact me.

### **Disabilities and Accommodations:**

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the disability Resource Center.

## **COURSE OUTLINE**

### ***Part I: Methodological and Ethical Issues***

Week 1 (1/15) Overview

Week 2 (1/22) Qualitative Research Methods Refresher

Week 3 (1/29) Ethical Concerns

Week 4 (2/5) Validity, Transferability and Reflexivity

### ***Part II: Qualitative Research Design -***

Week 5 (2/12) Design I: Basics

Week 6 (2/19) Design II: Case Study

Week 7 (2/26) Design III: Peer Review

### ***Part III: Qualitative Data Analysis -***

Week 8 (3/5) Managing, Coding and Categorizing

Week 9 (3/12) Linking, Mapping and Corroborating

## **SPRING BREAK**

Week 10 (3/26) Drawing and Verifying Conclusions

### ***Part IV: Evaluation, Reflection and Beyond -***

Week 11 (4/2) Evaluating Qualitative Research

Week 12 (4/9) Beyond Qualitative: Mixed Methods

Week 13 (4/16) Individual Meetings

Week 15 (4/23) Presentation and Critique

## CLASS SCHEDULE AND READINGS (SUBJECT TO CHANGE)

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### Week 1: Starting Where You Are: Overview

(1/15)

“show and tell;” paradigmatic reflections: qualitative vs quantitative; current status of qualitative research in our field

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### Week 2: Qualitative Methods Refresher

(1/22)

*Read:* Students will sign up to prepare a 20-minute presentation on one of the following qualitative research methods. Here are some readings that should be helpful for preparing your presentation. Feel free to use additional materials. See Canvas page for instructions and readings.

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### Week 3: Ethical Concerns in Qualitative Research

(1/29)

*Read: (Note: please read Carolyn Ellis’ article before Charlotte Allen’s, and read Hammersley’s article before Taylor and Smith’s response and then read Hammersley’s reply to Taylor and Smith)*

Carolyn Ellis, “Emotional and Ethical Quagmires in Returning to the Field,” *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, 24:1 (April 1995): 68-98.

<http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/089124195024001003>

Charlotte Allen, “Spies Like Us: When Sociologists Deceive Their Subjects,” *Lingua Franca* (November 1997): 31-39. <http://linguafranca.mirror.theinfo.org/9711/9711.allen.html>

Martyn Hammersley, “On the Ethics of Interviewing for Discourse Analysis,” *Qualitative Research* (October 2014): 529-541. <http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/1468794113495039>

Stephanie Taylor and Robin Smith, “The Ethics of Interviewing for Discourse Analysis: Responses to Martyn Hammersley,” *Qualitative Research* (October 2014): 542-548.

<http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/1468794113503742>

Martyn Hammersley, “The Ethics of Interviewing for Discourse Analysis: Reply to Taylor and Smith,” *Qualitative Research* (December 2014): 763-766.

<http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/1468794114554148>

Marc Parry, “Conflict Over Sociologist’s Narrative Puts Spotlight on Ethnography,” *Chronicle of Higher Education*, June 12, 2015, <https://www.chronicle.com/article/Conflict-Over-Sociologists/230883>

Elizabeth Buchanan and Michael Zimmer, “Internet Research Ethics,” *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, 2021.

<https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/ethics-internet-research/> 14

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**Week 4: Validity, Transferability and Reflexivity**

(2/5)

Read: Robert Adcock and David Collier, "Measurement Validity: A Shared Standard for Qualitative and Quantitative Research," *American Political Science Review*, 95:3, (2001): 529-546.

Burke Johnson, "Examining the Validity Structure of Qualitative Research," *Education*, 118, no. 2 (1997): 282-292.

[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/246126534\\_Examining\\_the\\_Validity\\_Structure\\_of\\_Qualitative\\_Research](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/246126534_Examining_the_Validity_Structure_of_Qualitative_Research)

Greg Guest, Arwen Bunce & L. Johnson, "How Many Interviews are Enough? An Experiment with Data Saturation and Variability," *Field Methods*, 18 (2006): 59-82.

Lorelli Nowell, et al., "Thematic Analysis: Striving to Meet the Trustworthiness Criteria," *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 16, no. 1 (2017): 1-16.

