George Mason University College of Education and Human Development School of Education Educational Psychology Program EDRS 621, Section B01:Qualitative Inquiry in Education 3 Credits, Summer 2023 B Session ONLINE Tuesdays and Thursdays 4:30-7:10 PM

FacultyName:Dr. Kimberly SheridanOffice Hours:By appointment, onlineOffice Location:West Building, 2003 FairfaxEmail Address:ksherida@gmu.edu

Prerequisites/Corequisites

EDRS 590 or equivalent experience.

University Catalog Course Description

This course focuses on the study of basic application of naturalistic research methods. It examines major theoretical frameworks, and qualitative research techniques, which include participant observation, interviewing, coding, and interpretation of data. (Prerequisite: EDRS 590 or equivalent)

Course Overview

This course is designed to be highly interactive as students are guided through the process of learning to use, conduct, and write about qualitative research in education.

Course Delivery Method

This course will be delivered entirely on-line, combining synchronous meetings with asynchronous activities and forms of participation. GMU's Blackboard course framework will be used regularly throughout the course. Your GMU email address is required for communication with the course instructor and must be active by the first week of class. Please inform me of any accessibility problems the first day of class. Please note that because you have much to learn from each other, and because teaching is often a collaborative effort, you will frequently work in groups. This will give you a chance to share ideas, be exposed to a range of perspectives and experiences, and support each other as you continue to develop your researching skills.

Under no circumstances, may candidates/students participate in online class sessions (either by phone or Internet) while operating motor vehicles. Further, as expected in a face-to-face class meeting, such online participation requires undivided attention to course content and communication.

Technical Requirements

To participate in this course, students will need to satisfy the following technical requirements:

• High-speed Internet access with standard up-to-date browsers. To get a list of Blackboard's supported browsers see:

https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Getting_Started/Browser_Support#supported-browsers

To get a list of supported operation systems on different devices see: <u>https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Getting_Started/Browser_Support#tested-devices-and-operating-systems</u>

- Students must maintain consistent and reliable access to their GMU email and Blackboard, as these are the official methods of communication for this course.
- Students may be asked to create logins and passwords on supplemental websites and/or to download trial software to their computer or tablet as part of course requirements.
- The following software plug-ins for PCs and Macs, respectively, are available for free download:
 - Adobe Acrobat Reader: <u>https://get.adobe.com/reader/</u>
 - Windows Media Player:
 <u>https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/help/14209/get-windows-media-player</u>
 Apple Quick Time Player: www.apple.com/quicktime/download/
 - Apple Quick Time Player: <u>www.apple.com/quicktime/download/</u>
- Students must maintain consistent and reliable access to their GMU email and Blackboard, as these are the official methods of communication for this course.
- We will be using the software MaxQDA for data analysis. You will have access to a free student trial version for the duration of the class and you will need a computer on which you can run this software. MaxQDA is also available in the CEHD computer lab

Communication with professor: I try to respond to emails within 48 hours during business days. If you have not received a response from me in that time, please send a reminder. Conversely, if you send a question that you resolve before hearing from me, please let me know.

Expectations

 \cdot <u>Course Week</u>: Our course week will begin on the day that our synchronous meetings take place as indicated on the Schedule of Classes.

· Log-in Frequency:

Students must actively check the course Blackboard site and their GMU email for communications from the instructor, class discussions, and/or access to course materials at least 3 times per week. In addition, students must log-in for all scheduled online synchronous meetings.

· Participation:

Students are expected to actively engage in all course activities throughout the semester, which includes viewing all course materials, completing course activities and assignments, and participating in course discussions and group interactions.

· Technical Competence:

Students are expected to demonstrate competence in the use of all course technology. Students who are struggling with technical components of the course are expected to seek assistance from the instructor and/or College or University technical services.

· Technical Issues:

Students should anticipate some technical difficulties during the semester and should, therefore, budget their time accordingly. Late work will not be accepted based on individual technical issues.

