

UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN

PSYCHOLOGY 809.3

Fall 2017

Qualitative Research

Instructor: Linda McMullen, Ph.D.; telephone: 966-6666; office: Arts 67;
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Time and Location: Mondays, 9:00 – 11:45 a.m. Room 166 Arts

Office hours: By appointment

As we gather here today, we acknowledge we are on Treaty Six Territory and the Homeland of the Métis. We pay our respect to the First Nation and Métis ancestors of this place and reaffirm our relationship with one another.

Course Description and Objectives:

Psychology in North America has been built upon post-positivist assumptions that typically are paired with experimental and quasi-experimental research methodologies as routes to gaining knowledge. The widespread acceptance of this approach in psychology can leave the impression that it is *the* way to understand the world and frame research rather than simply *a* way of doing so. This course is designed to introduce students to alternative ways of doing research (commonly referred to as qualitative research) that are often grounded in different epistemologies and theoretical perspectives and appeal to different criteria for their evaluation.

We will begin by considering the philosophical foundations of qualitative methodologies, and will then focus on specific methodologies, including phenomenological analysis, grounded theory, discourse analysis, narrative analysis, intuitive inquiry, qualitative case studies, and thematic analysis. In addition, we will consider contemporary issues with regard to methods of data generation, generalization, and criteria for evaluation of qualitative research. The course typically culminates in the students' development of their own research proposals. In exceptional cases, e.g., when a student has already developed a qualitative research proposal, I am prepared to consider the submission of other work that will facilitate progress on research. Examples might include an extended application for ethics approval, a fully developed methods section, or a subset of analyses with reflexive commentary on one's analytic process. The goal of this major assignment is to further your own progress on thesis or dissertation research, if you are undertaking qualitative research.

The objectives of the course are: (1) to provide you with an understanding of how to situate qualitative methodologies vis-à-vis quantitative methodologies; (2) to familiarize you with a range of qualitative methodologies; (3) to introduce you to the wide range of topics and research questions that can be pursued via qualitative research; and (4) to begin to prepare you to conduct

qualitative research in the future.

Required Textbook, Recommended Textbook, and Weekly Readings:

Required: Wertz, F.J., Charmaz, K., McMullen, L.M., Josselson, R., Anderson, R., & McSpadden, E. (2011). *Five ways of doing qualitative analysis: Phenomenological psychology, grounded theory, discourse analysis, narrative research, and intuitive inquiry*. New York: Guilford.

Recommended: Willig, C. (2013). *Introducing qualitative research in psychology* (3rd ed.). Berkshire, England: Open University Press.

Additional weekly readings will be available through our course page on PAWS or via personal download from the U of S library.

Course Format:

The class will meet weekly to discuss the assigned readings. Each student is responsible for completing all readings, participating in class discussion, and formulating questions that can be posed to one's classmates to stimulate discussion.

Assignments and Examination:

Reflections on a short piece of data – Due 9:00 AM, Monday, October 2, 2017:

To stimulate a qualitative mind set, you will be provided with a small sample of qualitative data and will be asked to write a reflective commentary **of approximately 5 double-spaced pages** on how you started to make sense of the data. I will provide you with a set of orienting questions that will be focused on helping you articulate your process of engaging with the data and your initial constructions.

This assignment will count for 15% of your final grade.

Connecting research questions and methods of data generation – Due 9:00 AM, Monday, October 30, 2017:

To practice connecting the form of research questions with methods of data generation, you will choose a broad topic and will be asked to develop a research question(s) that can be addressed through the use of at least two methods of data generation. I will provide you with a set of orienting questions that will help you to articulate the connection between question and method and what might be produced by this connection. Again, the length of your response to this assignment should be **approximately 5 double-spaced pages**.

This assignment will count for 15% of your final grade.

