

**George Mason University
College of Education and Human Development
Graduate School of Education
Research Methods**

**EDRS 897 DL1– SPECIAL TOPICS:
ADVANCED ANALYSIS of QUALITATIVE DATA
3 Credits, Spring 2023**

**Monday, 9am-11:40am (synchronous sessions via Zoom every two weeks)
All other sessions via asynchronous discussions via Blackboard**

Faculty

Name: L. Earle Reybold
Office hours: By Appointment
Office: West 2203, Fairfax Campus
Office phone: 703-993-9174 (email preferred)
Email address: ereybold@gmu.edu

Prerequisites/Corequisites: N/A

University Catalog Course Description

Develops knowledge and skills of selected advanced research methods topic(s). Offered by School of Education. May be repeated within the degree for a maximum 6 credits.

Course Overview

This course is an advanced seminar that focuses on current and emerging issues in qualitative analyses across interview, observation, and document data. You bring data and we explore! Most students tell me there is not enough focus on qualitative analysis: How to choose the “best” analysis to fit your conceptual framework and research questions, how to actually code and develop themes across a project, and how to report out your findings. This course meets those needs! We will cover topical and theory-driven analyses, as well as those that develop themes and even theory “from the ground up” in constructivist and critical designs.

What if you do not have all three types of data types (interview/observation/documents) for this course? The readings and discussions each week will focus on your actual analyses, also we will discuss how other data types may support your current and future goals.

Half of our meetings will be conducted synchronously via Zoom (Mondays, 9am-11:40am); the other sessions will be conducted as asynchronous online discussions via Blackboard that focus on your analysis project(s), peer review, and feedback.

Assignments consist of three modules, each on a particular aspect of qualitative analysis. Each module will have a written assignment and a related post to Bb for peer review and discussion. I suggest you meet with your major professor and/or methodologist (if applicable) to determine how these assignments might support your dissertation or proposal.

I expect you to come to meetings prepared to discuss the reading assignments, and I encourage you to share with the class other readings and examples you have found that are relevant. Before beginning the readings for a particular module, I suggest that you ask yourself what your questions and concerns are about this issue and that you list them. After finishing a reading ask yourself how it related to your questions or concerns. Outline the author's main points and consider these questions:

- Did the reading answer your questions? Did it raise new issues?
- Do you agree or disagree with the author?
- If an example of a qualitative article is also assigned, analyze it in terms of the methodological readings: How do the ideas apply? How do they not apply? What are their implications for this study?

We will often be reading articles or book chapters presenting different perspectives on the same topic. Think about each author's approach to qualitative research as you read his/her section for a particular module, and how this fits into the different approaches we have discussed.

This class will be collaborative and interactive—be prepared for discussion! Questions are encouraged and expected, and alternative viewpoints are welcome. I value contributions to our discussions and ask you to speak up! However, I do expect you to support your assertions. Also, I expect all of us to create an educational climate of open debate that is respectful and democratic. Further, be familiar with the [GMU Honor System and Code](#). Your participation as a class member will be evaluated, not by the *quantity* of your contribution, but by the *quality* and *integrity* of your contribution.

Please note that course readings are listed for the week in which they will be discussed. Also note assignment due dates. Contact me if you have questions or concerns about this material. I am available via e-mail to schedule an appointment.

NOTE: When printing non-graded materials, I encourage you to print front and back.

Course Delivery Method

This course will be delivered online (76% or more) via Zoom for synchronous class meetings and asynchronous Blackboard Discussion forums for additional conversations related to non-graded assignments and peer review. See Blackboard Learning Management system (LMS) housed in the MyMason portal; you will log in to the Blackboard (Bb) course site using your Mason email name and email password. The synchronous meetings will be available Mondays 9am-11:40am, the course site will be available at all times.

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

- 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: <https://get.adobe.com/reader/>

Windows Media Player: <https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/help/14209/get-windows-media-player>

Apple Quick Time Player: www.apple.com/quicktime/download/

Expectations

- Course Week: Our course week will begin on the day that our synchronous meetings take place as indicated on the Schedule of Classes (Mondays).
- 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 one time 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 course-related 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.
- Netiquette: 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 awareness of alternative philosophies and methods of qualitative research in relation to general qualitative analysis techniques.
- Apply alternative analysis techniques for various qualitative research techniques.
- Critique analysis and support methods and findings in relation to your project goals and discipline/field of study.

