

Rutgers University
Graduate School of Education
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***Introduction to
Qualitative Research in Education***
Fall 2012

Instructor: Ariana Mangual Figueroa
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Meeting Time: Mondays, 4:50-7:30 pm
Location: Scott Hall, Room 201
Office Hours: Monday, 2:00-4:00 pm,
by appointment

Course Description. The purpose of this course is to introduce students to the theories and practices of qualitative inquiry. Qualitative researchers are interested in constructing in-depth descriptions and analyses of educational phenomena; we do so by spending time in the field observing and eliciting the meanings individuals give to different educational contexts, issues, and problems. Throughout the course of this semester, students will develop the skills both to critically read qualitative studies of education and design their own research studies.

This course is structured to provide students with opportunities to understand the nature of qualitative inquiry, the kinds of questions addressed, and the various types of research designs used to answer them. The goal of the course is to provide students with a sense of the ideas and disciplinary contexts that have contributed to the development of this field of inquiry as well as the attributes that make qualitative studies a valid and reliable form of research. Students will be introduced to core qualitative data collection methods—including interviews, observations, and document analysis—and will have opportunities to practice these methods. The course will conclude with the development of a proposed research study, which includes the rationale for the study, a discussion of the conceptual framework and related research literature, as well as a section on the methodology (including data collection and analysis).

This course can be continued in Spring 2013. The next course in the sequence (Qualitative Research Methods II) is intended to deepen and strengthen students' familiarity and comfort with doing qualitative research work. It will provide students with more opportunities to refine their research design and data collection tools and to actually implement the research study proposed in Qualitative I. Students will collect data in the field, analyze this data, and construct a research report. They will also further develop their skills as informed consumers of qualitative studies.

Both classes are structured to develop students' abilities to advise and support their colleagues in their research efforts. The emphasis on collegiality is intended to facilitate students learning from one another, enhance their ability to critique each other's work in a constructive way and incorporate critique in their own work, and develop a "research community" that can provide support as they continue in their doctoral programs.

Required Texts. Two books and several articles are required for the class. The books should be ordered as soon as possible; they are also available for purchase at the RU Bookstore. Please purchase the 3rd edition of both course textbooks. Articles and other readings will be posted in the "resources" section on the Sakai course webpage.

Creswell, J. W. (2013). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (3rd Ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Booth, W. C., Colomb, G. G., & Williams, J. M. (2008). *The craft of research* (3rd Ed.). Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Course Assignments. The activities required as part of this course include (1) getting certified to conduct research involving human subjects, (2) developing a research focus and identifying a research site, (3) conducting observations, (4) writing a field journal and field notes, (5) preparing for and conducting an interview, and (6) conducting data analysis. These activities will be ongoing from the start of the course. These assignments are meant to introduce you to methods of data collection and analysis and constitute preliminary fieldwork for those of you who will continue on to Qualitative Methods II in the spring. As such, the assignments will guide you in conducting preliminary fieldwork and developing a proposal for your spring semester research study. *All written assignments submitted for review should be formatted as follows: double-spaced, 12 pt font, with 1 inch margins. References should be formatted using American Psychological Association Manual, 2010, 6th edition. All assignments should be submitted via the students' personal Drop Box in the course Sakai website by noon on the Sunday before class meets. The only assignment with a different due date is Proposal Paper 3.*

I. Preparing To Conduct Qualitative Research

- A. **Group analysis and presentation of research article.** For this assignment you will be assigned to a group. Your group will meet before your assigned class to analyze the week's qualitative research reading and to prepare to present your analysis to the rest of the class. All students are responsible for reading the qualitative research readings each week and participating in the discussion led by the presenting group. Various due dates. See the resources section in Sakai for a handout entitled "Deconstructing a research study article" that can guide your article analysis.
- B. **Human subjects certification program (HSCP) training.** You must complete this training to engage in any kind of human research. You can access the training materials and exam online at <http://orsp.rutgers.edu/Humans/hscpletter.php> Please give me a copy of your human subjects certificate once you have completed the training.

