Course Description:
In this course, students will learn to investigate the social world using a variety of qualitative research approaches, such as in-depth interviewing, observation, and content analysis. Students will explore the principles underlying qualitative inquiry and acquire a general understanding of the theoretical positions that underlie qualitative methodology. Through lectures, readings, and hands-on research activities, students will explore different ways of investigating the social world in a scientific but non-statistical way that gives voice to the people we are studying. The ultimate goal is to let students obtain some hands-on experience with qualitative research.

Prerequisites: Sociology 2205A/B and 2206A/B.
Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. The decision may not appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

Antirequisite(s): Sociology 3310F/G, 3311F/G, Family Studies and Human Development 3230A/B.

Learning Outcomes:
By the end of this course, students should be able to do the following:

* Evaluate different research methods and their usage.
* Formulate research questions and choose a qualitative research design to examine those questions.
* Understand and meet the ethical standards for conducting research with human subjects.
* Design and carry out a research project, including conducting in-depth interviews, ethnographic field observations, and content analysis.
* Analyse and interpret qualitative data.

Required Text:
Evaluation:

Quiz on key terms
Feb 4, 2020 15%

In-depth interview proposal
Feb 11, 2020 15%

Ethnography Assignment
March 3, 2020 20%

Content Analysis in-class assignment
March 10, 2020 15%

Interview transcription, analysis and write-up
March 31, 2020 25%

Class attendance
All weeks 10%

Evaluation Details:

Quiz: You will be given a short test of key concepts and methodological principles covered in the first 4 weeks of class.

In-depth interview proposal: Identify a sociological problem. Identify research questions. Create a draft interview guide; Describe your recruitment strategy; produce your letter of information and consent form.

Ethnography Assignment: Spend some time observing a site; collect field notes. Write a brief report summarizing your observations. Answer the questions posed to you on the assignment sheet; hand in a sample of your rough notes.

Content Analysis In-Class Assignment: In class we will review and begin to analyse on-line content. You will be asked to identify themes in the on-line content. Hand in a report answering the questions posed, and summarizing the key themes.

Interview transcription, analysis and write-up: Analyse the interview transcripts for themes related to your research questions, and write a brief report on your findings. Submit your transcription, your thematic coding notes, and a brief write-up on your findings.

Class Attendance: Attendance in class is expected. If you cannot attend a class due to illness or other reasons please inform Professor Adams ahead of time. With respect to class attendance you receive 1 mark for each of the 9 classes attended, and a bonus mark either for attending all 9, or for meeting with me briefly (in office hours or after class) to discuss your research assignments in-person.

How to Contact Me:

The best ways to contact me are through email (tladams@uwo.ca), in class, or during my office hours.

How to get important information:

Make sure to check the course OWL site regularly for course updates, cancellations, and other course-related material.
Important Policies

Policies for Assignment Deadlines:
In-class assignments must be completed in class. For all other assignments, late marks of 5% per day will be deducted. If you miss the due date for an assignment due to illness or for any other unforeseen reasons, you must provide notification of and documentation respecting your circumstances to your Academic Counselor within 48 hours. If your problem is medical in nature, you should be seen by your doctor on the date of the quiz or on the date the assignment is due. If your Academic Counselor agrees that your reasons are legitimate and are supported by your medical doctor’s documentation, you will be allowed to hand in your assignment (or write the quiz) at a later date, or have your grade re-weighted, depending on the circumstances.

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:
All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (www.turnitin.com).

Policies on Examinations
No electronic devices will be allowed during the quiz.

Policy on Laptops and other Electronics/Phones in Class:
Laptops are permitted in class but if it is observed that students are on social networking sites such as Facebook or Twitter, they will be told to close the lid and they will not be permitted to use it for the remainder of the class. Be sure that all cell phones are turned off at the beginning of class.

Academic Consideration for Missed Work
Students who are seeking academic consideration for missed work during the semester may submit a self-reported absence form online provided that the absence is 48 hours or less and the other conditions specified in the Senate policy are met. Two important exceptions to this rule: SRAs will not be allowed for final examinations or assessments worth more than 30% of a given course.

Students whose absences are expected to last longer than 48 hours, or where the other conditions detailed in the policy are not met (e.g., work is worth more than 30% of the final grade, the student has already used 2 self-reported absences, the absence is during the final exam period), may receive academic consideration by submitting a Student Medical Certificate (for illness) or other appropriate documentation (for compassionate grounds).
All students pursuing academic consideration, regardless of type, must **contact their instructors no less than 24 hours following the end of the period of absence** to clarify how they will be expected to fulfill the academic responsibilities missed during their absence. Students are reminded that they should consider carefully the implications of postponing tests or midterm exams or delaying submission of work, and are encouraged to make appropriate decisions based on their specific circumstances.

https://counselling.ssc.uwo.ca/procedures/having_problems/Self_Reported_Absence.html

**Accessibility Options:**

Please contact the course instructor if you require material in an alternate format or if you require any other arrangements to make this course more accessible to you. You may also wish to contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) at 519 661-2111 x 82147 for any specific question regarding an accommodation. Information regarding accommodation of exams is available on the Registrar’s website:

www.registrar.uwo.ca/examinations/accommodated_exams.html

**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:

www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

**Mental Health**

Students who are in **emotional/mental distress** should refer to Mental Health@Western (http://uwo.ca/health/mental_wellbeing/index.html) for a complete list of options how to obtain help.

**Compassionate Grounds**

Serious illness of a family member – Inform your instructor as soon as possible and submit a medical certificate from the family member’s physician to your home faculty’s Academic Counseling office.

In case of a death – Inform your instructor as soon as possible and submit a copy of the newspaper notice, death certificate or documentation provided by the funeral director to your home faculty’s Academic Counseling office.
Course Schedule and Readings:

January 7  Week 1: Introduction to course – what is qualitative research?
Reading: Hesse-Biber, chapter 1

January 14  Week 2: Approaches to Qualitative Research, Designing Qualitative Research
Reading: Hesse-Biber, chapter 2 & 3

January 21  Week 3: Ethics in Research
Reading: Hesse-Biber, chapter 4

January 28  Week 4: In-depth interviews
Reading: Hesse-Biber, Chapter 5

February 4  Week 5: Quiz (and Research Week)
No readings

Feb 11  Week 6: Ethnography
Reading: Hesse-Biber, Chapter 7

** In-Depth interviewing proposal due

Feb 17-21  Reading Week

Feb 25  Week 7: Hands-on Research
No reading this week. Work on assignments.

March 3  Week 8: Case Studies and Institutional Ethnography
Reading: Hesse-Biber, Chapter 8

* Ethnography Assignment due.
March 10       Week 9: Content Analysis
Reading:       Hesse-Biber, Chapter 9
* In-class Assignment

March 17       Week 10: Analysis, Interpretation, and Writing
Reading:       Hesse-Biber, Chapter 11 & 12

March 24       Week 11: Research & Writing
No reading this week

March 31       Week 12: Course Wrap-Up and Reflections
* No reading this week.
* In-depth interviewing assignment due.