



Western University

Sociology 9021B

Qualitative Research Methods

Winter 2017

Instructor

Professor Jerry P. White

CONTACT:

| Office | Email | Telephone X | Office Hours |
|----------|--|-------------|---|
| SSC 5412 | white@uwo.ca | 85230 | Thursday 1:30 – 3:30; or appointment |

Course Basic Info

Thursday 9:30 – 12:30 ROOM 1004 SSC Winter 2017 January 5 through March 30th

First Class – THURSDAY **Jan 5, 2017** will be used to organize the rest of the semester, acquaint students with how the class will function and handle organizational issues. ATTENDANCE IS ABSOLUTELY MANDATORY. Your presentation topic will be assigned in this first class. If you want to have a particular topic write me white@uwo.ca and indicate the session you wish to lead. You will get preference. Look over the list below. Others will be assigned on the basis of a lottery draw.

Course Description

This course provides students with an overview of several of the main types of qualitative research methods as well as the epistemological issues that distinguish qualitative from quantitative methods. It also considers ethical issues, data analysis and management challenges that are associated with qualitative research. Students will have three hands on projects and will use the knowledge that they gain in this course to write a research project proposal. It is expected that the proposal will reflect the students proposed research program or a future project that they may undertake.

Course Cap is 16 students (with flexibility to take an absolute maximum of 18 where the course is needed to complete a degree program in SOCIOLOGY or GEOGRAPHY).

Due to an arrangement between Sociology and Geography - students from those departments are allowed to sign up first (until early December) after that the course opens up to graduate students from other departments. If you are a sociologist or a geographer, please sign up as soon as possible so we can determine the current enrollment and allow others to join the class. If you are interested in the course and are outside of these two departments contact Professor JERRY WHITE (white@uwo.ca) and ask to be put on the waiting list. You may do this any time after September 1, 2015.

Students wishing to audit one or more of the classes may make that request to Professor Jerry White directly (make the request as early as possible).

Format

As a graduate class, each session will be led by student facilitators based on the assigned readings. The group of facilitators can organize the class discussion any way they like which might include: a formal presentation of the readings, (PowerPoint or other format) handouts, problems for the class to ponder, questions and/or other approaches. The student led discussion is graded and will last for 1.5 hours including discussion.

Each course meeting will have a one hour or session led by Dr. Jerry White. These sessions will be more “hands-on” discussions of different types of qualitative research highlighting issues researchers face and drawing on actual studies carried out by the instructor.

Evaluation

| Required for course | Due Date | Weight |
|---|--------------------------|--------|
| Paper (See Appendix One A below) | | 20% |
| Proposal for paper | February 9 th | 5 |
| Final draft | April 8 th | 15 |
| Seminar Presentation (see Appendix One B below) | Assigned | 20% |
| Participation/weekly assignments (See Appendix One C below) | On-going | 15% |
| Three Hands-on qualitative mini-studies (See Appendix One D below) | Various | 45% |

Readings [SEE APPENDIX TWO BELOW]

Core text: Nagy Hesse-Biber, S. and Leavy, P. 2004. *Approaches to Qualitative Research: A reader on Theory and Practice*. Oxford University Press

Additional readings: Note that there are additional REQUIRED READINGS for many sessions. Students will be responsible for these readings whether they are presenting or not. The course outline (Appendix 2) indicates these readings, some of which will be available for you on OWL others through Western's free on-line subscriptions at the library.

Student leaders may opt to ADD other readings they feel will enhance their presentations. This should be approved by the Professor at least one week prior to the presentation. I urge you to restrict the extra work you give your fellow students.

IN OUR FIRST MEETING YOU WILL BE CHOOSING A CLASS TO LEAD. SEE BELOW IN THE COURSE OUTLINE “STUDENT LED” WEEKS INDICATE YOUR CHOICES.