II. Conducting Fieldwork and Analysis

- A. **Fieldwork - Observations.** You will complete two observations by mid-semester. When you go to your site, you will document what is happening at the site, note specific phrases people use, and create a map of the site. Note these in your "field journal" (typically a bounded notebook), which you will carry around with you at your site. The field journal notes will serve as the raw material for your more polished and complete field notes. Field notes need to be typed and will extend what you jotted down in your field journal. These will be used in class for discussion. *Attach a 1-page reflection to each set of field notes that addresses what you learned from the experience, what you might do differently next time, and how you view your positionality in the field during this activity.*
- B. **Fieldwork - Interview.** You will develop an interview protocol that you will use to conduct one interview. This interview should be conducted with a person similar to those who will invite to be participants in your spring research study (e.g., if you want to study skateboarders at a local skate park, you might interview one skateboarder this semester). *Bring a draft of your interview protocol to class for review on November 5.* You will need to

audio record and transcribe your interview. This interview will help you practice the skills needed to conduct an effective interview and it should help you to think about and design your spring research study interviews. It will be used in class for discussion. *Attach a 1-page reflection to your transcript that addresses what you learned from the interview experience, what you might do differently next time, and how you view your positionality in the field during this activity.*

- C. **Analytic Memo.** For this assignment, you will develop a preliminary analysis of your observations and interview. You will review the data you have collected over the course of the semester and write about themes you've identified, tensions or contradictions that you've noticed in relation to your interests, and questions about which you are still curious. Class readings and exercises on interpreting and analyzing data should be helpful as you try to make sense of your data. For those of you planning to take Qualitative Research Methods II, the purpose of this memo is for you to figure out what research questions and issues you want to explore in your spring semester research project. *The memo should be 5 pages in length (maximum). Include interview transcript as an appendix.*

III. Creating a Research Proposal

The final product for this class is a research proposal. I have broken down the task of writing a proposal into smaller chunks so that it can be completed with guidance and in a timely manner. Specific guidelines for the proposal will be discussed in class.

- A. **Proposal Paper 1: Research focus statement draft.** In order to begin your preliminary fieldwork, you will need to figure out what you are interested in studying. To that end, I want you to write a paper in which you identify a cultural practice, social construct, policy or program reform on which you want to focus your study. Additional study foci can be discussed with the professor. This cultural practice, social construct, or reform may emerge from a question of practice within the field of education. What do you know about this topic? Why are you interested in studying it? What do you want to know about it? What ideas do you have about how you might go about studying this practice or construct (i.e., what do you think you will have to investigate to learn more about it)? It is expected that as you read the scholarship on this topic during this semester, this research focus statement will evolve. *Explain the purpose and significance of your study and include your proposed research questions. Include a list of 8 articles, books, and book chapters that you will read in preparation for proposal paper 2 (the literature review). 3 pages maximum, not including the resource list.*

Note: When you revise this section for Proposal Paper 3 you should write about the purpose and significance of your proposed research study along with the key concepts that guide the study. Following your questions, identify and define the concepts that you intend to use in approaching your questions and discuss how they are related to each other. Be sure to articulate the assumptions that underlie your use of the concepts; if you're using concepts that rely on different fundamental assumptions, you must explain and justify how you are planning on integrating these different concepts in your study. As you write Proposal Paper

3, focus on aligning the purpose of your study, your research questions, and your emerging conceptual framework.

