

George Mason University
College of Education and Human Development
School of Education
EDRS 822 001- ADVANCED APPLICATIONS OF QUALITATIVE METHODS
Tuesdays, 7:20-10 pm – Thompson Hall L018- 3 credits, Fall 2023

PROFESSOR

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COURSE DESCRIPTION:

- A. Prerequisite(s):** (EDRS 810^{B-} or 810^{XS}) and (EDRS 812^{B-} or 812^{XS}).
^{B-} Requires minimum grade of B-.
^{XS} Requires minimum grade of XS.
- B. University catalog course description:** Advanced seminar devoted to study of current topics in qualitative research. Deals with cutting-edge information on selected advanced topics in qualitative research and provides opportunities to apply new skills and knowledge to projects related to students' interests.
- C. Course Overview** What are the theoretical and practical implications that undergird approaches to qualitative methodology? What are the innate meanings, hidden challenges, and critical juxtapositions that inform the ways in which we "do" research? This course is an advanced seminar that will try to answer these questions and focus on current and emerging issues in qualitative research. In this course, student will explore the philosophical underpinnings of design and application, as well as various analytical techniques. This course consists of three modules, each on a particular aspect of qualitative research including design and theories of qualitative research, methods and analysis and finally quality issues and ethics in conducting qualitative research.
This advanced course offers students flexibility to pursue methodological interests as they build towards their dissertation and the instructor will expect students to work closely with their major advisor in developing the questions and research focus that they will subsequently build on during this course.

Course Delivery Method

This course includes a variety of learning activities: discussions in seminar format, text-based/multi-media presentation of course materials, experiential learning activities including interactive assignments, cooperative learning group activities, online discussions and activities, and lecture.

My philosophy towards the content of this course is exploratory and investigative. Students are expected to be prepared, engage actively, and question their assumptions critically, and support peers in exploring their own perceptions towards research. Systematic study of an issue requires a deeper understanding of why the research matters, how it can be undertaken ethically, and the role the researcher plays in the process. As the instructor, it is my job to press students to question their own knowledge and beliefs, and as such, the course will depend on the active presence of students' over the 15 weeks.

LEARNER OBJECTIVES

This course is designed to enable students to:

- Develop an awareness of alternative philosophies and methods of qualitative research in relation to general perspectives of inquiry.
- Develop alternative research designs for various forms of qualitative research.
- Develop and critique various methods of data collection and analysis, depending on emerging and changing research design.
- Critique data collection and analysis techniques in relation to relevant literature on qualitative research methods.
- Critique your research project and suggest areas for improvement.
- Critique empirical qualitative research according to standards for quality research.

PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

Not applicable.

TEXTS

REQUIRED

Crotty, M. (1998 or 2015). *The foundations of social research*. SAGE.

Hatch, A. (2002). *Doing qualitative research in educational settings*. SUNY Press

Other readings as assigned. (Articles available on Blackboard under Course Content).

RECOMMENDED - Supplemental Texts (*just for your information—you do not need to purchase*)

Denzin, N.K. & Lincoln, Y. S. (Eds.) (2013). *The landscape of qualitative research*. Sage.

Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (Eds.). (2011). *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research* (4th ed.). SAGE.

Holstein, J. A., & Gubrium, J. F. (Eds.) (2003). *Inside interviewing: New lenses, new concerns*. SAGE.

Luttrell, W. (Ed.). (2010). *Qualitative educational research: Readings in reflexive methodology and transformative practice*. Routledge.

Miles, M. B., Huberman, A. M., & Saldaña, J. (2014). *Qualitative data analysis: A methods sourcebook*. SAGE.

Patel, L. (2016). *Decolonizing educational research*. Routledge

Saldaña, J. (2015). *Thinking qualitatively: Methods of mind*. SAGE.

Saldaña, J. (2016). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers* (3rd ed.). SAGE.

COURSE PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS

Course Delivery. Dialogic in nature, EDRS 822 is predicated upon expanding knowledge and understanding through interactive discussion, critical reflection, and research. Course delivery is designed to be learner-focused in multiple ways to meet the course objectives and the needs of participants. A variety of on-line, cooperative, and individualized instructional approaches include:

- *Student and professor directed discussions and dialogic participation;*
- *Discussions* (i.e., active involvement of students in learning by asking questions that engage doctoral students in deep critical thinking and engaged verbal interaction);
- *Cooperative and Collaborative learning* (i.e., small group learning interactions emphasizing learning from

- and with others);
- *Multimedia*
- *Blackboard* web-based course management system to extend classroom learning and foster personal and collaborative reflection.