COME PREPARED : SELECT THREE IN ORDER OF YOUR CHOICE . I WILL ASK FOR VOLUNTEERS, WHERE WE HAVE MORE THAN 2 WISHING A PARTICULAR SUBJECT I WILL CHOOSE THROUGH LOTTERY.

Class Schedule Thursday 9:30 -12:30 SSC 1004. Readings: Appendix two below

FIRST 1.5 HOURS STUDENT LED LAST 1 hour 15 mins PROFESSOR LED

| Week | Date | Topic | Reading | Graduate Student Leader | Professor Lecture/commentary |
|--|---------|--|---|---|---|
| 1 | Jan. 5 | Organizational Meeting : See course basic info above | Fill out survey in appendix 3 | students will select a presentation session | Assign presentations and explain course |
| 2 | Jan. 12 | Paradigms* | Text Chapters 1 and 2 | STUDENT LED | Lecture: Doing Case Studies |
| | Jan. 19 | Using Photo Voice <u>Photo voice assignment GIVEN</u> | Wang et al 1996; Wang 1997; Harrison 2002 | Guest researcher or Professor | Explain Photo Voice assignment |
| 4 | Jan. 26 | Feminist*Approaches/Standpoint Methodology | Readings Text Ch3, | STUDENT LED | Lecture: Ethics in Research: Practical issues. Departmental seminar. |
| 5 | Feb. 2 | Mixed Methods * <u>Photo voice assignment DUE</u> | Text Ch4, Ch5 | STUDENT LED | Doing Mixed Methods |
| 6 6 | Feb. 9 | In-Depth Interviewing <u>Interview Assignment given</u> | Text Ch9, Readings | STUDENT LED | Lecture: How to use focus groups AND Explain Interviewing Assignment |
| 7 | Feb. 16 | Participatory Action Research * | Readings | STUDENT LED | Discuss Photo Voice Assignment |
| 8 | Feb. 23 | <u>READING WEEK</u> <u>Interviewing Assignment DUE</u> | None | none | N/A |
| 9 | Mar 2 | Ethnography and Grounded Theory <u>Ethnography Assignment given</u> | Text Ch20, Ch23, Prus 1997 | STUDENT LED | Lecture: Doing Ethnography: Practical Issues AND Explain Ethnography Assignment |
| 10 | Mar. 9 | Discourse and Text Analysis * | P3 Opener, Ch15, Readings | STUDENT LED | Practical Issues in the field – Ethical and Unethical |
| 11 | Mar. 16 | Qualitative Rigour and the Role for "Counting"? <u>Ethnography Assignment DUE</u> | Readings | STUDENT LED | Lecture: Qualitative Data: Practical issues in Analysis and Interpretation |
| 12 | Mar. 23 | Interpretation, Coding and Computer-Assisted Data Analysis An intro to NVivo | Ch25, Readings | GUEST LECTURE | Discuss ethnography assignment Discuss Research proposal assignment |
| 13 | Mar. 30 | Community Based Research Methods: Utilizing Indigenous Peoples as an example The role of qualitative research in policy making | TBD | Guest Lecturer And Professor | Questions you have |
| <p>**Get your tricouncil policy statement CORE training - If this link is not operative go to http://www.pre.ethics.gc.ca/eng/education/tutorial-didacticiel/</p> <p>Add this to your CV</p> | | | | | |

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|---|--|
| When in doubt about the principles that should guide the ethical conduct of your research, consult the Tri-Council Policy Statement on Ethics | |
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Learning Outcomes

Analyze, evaluate, and utilize a variety of theoretical perspectives and methodological approaches in Sociology

Demonstrate an ability to engage in scholarly discussion and debate in formal and informal learning environments

Demonstrate an ability to present and discuss ideas clearly and articulately through effective oral and written communication

Understand and apply standards of academic integrity and appropriate guidelines and procedures for responsible conduct and presentation of research*

APPENDIX ONE

A. PAPER: PLAN FOR A QUALITATIVE STUDY

Worth: TOTAL 20%

Due: NOTE THAT THERE ARE TWO DATES TO KEEP IN MIND: THE PROPOSAL IS DUE FEB 9TH (5%) and your PAPER April 8th (15%). This will be submitted on line in WORD no PDFs. Only under the most exceptional circumstances will extensions be granted. I STRONGLY SUGGEST YOU NOT PURSUE AN EXTENSION FOR "TIME MIS-MANAGEMENT". IT WILL BE DENIED. For the most part, there will be no exceptions to this.

