



Western University
SOCIOLOGY 3307F – 650 (Summer 2022)
Qualitative Research

Instructor: Dr. Stephen Lin

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Office Hours: By Appointment (Zoom)

<https://westernuniversity.zoom.us/j/3825666064>

Course Description

In this course, students will learn to investigate the social world using a variety of qualitative approaches, such as in-depth interviewing, participant observation, or content analysis. In so doing, students will explore the principles underlying qualitative inquiry and acquire a general understanding of the numerous theoretical positions that underlie qualitative methodology. Through lectures, readings, group presentations, 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 experience the ways that qualitative sociologists do research.

Prerequisite(s): [Sociology 2206A/B](#).

Antirequisite(s):

[Sociology 3310F/G](#), [Family Studies and Human Development 3230A/B](#)

Course Delivery Method

The content of this course will be delivered fully online via **an asynchronous learning format**. Asynchronous learning means that the instructor and the students in the course all engage with the course content **at different times (and from different locations)**.

In terms of content delivery, I will provide pre-recorded weekly lectures which you can download from OWL. You should try your best to complete the assigned reading and use the pre-recorded lectures to guide your learning at your time of convenience.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- 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 humans.
- Design and carry out a research project, including conducting in-depth interviews, ethnographic field observations, and content analysis.

- Analyze and interpret qualitative data.
- Write an effective research report.
- Prepare an effective oral presentation that presents key information in a time frame.

Required Text(s)

Van den Hoonaard, D.K. (2018). *Qualitative Research in Action: A Canadian Primer*. (4th Edition). Oxford University Press. ISBN: 9780199030026.

Please note that the 3rd edition of the textbook is also acceptable.

**Additional articles are assigned in some weeks weekly and can be accessed from OWL.

Method of Evaluation

Content Analysis (June 17)	20%
Online Midterm Exam (June 29)	30%
Ethnography Assignment (July 25)	35%
Critical Reflection (July 29)	15%

Evaluation Breakdown

Content Analysis (20%) – Friday, June 17 by 11:55pm

- You will be asked to choose one advertisement from selected themes.
- Analyze the content of the chosen advertisement according to a set of questions.
- See the instruction sheet on OWL.

Important Notes:

1. Report/Essay due: Friday, June 17 by 11:55pm via the Assignment Tab
2. Length: 4 pages double-spaced, 12 font-size
3. Late assignments will be docked 5% per day, unless accommodation has been given.

Online Midterm Exam (30%) – Wednesday, June 29

This 70-minute exam will cover the material from May 9 until June 26. This exam will consist of multiple-choice questions only. Questions will come from the lecture materials only. This exam is scheduled on Wednesday, June 29 from 9:00am to 9:00pm.

Ethnography Assignment (35%) – Monday, July 25 by 11:55pm

- Spend some time observing a specific site; collect field notes.
- Write a report describing your observations, and your challenges as an observer
- See details in the assignment instruction sheet (available on OWL)

Important Notes:

1. Report/Essay due on Monday, July 25 by 11:55pm via the OWL Assignment Tab
2. 8 pages max., double spaced, 12 font-size
3. Late assignments will be docked 5% per day, unless you have my permission for late submission.

Critical Reflection (15%) – Friday, July 29 by 11:55pm

At the end of this semester, you will write up to a **one-page (single-spaced)** to reflect upon what you have learned from this course. Your main task is to discuss overarching ideas regarding qualitative methods, such as the rationale or purpose for conducting qualitative research and benefits/advantages of qualitative methods. You will be assessed based on your comprehension, creativity and critical thinking.

Important Notes:

1. Paper due on Friday, July 29 by 11:55pm via the Assignment Tab on OWL.
2. Late assignments will be docked 5% per day, unless accommodation has been given.

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:

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

You may not use any electronic devices during examinations. Computer marked multiple-choice tests/exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating.

Use of Recording Devices and Course Content

Course instructors own and retain the intellectual property rights of their teaching materials. These rights extend to materials used in online settings and digital learning management systems like Owl or Zoom. Students do not have our permission to make audio or video recordings of lectures, take pictures of lecture material, or distribute any course content for

nefarious purposes (E.g. for sale or to cheat on exams). It is the decision of the instructor as to how and when teaching materials can be shared or used. **Unless explicitly noted otherwise, you may not make audio or video recordings of pre-recorded lectures or other course materials. Nor may you edit, re-use, distribute, or re-broadcast any of the material posted to the course website.**

Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness

Western’s policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness can be found at www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf.

Students must see the Academic Counsellor and submit all required documentation in order to be approved for certain accommodation:

https://counselling.ssc.uwo.ca/procedures/academic_consideration.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:

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 list of options how to obtain help.

Course Schedule and Readings

Week	Date	Topic/Assignment	Assigned Readings
1	May 9-15	Introduction to the course Forming a Group (3 students)	Van Den Hoonaard, Ch. 1
2	May 16-22	Designing a Qualitative Study	Van Den Hoonaard, Ch.2 & 3
3	May 23-29	Content Analysis	Van Den Hoonaard, Ch. 8 Alexander (2003)
4	May 30-June 5	Discourse Analysis Critical Discourse Analysis	Van Dijk (1993) Phillips & Jorgensen (2002)

5	June 6-12	Observational/ Ethnographic Research	Van Den Hoonaard, Ch. 5 Emerson, Fretz & Shaw (1995)
6	June 13-19	In-Depth Interviewing *Content Analysis due (June 17)*	Van Den Hoonaard, Ch. 6 Hesse-Biber (2014)
7	June 20-26	Focus Groups	Van Den Hoonaard, Ch. 7 Madriz (2000) Carey (1994)
8	June 27-July 3	Online Midterm Exam (June 29)	No Reading
9	July 4-10	Sampling in Qualitative Research	Luborsky & Rubinstein (1995)
10	July 11-17	Grounded Theory	Charmaz (2014)
11	July 18-24	Analyzing Qualitative Data	Van Den Hoonaard, Ch. 9 LeCompte (2000)
12	July 25-29	Ethics in Qualitative Research *Ethnography Due (July 25)* *Critical Reflection Due (July 29)*	Van Den Hoonaard, Ch. 4 Laud (1970)