My teaching style revolves around dialogic interaction. It is expected that *you will read in advance of class* and continue to try to find the bigger picture as you learn to sort through the findings as you move from one author/study to the next. In addition to classroom attendance and participation, you are expected to participate fully in whole class and small group discussions, group, pair and individual projects, internet research, analyses of case studies and reflections on practice.

EXPECTATIONS AND ASSIGNMENTS

Attendance and Participation (15 points (5 points for each five-week segment))

Class participation is important not only for each individual student's learning, but for the learning and success of our class as a whole. Class participation is a factor in grading; instructors may use absences, tardiness, or early departure in both on-line and campus class sessions as de facto evidence of non-participation and as a result lower a student's grade (Mason Catalog 2011-12).

Your presence alone is not a reason to get full points. Active participation in preparation, class discussion, group work and timely follow up for paper deadlines (more on that in class), will be considered. Each five-week "third" of the class, I will assess your overall participation, engagement and presence to determine the points assigned.

Students are expected to submit all assignments on time in the manner outlined by the instructor (e.g. Email, Blackboard, hard copy).

Jigsaws (2) 10 points each (20 points total)

Instructions will be provided in class two weeks prior to activity

Module Papers (3)

Over the course of the semester, you will write three scholarly papers. One way to look at these three papers is that together they will become a draft of your chapter three for your dissertation. If you are not doing a qualitative dissertation, or you are not ready to write your chapter three, then these three papers will stand as scholarly explorations of the three main topics of the course: **theory and philosophy; design and methods; and quality.** All papers will be sent via EMAIL to me by the due date.

Module Paper 1 –Theory and Philosophy (25 points): This paper should be 10-pages long, where you explore particular ontological and epistemological perspectives in greater depth. Your goal is to answer the question someone might pose to you asking "Hmm, you seem to define yourself as a, tell me what you mean by that?" So – this paper would depend on you preparing to defend your answer using literature beyond what you are exposed to in class. You might address the history of a particular stance or even two stances, the major definitions, the critiques that exist in the field, and how these stances makes sense to you as a researcher.

For this paper - Final grade will be determined by the following checklist:

1. Has the author provided a clear rationale for the selection of the particular ontology and epistemology for their paper (5 points)?

2. Has the author provided a clear understanding of the background and history, the debates and the critiques of this particular theoretical stance (5 points)?
3. Has the author provided at least 8-10 citations beyond the class readings describing their theoretical stance that go beyond assigned readings? (10 points)?
4. Clarity of writing, effort, and APA formatting, and careful editing will earn 5 points. Each mistake after the first one will result in a loss of points.

Module Paper 2 – Design and Methods (20 points): This paper should be 10-pages long, and should explore either your understanding of one or two designs, similar to Module Paper 1 or it should explain your choice of design for your dissertation and present all components of that design. For Option 1, you would present an in-depth understanding of two designs: the history, the definitions and critiques. For option 2, you will present one design and defend your choice of that design exploring the definitions and critiques. Again, this would be to answer the question “Hmm – I see you are selecting XYZ as your design – tell me why?” In addition, you will be exploring the components of your design including but not limited to selection of site and participants, methods/tools of data collection, and analysis as well as a clear defense of why you are making the decisions you are making.

For this paper - Final grade will be determined by the following checklist:

1. Has the author provided a clear rationale for the selection of the particular design for their paper (3 points)?
2. Has the author provided a clear understanding of the background and history, the debates and the critiques of this particular design and how it fits in with their ontological and epistemological stance? (5 points)?
3. Has the author provided critical decision points that would emerge from the choice of design to extrapolate to complete their understanding of the design (8 points)?
4. Has the author provided at least 4-5 citations beyond the class readings describing various components of the design? (5 points)?
5. Clarity of writing, effort, and APA formatting, and careful editing will earn 4 points. Each mistake after the first one will result in a loss of points.

Module Paper 2 – Quality (20 points): This paper should be 10-pages long and should explore the components that affect the fidelity or quality of your study. This Module paper will explore the issues of researcher reflexivity, bias, positionality, ethics, limitations, and other components that are aligned with your ontological and epistemological positions as well as in congruence with your choices of design. This paper would answer the question “Hmm, How do I trust your work?” This addresses issues of transparency, rigor and quality of your work and is critical to the trust the reader puts into your work.

For this paper - Final grade will be determined by the following checklist:

1. Has the author provided a clear understanding of what quality means to them in a qualitative study? (4 points)?
2. Has the author provided a clear understanding of how their understanding of quality is linked to ontology, epistemology and design (4 points)?
3. Has the author identified and described 4-5 key issues of quality that they are particularly concerned about or are linked to their previous module papers (8 points)?
4. Has the author provided at least 6-8 citations beyond the class readings to further understand issues of quality (5 points)?
5. Clarity of writing, effort, and APA formatting, and careful editing will earn 4 points. Each mistake after the first one will result in a loss of points.