Description: The paper will be MINIMALLY approximately 12 pages. Under no circumstances should it be over 20 pages (double spaced, 1.5 inch margins, 12 point font including references reasonable margins). You have several OPTIONS (choose only one):

Design a Qualitative study, frame the problem; note key literature*; Discuss your methodological approach and your ontological and epistemological premises. Discuss your recruitment methods and indicate how you would deal with the ethical issues that could arise. Consider both the researcher and the participant's perspectives. Be sure to outline your research questions and hypotheses. Include a discussion and justification for what tools/particular methods you will employ (semi-structured interviews, photo voice, grounded theory and so on). You are asked to choose from one of the following methods:

Interviews OR

Photovoice OR

Ethnography OR

Mixed methods including one or more of the above (and/or quantitative)

Other method APPROVED BY THE PROFESSOR at proposal stage.

PLEASE NOTE THAT IT WOULD BE ADVISABLE TO CHOOSE A RESEARCH AREA THAT YOU WILL BE USING FOR YOUR THESIS / DISSERTATION. IT WILL SAVE YOU TIME DOWN THE ROAD.

This is to be a scholarly research proposal, properly referenced with title page, abstract (which do not count as pages) and bibliography. Papers will be uploaded to a plagiarism checking site. Information on plagiarism can be found at the following website: http://sociology.uwo.ca/graduate_handbook/academic_matters.html

* This is NOT a full literature review. It is similar to a compressed review for ethics or a grant application. Therefore it would be 2-3 pages touching on the main concepts and knowledge that applies to your research question. This is very circumscribed and not expected to be detailed.

B. SEMINAR PRESENTATION

Worth: 20%

Schedule: see lecture schedule

At our first class, January 5th, you will be selecting/be given a seminar/subject class to lead. Each class is based on the week's readings. Students will make critically informed presentations to the class about the weekly readings and will use whatever strategies they like to stimulate discussion within the group. Students are expected to organize as a group (if more than one student is involved) and should prepare to lead the two hour student session - keeping in mind that group discussion should be a focus. The key themes of the readings should be summarized, critically evaluated, and presented clearly and concisely. You will be assessed on any formal presentation materials provided (e.g., PowerPoint, handouts) as well as contributions to the discussion. The FIRST SESSION is paradigms and is only a week afterward. Anyone wishing to do that one could ask the professor in advance of January 5th (by email). This is a shorter reading presentation.

Evaluation of student led presentation:

Summary/Synthesis of the readings ~ 45% THIS INCLUDES A 500 WORD DESCRIPTION OF WHAT YOU ARE PLANNING TO COVER IN THE SEMINAR AND AT LEAST 3 QUESTIONS YOU WILL BE POSING TO ELICIT DISCUSSION.

Your presentation and written summary will be evaluated looking at:

Are you able to identify the key themes of the chapters?

How well do you understand the arguments? Have you presented them properly?

Critical Thinking/Assessment ~ 30%

Do the students demonstrate critical thinking in their presentations?

Are the students able to identify the assumptions behind the author's arguments?

Presentation/Facilitation Style ~ 25%

Is the presentation/facilitation clear?

Is the presentation/facilitation well organized?

Were the methods used interesting and stimulating? Did they engage the class?

C. CLASS PARTICIPATION

There are several components to participation. There is direct participation during the seminar and short weekly commentaries handed in to the instructor.

