

**FRAN\*6020 QUALITATIVE METHODS Winter 2013**

**Department of Family Relations and Applied Nutrition  
University of Guelph**

**Instructor:** Olga Sutherland, Ph.D., C. Psych., RMFT

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**Office Hours:** By appointment

**Course Time and Location:** MACs 331, Tuesdays 11:30 am to 2:20 pm (January 8 - April 2)

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

During this course, students will learn about and apply the theoretical and empirical assumptions informing a variety of qualitative methodologies, with the end-product consisting of a written research report utilizing one approach to qualitative research. Students will learn to compare different research questions, theoretical frameworks, analytic assumptions, and methodological procedures. They will become familiar with the standards of empirical rigour underpinning these approaches and with how to practice emerging analytic skills relevant to each. Students will be able to articulate their preferred paradigm in conducting research in social sciences. The major focus will be on the following qualitative methodologies: grounded theory, phenomenology, narrative analysis, and discourse analysis.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

1. Become familiar with the characteristics, language, and assumptions of qualitative research;
2. Delineate the differences between qualitative and quantitative research approaches and describe the theoretical and practical implications of these differences for a research project;
3. Understand the available techniques and procedures for qualitative data collection and analysis;
4. Be able to recognize and assess quality and rigour in evaluating a qualitative research study;
5. Understand the characteristics of different qualitative approaches and apply them to address a particular research topic;
6. Undertake analysis of qualitative data, including coding using computer assisted qualitative data analysis; and
7. Integrate qualitative research into a successful academic career by learning how to write qualitative research proposals and reports.

**COURSE FORMAT**

Class meetings will be conducted as seminars. The course will combine lecture, discussion, and in-class group activities, facilitating an atmosphere where ideas are exchanged and research experiences are shared. On occasion, class time will be an opportunity for students to engage in data analysis.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

**All assignments are submitted to the Dropbox (CourseLink).** The course instructor will not read or grade the material beyond the page limit identified for a specific assignment. All assignment should be typed, double-spaced, Times New Roman 12 font, with 1" margins (.doc format).

**Evaluation:**

There are three assignments and one in-class presentation in this course:

Summary – 10%

Research Proposal & Ethics Form – 20%

Research Presentation – 30%

Written Research Report – 40%

**1. Summary (10%):** You are expected to prepare a 4-page summary of four readings (1 page maximum addressing each reading): Gergen (2001), Snape & Spencer (2003), Howe (2004), Seale (1999). These summaries will be evaluated in terms whether they reflect comprehension of the readings, critical/reflective thinking, complete coverage of key ideas, and organization and style. **DUE Jan 22.** You are asked to respond to the following questions:

- 1) How do you understand the author's key argument(s)? What is your position on the issue discussed (justify)? (if the author addresses more than one point, list all or most of them and select one for a detailed discussion).
- 2) How has the article changed your understanding or practice of research?

**2. Research proposal/submission of ethics form (20%):** In your research proposal (*length 4-5 pages*), you will be expected to identify a research problem/topic, discuss the significance of examining this topic, provide background information on the topic and rationale for the study, specify your theoretical framework, and discuss your research design (see the textbook pp. 299-304 for details). Please also discuss your paradigm or philosophical assumptions related to knowledge generation (ontology and epistemology). The substantive focus for your research project is open but it should be a topic that is within the broad parameters of family relations, human development, and applied nutrition. Please consult with the instructors if you want help puzzling through the focus of your project. **DUE Feb 5**

**Grading of Research Proposal (15 points total):**

Comprehension (depth and breadth)	3 points
Depth of analysis & application of knowledge to practice	9 points
Clarity, quality, and organization of writing & APA style adherence	3 points

**Grading of Ethics Application (5 points total):**

Application of the ethical guidelines (see below) to a project	5 points
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*You should not begin interacting with participants until your research project is approved* to ensure its compliance with the University of Guelph Research Ethics Guidelines and the Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans [www.pre.ethics.gc.ca/pdf/eng/tcps2/TCPS\\_2\\_FINAL\\_Web.pdf](http://www.pre.ethics.gc.ca/pdf/eng/tcps2/TCPS_2_FINAL_Web.pdf). Student research involving human participants in class-based projects require the completion of the *Student In-Course Application* attached to this outline and found online [http://www.uoguelph.ca/research/forms\\_policies\\_procedures/human\\_participants.shtml](http://www.uoguelph.ca/research/forms_policies_procedures/human_participants.shtml).

Sandra Auld, Research Ethics Coordinator, will discuss the process of completing the form in Week 2. Both an electronic and hard (signed) copy of the form must be submitted to me by February 12, 2012.

After I approve your research plan and ethics form (this may need to be revised following my feedback), you are free to engage in data collection and analysis. Given the time constraints, you should choose data sources that are easily accessible to you. In particular, if you are doing interviews, you may wish to think about conducting these with graduate student peers, friends, or acquaintances.