· Workload:

Please be aware that this course is not self-paced. Students are expected to meet specific deadlines and due dates listed in the Class Schedule section of this syllabus. It is the student's responsibility to keep track of the weekly course schedule of topics, readings, activities and assignments due.

· Instructor Support:

Students may schedule a one-on-one meeting to discuss course requirements, content or other courserelated issues. Those unable to come to a Mason campus can meet with the instructor via telephone or web conference. Students should email the instructor to schedule a one-on-one session, including their preferred meeting method and suggested dates/times.

· <u>Netiquette:</u>

The course environment is a collaborative space. Experience shows that even an innocent remark typed in the online environment can be misconstrued. Students must always re-read their responses carefully before posting them, so as others do not consider them as personal offenses. Be positive in your approach with others and diplomatic in selecting your words. Remember that you are not competing with classmates, but sharing information and learning from others. All faculty are similarly expected to be respectful in all communications.

· Accommodations:

Online learners who require effective accommodations to insure accessibility must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services.

Learner Outcomes or Objectives

This course is designed to enable students to do the following:

• Develop an understanding of current qualitative research methods and the theories and epistemologies that have influenced their development.

• Gain experience with data collection techniques including participant observation and qualitative interviewing.

• Learn and use approaches to qualitative data analysis and interpretation, including categorization strategies such as coding and matrices, and connecting strategies such as case studies.

• Develop proficiency using computer-aided qualitative analysis software (e.g. MaxQDA)

- Find, understand, evaluate, and apply published research that is relevant to their field.
- Thoughtfully consider ethical issues in qualitative research
- Thoughtfully consider validity issues in qualitative research

Professional Standards: The program goals are consistent with the following Learnercentered psychological principles (APA Division 15) outlined by the American Psychological Association Presidential Task Force in Education.

- Principle 1: The Nature of Learning Process
- Principle 2: Goals of the Learning Process
- Principle 3: Construction of Knowledge
- Principle 4: Strategic Thinking
- Principle 5: Thinking about Thinking
- Principle 6: Context of Learning
- Principle 7: Motivational and Emotional Influences on Learning
- Principle 8: Intrinsic Motivation to Learn
- Principle 9: Effects of Motivation on Affect
- Principle 10: Developmental Influences on Learning
- Principle 11: Social Influences on Learning
- Principle 12: Individual Differences on Learning
- Principle 13: Learning and Diversity
- Principle 14: Standards and Assessment

For more information please see: American Psychological Association (1997). Learner-centered psychological principles: A framework for school redesign and reform.

Relationship to Program Standards:

In this course, the following Educational Psychology program standards will be addressed:

Standard 2. Candidates will apply their knowledge of quantitative and qualitative research methods, including basic concepts, principles, techniques, and ethical issues, to read and critique relevant products of research.

Standard 3. Candidates will apply their knowledge and skills of quantitative and qualitative research methods, including basic concepts, principles, techniques, and ethical issues, to

conduct research and/or inform practice in diverse applied settings.

Standard 4. Candidates will demonstrate oral and written communication relevant to educational psychology, including knowledge and use of APA style and professional formats (e.g., oral presentations, poster presentations, article abstracts, literature reviews, research proposals, reports).

Standard 5. Candidates will demonstrate professional dispositions relevant to educational psychology such as critical thinking, collaboration, interpersonal communication, intercultural competence, ethical leadership, professionalism, and technological skills.

Required Text:

Saldana, J. & Omasta, M. (2017). Qualitative research: Analyzing life (1st ed). Sage

Publications. *Note—page numbers are given for the 1st edition, but 2nd edition is also acceptable.

Additional materials will be available on Blackboard or through the GMU library system.

Recommended text:

Maxwell, J. A. (2012). Qualitative research design: An interactive approach (3rd ed).

Sage Publications. (*2nd edition also acceptable)

This text is not required, but is useful if you intend to do a qualitative research capstone project.

Course Performance Evaluation

Students are expected to submit all assignments on time into Blackboard.