Worth: 15%

- 1) Participation in the Seminar part 2:** Students are expected to contribute to discussion in every class. Participation will be noted by the professor and evaluated on the basis of quality of your comments including value added for other students, clarity of your understanding and/or import of the questions you raise.
- 2) Critical Comments:** After each presentation students are asked to submit a short evaluation of the student presentation indicating whether the presenters gave a good review, if their were any problems or omissions. This is NOT necessary for the Professor lectures or guest lectures but you are more than welcome to do so either anonymously or over email.

D. COURSE ASSIGNMENTS: LEARNING HANDS ON

Worth: TOTAL 45% of the course

Assignment #1: Photo Voice:

Worth 15%

Due: Feb 2st

You will act as both researcher and research participant. You will decide on a theme for your photo voice. It can be anything connected to your "public life" as a student at Western OR private life.

Ex: Becoming a graduate student; your challenges to getting to where you are; greatest disappointments or surprises; facing a personal dilemma; a passion in your life; what friendship means to you; a family challenge; coping with an illness and so on.

You will think through the things you would tell a research participant (i.e. yourself). Make a record of your approach and instructions. Then you will send yourself out to collect 3-5 pictures that capture the issue from your personal perspective.

You will write a short description of the photos taken and what they mean to you. Write up your approach and the instructions utilized and submit this as your project. A description of the photo meaning can be a paragraph.

Length: It can be done in five pages or might take you a bit more. You decide

Assignment #2: Interviewing:

Worth 15%

Due: Feb 23rd

You will be interviewing two people, both Graduate students (ANY Department). You will be trying to determine what if any changes have taken place in their career or life ambitions since they entered graduate school.

The assignment is to draft an interview guide: Semi-structured. Recruit the interviewees; get their consent (signed); conduct the interviews: One taking notes, one using a recorder; analyze the data and write up your results. The paper will be 5-10 pages and will outline each stage of the study you did.

You will include an INTERVIEWER REFLECTIONS appendix where you discuss anything unexpected that occurred, things you would do differently and finally the difference between notes based and recorded interviews: pros and cons.

Assignment #3: Ethnography:

Worth: 15%

Due: March 16th

Write an *ethnography* OR a *grounded theory* (3-5 pages) about the culture of Tim Hortons or Starbucks. On the public side of the counter, it can be anything about this "culture" from the lines, behind the counter, in front of the counter, special fads or promotions (roll up the rim or working with your latte whatever). You can try and include what you see of the servers' side but this is not mandatory. This will help us explore several issues including: doing ethnography as an insider (some of you may yet be "outsiders" to this strange culture), data management, field notes, memos, as well as bracketing, reflexivity, disciplined subjectivity, what counts as (good) theory, and rigour. I encourage you to (re)read an empirical ethnography or grounded theory study as a guide – There is a journal-length ethnography by Schouten and McAlexander for you to look at in the Readings folder on Owl.

This is a partial ethnography/ grounded theory study to learn about the culture of Tim Hortons/ Starbucks and/or develop a theory of the phenomenon. You may find yourself as "either" an observer/participant or a participant/ observer (the difference is covered in a Professor lecture). You will learn about: data collection issues; interpretation issues and the scope of real ethnography.

You need not draw on the literature if you do not wish to. You do need to describe the challenges you had in data collection, the way you approached analysis of the data and your analysis itself.

APPENDIX TWO: Readings for Course

[all are available on the course website and Western Libraries]

Sociology 9021B Qualitative Methods for Sociology and Geography Other Readings for Qualitative Methods

Many thanks to Dr. Jamie Baxtor for all his work on developing this list of readings.

Feminist Approaches/Standpoint Methodology

Brooks and Hesse-Biber "An Invitation..."

Collins " Gender, Black Feminism..."

Jaggar " Just Methods: An Inetrdisciplinary Feminist Reader..."

