

## Research Methods: Qualitative\*

\*pandemic edition

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<b>Office hours:</b> By appointment – email me to schedule a virtual meeting	

*Note: This syllabus is a general plan for both course content and administrative procedures. I reserve the right to modify both of these things as necessary as the course unfolds.*

### Course Information

Welcome to Qualitative Research Methods! Given the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic this course will operate online only.

#### Course Description

Social sciences are set apart from the humanities and the life sciences by our ability to tackle human issues using scientific methods. Whereas a biologist might study bacteria using scientific methods, and a philosopher might use introspection to investigate the human condition, social scientists use scientific methods to understand the human world. In this class, students learn how to think like a social scientist. Students learn qualitative research methods, like ethnography, focus groups, interviews and surveys. Course Code: SOC 3503

#### Course Objectives

- Engage with one another with empathy and kindness as we navigate this unprecedented pandemic
- Understand a variety of qualitative methods used in social science research
- Gain familiarity with carrying out a number of different qualitative methods
- Consider the epistemological and ontological dimensions of social science research

#### Quest Learning Outcomes

*Higher-Order Thinking* (HT) – Students will assess the strengths and weaknesses of evidence, analysis, and interpretations, synthesize evidence from different sources, and deploy evidence to support a particular perspective or argument.

*Integrated Learning* (IL) – Students will make connections across scholarly works and relate course ideas to real world contexts.

*Communication* (C) – Students will describe, synthesize, and convincingly present information from a range of different perspectives.

*Multiple Perspectives* (MP) – Students will explore the lived experiences of others from multiple perspectives, while examining influences on knowledge production.

*Self and World* (SW) – Students will reflect on course content and relate it to their own beliefs, values, and experiences, while considering the consequences of such in the world.

## Course Materials

### Required Texts:

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2013). *Successful Qualitative Research: A Practical Guide for Beginners*. Sage.  
 Emerson, R. M., Fretz, R. I., & Shaw, L. L. (2011). *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes, Second Edition*.  
 University of Chicago Press.

All other course materials, including additional readings and detailed descriptions of assignments, are available on the course Moodle page.

## Mark Breakdown

Assessment	Learning Outcome	Type	Weight
TCPS 2 Certification	SW	Individual	5%
Reflexivity Assignment	C, MP, SW	Individual	15%
Journal	IL, C, MP, SW	Individual	20%
Research Exercises	HT, IL, C, MP, SW	Individual/Group	30%
Research Proposal	HT, IL, C, MP	Individual/Group	30%

Full assessment details can be found on Moodle.

## Grades

Letter Grade	Percentage	Description
A	94-100	<b>Exceptional and outstanding performance.</b> Demonstrates an insightful grasp of the subject matter, takes initiative, and exceeds expectations.
A-	90-93	
B+	87-89	<b>Very good performance.</b> Demonstrates a solid grasp of the subject matter, or an excellent grasp in some areas balanced by a satisfactory grasp in other areas. Meets expectations. <i>Note:</i> Normally achieved by the largest number of students.
B	84-86	
B-	80-83	
C+	77-79	<b>Satisfactory or minimally satisfactory performance.</b> Demonstrates some grasp of the subject matter, or a solid grasp in some areas and a superficial grasp in other areas. Meets some, but not all, expectations.
C	74-76	
C-	70-73	
D	60-69	<b>Marginal performance.</b> Demonstrates a superficial grasp of the subject matter and/or fails to meet many expectations.
F	0-59	<b>Unsatisfactory performance.</b> Little grasp of the subject matter, fails to meet expectations, and/or fails to complete course components.

## Citizenship

There is an expectation for you to be a good class citizen. This includes, but is not limited to:

1. **Respond to my emails.** Please keep in touch and let me know as soon as possible of any challenges you are facing and how I might help.
2. **Visit the course Moodle and Microsoft Teams sites regularly.** This is where the syllabus, course readings and assignments are posted (Moodle) and where discussion forums operate (Teams).
3. **Treat everyone in the class with respect.** This goes without saying, but I'm going to say it none-the-less. Everyone is in this class to learn (you included) and is endeavouring to do so during incredibly challenging circumstances. Be respectful, kind, and empathetic.