All written assignments should be posted through the assignment folder on Blackboard Assignments:

1. Participation 10%

During class sessions in this course, we work on learning concepts, practicing the craft of qualitative research, and reflecting and analyzing research. It is essential to your learning that you come prepared to thoughtfully participate. Please complete required readings and course activities, view video lectures and participate thoughtfully in class activities and discussions. More than one absence, except

under extenuating circumstances, will automatically lower your participation grade. (See end of syllabus for participation rubric.)

2. Article critique 25%

You will write a critical analysis of a qualitative research article on a topic you choose to pursue for the duration of the semester. (See end of syllabus for article critique rubric.)

EDRS 621 Article Critique Assignment

The EDRS 621 (Qualitative Inquiry in Education) article critique assessment is a paper that requires analysis and critique of a scholarly article based on a qualitative research study. It satisfies the performance-based assessment for students in the Educational Psychology master's program. The assignment requires candidates: (1) to carefully and critically read a study using qualitative methods, and (2) to analyze and critique the author's methods.

ARTICLE CRITIQUE UPLOAD REQUIREMENT (Important!)

Every student registered for any Educational Psychology course with a required performance-based assessment is required to submit this assessment to Blackboard (regardless of whether a course is an elective, a onetime course, or part of an undergraduate minor). Evaluation of the performance-based assessment by the course instructor will also be completed in Blackboard. Failure to submit the assessment to Blackboard will result in the course instructor reporting the course grade as Incomplete (IN). Unless the IN grade is changed upon completion of the required Blackboard submission, the IN will convert to an F nine weeks into the following semester.

3. Analytic exercises/memos 35%

You will be regularly completing analytic exercises/memos in response to prompts, both during class and as outside assignments. You will post these in your Bb journal for ongoing review, and you will turn them in to Bb Assignments as a collection to be graded at the end of the term. Some involve work with MaxQDA software (See end of syllabus for research memo rubric.)

4. Interview project 30%

You will identify a research question, select interview participant(s), write an interview protocol, and conduct a minimum of 1.5 hours of interviews and/or at least 1 hour of interview + field observations and/or artifact analysis. You will transcribe and code your data using Max QDA. You will write an analytic memo about your findings and your process. Your focus for this project should be related to the topic you developed in earlier memos. (See blackboard for updated details on the project and the end of syllabus for evaluation criteria for interview project.)

ADDITIONAL COURSE POLICIES

Paper Format

- 1 inch margins on all sides, double-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman or similar font.
- Include the following information: title, name, date, professor, course number.

• All papers should be proofread for spelling, grammar, and clarity errors; citation and references in APA format.

• Titles of uploaded files should include submitter's last name.

Late Assignments

Assignments are due submitted in Blackboard at or before the start of class on the assigned due date unless otherwise noted. Late assignments will be marked down by half a letter grade for each day the assignment is late unless otherwise noted. If there are questions or concerns about a particular situation, please contact me via email in advance of the deadline.

Grading Scale

Your final grade for this class will be based on the following:

A + = 98 - 100%	A = 93 - 97.99%	A = 90 - 92.99%
B + = 88 - 89.99%	B = 83 - 87.99%	B = 80 - 82.99%
C = 70 - 79.99%	F < 70%	

Professional Dispositions

See https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/polices-procedures/

Date	Class Topics/Activities	Readings/Assignments Due		
Session 1 Tues May 30	Introduction to qualitative research • Introduction to qualitative research- • Overview of course and syllabus	Review syllabus.		
Session 2 Thurs Jun 1 4:30-7:10	 Analyzing Field Sites Understanding field relations Observation Exercise Writing Field Notes 	Read Ch. 1 Saldana & Omasta Analyzing Qualitative Data Read Saldana & Omasta, Ch. 2 Complete Session 2 Materials on Bb		
Session 3 Asynchronous	Conduct field observation			
Session 4 Thurs June 8 4:30-7:10 PM	Discuss Fieldnotes, upload to Max QDA Analyzing Documents, Artifacts, & Visual Materials	Read Saldana & Omasta, Ch. 3 Field observation due		
Session 5 & 6 Tues June 13 & Thurs June 15 Asynchronous No class meeting: Dr. Sheridan at the International Society of the Learning Sciences Conference.	• Understanding types of Artifacts Hands on exercise analyzing artifacts Max QDA tutorials and activities	Complete Materials on Bb		