Professional Standards

Not Applicable

Required Texts

Miles, M. B., Huberman, A. M., & Saldaña, J. (2020). *Qualitative data analysis: A methods sourcebook*. SAGE.

Saldaña, J., & Omasta, M. (2018). *Qualitative research: Analyzing life*. SAGE.

Other readings as assigned. (Articles available on Blackboard in the Readings Folder.)

Recommended Texts (We will discuss which texts might be useful based on your interests.)

Saldaña, J. (2016). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers* (3rd ed.). SAGE. **(HIGHLY SUGGESTED FOR ALL STUDENTS)**

Spradley, J. P. (1980). *Participant observation*. Waveland Press. **(HIGHLY SUGGESTED FOR STUDENTS ANALYZING OBSERVATION DATA)**

Tight, M. (2019). *Documentary research in the social sciences*. SAGE. **(HIGHLY SUGGESTED FOR STUDENTS ANALYZING DOCUMENTS AS PRIMARY DATA)**

Course Performance Evaluation

Students are expected to submit all assignments on time in the manner outlined by the instructor. All assignments will be submitted as email attachments (Word Document) to the instructor (ereybold@gmu.edu) by 9am on the due date listed on the course calendar.

- **Assignments**

Participation

This is an advanced methods course, and engagement is expected and necessary. Everyone in the class is a learner, and everyone is a teacher. I want to emphasize our obligation to critical thinking, reasoned discussion, and self-critique. Participation is not equivalent to attendance! Participation includes online discussion and peer review/feedback to at least one other student.

Analysis and Critique Papers (3)

Using criteria discussed in class, you will code/analyze data and critique your choices for each of the three module areas: a) general qualitative analysis and the role of theory; b) interview, observation, document analysis, and blended analysis designs; and c) integrating/reporting qualitative analyses within and across data types. These papers will allow you to interact personally with the material based on your own research interests and dissertation development

Weighting for Assignments

Assignment	Points
Participation (includes online materials, discussion, and peer feedback)	30
Module One Paper	20
Module Two Paper	30
Module Three Paper	20
Total	100

- **Other Requirements**

Grades on assignments turned in late will be reduced 10%, and assignments more than one week late will not be accepted. Attendance is very important to class participation; one point will be deducted per class-hour absence.

- **Grading**

A+	98-100%	B+	88-89%	C	70-79%
A	93-97%	B	83-87%	F	below 70%
A-	90-92%	B-	80-82%		

Assessment Rubric(s)

Module Papers

You will write a scholarly essay for each of the three modules in this course. We will discuss these topics and paper parameters in class. Each paper should address the following areas:

1. Module focus. How does your paper address the module focus (readings and discussion)? Why did you choose this—what were your goals in exploring this topic? Is this a personal or professional exploration? Provide rationale for selecting this topic.
2. Module coverage. What aspects of this module are covered in our readings? In other literature? What are you exploring beyond class material? Is your focus broad (breadth of topic) or narrow (depth of topic)? What theories, beliefs, or expectations did you have about this topic? Where did these questions and expectations come from? How did they change as a result of this assignment (if they did)?
3. Discussion and critique. Have you developed each of your major points and connected them to the course material? Have you reflected on the material and considered alternative viewpoints? Does your essay critique both the content covered and assumptions about that content?
4. Application to personal research. How might this topic impact your dissertation or other

research projects? Why? What ‘makes sense’ to you and why? What is not useful to you and why?

5. Technical. This is a scholarly assignment in an advanced doctoral methods course. APA guidelines for writing and referencing are expected.

Each module paper should be no longer than 10 typed pages, double-spaced, Times New Roman, 12pt font – standard APA guidelines – not including cover, abstract, and references. NO APPENDICES!

Assignments: General Guidelines/Assessment Rubric

Module Papers

Assessment criteria for papers (see Bloom’s Revised Taxonomy, Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001):

Reflection and Critique: avoids surface presentation and summary of topic; identifies and meets relevant need; provides neutral presentation of strengths and weaknesses of topic; evaluates strengths and weaknesses; states and supports position.