Sexual Violence for my lecture

Narayan, Uma (2004) "The Project of Feminist Epistemology: Perspectives from a Non-western Feminist" Chapter 15 (Pp. 213-224) in Sandra Harding (ed.) *The feminist standpoint theory reader: Intellectual and political controversies*. New York: Routledge

In-depth Interviewing

Dwyer, S and Buckle, J. (2009) The Space Between: On Being an Insider-Outsider in Qualitative Research *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 8(1): 54-63

Focus Groups Iowa State: For Professor lecture

Participatory Action Research

This session reviews a broad range of literature on participatory action research in the social sciences. Both Saether and Bartlett review the literature and outline some of the different approaches to PAR. The remaining papers are short descriptions of case studies from the Nyden et al. book. All the papers raise the importance of and the considerable challenges of PAR.

Get all readings in this section at Owl course site : **Resources**

Bartlett, J. Iwasaki, Y., Gottlieb, B., Halld, D. and Mannel, R. (2007) Framework for Aboriginal-guided decolonizing research involving Metis and First Nations persons with diabetes, *Social Science and Medicine* 65: 2371–2382

Baum, F., MacDougall, C. and Smith, D. (2006) Participatory action research, *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health*, 60: 854-57.

Brown, P. (1997) Social science and environmental activism: A personal account, in Nyden, P., Figert, A., Shibley, M. and Burrows, D. (Eds.) *Building Community: Social Science in Action*, Thousand Oaks CA: Pine Forge Press, pp.98-102.

Lukehart, J. (1997) Collaborative, policy-related research in the area of fair housing and community development, in Nyden, P., Figert, A., Shibley, M. and Burrows, D. (Eds.) *Building Community: Social Science in Action*, Thousand Oaks CA: Pine Forge Press, pp.47-51.

Pena, D. and Gallegos, J. (1997) Local knowledge and collaborative environmental action research, in Nyden, P., Figert, A., Shibley, M. and Burrows, D. (Eds.) *Building Community: Social Science in Action*, Thousand Oaks CA: Pine Forge Press, pp. 85-91E

See the Canadian Geographer Vol 56 , #2
<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/cag.2012.56.issue-2/issuetoc>

Koster, et al pg 195–210.

Leeuw et al pg. 180–194.

Optional : Castledon et al pg 160-179

OPTIONAL READING Saether, B. (2007) From researching regions at a distance to participatory network building: Integrating action research and economic geography *Syst Pract Act Res*, 20:15–25

Photo Voice

Harrison, B. 2002. "Seeing Health and Illness Worlds – Using Visual Methods in Sociology of Health and Illness: A Methodological Review." *Sociology of Health and Illness* 24(6), 856.

Wang, C. 1997. "Photovoice: Concept, Methodology, and Use for Participatory Needs Assessment." *Health Education and Behavior* 24(3): 369.

Wang, C., M.A. Burris and X.Y. Ping. 1996. "Chinese Village Women as Visual Anthropologists: A Participatory Approach to Reaching Policy Makers." *Social Science and Medicine* 42: 1391

Discourse and Text Analysis

Heaton, J. (1999) The gaze and visibility of the carer: a Foucauldian analysis of the discourse of informal care, *Sociology of Health and Illness*, 21(6): 759-77

The opening section to Part 3 Hesse-Biber

Ethnography

Prus, Robert (1997) " Subcultural Mosaics: An Ethnographic Research Agenda: The Preface (see course site)

Schouten, J. and McAlexander, J. Subcultures of consumption: An ethnography of the new bikers, *Journal of Consumer Research*, 22(1): 43-61.

Rigour and Counting

Athens, L. Scientific criteria for evaluating qualitative studies, *Studies in Symbolic Interaction*, 5: 259-268.

Baxter, J. and Eyles, J. (1997) Evaluating qualitative research in social geography: Establishing "rigour" in interview analysis, *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 22(4): 505-25.

Munck, Gerardo L. (1998). "Canons of Research Design in Qualitative Analysis." *Studies in Comparative International Development* 33(3): 18-45.