Cukier, Wendy, Robert Bauer, and Catherine Middleton. "Applying Habermas' Validity Claims as a Standard for Critical Discourse Analysis." In *Information Systems Research*, 233-258.

Katja Mruck and Franz Breuer. "Subjectivity and Reflexivity in Qualitative Research," *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung / Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, 4 (2003), Art. 23.

<http://www.qualitative-research.net/index.php/fqs/article/view/696/1504>

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**Week 5 Designing Qualitative Studies I**

(2/12)

Read: Robert Yin. *Qualitative Research From Start to Finish* (NY: Guilford, 2011), Chapters 3 and 4. Read the e-book through UF library.

(Research Example) Joy Jenkins, "Elevated Influences: The Construction of Journalistic Identities at a City Magazine," *Journalism Studies*, 20, no. 8 (2018): 1069-1087.

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/1461670X.2018.1486729>

(Research Example) Letrell Crittenden & Antoine Haywood (2020) Revising Legacy Media Practices to Serve Hyperlocal Information Needs of Marginalized Populations, *Journalism Practice*, 14:5, 608-625, DOI: [10.1080/17512786.2020.1759124](https://doi.org/10.1080/17512786.2020.1759124)

(Example) Saskia Witteborn, "The Situated Expression of Arab Collective Identities in the United States," *Journal of Communication*, 57(2007): 556-575.

<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1460-2466.2007.00357.x/abstract>

\* *Response paper I due by noon on 9/19*

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**Week 6: Designing Qualitative Studies II**

(2/19)

Mario L. Small, “‘How Many Cases do I Need?’ On Science and the Logic of Case Selection in Field Based Research,” *Ethnography*, 10 (2009): 5-38. Eres.

Bent Flyvbjerg, “Five Misunderstandings of Case-Study Research,” *Qualitative Inquiry*, 12(2006): 219-245.

Gary Thomas, “A Typology for the Case Study in Social Science Following a Review of Definition, Discourse, and Structure,” *Qualitative Inquiry*, 17(2011): 511-521.

\* *Research design assignment due by noon on 9/26*

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### **Week 7: Designing Qualitative Studies III**

(2/26)

(Research Example) Roma Subramanian & Andrea Weare (2022) #notokay: Challenging sexual violence through digital health activism, *Critical Public Health*, 32:2, 263-272, DOI: [10.1080/09581596.2020.1776218](https://doi.org/10.1080/09581596.2020.1776218)

(Research Example) Amanda Hinnant, Roma Subramanian, Rokeshia Renné Ashley, Mimi Perreault, Rachel Young & Ryan J. Thomas (2019) How Journalists Characterize Health Inequalities and Redefine Solutions for Native American Audiences, *Health Communication*, 34:4, 383-391, DOI: [10.1080/10410236.2017.1405482](https://doi.org/10.1080/10410236.2017.1405482)

(Research Example) Ashley, R. R. (2022). #RealBleachers: Black Women’s Knowledge of Skin Whitening Risks. *Journal of Black Studies*, 53(1), 60-75. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00219347211050845>

\* *Response paper II due by noon on 10/3*

### **Week 8: Managing, Coding and Categorizing**

(3/5)

Ian Dey. *Qualitative Data Analysis* (Routledge, 1993), chapters 7-10. Read the e-book through UF library.

Bruce D. Johnson, Eloise Dunlap and Ellen Benoit. “Structured Qualitative Research: Organizing “Mountains of Words” for Data Analysis, both Qualitative and Quantitative,” *Subst Use Misuse*, 45, no. 5 (2010): 648-670. See

<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2838205/pdf/nihms65965.pdf>

Sheila Henderson, Janet Holland, et al., “Storying Qualitative Longitudinal Research: Sequence, Voice and Motif,” *Qualitative Research*, 12 (February 2012): 16-34.

<http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/1468794111426232>

(Research Example) TJ Thomson, Sarah Johnstone, Jen Seevinck, Evonne Miller & Sarah Holland-Batt (2022) It’s not enough to be seen: exploring how journalists show aged care in Australia from 2018-2021, *Communication Research and Practice*, 8:4, 261-277, DOI: 10.1080/22041451.2022.2137237

(Research Example) Grant, R., Jenkins, J., & Cabas-Mijares, A. (2022). Selling Breonna: Twitter Responses to Breonna Taylor on the Covers of O, The Oprah Magazine and Vanity Fair.



Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly, 99(3), 784-801.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/10776990221108646>

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### **Week 9: Linking, Mapping and Corroborating**

(3/12)

*Read:* Ian Dey. *Qualitative Data Analysis* (London: Routledge: 1993). Read chapters 11-14. Read the e-book through UF library.

Gary King, Robert Keohane, & Sidney Verba. *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), chapter 3, “Causality and causal inference.” Read the e-book through UF library.

Kyle Bower, Denise Lewis, & Trena Paulus. “Using ATLAS for Mac to Enact Narrative Analysis: Metaphor of Generativity from LGBT Older Adult Life Stories,” *Qualitative Research*, 22 no. 6 (2022): 933–950. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1468794121999008>

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### **Week 10: Drawing and Verifying Conclusions**

(3/26)

Leeman, Jennifer, DrP.H., M.Div., & Sandelowski, Margarete, PhD, R.N., F.A.A.N. (2012). Practice-based evidence and qualitative inquiry. *Journal of Nursing Scholarship*, 44(2), 171-9. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1547-5069.2012.01449.x>

Hall, T., Lashua, B., & Coffey, A. (2008). Sound and the Everyday in Qualitative Research. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 14(6), 1019-1040. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1077800407312054>

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### **Week 11: Evaluating Qualitative Research**

(4/2)

*Read:* Arthur Bochner. “Criteria Against Ourselves,” *Qualitative Inquiry*, 6 (2000): 266-272. <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/107780040000600209>

1.

Hamilton JB. Rigor in Qualitative Methods: An Evaluation of Strategies Among Underrepresented Rural Communities. *Qualitative Health Research*. 2020;30(2):196-204. doi:10.1177/1049732319860267

Schwandt, Thomas A., Yvonna S. Lincoln, and Egon G. Guba. “Judging Interpretations: But Is It Rigorous? Trustworthiness and Authenticity in Naturalistic Evaluation.” *New directions for evaluation* 2007, no. 114 (2007): 11–25.

Migala, Silke, and Uwe Flick. “Cultural and Individual Barriers to Palliative Care From Different Angles: Data Triangulation in Practice.” *Qualitative inquiry* 25, no. 8 (2019): 786–798.  
\* *Response paper III due by noon on 10/31*

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### **Week 12: Mixed Methods**

(4/9)

*Read:* Robert Yin. *Qualitative Research From Start to Finish* (NY: Guilford, 2011), chapter 12. Read the e-book through UF library.

Mario Luis Small, "How to Conduct a Mixed Methods Study: Recent Trends in a Rapidly Growing Literature," *Annual Review of Sociology*, 37 (August 2011): 57-86. See: [http://scholar.harvard.edu/files/mariosmall/files/small\\_ars\\_2011.pdf](http://scholar.harvard.edu/files/mariosmall/files/small_ars_2011.pdf)

Joanna Sale, Lynne Lohfeld and Kevin Brazil, "Revisiting the Quantitative-Qualitative Debate: Implications for Mixed-Methods Research." *Quality and Quantity*, 36 (2002): 43-53. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4623759/>

Janice Morse, "Issues in Qualitatively-Driven Mixed-Method Designs: Walking Through a Mixed-Method Project." In S. Hesse-Biber & R. B. Johnson (Eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Multimethod and Mixed Methods Research Inquiry* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015, pp. 206-222). Read the e-book through UF library.

Harry Torrance, "Triangulation, Respondent Validation, and Democratic Participation in Mixed Methods Research," *Journal of Mixed Methods Research*, (April 2012): 111-123. <http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/1558689812437185>

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### **Week 13: Individual Meetings**

(4/16)

No readings. During this week, each student will have a 30-minute individual meeting to discuss your research progress with the instructor.

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### **Week 15: Final Paper Presentation and Critique**

(4/23)

\* *Draft of your final paper due by noon on 4/23.*

\* *Final paper due by noon on 5/1.*