- C No reflection, no critique
- B- Reflective on experience and personal opinions; no critique
- B Reflective on experience; reflection of material and/or theory embedded
- B+ Reflective of material and/or theory
- A- Critique initiated; critique lacks validity and is not maintained
- A Critique initiated; critique is valid but not maintained
- A+ Critique initiated; critique is valid and well maintained

Integration and Evidence: provides comprehensive connections across course material (i.e., readings, discussions, previous learning, and personal experiences); balances theory and practice; provides appropriate and adequate support for ideas, facts, and propositions.

- C No integration, no evidence
- B- Material OR experience integrated to some degree; inadequate support
- B Material AND experience integrated to some degree; inadequate support
- B+ Material AND experience integrated well; inadequate support
- A- Material OR experience integrated well; limited support
- A Material AND experience integrated well; partial support is valid but not maintained
- A+ Material AND experience integrated well; conclusive support is valid and maintained

Technical Soundness: characterizes scholarly writing; attends to audience composition; exhibits drafting and editing appropriate for graduate-level work; adheres to APA 6th Edition guidelines.

<input type="checkbox"/> Grammar	<input type="checkbox"/> Readability	<input type="checkbox"/> APA Style
<input type="checkbox"/> Punctuation	<input type="checkbox"/> Tone/Voice	<input type="checkbox"/> Cover page
<input type="checkbox"/> Spelling	<input type="checkbox"/> Language	<input type="checkbox"/> Abstract
<input type="checkbox"/> Agreement	<input type="checkbox"/> Flow	<input type="checkbox"/> Citations
<input type="checkbox"/> Sentence structure	<input type="checkbox"/> Transitions	<input type="checkbox"/> Quotations
<input type="checkbox"/> Paragraph structure	<input type="checkbox"/> Preview/Summary	<input type="checkbox"/> References

Participation

The following criteria are expected:

- ✓ Prepared for discussion and tasks. This includes reading material and attending any team meetings.
- ✓ Maintains balance between speaking and listening roles. I do not expect you to ‘time’ yourself; be aware, though, ‘strong’ personalities overpower a discussion. Monitor your team and classroom interactions!
- ✓ Listens attentively and offers constructive feedback. All contributions should be considered and negotiated.
- ✓ Accepts diversity in viewpoints and negotiates differences. You are not expected to agree with one another at all times! However, we will be respectful and professional.
- ✓ Shares leadership roles. While it is comfortable to let ‘managers’ and ‘organizers’ plan team strategy, this will result in a vision defined by one person.

Professional Dispositions

Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times.

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: <http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/>.

GMU Policies and Resources for Students

Policies

- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the Mason Honor Code (see <https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/honor-code-system/>).
- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing (see <https://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/>).
- 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>).
- 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 viahelp@gmu.edu or <https://cehd.gmu.edu/aero/assessments>. Questions or concerns regarding use of Blackboard should be directed to <https://its.gmu.edu/knowledge-base/blackboard-instructional-technology-support-for-students/>
- For information on student support resources on campus, see <https://ctfe.gmu.edu/teaching/student-support-resources-on-campus>.

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 [University Policy 1202](#). If you wish to speak with someone confidentially, please contact one of Mason’s confidential resources, such as [Student Support and Advocacy Center](#) (SSAC) at 703-380-1434 or [Counseling and Psychological Services](#) (CAPS) 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 titleix@gmu.edu.

For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, please visit our website <https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/>.

Class Schedule (*indicates suggested reading)

MODULE 1: General Qualitative Analysis and the Role of Theory

1/23 (ZOOM): Introduction

Introduction to course, review of syllabus, discussion of module format and expectations

1/30 (Bb): Selection, Triangulation, and Thinking Toward Analysis

Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña (2020), chpts. 1-2

Reybold, et al. (2013) Selection as Thinking Forward

Reybold, et al. (2018) Reclaiming Triangulation

Why and how do we “design” toward analysis? How does selection of RQs/sites/participants impact WHAT we can analyze? What is your conceptual framework (CF) of research methods (RM) and how does that impact your possible analysis choices?