There are many types of data that you can use for this assignment. The data collection strategy that you will use depends on the methodological approach. Here are some possibilities:

- 1) If you are interested in *ethnography*, *phenomenology*, or *grounded theory* analysis, you can conduct interviews, participant observations, or focus groups. (Suggested number: 3 interviews, 3 participant observation sessions, or 2 focus groups).
- 2) Those who wish to carry out *discourse analysis* can conduct interviews or focus groups, use interview or focus group data conducted by other researchers, or can identify a corpus of naturalistic data (i.e., not collected for the purpose of conducting research). Naturalistic data can include transcription of audio or video material (e.g., mealtime conversations, radio or television interviews, or talk shows); web-based documents; or materials from popular publications, literature or academic texts. (Suggested number: 5-10 segments, depending on the length and whether you intend to analyse large portions of a single source or certain segments from several sources).
- 3) If you wish to conduct *narrative analysis*, you can conduct life history interviews or do a case study. If taking this approach, it may be wise to focus on one participant but consider repeated interviews (2-3) and/or use other sources of information to triangulate your understanding of the case.

**3. Research Presentation (30%):** The purpose of this assignment is to encourage students to reflect on the process of conducting research. Each presentation should be *25 minutes* including questions and discussion (the exact time TBD). The presentation will consist of two components: summary of your research & discussion facilitation. You are asked to cover the following aspects of your research: the research topic and question, methodology, and summary of most central or interesting results (10 minutes). You can also discuss your experience of conducting research and how research evolved over time, including struggles and challenges you encountered. You are welcome to pose methodological questions to students related to your project or elicit their experiences of a particular issue or dilemma faced during data collection, analysis, and write-up. **DUE Mar 27 & Apr 6 during class time**

Grading (30 points total):

Quality of the material presented – comprehension, evaluation, relevance	10 points
Reflexivity	5 points
Creativity & originality (information is presented in a unique, engaging, and interesting format)	5 points
Discussion facilitation	5 points
Organization, time management, & style	5 points

**4. Written Research Report (40%):** Some aspects of the project you have already addressed in your proposal; therefore, you should streamline your Introduction by giving only the briefest framing of the literature before listing your research questions or aims. Note that the major emphasis is on *the results or analyses* of your data. But it is important that you be selective here so that you are not taking on too much for the assignment. That is, even if your grounded theory analysis has generated four or five major categories, you should mention all four but be clear to be selective and choose only two (for example) to showcase in your paper. Let's say you are conducting a discourse analysis of interviews on food preferences. You have identified four different discursive strategies participants use to justify non-healthy food choices. In your write-up, you can briefly list the four strategies but show the analyses of only two of the strategies in your paper. There are lots of other ways to delimit your analytic focus (feel free to discuss this with me if you are unsure how to delimit your focus). The paper should be no more than *15-20 pages*, with the upper end being more likely in the case of discourse-analytic projects or narrative-analytic papers that will include excerpts cut and pasted into the Analysis section. **DUE Apr 2**

**Grading (40 points total):**

Effective use of existing literature to provide background/rationale	5 points
Design of the study	5 points
Analysis: Quality/rigour of data analysis	15 points
Discussion: Interpretation of the results and drawing conclusions (for different stakeholders: theorists, researchers, and practitioners)	10 points
Clarity, quality, and organization of writing & APA style adherence	5 points

**REQUIRED READINGS:**

- Readings are available on D2L CourseLink site
- Students are expected to read assigned book chapters or articles *prior to* each class.
- Students are encouraged to use qualitative analysis software (e.g., NVivo, MAXQDA – free 30-day demos are available for download).
- Textbook (available from the University Bookstore): Liamputtong, P. (2012). *Qualitative research methods* (4th ed.). Melbourne: Oxford University Press.

**Week 2**

- Lincoln, Y. (1995). Emerging criteria for quality in qualitative and interpretive research. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 1, 275-289.
- Seale, C. (1999). Quality in qualitative research. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 5(4), 465-478.
- Plano Clark, V. L., Creswell, J. W., Green, D. O., & Shope, R. J. (2008). Mixing quantitative and qualitative approaches: An introduction to emergent mixed methods. In S. N Hesse-Biber & P. Leavy (Eds.), *Handbook of emergent methods* (pp. 363-387). London: Guilford.

**Week 3**

- Snape, D., & Spencer, L. (2003). The foundations of qualitative research. In J. Ritchie & J. Lewis (Eds.), *Qualitative research practice: A guide for social science students and researchers* (pp. 1-23). London: Sage.
- Baert, P., Weinberg, D., & Mottier, V. (2011). Social constructionism, postmodernism, & deconstructionism. In I. C. Jarvie & J. Zamora-Bonilla (Eds.), *The Sage handbook of the philosophy of social sciences* (pp. 474-486). London: Sage.
- Gergen, K. J. (2001). Psychological science in a postmodern context. *American Psychologist*, 56(10), 803-813.
- Howe, K. R. (2004). A critique of experimentalism. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 10, 42-61.