- B. **Proposal Paper 2: Literature review draft.** For this assignment, locate, read, and review 8-10 texts (empirical studies and conceptual pieces as appropriate) that are most relevant to your study. (This is will not be an exhaustive review, but instead a focused review of the literature.) Based on your reading, develop a literature review in which you discuss issues including: how your topic has been investigated in prior studies, what others have learned about your topic, and what questions still remain. *As you review the literature, consider the following: how might you integrate the ideas from different sources so that they can help you to focus your study?, what kinds of questions might you ask to extend our current understanding of the topic?, what is your critical perspective on the literature reviewed?, and what kinds of data might you collect? 5 pages maximum.*
- C. **Proposal Paper 3: Everything plus methods.** For this assignment, revise and edit Proposal Papers 1 and 2 incorporating instructor and peer feedback and add your methods section. Your methods section should include the following: (1) a description of your site; (2) a discussion of your role as a researcher; (3) a description of your study participants and how they will be selected; (4) a detailed description of your proposed strategies for collecting data sources (e.g., what will you observe at your site? why? when? whom will you interview? why? when? what will you ask them?); (4) a discussion of your data analysis plan; and (5) a section addressing questions of validity. See the resources section in Sakai for a handout entitled “Elements of a proposal” that can guide your article writing. However, please not the different page requirements and follow the maximum stated in this syllabus. *15-pages maximum, including the following sections (with approximate page lengths in parentheses): Purpose and Significance of the Project (1-2 pages); Conceptual Framework (2-3 pages); Literature Review (4-5 pages); Research Methods (5 pages); Summary (1 page).*

Grading. Final course grades will be determined as follows:

Assignment	Points
Fieldwork	40 total
	Observation #1
	Observation #2
	Interview
	Analytic Memo
Research Proposal	40 total
	Proposal Paper #1
	Proposal Paper #2
	Proposal Paper #3
In-class work	20 total
Participation (preparedness, discussion of readings, engagement & collaboration)	10
Group article presentation	10
Total	100 points total

Assignment Overview.

Week	Date	Assignment Due
1	September 10	
2	September 17	
3	September 24	Complete HSCP training Group 1 - Analysis and Presentation of Qual. Research Reading
4	October 1	Group 2 - Analysis and Presentation of Qual. Research Reading
5	October 7 & 8	Proposal Paper 1, due Sunday October 7 th at noon, via Sakai DropBox Group 3 - Analysis and Presentation of Qual. Research Reading
6	October 15	Group 4 - Analysis and Presentation of Qual. Research Reading
7	October 21 & 22	Observation and Reflection #1, due Sunday October 21 st at noon, via Sakai DropBox Group 5 - Analysis and Presentation of Qual. Research Reading
8	October 28 & 29	Observation and Reflection #2, due Sunday October 28 th at noon, via Sakai DropBox Group 6 - Analysis and Presentation of Qual. Research Reading
9	November 4	Interview Protocol Draft, due Sunday at noon, via Sakai DropBox
10	November 11	Proposal Paper 2, due Sunday at noon, via Sakai DropBox
11	November 18	Interview Transcript and Reflection, due Sunday at noon, via Sakai DropBox
12	November 26	
13	December 2	Analytic Memo, due Sunday at noon, via Sakai DropBox
14	December 10	For students who are planning to take Qualitative Methods II next semester, a draft research plan is required along with IRB materials ready for submission.
15	December 17	Proposal Paper 3, due December 17 th at noon, via Sakai DropBox No class meeting.

Evaluation of Written Work. I will use the following criteria when evaluating your work:

- Responsiveness to the task (*fulfilling the requirements of the assignment*)
- Clarity and organization of writing
- Conciseness (*focus and a lack of redundancy in writing*)
- Completeness and depth (*providing the necessary amount of detail to support your points. writing or presenting for an audience that is not an expert on your topic, while demonstrating your depth of analysis of the topic.*)
- Independent judgment (*doing more than summarizing information presented by others. offering your critical lens, seeing both strengths and weaknesses in previous work, and supporting your assertions with your own reasons.*)
- Relevance (*making connections between your work and the content and organization of this class*)
- Professionalism (*papers should be typed or word-processed and follow APA format*)
- Timeliness (*submitting on the due date. if you would like to request an extension on an assignment, please contact me in advance of the due date to discuss the possibility.*)

Academic Integrity. Rutgers prohibits conduct that is contrary to accepted principles of academic integrity. Violations of the Rutgers Academic Integrity Policy include but are not limited to plagiarism, cheating, and fabrication. Evidence of any such violations can result in a failing grade for the assignment, the course, or sanctions imposed by the university. For information on the academic integrity policy, please go to: <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu>; a multimedia presentation on plagiarism can be found at: <http://www.rci.rutgers.edu/~polcomp/integrity/realifeexamples.html>

Course Outline.