Sandelowski, M. (2001) Real qualitative researchers do not count: The use of numbers in qualitative research, *Research in Nursing and Health* 24(3) 230-240.

Schouten, J. and McAlexander, J. Subcultures of consumption: An ethnography of the new bikers, *Journal of Consumer Research*, 22(1): 43-61.

Risteen Hasselkus B (1991) Qualitative research: Not another orthodoxy. *The Occupational Therapy Journal of Research*, 11(1) 3-7

Computer-Assisted Qualitative Data "Analysis"

Bringer, J. Johnston, L. and Brackenridge, C. (2006) Using Computer-Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software to Develop a Grounded Theory Project, *Field Methods*, 18(3) pp.245-266.

St. John, W. and Johnson, P. (2000) The pros and cons of data analysis software for qualitative research, *Journal of Nursing Scholarship*; 32(4): 393

Ethics

Borland, K. (2004) "That's Not What I Said": Interpretive Conflict in Oral Narrative Research, in Nagy Hesse-Biber, S. and Leavy (Eds) *Approaches to Qualitative Research: A reader on Theory and Practice*. Oxford University Press.

Shaw, I. (2008) Ethics and the practice of qualitative research, *Qualitative Social Work*, 7(4): 400-14.

Daley, K. (2012) Gathering Sensitive Stories Youth Studies Australia VOLUME 31 NUMBER 3 2012

APPENDIX THREE

Introductory survey for Qualitative Methods

Please fill in and submit as an email attachment subject line: SURVEY

TO: white@uwo.ca

Name and Department

What is the working title for your research?

What methods are you planning to use in your research?

Important Policies

A Note on Plagiarism:

Students must write their assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major scholastic offence (the [Scholastic Offence Policy](#) can be viewed in the Western Academic Calendar).

Plagiarism Checking:

Students may be required to submit their assignments to turnitin.com on the class WebCT website after they are completed. These papers will be subject to submission for textual originality.

Policy on Laptops and other Electronics/Phones in Class:

Laptops are permitted in class. Be sure that all cell phones are turned off at the beginning of class.

Scholastic Offences:

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following web site:

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/appeals_discipline/index.html

Accommodation:

Only in exceptional circumstances may a student be provided special accommodation in the completion of a course requirement (i.e., exams, papers). To request a one-time accommodation (brief illness, family emergency), the student should inform the professor when they are able so accommodation can be made. To request other accommodation(s), the student must first meet with the Graduate Chair to discuss options. Medical documentation, where required, will be kept on file in the Sociology graduate program office.

Completion of Course Requirements:

Course requirements must be completed by the end of the term in which the course is offered (Fall-December 31; Winter-April 30, Summer-August 31). Only in exceptional circumstances may a student take additional time to complete the course requirements. In such a case, the student must first meet with the Graduate Chair to request permission to carry the incomplete. Medical documentation, where required, will be kept on file in the Sociology graduate program office. More details regarding incompletes are outlined in the Graduate Handbook: http://www.sociology.uwo.ca/graduate_handbook/course_information.html

Mental Health

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western for a complete list of options how to obtain help - <http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/>

Health and Wellness

As part of a successful graduate student experience at Western, we encourage students to make their health and wellness a priority. Western provides several on campus health-related services to help you achieve optimum health and engage in healthy living while pursuing your graduate degree. For example, to support physical activity, all students, as part of their registration, receive membership in Western's Campus Recreation Centre. Numerous cultural events are offered throughout the year. Also, we encourage you to check out the Faculty of Music web page <http://www.music.uwo.ca/>, and our own McIntosh Gallery <http://www.mcintoshgallery.ca/>. Students seeking help regarding mental health concerns are advised to speak to someone they feel comfortable confiding in, such as their faculty supervisor, their program director (graduate chair), or other relevant administrators in their unit. Western's School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies' [Living Well](#) website provides tips for thriving at grad school and other helpful information.