

Qualitative Research/MMC 6936/Fall 2012

Class Hours: T 12:50-3:50; Weimer 1090

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392-0447

Please bring this syllabus to class with you each week in order to note changes.

Accommodations for students with disabilities. Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student, who must then give it to me when requesting accommodation.

Required Texts:

Creswell, J. W. (latest). *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Maxwell, J. A. (2013). *Qualitative Research Design: An Interactive Approach*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Subscribe: QUALRS-L. LISTSERV of qualitative researchers. Join the list and read about issues that are pertinent to scholars using qualitative methods. You may also decide to pose a question to the list once the semester gets underway.

<http://listserv.uga.edu/cgi-bin/wa?SUBED1=qualrs-l&A=1>

To search the archives for topics covered since 1991: <http://www.listserv.uga.edu/archives/qualrs-l.html>

E-mail: Please check and make sure you have received an e-mail from me after the second class. Subject line: **QUAL CLASS**. If it is not received, the registrar has an old contact listed under your name. Please update if necessary. Check your account every day for any class changes or news.

Course Description: This class was designed to develop qualitative research skills informed by critical theory and other theories frequently used in qualitative inquiry. The focus of the class will be on major concepts, issues, theoretical bases, and methods. Participants will read major texts and current articles and discuss problems frequently encountered fieldwork, including ethical and practical problems.

The format of the class is lecture/discussion. This type of class only works well when participants spend the time necessary to read carefully and thoughtfully the readings for the week. **If you are unwilling or unable to read and discuss graduate level articles, this is not the class for you.** You are expected to contribute substantive insights to *every* class discussion. There is a grade reduction for failure to participate.

You will not be “warned” or “reminded” to participate. As graduate students, it is your job to be prepared and to practice verbalizing new concepts.

If the class is moving too fast or the presenter/teacher is using language that is unfamiliar, please feel free to raise your hand and ask for clarification. Chances are, if you are confused, others are, too!

For my part, I will try to gear readings to your interests and augment exemplar articles with foundational readings that give you the basic knowledge needed to read your homework critically. Because this is a small graduate seminar, it is expected that you will attend every class.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

Class participants will...

1. Explore and interrogate their presuppositions about research processes.
2. Identify the kinds of problems and questions best addressed by qualitative research. By the end of this class, you will be able to specify the goals of qualitative research, the nature of the explanations generated by qualitative research and the limitations of those explanations.
3. Examine the theoretical underpinnings of qualitative and critical approaches and be able to converse fluently about the uses of these approaches.
4. Investigate strategies for designing qualitative inquiries, with attention to the values and assumptions underlying various traditions of qualitative research.
5. Evaluate qualitative research and be able to specify the criteria for quality work.

GRADING:

Any late assignment or unexcused absences will result in a deduction from your final grade for this class; amount to be determined at the discretion of the professor.

Class participation (30%): You are expected to make significant contributions to every class discussion. Because there are no exams in this course, your ability to discuss the reading is an important part of how you are evaluated for the course.

Class reading is material with which you should find it easy to engage—it speaks to human concerns, interpretations and values. I encourage you bring your unique perspective to each discussion. That can only happen, though, if you read and think and observe before each meeting.

Every Sunday, by 3 p.m., you should send me an email in which you reflect on readings for the following Tuesday -- were they similar or different? What comment would the authors have on the

others' works? What do they add to class understanding? How did the work change or add to your understanding? What don't you understand?

In addition, send one thought-provoking question or observation about facilitated reading(s) to my e-mail address and the address of the reading's facilitator. These questions/observations should be interesting enough to spark classroom conversation. The e-mails needn't be long--just insightful, compelling or otherwise provocative. You will be excused for one failure to supply your reflection and question; after that, you will lose 5% of your final grade for each missing/late exercise.

Bring hard copies of articles to class, annotated with your comments and observations.
Bring your book on days when the book is being discussed.