C 7		
Session 7	Discuss Max QDA work	Dood Soldono & Oregete Ch. 4
Tues June 20	Analyzing Interviews: Preparing,	Read Saldana & Omasta, Ch. 4
4:30-7:10 PM	Conducting, and Transcribing	Complete materials on Bb
	Compare types of interviews	Interview project brief proposal
	Describe Sampling Strategies	due.
	Devise Interview Protocols	
	Conduct and Transcribe Interview	
	Analyzing Interviews: Condensing &	Read Saldana & Omasta, Ch. 5
	Coding	Complete materials on Bb
	Condense Semi-structured	
	interviews	
	• Analyze interviews using	
	multiple coding methods	
	matche coung nechous	
Session 8	Analyzing Qualitative Methodologies	Read Saldana & Omasta, Ch. 6
Thurs June 22	Describe Major	Complete materials on Bb
4:30-7:10 PM	Theoretical Premises	1
	Identify & Describe	Bring potential qualitative
	Selected Methodologies	research articles for article critique
	Group Analytic Exercise for Qualitative	to class.
	Research Methodologies	
Session 9	Analyzing Qualitative Research Design	Read Maxwell article on Bb
Tues June 27	Identify & Describe Elements	Read Maxwell article on Do
4:30-7:10 PM	of Research Design	
H.50 -7.10 I IVI	0	Complete materials on Bb
	Explain How Components of Design Interest on d	Complete materials on Bo
	Research Design Interact and	
	Initiate Design Decisions	
Session 10	Qualitative Research Design: Methods	Re-read Maxwell ch 7 article,
Thurs June 29	Making a case for your methods	Read Maxwell Understanding and
4:30-7:10 PM	decisions.	Validity
	Qualitative Research Design: Validity	Complete materials on Bb
	• What makes our data and analysis	1
	trustworthy? How might we be	
	wrong?	
Tues July 4	NO CLASS SESSION	
GMU closed for		
Independence Day		

Session 12 Thurs July 6 4:30-7:10 PM	Validity/Research Design continued— Writing a Qualitative Research Proposal Analyzing Research Ethics • Define rules of research (consent, assent, confidentiality) • Composing IRB forms, Informed Consent forms • Citi-Training	Read Saldana & Omasta, Ch. 8 Complete Session 9 materials on Bb Article Critique Due
Session 13 Tues July 11 4:30-7:10 PM	Revisting Qualitative Interview analysis and introducing Analytic Synthesis Understanding Analysis & Interpretation After Data Collection Data Analysis of Interview Exercise	Read Saldana & Omasta, Ch. 9 Complete Session 12 materials on Bb Transcribed interview for final project due (bring to class for analysis exercise)
Session 14 Thurs July 13 4:30-7:10 PM Session 15 Tues July 18 4:30-7:10 PM	Analytic Synthesis: Understanding, Interpreting, & Theorizing Selecting Qualitative data Analysis Methods Transforming Data into Symbols of Condensed Meaning Creating Synthesis from data corpus Analytic Write-ups Identify techniques of If the second se	Read Saldana & Omasta, Ch. 10 Read Data Analysis and Interpretation Maxwell & Miller (2008) (on blackboard) Complete Session 13 materials on Bb
4:30-7:10 PM Session 15: Thurs July 20 4:30-7:10 PM	effective qualitative research writing • Present and Reflect	Complete set of memos/activities due as single document uploaded to Bb assignments by 11:59 PM Presentations on final projects
		Final Project due Tues July 25

Note: Faculty reserves the right to alter the schedule as necessary, with notification to students.