**Week 4**

- Wertz, F. J. et al. (2011). *Five ways of doing qualitative analysis*. New York: Guildford. (Ch. 2).
- Wood, L. A., & Kroger, R. O. (2000). *Doing discourse analysis: Methods for studying action in talk and text*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. (Chs. 1-3)

**Week 5**

- Corbin, J. & Morse, J. M. (2003). The unstructured interactive interview: Issues of reciprocity and risks when dealing with the sensitive topics. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 9, 335-354.
- Davies, B. et al. (2004). The ambivalent practices of reflexivity. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 10, 360-389.
- Sword, W. (1999). Accounting for presence of self: Reflections on doing qualitative research. *Qualitative Health Research*, 9, 270-278.

**Week 6**

Charmaz, K. (2003). Grounded theory: Objectivist and constructivist methods. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Strategies of qualitative inquiry* (pp. 249-291). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Rennie, D. (2000). Grounded theory methodology as methodical hermeneutics: Reconciling realism and relativism. *Theory & Psychology, 10*(4), 481-502.

### Week 8

Charmaz, K. (2006). *Constructing grounded theory: A practical guide through qualitative analysis*. London: Sage. (Chs. 3 & 5).

Walker, D., & Myrick, F. (2006). Grounded theory: An exploration of process and procedure. *Qualitative Health Research, 16*, 547-559.

### Week 9

Hein, S. F., & Austin, W. J. (2001). Empirical and hermeneutic approaches to phenomenological research in psychology: A comparison. *Psychological Methods, 6*(1), 3-17.

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology, 3*, 77-101.

### Week 10

Riessman, C. (2008). *Narrative methods for the human sciences*. London: Sage. (Chs. 3-4).

### Week 11

Potter, J. (2011). Discursive psychology and the study of naturally occurring talk. In D. Silverman (Ed.), *Qualitative research* (3rd ed., pp. 187-207). London: Sage.

Heritage, J. (2011). Conversation analysis: Practices and methods. In D. Silverman (Ed.), *Qualitative research* (3rd ed., pp. 208-230). London: Sage.

### Sample qualitative studies:

Genoe, M. R., Keller, H. H., Schindel Martin, L., & Dupuis, S. L. (2012). Adjusting to mealtime change within the context of dementia. *Canadian Journal on Aging, 31*(2), 173-194.

Pelling, C., & Arvay-Buchanan, M. (2004). Experiences of attachment injury in heterosexual couple relationships. *Canadian Journal of Counselling, 38*(4), 289-303.

Eatough, V., Smith, J. A., & Shaw, R. (2008). Women, anger, and aggression: An interpretive phenomenological analysis. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence, 23*(12), 1767-1799.

Frost, N. (2009). 'Do you know what I mean?' The use of a pluralistic narrative analysis approach in the interpretation of an interview. *Qualitative Research, 9*(1), 9-29.

Keats, P. A. (2009). Multiple text analysis in narrative research: Visual, written, and spoken stories of experience. *Qualitative Research, 9*(2), 181-195.

Lempert, L. B. (1994). A narrative analysis of abuse. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography, 22*(4), 411-441.

Malson, H., Finn, D. M., Treasure, J., Clarke, S., & Anderson, G. (2004). Constructing 'the eating disordered patient': A discourse analysis of accounts of treatment experience. *Journal of Community & Applied Social Psychology, 14*, 473-489.

Ollerenshaw, J. A., & Creswell, J. W. (2002). Narrative research: A comparison of two restorying data analysis approaches. *Qualitative Inquiry, 8*(3), 329-347.

Peterson, A., & Jenni, C. B. (2003). Men's experience of making the decision to have their first child: A phenomenological analysis. *The Family Journal, 11*(4), 353-363.

Rahilly, D. A. (1993). A phenomenological analysis of authentic experience. *Journal of Humanistic Psychology, 33*(2), 49-71.

Sims-Schouten, Riley, C. E., & Willig, C. (2007). Critical realism in discourse analysis: A presentation of a systematic method of analysis using women's talk of motherhood, childcare and female employment as an example. *Theory and Psychology, 17*(1), 101-124.

### RECOMMENDED READINGS:

Daly, K. J. (2007). *Qualitative methods for family studies and human development*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Wood, L. A., & Kroger, R. O. (2000). *Doing discourse analysis: Methods for studying action in talk and text*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Riessman, C. (2008). *Narrative methods for the human sciences*. London: Sage.

Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (2011) (Eds.). *The Sage handbook of qualitative research* (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

### E-mail Communication

As per university regulations, all students are required to check their <uoguelph.ca> e-mail account regularly: e-mail is the official route of communication between the University and its students.

### When You Cannot Meet a Course Requirement

When you find yourself unable to meet an in-course requirement because of illness or compassionate reasons, please advise the course instructor in writing. See the graduate calendar for information on regulations and procedures for Academic Consideration: <http://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/graduate/current/> Without appropriate documentation all late work will incur **a penalty of 10%** of the total marks per day late.

### Drop Date

The last date to drop one-semester courses, without academic penalty, is March 8, 2013. For regulations and procedures for Dropping Courses, see the Undergraduate Calendar: <http://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/c08/c08-drop.shtml>

### Copies of out-of-class assignments

Keep reliable back-up copies of all out-of-class assignments: you may be asked to resubmit work at any time.

### Accessibility

The University of Guelph is committed to creating a barrier-free environment. Providing services for students is a shared responsibility among students, faculty and administrators. This relationship is based on respect of individual rights, the dignity of the individual and the University community's shared commitment to an open and supportive learning environment. Students requiring service or accommodation, whether due to an identified, ongoing disability or a short-term disability should contact the Centre for Students with Disabilities as soon as possible. For more information, contact CSD at 519-824-4120 ext. 56208 or email [csd@uoguelph.ca](mailto:csd@uoguelph.ca) or see the website: <http://www.csd.uoguelph.ca/csd/>

### Academic Misconduct

The University of Guelph is committed to upholding the highest standards of academic integrity and it is the responsibility of all members of the University community – faculty, staff, and students – to be aware of what constitutes academic misconduct and to do as much as possible to prevent academic offences from occurring. University of Guelph students have the responsibility of abiding by the University's policy on academic misconduct regardless of their location of study; faculty, staff and students have the responsibility of supporting an environment that discourages misconduct. Students need to remain aware that instructors have access to and the right to use electronic and other means of detection. Please note: Whether or not a student intended to commit academic misconduct is not relevant for a finding of guilt. Hurried or careless submission

of assignments does not excuse students from responsibility for verifying the academic integrity of their work before submitting it. Students who are in any doubt as to whether an action on their part could be construed as an academic offence should consult with a faculty member or faculty advisor. The Academic Misconduct Policy is detailed in the Graduate Calendar:

<http://www.uoguelph.ca/graduatestudies/gchandbook/academicmisconduct>

#### Recording of Materials

Presentations which are made in relation to course work—including lectures—cannot be recorded or copied without the permission of the presenter, whether the instructor, a classmate or guest lecturer. Material recorded with permission is restricted to use for that course unless further permission is granted.

#### Resources

The Academic Calendars are the source of information about the University of Guelph's procedures, policies and regulations which apply to undergraduate, graduate and diploma programs:

<http://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/index.cfm?index>

**CLASS SCHEDULE & ASSIGNED READINGS**

<b>Week</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Readings</b>	<b>Assignment Due Dates</b>
1	Jan 8	Course overview		
2	Jan 15	Introduction to qualitative research Rigour Research ethics ( <i>Sandy Auld</i> )	Textbook (Ch. 2) Lincoln (1995) Seale (1999) Plano Clark, Creswell, Green, & Shope (2008) <i>Textbook (Chs. 15 &amp; 17) – optional (addresses research ethics, including ethics of online research)</i>	
3	Jan 22	Paradigms	Snape & Spencer (2003) Baert, Weinberg, & Mottier (2011) Gergen (2001) Howe (2004)	<b>Summary</b>
4	Jan 29	Methodologies Sampling	Textbook (Ch. 1) Wertz et al. (2011) Wood & Kroger (2000) <i>Textbook (Ch. 13) – optional (useful for writing the proposal)</i>	
5	Feb 5	Interviewing & focus groups Reflexivity	Textbook (Chs. 3 & 4) Corbin & Morse (2003) Davies et al. (2004) Sword (1999)	<b>Research proposal &amp; ethics application</b>
6	Feb 12	Data Analysis Grounded theory methodology I	Textbook (Chs. 11-12) Charmaz (2003) Rennie (2000)	
7	<i>Feb 19</i>	<i>Winter Break</i>		
8	Feb 26	Grounded theory methodology II ( <i>Kerry Daly</i> )	Charmaz (2006) Walker & Myrick (2006) <i>Textbook (Ch. 14) – optional (useful for writing the report)</i>	
9	Mar 5	Phenomenology & thematic analysis	Hein & Austin (2001) Braun & Clarke (2006)	
10	Mar 12	Narrative analysis	Textbook (Ch. 6) Riessman (2008)	
11	Mar 19	Discourse analysis	Potter (2011) Heritage (2011)	
12	Mar 26	<b>Research presentations</b>		
13	Apr 2	<b>Research presentations</b>		<b>Research report</b>