If you come into class after class has begun, you are tardy. Two tardies=one absence. You have two absences to use at your discretion – use these “passes” for interviews, conferences, weddings, minor illnesses. After two absences, you will lose points from your final grade, at my discretion. You still need to do the reading and send reflection/questions for all readings. There will be a 5-point reduction in the final grade for each failure to comment.

Article critique (10%): Due Sept. 11. Critique an article that employs a qualitative approach from a peer-reviewed journal in your field. Do not "lift" language from the article -- paraphrase. Turn in a copy of the original article with your critique. Your critique should be about a page long. Address the following:

- Focus of inquiry
- Theoretical/conceptual framework
- Data collection methods and participant selection methods
- Data analysis methods
- Findings/conclusions
- Personal reactions/critique

Interview/analyze/transcribe OR Research proposal and paper (40%):

Interview/analyze/transcribe

Interview guide due Oct. 9 for in-class critique; finished interview project due last day of class (12/4). An early deadline of 11/20 is offered for researchers requiring feedback before the end of the semester. Conduct an in-depth interview (**at least one hour long**) with someone *you do not know*. If your interview turns out to be less than an hour long, you must redo it. Otherwise, you will not have enough data to analyze.

You must interview face-to-face, in person. This is NOT an FYI interview--you will be asking your participant about their lived experience of a topic/question appropriate to qualitative analysis. For this assignment, you will create an interview guide; conduct, record and transcribe the interview; make a preliminary analysis of categories; summarize the findings; and write your reactions to the process. The objective is to develop abstract categories of analysis rather than counts of words and phrases. All themes will be supported by illustrative quotes pulled from your transcript.

For those who need more guidance, I have added a “for instance” length after each section. The length guidelines are tentative because there is no page minimum/maximum for this assignment. You are not graded on quantity. Rather, I am looking for a credible, thoughtful account of your interview.

Include:

- a reflection on the significance of your research question (2 paragraphs?)
- a description of your interview participant and the interview setting (1 or 2 paragraphs?)
- the interview guide/protocol (1 page?)
- interview transcript marked up with notes from analysis (whatever it takes)
- a discussion of the findings and themes, with supporting quotes. (1 page or more?)
- your reflections on the experience. How well did the interview progress? What difficulties did you encounter? How would you change the process for next time? What did you learn about interviewing? about yourself? about your comfort level with this method? (1 page or more?)

Please use as many words as necessary to address the assignment. Some of you may need more; some may need fewer. IRB approval is not required for this assignment because the results are for class only, not publication.

OR Research Proposal and Paper

(Assignment adapted from Jeff Howard’s (2009), Qualitative Research Methods syllabus, UTA).

This is a two-stage process.

- 1) Initial proposal must include: (a) a question conducive to qualitative analysis; (b) an outline of the research design you propose to use to answer your research question, including a description of the data you propose to use; (c) a description of your audience (reader), and a description and justification of your voice or “positionality” as the researcher; and (d) a preliminary bibliography, along with a declaration of which stylebook you will use for citation and bibliography style. Among other sources, be sure to use the course textbooks for bibliographical sources. The proposal is due on Nov. 6; you are welcome to submit earlier. (Credit for the proposal will be included in the overall grade for the assignment.)
- 2) Final paper developing a qualitative research project designed to answer a research question on a topic of your choice. If you wish, the question may concern an issue you are considering for your thesis or dissertation project. The paper must include:
 - A. Statement of the research question
 - B. Brief explanation of the theoretical context of the research question
 - C. Research design – description of the major elements; how these elements relate to the theoretical context; how they combine (e.g., chronologically) to address the research question

D. Statement and **critical evaluation** of:

- a. one (if any) of Creswell's approaches that informs your work. Alternatively, you may discuss critical theory, social constructivism or other epistemological frame you are using.
- b. the intended audience (or reader) and the researcher's voice (or positionality);
- c. **the proposed method(s)** – appropriateness of data generated for the research question you are addressing; other methods you considered but rejected, and why; what the design's limitations are; what your chosen method(s) elucidates, and what it obscures

E. Bibliography

F. Appendix: IRB forms

IMPORTANT: The substantive topic of your research question (e.g., recruitment and retention of PR professionals) is not the focus of the paper – merely its context. *The main focus of the paper is the application and critical evaluation of your chosen methodology or methodologies.* You are required to make a short in-class presentation summarizing your paper.