2/06 Individual Meetings to Discuss Analysis Goals

2/13 (ZOOM): Role of Theory in Analysis

Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña (2020), chpts. 3-4

*EXAMPLES:

Reybold (2003) Pathways to the Professorate

Reybold, et al. (2014) Hurricane Katrina

2/20 (Bb): Module 1 Discussion and Module 1 Paper Due

Online discussion will be available for the full week. Submit paper by email (ereybold@gmu.edu) by 9am.

MODULE 2: Interview/observation/document analysis and Blended Approaches

2/27 (ZOOM): Approaches to QR Data Analysis-General

Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña (2020), Part 2

*EXAMPLES:

3/06 (Bb): Approaches to QR Data Analysis-Specific

Saldaña & Omasta (2018), chpts. 1-5

Are you relying on one specific analysis approach for each data type? Why? What might be the pros/cons of mixing and matching analysis approaches across research questions and/or data types? How are the readings helping (or not) as you work through your choices?

3/20 (ZOOM): Analyzing Interviews

Saldaña & Omasta (2018), chpts. 6-9

*EXAMPLES:

Call-Cummings (2020) Reconstructive Horizon Analysis

Enosh & Buchbinder (2005) Narrative Styles in Sensitive Interviews

Muccio, et al. (2015) Portraiture

Reybold et al. (2012) Dissertation Politics

3/27 **(Bb): Analyzing Interviews-Your Choices**

Focus on connecting previous discussions with types of interviews (content analysis, thematic analysis, thematic network analysis, first cycle/second cycle analysis, critical analysis, visual display as analysis). Interviews are usually central to qualitative research in education, so we will continue these themes throughout the module as we discuss observations and documents. Which analyses make more sense to your research goals and data? What have you learned about research design after applying at least two different analytic techniques to your data? (We will discuss why some would prefer to apply more than one method across ALL data, but others would prefer to apply different methods to types of data.)

4/03 **(ZOOM): Analyzing Observations and Documents**

*Spradley (1980)

*Tight (2019)

*EXAMPLES:

Ramos (2007) PhotoDialogo Method

Reybold, et al. (2016) Policy Paradox

Ross (2017) Horizontal Analysis

Perry, et al. (2014) Occupational Choice during Segregation

Zembylas (2005) Emotions in Teaching

4/10 **(Bb): Analyzing Observations and Documents-Your Choices**

We will explore both observation-dominant analyses and the intersection of observation and interview data, particularly in terms of primary and secondary/supporting data. Are you wishing you had observation data? Is it too late to add in? What does it mean to make changes to your design at this point in your project? Which data type is primary? Or are both primary? How does this impact your analysis choices? What readings are working for you?

4/17 **(Bb): Module 2 Discussion and Module 2 Paper Due**

Online discussion will be available for the full week. Submit paper by email (ereybold@gmu.edu) by 9am.

We will explore more than one way to analyze observations and documents, one from the perspective of education policy, the other from the more general social science perspective. Also, we will discuss primary/secondary data and how their impact on analysis choices. Again, we will connect to interview data and analyses. Do you see a need for observations and/or documents in

your research? Which data type is primary... or secondary... or supportive? Consider how your analysis needs to highlight the role of your data in order to address your research questions! Let me know if the readings are helpful.

MODULE 3: Integrating/reporting Qualitative Analyses within/across Data Types

4/24 (ZOOM): Analyzing within/across Data and Analysis Types

Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña (2020), Part 3

Saldaña & Omasta (2018), chpts. 10-13

*EXAMPLES:

Baily (2015) Diaspora, Indigenous, & Minority Education

Reybold & Halx (2012) Interdisciplinarity

5/01 (Bb): Analyzing within/across Data and Analysis Types-Your Choices

Students tell me this is one of the most difficult tasks in writing. They end up writing to the research questions only, ignoring the emergent themes; or they end up privileging one type of data (usually interview) and using observation and documents to supplement themes). There is nothing wrong with those choices... if that is your goal. This discussion will focus on techniques to integrate analyses across data types and audiences. By now you should have a definitive matrix of your analysis choices connected to your research questions and data types. Most likely, you have a clear understanding of what you want to say to your audiences. What approach(es) will you privilege?

5/6 MODULE 3 Paper DUE

REVIEW those readings that align with your approach! Also, I can provide articles from my longitudinal study of faculty identity development (two decades of data collection, analysis, and publication). I can address specific questions about design and methods choices related to publication since I was the sole or first author on all articles.