Important Considerations

Each paper will address the topics covered during that particular segment of the class. Guidance for these papers will be relatively individual as the papers will be representations of where each of you is located as a scholar. There are clear parameters of what these papers should and should not be:

- a. They are not a regurgitation of the readings assigned. The readings assigned are a snapshot of the field. You will be expected to find literature that addresses your stance, design or concerns on quality. These papers will represent what you are learning as you explore your identity as a qualitative researcher.
- b. **These papers should provide more NO MORE than a single page that focuses on your research interests, if that.** While you may draw upon methodological issues from literature in your chosen topic, none of these papers are to be about reviewing your literature on the topic. These are to be research methods focused and as such you can connect to your field, but will draw upon methodological considerations.
- c. These papers should be technically correct and between 9-12 pages in length. APA guidelines for writing and referencing are expected. Points will be deducted for repetitive mistakes.
- d. These papers will allow you to interact personally with the material based on your own research interests and dissertation development. I suggest you communicate directly with your major professor/dissertation advisor about these assignments, as they may be used in either your proposal or dissertation. I would be happy to discuss this with you and your advisor via e-mail.

Due to the individualized nature of these papers and the different needs of students, the instructor may provide additional guidance or make alterations to these general expectations.

Course Assessment

Assignment	Points
Participation	15
Jigsaw	20
Module One Paper	25
Module Two Paper	20
Module Three Paper	20
Total	100

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 Scale:

At George Mason University, course work is measured in terms of quantity and quality. A credit normally represents one hour per week of lecture or recitation or not fewer than two hours per week of laboratory work throughout a semester. The number of credits is a measure of quantity. The grade is a measure of quality. The system for grading graduate courses is as follows:

Grade	GRADING	Graduate Courses
A+	100	Satisfactory / Passing
A	94-99	Satisfactory / Passing

A-	90-93	Satisfactory / Passing
B+	85-89	Satisfactory / Passing
B	80-84	Satisfactory / Passing
C	70-79	Does not meet requirements of the School of Education
F	<69	Does not meet requirements of the School of Education

All assignments will be evaluated holistically using a mastery grading system; the general rubric is described below. A student must demonstrate “mastery” of each requirement of an assignment; doing so will result in a “B” level score. Only if a student additionally exceeds the expectations for that requirement—through quality, quantity, or the creativity of her/his work—will she/he be assessed with an “A” level score. With a mastery grading system, students must *choose* to “go above and beyond” in order to earn “A” level scores.

- “A” level score = Student work is well-organized, exceptionally thorough and thoughtful, candid, and completed in a professional and timely manner. Student followed all format and component guidelines, as well as including additional relevant component. Student supports assertions with multiple concrete examples and/or explanations. Significance and/or implications of observations are fully specified and extended to other contexts. Student work is exceptionally creative, includes additional artifacts, and/or intentionally supports peers’ efforts.
- “B” level score = Student work is well organized, thorough, thoughtful, candid, and completed in a professional and timely manner. Student followed all format and component guidelines. Student supports assertions with concrete examples and/or explanations. Significance and/or implications of observations are fully specified.
- “C” level score = Student provides cursory responses to assignment requirements. Student followed all format and component guidelines. Development of ideas is somewhat vague, incomplete, or rudimentary. Compelling support for assertions is typically not provided.
- “F” level score = Student work is so brief that any reasonably accurate assessment is impossible

PROFESSIONAL DISPOSITIONS

Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times. See <https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/polices-procedures/>

PROPOSED CLASS SCHEDULE

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

Date	Topic/Learning Experiences	Readings and Assignments
Segment I		
August 22	Course and Class Introductions Class Norms Defining Terms Exploring Research Interests	Hatch Chapter 1 Crotty Chapter 1 Please finish Part 1 of the SAGE Handbook Text by September 19, 2023