- Proposal due Nov. 6
- Paper due Dec. 4
- Presentation on Dec. 4

PHD STUDENTS ONLY

Discussion leader (20%): You will lead discussion for one or two classes (depending on enrollment) of your choice during the semester. Come to that class with a list of issues/questions that you will use to facilitate discussion among your classmates. Briefly summarize the article – then ask provocative questions or provide unexpected insights that will improve our understanding of the primary issues. Augment your discussion with visual material, exercises, etc. Google “leading class discussion” for pointers on how to keep the conversation going.

MASTER'S STUDENTS ONLY

Group Class Presentation (20%): You and your group will make a 30-minute PowerPoint group presentation on an assigned topic. One way to approach most topics is to select two exemplary qualitative articles (from a refereed journal in your field) that deal especially well with the subject. Use examples from the article(s) to illustrate how the following are achieved in practice.

Don't dwell on the results of the study; focus on the method, explanations, contexts, and ways of presenting the research material. Expand on our class readings, don't reiterate them. What can we learn from others' approaches? Create an exercise so your lesson comes alive for the class. Inspire interaction. You have latitude in how you approach this assignment. I am available to offer ideas if you need them.

SEPTEMBER 25

Building rapport/debriefing

Presenters: Carlos, Marisa

OCTOBER 9

Researching across difference (e.g., age, gender, ethnicity, sexuality)

Presenters: Carina, Sese

OCTOBER 16

Evolving methods

Presenters: Kaitlyn, Bridget, Ellie

NOVEMBER 13

Critical theory work

Presenters: Stania, Erica

Turn in copies of any articles you use to Dr. Duke Cornell on your presentation day. E-mail a copy of your PowerPoint by noon the day before your presentation.

A word about laptops: Your classmates and professors deserve your full attention for the time you are with them. E-mail and web surf before or after class -- not while it is in session. Do not read articles in class on your computer. Bring hard copies.

LIBRARY RESOURCES

Library Homepage	http://www.uflib.ufl.edu/ (all library services and collections)
Course Reserves	https://ares.uflib.ufl.edu/ (hard copy and/or elec. reserves)
Ask-A-Librarian	< http://www.uflib.ufl.edu/ask/ > http://www.uflib.ufl.edu/ask/ (direct email or online chat for assistance)
IR @ UF	< http://ufdcweb1.uflib.ufl.edu/ufdc/?g=ufirg > http://ufdcweb1.uflib.ufl.edu/ufdc/?g=ufirg (to access the UF digital Institutional Repository)
Library Tools and Mobile Apps	http://www.uflib.ufl.edu/tools/ (smart phone apps, RSS feeds, and much more)

Tentative Schedule

(subject to change with adequate notice to participants)

Note: All articles available at Find/Course Reserves/Electronic Reserves under "Duke" at www.uflib.ufl.edu. They should all be available by week 2 of class.

Aug. 28 **What is Qualitative Research?**

Overview of Course. Student/professor introduction.

Lewis, Seth C. (2012). From journalism to information: The transformation of the Knight Foundation and news innovation, *Mass Communication and Society*, 15, 309-334.

Sept. 4 Creswell, Ch. 1-2; Maxwell, Ch. 1-3

Pauly, John J. (1991). A beginner's guide to doing qualitative research in mass communication. *Journalism Monographs* 125.