Research Proposal (or other major assignment with my approval) – Due 9:00 AM, Monday, November 20, 2017:

An approximately 20-page research proposal is required. The proposal must include a short review of relevant literature; a statement of and justification for your research question; an explication of and justification for how your choice of methodology and methods is consistent with your epistemological position and of how your research question and your choice of methodology and methods are linked; and an explication of how you will analyse your data. I will provide you with a more detailed outline of what should comprise the proposal. If you opt to complete the major assignment via an option other than a research proposal, you will need to have my approval.

This assignment will count for 40% of your final grade.

Grades for assignments handed in after 9:00 AM on the due date will be reduced by 5% per day.

Final Examination:

The final examination will be scheduled for the **Monday (December 11, 2017)** following the end of classes and will comprise questions covering the course content. I will give these questions to you a week in advance so that you can develop your answers. However, you must write the examination in-class; notes cannot be brought into the exam.

This component of the course will count for 30% of your final grade.

Course Schedule
(subject to slight modifications with notice)

September 11: Introduction to Qualitative Research in Psychology; Overview of Ontology, Epistemology, Methodology, and Method

- McMullen, L.M. (2002). Learning the languages of research: Transcending illiteracy and indifference. *Canadian Psychology*, 43, 195-204.
- Gergen, K.J., Josselson, R., & Freeman, M. (2015). The promises of qualitative inquiry. *American Psychologist*, 70, 1-9.
- Crotty, M. (1998). *The foundations of social research: Meaning and perspective in the research process*. London, UK: Sage Publications Ltd. **Chapter 1 (pp. 1-17)**
- Burr, V. (1995). *An introduction to social constructionism*. London, UK: Routledge. **Introduction (pp. 1-16)**

September 18: Formulating a Research Question and Rationale; Methods of Data Generation: Interviews, Focus Groups

- Haverkamp, B.E., & Young, R.A. (2007). Paradigms, purpose, and the role of the literature: Formulating a rationale for qualitative investigations. *The Counselling Psychologist*, 35, 265-294.
- Potter, J., & Hepburn, A. (2005). Qualitative interviews in psychology: Problems and possibilities. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 2, 281-307.
- Kitzinger, J., & Barbour, R.S. (1999). Introduction: The challenge and promise of focus groups. In R.S. Barbour and J. Kitzinger (Eds.), *Developing focus group research: Politics, theory and practice* (pp. 1-20). London, UK: Sage Publications Ltd.

September 25: Methods of Data Generation (continued): Mobilities, Visual Methods, Observation, Objects, Electronic Data

- Carpiano, R. (2009). Come take a walk with me: The “Go-Along” interview as a novel method for studying the implications of place for health and well-being. *Health & Place*, 15, 263-272.
- Clark, A., Holland, C., Katz, J., & Peace, S. (2009). Learning to see: Lessons from a participatory observation research project in public spaces. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 12, 345-360.
- Woodward, S. (2016). Object interviews, material imaginings and ‘unsettling’ methods:

Interdisciplinary approaches to understanding materials and material culture. *Qualitative Research*, 16, 359-374.

- Chamberlain, K., Cain, T., Sheridan, J., & Dupuis, A. (2011). Pluralisms in qualitative research: From multiple methods to integrated methods. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 8, 151-169.

October 2: Methodologies and Methods of Data Analysis: Introduction to the Five Ways Project; Psychological Phenomenological Analysis (Assignment #1 Due)

- Wertz, F.J., et al. (2011). *Five ways of doing qualitative analysis: Phenomenological psychology, grounded theory, discourse analysis, narrative research, and intuitive inquiry*. New York: Guilford. **Introduction (pp. 1-12), Chapter 3 (pp. 75-99), Chapter 4 (pp. 103-123).**
- Wertz, F.J., et al. (2011). *Five ways of doing qualitative analysis: Phenomenological psychology, grounded theory, discourse analysis, narrative research, and intuitive inquiry*. New York: Guilford. **Chapter 2 (pp. 52-56), Chapter 5 (pp. 124-164).**

October 9: Thanksgiving (no class)