<p>Week 1 September 10</p>	<p>Introduction <i>What is qualitative research?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The nature of qualitative inquiry in education • Socio-historical and philosophical foundations of qualitative research • Identifying sources • Overview of the class
<p>Week 2 September 17</p>	<p>Theoretical underpinnings and characteristics of qualitative research <i>What views of the world are embedded in qualitative approaches?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Epistemologies and paradigms • Influence of theory on research • Critically analyzing qualitative research <p>READINGS: Creswell, J. W. (2013). Chapters 2, 4, 5 Jigsaw of Appendices B, C, D, E and F (read assigned appendix; more if you like)</p>
<p>Week 3 September 24</p>	<p>Conceptualizing and framing a qualitative study <i>How do you set up a qualitative study that makes sense?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finding a researchable problem • Articulating research questions • Clarifying the purpose <p>READINGS: Creswell, J. W. (2013). Chapters 3 & 6</p> <p>Qualitative research reading: Williams, L. (2008). Book selections of economically disadvantaged Black elementary students. <i>Journal of Educational Research</i> 102(1), pp. 51-63.</p> <p>ASSIGNMENTS: Complete HSCP training Group 1 - Analysis and Presentation of Qualitative Research Reading</p>
<p>Week 4 October 1</p>	<p>Strengthening a conceptual framework and literature review of a qualitative study <i>How do you communicate your study's framework, approach and place in the</i></p>

	<p><i>field to an audience?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positioning your study • Mapping and reviewing the literature critically • Rhetorical considerations <p>READINGS: Booth, W. C., Colomb, G. G, & Williams, J. M. (2008). Chapters 3, 4 & 6</p> <p>Qualitative research reading: Vagle, M. D. (2006). Dignity and Democracy: An Exploration of Middle School Teachers' Pedagogy. <i>Research in Middle Level Education Online</i> 29(8), 1-17.</p> <p>ASSIGNMENTS: Group 2 - Analysis and Presentation of Qualitative Research Reading</p>
<p>Week 5 October 8</p>	<p>Research design <i>How do you design a qualitative study that will answer your questions?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building the Study • Sample and Setting • Techniques of collecting data • Researcher Role <p>READINGS: Cresswell, J. W. (2013). Chapter 7. Patton, M. Q. (2002). Designing Qualitative Studies. In <i>Qualitative research and evaluation methods</i> (pp. 228-246). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. Cochran-Smith, M. & Lytle, S. (1999). The teacher research movement: A decade later. <i>Educational Researcher</i>, 28(7), 15-25.</p> <p>Qualitative research reading: Chance, P. & Segura, S. (2009). A rural high school's collaborative approach to school improvement. <i>Journal of Research in Rural Education</i>, 24(5).</p> <p>ASSIGNMENT: Proposal Paper 1, due Sunday, October 7th, at noon, via Sakai DropBox Group 3 - Analysis and Presentation of Qualitative Research Reading</p>
<p>Week 6 October 15</p>	<p>Observation 1 <i>How can observations help us "make the familiar strange?"</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paying attention to issues of context and culture • Participant observation • Field notes • Using audiovisual data