Place, Katie R. (2012). A qualitative examination of public relations practitioner ethical decision making and the deontological theory of ethical issues management, *Journal of Mass Media Ethics: Exploring Questions of Media Morality*, 25:3, 226-245.

Sept. 11 **Developing Research Questions/Ethical work**

Assignment One due. Think about: What questions drove the research you reviewed for this assignment?

Creswell, Ch. 6; Maxwell, Ch. 4

Ethics and IRB—Visit <http://irb.ufl.edu/>

Tierney, William G., Blumberg Corwin, Zoe (2007). The tensions between academic freedom and Institutional Review Boards. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 13, 388-398

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Ellis, Carolyn (1995). Emotional and ethical quagmires in returning to the field. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, 24(1).

Zimmer, Michael (2010). "But the data is already public": On the ethics of research in Facebook. *Ethics in Information Technology+*.

Sept. 18 Creswell's "Five Approaches"

Creswell, Ch. 4-5; pp. 282-302; pp. 327-416

Fraser, Benson P. and William J. Brown (2002). Media, celebrities, and social influence: Identification with Elvis Presley. *Mass Communication & Society*, 5(2), 183-206.

Dennis Smith, Sara M. and Krugman, Dean M. (2010). Exploring perceptions and usage patterns of digital video recorder owners, *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media*, 54(2), 248-264.
dennis.frohlich@ufl.edu

Study Design

Creswell, Ch. 3; 10; Maxwell, Ch. 5-6

Sept. 25 Interviewing/One-on-one and groups

Interviewing/One-on-one and groups

PREPARE INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR EXCHANGE 3/1

Creswell, Ch.6- 7; Maxwell, Ch. 5

Gaskell, George (1994). Individual and group interviewing, in Martin, W. and George Gaskell (Eds.), *Qualitative researching with text, image and sound*. London: Sage.

Rakow, Lana F. (2011). Commentary: Interviews and focus groups as critical and cultural methods, *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, 88(2), 416-428.

PRESENTATION: *Building rapport / debriefing*
Presenters: Carlos, Marisa

NOTE TO CLASS: I WILL BE IN TEXAS WORKING ON A GRANT OCTOBER 2. THERE WILL BE NO CLASS ON THIS DAY.

Oct. 9 EXCHANGE AND CRITIQUE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Guest, Greg, Arwen Bunce and Laura Johnson (2006). How many interviews are enough? An experiment with data saturation and variability. *Field Methods*, 18(1), 59-82.

Tilley, Susan A. (2003). Challenging research practices: Turning a critical lens on the work of transcription. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 9(5), 750-773.

McLellan, Eleanor; MacQueen, Kathleen M.; and Neidig, Judith L. (2003). Beyond the qualitative interview: Data preparation and transcription, *Field Methods*, 15, 63-84.

PRESENTATION: *Researching across difference (e.g., age, gender, ethnicity, sexuality)*

Presenters: Carina, Sese

Oct. 16 New Texts/Evolving Methods

Dennis Hookway, Nicholas (2008). Entering the blogosphere: Some strategies for using blogs in social research, *Qualitative Research*, 8(1), 91-113.

Kazmer, Michelle M., and Bo Xie (2008). Qualitative interviewing in internet studies. *Information, Communication, and Society*, 11, 257-278.

Soojin Campbell, Colin, Leyland F. Pitt, Michael Parent, and Pierre R. Berthon (2011), "Understanding Consumer Conversations Around Ads in a Web 2.0 World," *Journal of Advertising*, 40 (1), 87-102.

Sarab Arnason, Lara (2011). New media, new research methods: Current approaches to research in the virtual world, *Media International Australia*, 138, 98-111.

PRESENTATION: *Evolving methods*

Oct. 23 Analysis

Creswell, Ch. 8

Vicsek, Lilla (2007). A scheme for analyzing the results of focus groups. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 6(4).

Ryan, Gery W. and Bernard, H. Russell (2006). Techniques to identify themes. *Field Methods*, 15(1).