## Communication

When in doubt contact me sooner rather than later!

**Office hours and appointments:** I do not have set office hours for this course. Please email me to book an appointment.

**Email:** I check my email regularly during the workday and will make my best effort to respond to you ASAP. If it is an emergency/urgent, please put this in the subject line of the email. I check my email infrequently on weekends, so you will have to wait longer for a response.

## Course Policies

*What happens if I have a non-Academic or Academic emergency?*

- Reach out to me via email and let me know what is going on and how I might help. We can also easily schedule a video meeting.

*Academic Accommodation*

Students experiencing learning challenges are encouraged to contact me as soon as possible to discuss their Academic Accommodation Plans.

*Academic Integrity*

In accordance with the University policies on academic honesty (see Calendar for more details), plagiarism and cheating will not be tolerated in the course. Any offenses will be immediately reported to the Chief Academic Officer. The work you submit must represent your own intellectual efforts and use your own words.

*Important Dates/Other Questions*

In case you have any questions about important dates (drop-dates, etc), you can find this information on the portal under the registrar FAQ. Please feel free to come talk to me at any time and I will do my very best to help you!

## Schedule

*Note: Schedule is tentative and subject to change*

Date	Day	Topic	Readings and Due Dates
<b>Week 1</b>			
Mar 30	1	Introduction	B&C Ch. 1; Brinkmann et al (2014) <b>Zoom Class Meeting – 1pm</b>
Mar 31	2	Epistemology and Ontology	B&C Ch. 2; Spencer et al (2014); Law & Urry (2004)
Apr 1	3	Positionality and Reflexivity	Berger (2015); Bott (2010); hooks (1990) <b>Zoom Class Meeting – 1pm</b>
Apr 2	4	Feminism, Decolonization, and Indigenization	Evans et al (2014); Chilisa et al (2017); Patai (1994)
Apr 3	5	Research Questions	B&C Ch. 3; Allen (2003); Pascoe (2005) <b>Zoom Class Meeting – 1pm</b> <b>Due: TCPS 2: CORE Certificate</b>
<b>Week 2</b>			
Apr 6	6	Field Notes	E Ch. 1 & 2; Tjora (2006) <b>Zoom Class Meeting – 1pm</b> <b>Due: Reflexivity Assignment; Research Proposal Topic and Bibliography</b>
Apr 7	7	Ethnography	E Ch. 3 & 4; Huot (2019)
Apr 8	8	Meaning Making	E Ch. 5 & 6; Henriksen & Schliehe (2020) <b>Zoom Class Meeting – 1pm</b>
Apr 9	9	Interviews	B&C Ch. 4; Hermanowicz (2002); Bengtsson & Fynbo (2019)
Apr 10	10	<b>Holiday - No Class</b>	
<b>Week 3</b>			
Apr 13	11	Focus Groups	B&C Ch. 5; Ayrton (2019) <b>Zoom Class Meeting – 1pm</b>
Apr 14	12	Textual Data	B&C Ch. 6; Bronson et al (2019)
Apr 15	13	Graphs and Visuals	Bravington & King (2019); Emmel (2008) <b>Zoom Class Meeting – 1pm</b>
Apr 16	14	Preparing Data	B&C Ch. 7 & 8
Apr 17	15	Coding and Patterns	B&C Ch. 9 & 10; Rapley (2001) <b>Zoom Class Meeting – 1pm</b>
<b>Week 4</b>			
Apr 20	16	Analysis and Interpretation	B&C Ch. 11 & 12; Roulston (2010) <b>Zoom Class Meeting – 1pm</b>
Apr 21	17	Writing Up	B&C Ch. 13; Gilgun (2014)
Apr 22	18	Wrap Up	<b>Due: Journal; Research Proposal</b>

A full list of course readings is available on Moodle. B&C = Braun & Clarke text, E = Emerson et al text.