	<p>READINGS:</p> <p>González, N. (2005). Beyond Culture: The Hybridity of Funds of Knowledge. In N. González, L.C. Moll, & C. Amanti (Eds.), <i>Funds of Knowledge: Theorizing Practices in Households, Communities, and Classrooms</i> (pp. 29-46). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc., Publishers.</p> <p>Gupta, A. & Ferguson, J. (Eds.) (1997). Discipline and Practice: “The Field” as Site, Method, and Location in Anthropology. In A. Gupta and J. Ferguson (Eds.), <i>Anthropological locations: Boundaries and grounds of a field science</i> (pp. 1-46). Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.</p> <p>Gutiérrez, K.D. & Rogoff, B. (2003). Cultural Ways of Learning: Individual Traits or Repertoires of Practice. <i>Educational Researcher</i>, 32(5), 19-25.</p> <p>Qualitative research readings:</p> <p>Auerbach, S. (2002). “Why do they give the good classes to some and not to others?” Latino parent narratives of struggle in a college access program. <i>Teachers College Record</i> 104(7), 1369-1392</p> <p>ASSIGNMENT:</p> <p>Group 4 - Analysis and Presentation of Qualitative Research Reading</p>
<p>Week 7 October 22</p>	<p>Validity, reliability and ethics in qualitative research</p> <p><i>What makes qualitative research trustworthy, ethical, and rigorous?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subjective, contextual and relational considerations • Equity and ethics • Bias and assumptions • Power and authority <p>READINGS:</p> <p>AERA Code of Ethics http://www.aera.net/AboutAERA/Default.aspx?menu_id=90&id=222</p> <p>Cresswell, J. W. (2013). Chapter 10.</p> <p>Deyhle, D.L., Hess, G.A., & LeCompte, M.D. Approaching Ethical Issues for Qualitative Researchers in Education. In M.D. LeCompte, W.L. Millroy, & J. Preissle (Eds.), <i>The Handbook of Qualitative Research in Education</i> (pp. 597-641). San Diego, CA: Academic Press, Inc.</p> <p>Qualitative research reading:</p> <p>Paris, D. (2011). "A friend who understand fully': notes on humanizing research in a multiethnic youth community'. <i>International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education</i>, 24(2), 137-149.</p> <p>ASSIGNMENT:</p> <p>Observation and Reflection #1, due Sunday, October 21st, at noon, via Sakai DropBox</p> <p>Group 5 - Analysis and Presentation of Qualitative Research Reading</p>
<p>Week 8 October 29</p>	<p>Observation 2</p> <p><i>What makes for rigorous and reliable field notes?</i></p>

- Observations as data
- Ethnographic language
- Validity claims

READINGS:

Booth, W. C., Colomb, G. G, & Williams, J. M. (2008). Chapters 12 & 13.
 LeCompte, M.D. & Goetz, J.P. (1982). "Problems of reliability and validity in ethnographic research." *Review of Educational Research* 52(1), 31-60.
 Creswell, J. W., & Miller, D. L. (2000). Determining validity in qualitative inquiry. *Theory into Practice*, 39(3), 124-130.

Qualitative research readings:

Fisher, C.M. (2009). Queer Youth Experiences with Abstinence-Only-Until-Marriage Sexuality Education: "I can't get married so where does that leave me?" *Journal of LGBTQ Youth*, (6)1, 61-79.

ASSIGNMENT:

Observation and Reflection #2, due Sunday October 28th, at noon, via Sakai DropBox Group 6 - Analysis and Presentation of Qual. Research Reading

Week 9
November 5

Interviewing 1

How can we draw out the opinions, worldviews, and experiences of participants?

- Purposes and types of interviews
- Interviewing techniques

READINGS:

Patton, M.Q. (1990). Qualitative Interviewing. *Qualitative evaluation and research methods* (pp. 227-367). Newbury Park: Sage.
 Briggs, C.L. (1984). Learning How to Ask: Native Metacommunicative Competence and the Incompetence of Fieldworkers. *Language in Society*, 13(1), 1-28.

Qualitative research readings:

Galletta, A. & Cross, W. (2007). Past as present, present as past: Historicizing black education and interrogating "integration." In Fuligni, A. (Ed.), *Contesting Stereotypes and creating identities* (pp. 15-31). New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

ASSIGNMENTS:

Interview Protocol Draft, due Sunday, November 4th, at noon, via Sakai DropBox

Week 10
November 12

Interviewing 2

How can we become "conversational partners" with participants?