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Bringer, Joy D., Johnston, Lynne H., and Brackenridge, Celia H. (2006). Using computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software to develop a grounded theory project, *Field Methods*, 18, 245-266.

Oct. 30

Writing Up Your Work

Maxwell, Ch. 7, Appendices A & B; Creswell, Ch. 9, Ch. 11.

Additional reading TBA

Nov. 6

Mixed Methods

Johnson, R. Burke and Anthony J. Onwuegbuzie (2004).

Mixed methods research: A research paradigm whose time has come. *Educational Researcher*, 33(7), 14-26.

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Hust, Stacey J. T., Jane D. Brown and Kelly Ladin L'Engle (2008). Boys will be boys and girls better be prepared: An analysis of the rare sexual health messages in young adolescents' media. *Mass Communication & Society*, 11(3).

Arnould, Eric J. and Price, Linda L. (1993). River magic: Extraordinary experience and the extended service encounter, *Journal of Consumer Research*, 20, 24-45.

Nov. 13

Critical Theory and Research

Hopkins, N. & Blackwood, L. (2011) Everyday citizenship: Identity and recognition. *Journal of Community & Applied Social Psychology* 21(3), 214-22

Marchi, Regina (2011). From disillusion to engagement: Minority teen journalists and the news media, *Journalism*, 13(6), 750-765.

Kuperberg, Arielle, and Stone, Pamela (2008). The media depiction of women who opt out. *Gender & Society*, 22; 497-517.

Hess, Aaron (2009), "Resistance up in smoke: Analyzing the limitations of deliberation on YouTube," *Critical Studies in Media Communication*, 26 (5), 411-434.

PRESENTATION: *Critical theory work*

Presenters: Stania, Erica

Early deadline for interview assignment, if you would like feedback.

Nov. 20

Qualitative Media Analysis

Hsieh, Hsiu-Fang and Sarah E. Shannon (2005). Three approaches to qualitative content analysis. *Qualitative Health Research*. 15(9), 1277-1288.

Hijmans, Ellen (1996). "The Logic of Qualitative Media Content Analysis: A typology," *Communications: The European Journal of Communication Research*, 21 (1), 93-108.

Zhang, Y. and B.M. Wildemuth (2009). "Qualitative Analysis of Content" in Wildemuth, B.M. (Ed.), *Applications of Social Science Research Methods to Questions of Information and Library Sciences*, Westport, CT: Libraries Unlimited.

Sarab

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Austin, Lucinda L. (2010), "Framing Diversity: A QCA of public relations industry publications," *Public Relations Review*, 36 (3), 298-301.

Nov. 27

Case Study

Stake, Robert E. (2000). Case studies, in Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of Qualitative Research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 86-104.

VanWynsberghe, R., & Khan, S. (2007). Redefining case study. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 6(2), Article 6. Retrieved January 1, 2008 from <http://bit.ly/9GZvt9>

Hindman, Elizabeth B. (2005). Jayson Blair, The New York Times, and paradigm repair. *Journal of Communication*.

Mitrook, Michael A, Nancy B. Parish, & Trent Seltzer (2008). From advocacy to accommodation: A case study of the Orlando Magic's public relations efforts to secure a new arena. *Public Relations Review*, 34, 161-168.

Dec. 4

Working with Images

Soojin

Epstein, Iris, Bonnie Stevens, Patricia McKeever and Sylvain Baruchel

soojin71@ufl.edu (2006). Photo elicitation interview (PEI): Using photos to elicit children's perspectives. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 5(3), Art. 1.

Heinonen, Tuula and Maria Cheung (2007). Views from the village: Photonovella with women in rural China. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods* 6 (4).

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Meo, Analia I. (2010). Picturing students' habitus: The advantages and limitations of photo elicitation interviewing in a qualitative study in the city of Buenos Aires. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 9(2).

Assignment Two Due: Turn in interviews and discuss