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Core Values Commitment

The College of Education and Human Development is committed to collaboration, ethical leadership, innovation, research-based practice, and social justice. Students are expected to adhere to these principles: <u>http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/</u>.

GMU Policies and Resources for students

Policies

- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the Mason Honor Code (see <u>https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/honor-code-system/ (New Window)</u>).
- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing (see <u>https://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/ (New Window)</u>).
- Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their Mason email account and are required to activate their account and check it regularly. All communication from the university, college, school, and program will be sent to students **solely** through their Mason email account.
- Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services. Approved accommodations will begin at the time the written letter from Disability Services is received by the instructor (see https://ds.gmu.edu (New Window)).
- Students must silence all sound emitting devices during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.

Campus Resources

- Support for submission of assignments to VIA should be directed to <u>viahelp@gmu.edu</u> or <u>https://cehd.gmu.edu/aero/assessments</u>. Questions or concerns regarding use of Blackboard should be directed to <u>https://its.gmu.edu/knowledgebase/blackboard-instructional-technology-support-for-students/ (New Window).</u>
- Notice of mandatory reporting of sexual assault, sexual harassment, interpersonal violence, and stalking: As a faculty member, I am designated as a "Non-Confidential Employee," and must report all disclosures of sexual assault, sexual harassment, interpersonal violence, and stalking to Mason's Title IX Coordinator per <u>University Policy</u> <u>1202</u> (New Window). If you wish to speak with someone confidentially, please contact one of Mason's confidential resources, such as the <u>Student Support and Advocacy Center</u> (<u>SSAC</u>) (New Window) at 703-380-1434 or <u>Counseling and Psychological Services</u> (<u>CAPS</u>) (New Window) at 703-993-2380. You may also seek assistance or support measures from Mason's Title IX Coordinator by calling 703-993-8730, or emailing <u>titleix@gmu.edu</u>.

- For information on student support resources on campus, see https://ctfe.gmu.edu/teaching/student-support-resources-on-campus (New Window)
- For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, please visit our website <u>http://cehd.gmu.edu/</u>.

Participation Rubric

Student participation is imperative to student learning and a successful class. The following rubric outlines how student participation scores will be determined in this course. All students are expected to demonstrate specific characteristics and actions throughout the semester. The quality and quantity of these actions will determine the points assigned for participation.

Students are expected to:

- a. Be punctual, present, and well prepared for synchronous class sessions.
- b. Participate fully in class activities and assignments—take an active part in small and large group discussions (without dominating conversations) and pay attention to class lectures whether synchronous or asynchronous.
- c. Make insightful comments, which are informed by required readings and demonstrate reflection on those readings. Specifically, students should come to class with questions, comments, and thoughts on the current readings.
- d. Treat class activities, group discussions, and class discussions as important components of the course, showing respect for fellow classmates and the course material.
- e. Avoid using electronic devices for personal communication or other non-class-oriented purposes during class time.

Each of these criteria will be assessed on a 5-point scale:

- **5** = Student **consistently** demonstrated the criterion throughout the semester.
- 4 = Student **frequently** demonstrated the criterion throughout the semester.
- **3** = Student **intermittently** demonstrated the criterion throughout the semester.
- 2 = Student rarely demonstrated the criterion throughout the semester.
- 1 = Student **did not** demonstrate the criterion throughout the semester.