- Focus groups
- Ethical considerations when interviewing individuals in educational settings

	<p>READINGS: Patton, M. Q. (2002). Special Applications and Issues. <i>Qualitative research and evaluation methods</i> (pp. 385-418). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.</p> <p>ASSIGNMENTS: Proposal Paper 2, due Sunday, November 11th, at noon, via Sakai DropBox</p> <p>NOTE: Class meets in alternate format because the professor will be presenting at the American Anthropological Association meeting that week.</p>
<p>Week 11 November 19</p>	<p>Document collection and analysis and other forms of qualitative data <i>What other methods of analysis are available to qualitative researchers? How can they complement interviews and observations?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relationships between research questions, approaches, and methods • Triangulation <p>READINGS: Merriam, S. (1998). Mining Data from Documents. <i>Qualitative research and case study applications in education</i> (pp. 112-133). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass. Booth, W. C., Columb, G. G, & Williams, J. M. (2008). Chapter 14.</p> <p>ASSIGNMENTS: Interview Transcript and Reflection, due Sunday, November 18th, at noon, via Sakai DropBox</p>
<p>Week 12 November 26</p>	<p>Methods of Data Analysis 1 <i>How can we make sense of our data?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Memos • Vignettes • Organizing and managing data <p>READINGS: Cresswell, J. W. (2013). Chapter 8 Graff, G. & Birkenstein, C. (2006). <i>They say/I say: The moves that matter in academic writing</i>. New York: Norton. Chapter 7 & 8. Booth, W. C., Columb, G. G, & Williams, J. M. (2008). Chapter 16.</p>
<p>Week 13 December 3</p>	<p>Methods of Data Analysis 2 <i>What is the difference between describing our data and analyzing it?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In vivo coding • Pattern coding • Validation techniques <p>READINGS: Cresswell, J. W. (2013). Chapter 9</p>

	Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1984). Drawing valid meaning from qualitative data: Toward a shared craft. <i>Educational researcher</i> , 13(5), 20-30.
	ASSIGNMENTS: Analytic Memo , due Sunday December 2 nd , at noon, via Sakai DropBox
Week 14 December 10	Reflecting back and looking forward Brief presentations of research plans/reports
	ASSIGNMENT DUE: For students who are planning to take Qualitative Methods II next semester, a draft research plan is required along with IRB materials ready for submission.
Week 15 December 17	No Class Meeting ASSIGNMENTS: Proposal Paper 3, due December 17 th at noon, via Sakai DropBox

Additional, recommended readings by approach/issue.

Case Study

Yin, R. K. (2008). *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Ethnography

Duranti, A. (1997). *Linguistic anthropology*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

LeCompte, M.D. & Schensul, J.J. (2010). *Designing & Conducting Ethnographic Research: An Introduction. Vol 1 of the Ethnographer's Toolkit*. Lanham, MD: AltaMira Press.

Field work

Lareau, A. & Schultz, J. (Eds.). (1996). *Journeys Through Ethnography: Realistic Accounts of Fieldwork*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

Emerson, R.M., Fretz, R.I., & Shaw, L.L. (1995). *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes*. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press.

Ethics

Lecompte, M.D., Schensul, J.J., Weeks, M.R., & Singer, M. (1999). *Researcher Roles & Research Partnerships. Vol 6 of the Ethnographer's Toolkit*. Lanham, MD: AltaMira Press.

General

LeCompte, M.D., Millroy, W.L., & Preissle, J. (Eds.). (1992). *The Handbook of Qualitative Research in Education*. San Diego, CA: Academic Press, Inc.

Ritchie, J. & Lewis, J. (Eds.). (2007). *Qualitative Research Practice: A Guide for Social Science Students and Researchers*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Writing

Walcott, H.F. (2009). *Writing Up Qualitative Research* (3rd edition). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.