October 16: Methodologies and Methods of Data Analysis: Grounded Theory; Intuitive Inquiry

- Wertz, F.J., et al. (2011). *Five ways of doing qualitative analysis: Phenomenological psychology, grounded theory, discourse analysis, narrative research, and intuitive inquiry*. New York: Guilford. **Chapter 2 (pp. 56-60), Chapter 6 (pp. 165-204).**
- Wertz, F.J., et al. (2011). *Five ways of doing qualitative analysis: Phenomenological psychology, grounded theory, discourse analysis, narrative research, and intuitive inquiry*. New York: Guilford. **Chapter 2 (pp. 66-69), Chapter 9 (pp. 243-276).**

October 23: Methodologies and Methods of Data Analysis: Discourse Analysis; Narrative Research

- Wertz, F.J., et al. (2011). *Five ways of doing qualitative analysis: Phenomenological psychology, grounded theory, discourse analysis, narrative research, and intuitive inquiry*. New York: Guilford. **Chapter 2 (pp. 60-63), Chapter 7 (pp. 205-223).**
- Wertz, F.J., et al. (2011). *Five ways of doing qualitative analysis: Phenomenological psychology, grounded theory, discourse analysis, narrative research, and intuitive inquiry*. New York: Guilford. **Chapter 2 (pp. 60-63), Chapter 7 (pp. 205-223).**

inquiry. New York: Guilford. **Chapter 2 (pp. 63-66), Chapter 8 (pp. 224-242).**

- Additional example of discourse analysis: McMullen, L.M. (2016). Decoupling antidepressants and depression in accounts of being prescribed antidepressants off-label. *Qualitative Psychology*, 3, 145-158.

October 30: Comparisons of the Five Ways of Doing Qualitative Analysis (Assignment #2 Due)

- Wertz, F.J., et al. (2011). *Five ways of doing qualitative analysis: Phenomenological psychology, grounded theory, discourse analysis, narrative research, and intuitive inquiry*. New York: Guilford. **Chapter 10 (pp. 279-333).**

November 6: The Participant's Response; Ethics; Interpretive Authority

- Wertz, F.J., et al. (2011). *Five ways of doing qualitative analysis: Phenomenological psychology, grounded theory, discourse analysis, narrative research, and intuitive inquiry*. New York: Guilford. **Chapter 11 (pp. 334-352), Chapter 12 (pp. 353-401).**
- Josselson, R. (2011). "Bet you think this song is about you": Whose narrative is it in narrative research? *Narrative Works: Issues, Investigations, & Interventions*, 1, 33-51.

November 13: Mid-term break (no class)

November 20: (Proposal Due); Topic to be Determined

November 27: Other Qualitative Methodologies: Case Studies; Thematic Analysis

- Baxter, P., & Jack, S. (2008). Qualitative case study methodology: Study design and implementation for novice researchers. *The Qualitative Report*, 13(4), 544-559. Retrieved from <http://nsuworks.nova.edu/tqr/vol13/iss4/2>
- Flyvbjerg, B. (2006). Five misunderstandings about case-study research. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 12, 219-245.
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3, 77-101.

December 4: Issues and Practices: Principles for Evaluating Qualitative Research; Generalization; Writing; Reflexivity

- Levitt, H.M., Motulsky, S.L., Wertz, F.J., Morrow, S.L., & Ponterotto, J.G. (2017). Recommendations for designing and reviewing qualitative research in psychology: Promoting methodological integrity. *Qualitative Psychology*, 4, 2-22.
- Smaling, A. (2003). Inductive, analogical, and communicative generalization. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 2(1), 52-67. Article 5.
- Gilgun, J.F. (2005). “Grab” and good science: Writing up the results of qualitative research. *Qualitative Health Research*, 15, 256-262.
- Pillow, W. (2003). Confession, catharsis, or cure? Rethinking the uses of reflexivity as methodological power in qualitative research. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 16:2, 175-196.