PERFORMANCE-BASED ASSESSMENT RUBRIC FOR EDRS 621 ARTICLE CRITIQUE: 28 points total

	1 Does not meet standards	2 Approaching standards	3 Meets Standards	4 Exceeds Standards
Writing and Mechanics	Writing has significant stylistic, grammatical or organizational issues AND there are significant errors in APA usage.	Writing has stylistic, grammatical, or organizational issues OR there are significant errors in APA usage.	Writing is clear and APA style has minor or no errors.	Excellent writing APA style has very minor or no errors
Description of how five components of research design are reflected in the article.	There are many inaccuracies in how components of research design are addressed AND several need further development.	There are some inaccuracies in how components of research design are addressed, OR 3 or more need further development.	Each component of research is addressed accurately. One or two need further development.	Each component of research is treated fully and accurately
Analysis of Relationships Among Design Elements	Does not analyze of relationship among design elements.	Analysis of relationships among design elements is present, but either contains inaccuracies or is not adequately developed.	Accurate account of some key relationships among design elements.	Insightful and accurate account of how key research design elements relate.
Analysis of Presentation of Findings	There is minimal analysis of the presentation of findings.	Strengths and limitations of the presentation of findings are discussed. Claims need further explication or leave key gaps	Strengths and limitations of the presentation of findings are discussed and claims are reasonable and meaningful.	Insightful accounts of the qualities, strengths and limitations of the presentation of findings. Claims are reasonable and meaningful.
Analysis of Validity Issues	Validity issues are not addressed.	Validity issues are discussed but there are some gaps or inaccuracies.	Validity issues and strategies are discussed accurately.	Careful and accurate treatment of validity issues and strategies used. Discussion extends beyond author's account
Use of Evidence to support Explanations and judgments	There is minimal use evidence to support claims.	Uses evidence to support some claims.	Uses evidence to illustrate and support most claims.	Consistently uses evidence well to explicate, support and illustrate claims

Reflection Component	There is minimal or no reflection section.	Reflective component is present but is underdeveloped or lacks connections to analysis.	Reflections are developed and have clear connections to analysis.	Reflections are thoughtfully and fully developed with clear and meaningful connections to analysis.

RUBRIC FOR Analytic memos/On-line course activities (40 points on total set)

	UNSATISFACTORY	EMERGING	COMPETENT
Response to instructor's written prompt	Does not respond to question(s)/challenge (s) or refer to the topic(s) posed in the prompt	Responds at least partially to question(s), topic(s) or challenges in the prompt, but with limited depth (e.g., few examples or explication)	Responds fully to all question(s) and topic(s) in the prompt with specific examples and detailed explanation.
Quality of reflection/analysis/insig ht	Responses do not show independent reflection or analysis.	Responses involve reflection and analysis.	Responses show solid critical and/or insightful reflection and analysis.
Consistency and Completeness	Fewer than 80% of the activities are completed.	At least 80% of the memos/activities are completed.	All memos/activities are completed consistently throughout the semester

Evaluation Criteria for Interview Project (30 points total)

Research question and conceptual context (3 points)

- Research question is appropriate for qualitative research
- Conceptual context draws on relevant scholarly literature

Informed consent (1 point)

- Written clearly and outlines consent issues appropriately.
- Signed before interview.
- If interviewing a minor (under age 18), informed consent for minor and parent/guardian needed. Minor assent form needs to be written in an appropriately leveled language and be read aloud to the minor.

Coversheet (1 point)

• Contains needed information.

Interview protocol (3 points)

- Questions are open-ended and not leading
- Questions seem organized around a set of research questions but not a direct translation of those questions.
- Questions show insight into ways of getting at research questions that may be difficult for participant to articulate.

Notes during interview (1 point)

- Identify which questions were asked/topics discussed
- Notes on anything that was not recorded.

Interview self-assessment (2 points)

- Completed promptly
- Thorough and insightful reflection on all the categories

Transcribed Interview (4 points)

- Interview is transcribed in full (may use auto-transcription software, but it should be corrected based on listening)
- Interview shows thoughtful listening and questioning in response to interviewee's responses, not just plodding through protocol

Coded Interview (5 points)

- Interview is coded using at least 2 coding strategies learned in course
- Max QDA report of coded data in the form you find useful.
- Summary of codes and coding process.

Analytic Memo (10 points)

- Issues of reactivity/reflexivity are discussed thoughtfully and in ways specific to the interview
- Thoughtful reflections supported by examples on the strengths/weaknesses of the interview protocol
- Themes generated are insightful and well explicated and supported.
- Next steps in research are discussed and are thoughtful.