August 29	Place and value of QR and the central focus on question	Crotty 2-4 Pascale Chap 1 and 2 Wright 2006
September 5 Synchronous ONLINE	Delving into paradigmatic boundaries	Crotty 5-7 Lather (2006) Koro-Ljungberg, M. Yendol-Hoppey, D., Smith, J. J., & Guba & Lincoln (n.d).
September 12	ASYNCHRONOUS ONLINE Jigsaw Activity 1	Read One dissertation of your choice – skim three chapter 1's to select Pryor (2010) Agee (2009)
September 19	Paradigms unpacked	Crotty 8-9 Knoblauch 2013
Segment II		
September 26	Paradigms unpacked cont.	Chapters from Parts 3-5 SAGE Handbook assigned earlier Chapter 3 of your dissertation choice
October 3	Ontological and epistemological concerns and challenges MODULE PAPER 1 DUE	Hatch2-3 Choice of one of the following three: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Naveed, A., et al, (2017) • Sakata, N., et al (2019). • Sakata, N. (2023)
Oct 10 NO class due to Fall Break		
October 17	Understanding design ASYNCHRONOUS ONLINE Jigsaw Activity 2	Chapters from Parts 6-8 of the SAGE Handbook assigned earlier
October 24	Selection and Decision points in design	Hatch 4-5 Brown, L., & Durrheim, K. (2009). Quinlan 2008
October 31	Data Collection Techniques - The Why rather than the how...	Gubrium, E., & Koro-Ljungberg, M. (2005). Enosh, G., & Buchbinder, E. (2005). Wolgemuth and Donohue. (2006).
Segment III - Ethics of Design		

November 7	Techniques, analysis and making meaning Module Paper Two due	Creswell and Miller (2000) Anfara, Jr., V. A., Brown, K. M., & Mangione, T. L. (2002). Nind et al (2012) Baily 2018
November 14	Researcher Identity – Taking on the mantle of researcher.	Polkinghorne 2007 Harrison, MacGibbon, & Morton (2001) Ghaffar-Kuchar, A. (2014). Cho, J., & Trent, A. (2006).
November 21	Trust and Rigor Representing the “other” in qualitative research.	Tracy 2010 Vanner 2015 Mayorga-Gallo and Hordge Freeman 2016
November 28	Ethics in Qualitative Research Wrapping up	Charmaz 2004
Module Paper Three DUE NO LATER Than December 2, 2023		

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

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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/> .

Other reminders:

GMU Add/Drop Policy: The last day to drop this class without any penalty is provided on the GMU academic calendar page <http://registrar.gmu.edu/calendar/>. It is the student's responsibility to check to verify that they are properly enrolled, as no credit will be awarded to students who are not.

Plagiarism Statement: Plagiarism means using the exact words, opinions, or factual information from another person without giving that person credit. Writers give credit through accepted documentation styles, such as parenthetical citation, footnotes, or endnotes; a simple listing of books and articles is not sufficient. Plagiarism is the equivalent of intellectual robbery and cannot be tolerated in an academic setting (Statement of English Department at George Mason University).

Plagiarism and the Internet: Copyright rules also apply to users of the Internet who cite from Internet sources. Information and graphics accessed electronically must also be cited, giving credit to the sources. This material includes but is not limited to e-mail (don't cite or forward someone else's e-mail without permission), newsgroup material, information from Web sites, including graphics. Even if you give credit, you must get permission from the original source to put any graphic that you did not create on your web page. Shareware graphics are not free. Freeware clipart is available for you to freely use. If the material does not say "free," assume it is not. Putting someone else's Internet material on your web page is stealing intellectual property. Making links to a site is, at this time, okay, but getting permission is strongly advised, since many Web sites have their own requirements for linking to their material.

If you have questions about when the contributions of others to your work must be acknowledged and appropriate ways to cite those contributions, please talk with the professor or utilize the GMU Writing Center.

Academic Integrity & Inclusivity: This course embodies the perspective that we all have differing perspectives and ideas and we each deserve the opportunity to share our thoughts. Therefore, we will conduct our discussions with respect for those differences, meaning we each have the freedom to express our ideas, but we should also do so keeping in mind that our colleagues deserve to hear differing thoughts in a respectful manner, i.e. we may disagree without being disagreeable. <http://integrity.gmu.edu/>

Diversity, Religious Holiday: Please refer to George Mason University's calendar of religious holidays and observations (<http://ulife.gmu.edu/calendar/religious-holiday-calendar/>). It is the student's responsibility to speak to the instructor in advance should their religious observances impact their participation in class activities and assignments.

Student Privacy Policy: George Mason University strives to fully comply with FERPA by protecting the privacy of student records and judiciously evaluating requests for release of information from those records. Please see George Mason University's student privacy policy <https://registrar.gmu.edu/students/privacy/>

Gender identity and pronoun use: If you wish, please share your name and gender pronouns with me and how best to address you in class and via email. I use she/her pronouns for myself.

Other Concerns: If you have concerns or issues relating to the content or conduct of the class, please talk with me directly. Although the specifics of these conversations are entirely confidential, they may provide me with useful suggestions that may be shared indirectly with the class to improve the learning experience for all students. As a matter of policy, I do not respond to anonymous e-mails.

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