This course is designed to familiarize doctoral and advanced master’s students with the more commonly used qualitative research methods. The course will prepare them to utilize these methods in their own research, or to evaluate the qualitative work that others have done.

Course Requirements

Class Participation

Because this is a seminar, active and informed participation in class discussions is critical and will count for 35% of the overall course grade. It is difficult to participate if you’re not in class, so participation will include attendance. Each class participant will be allowed one excused absence. Any additional absences, with the exception of those caused by emergencies, will result in a 5-point reduction off the total grade. Anyone who knows in advance that s/he will miss class must let the professor know as soon as possible.

Assignments

In addition to regular participation in seminar discussions, course participants will be required to fulfill weekly assignments. These will not be returned with individual grades and comments, but will be read carefully by me in preparation for that week’s class and will count for 40% of your overall grade. Unless indicated otherwise, the assignment listed below a given week’s heading must be uploaded to the course Sakai site by noon on the Monday before that class. Any work turned-in later than that will not be accepted.

Research Design

Class participants will be required to design and present to the class a research project that utilizes qualitative research methods. The research design will count for 25% of the overall course grade. More information about what the preliminary research proposals should include is available under the assignments tab, in the Sakai course folder [https://sakai.rutgers.edu]. Preliminary research proposals should be uploaded to Sakai by noon on Sunday, October 31st. Final written research proposals should be uploaded to Sakai by noon on Sunday, November 28th for distribution to the class, in advance of the presentations on November 30th and December 7th. They should include a firmed up version of all the areas covered in the preliminary research proposal, and a literature review.

Readings

In addition to the following books (which can be purchased on-line from Amazon or Barnes and Nobles and which also are on reserve at Alexander), a number of readings will be available on the Sakai course folder [https://sakai.rutgers.edu]. Your Rutgers e-mail user name and password should give you access.

- *Designing Qualitative Research*. Fourth Edition (2006) by: Catherine Marshall and Gretchen B. Rossman Sage Publications [The 5th edition is available and would be fine to purchase if you wish to do so, but it is more expensive than the 4th, which does the job just as well].

The Rutgers University policy on academic integrity and plagiarism is available at: http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/integrity.shtml#I
Week 1 (September 7): Introduction and course overview

Week 2 (September 14): Understanding qualitative methods/Designing qualitative studies
- Chapters 1, 2, 3 and 4 of Marshall and Rossman, (2006). Designing Qualitative Research
- Chapters 2, 3 and 4 of Rubin & Rubin, (1995). Qualitative Interviewing: The Art of Hearing Data

Research design assignment

Week 3 (September 21): Data collection – Individual interviewing
- Chapters 1, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9 of Rubin & Rubin, (1995). Qualitative Interviewing: The Art of Hearing Data

Interviewing assignment 1 for interviews to be conducted in class

Week 4 (September 28): Data collection – Individual interviewing continued

Class runs from 9:30 to 12:40

Examples:

Interviewing assignment 2 – to be distributed and conducted in class

Week 5 (October 5): Data collection – Group interviewing


Focus group assignment

Week 6 (October 12): Data collection -- Group interviewing continued

Examples:
Week 7 (October 19): Data collection -- Material culture, Use of images, Personal experience, Biographical and Historical methods

- Norman K. Denzin & Yvonna S. Lincoln (Eds), (1988). *Collecting and Interpreting Qualitative Materials*
  - Chapter 4: Ian Hodder, The Interpretation of Documents and Material Culture
  - Chapter 5: Douglas Harper, On the Authority of the Image
  - Chapter 6: D. Jean Clandinin and F. Michael Conneally, Personal Experience Methods
- Norman K. Denzin & Yvonna S. Lincoln (Eds), (1998), *Strategies of Qualitative Inquiry*
  - Chapter 4: Ian Hodder, The Interpretation of Documents and Material Culture
  - Chapter 5: Douglas Harper, On the Authority of the Image
  - Chapter 6: D. Jean Clandinin and F. Michael Conneally, Personal Experience Methods

**Examples:**

**Data collection assignment**

Week 8 (October 26): Observation, Participant observation and Ethnography

- Chapters 1,2,3, and 4 of Kathleen M Dewalt and Billie R. Dewalt (2002), *Participant Observation: A Guide for Fieldworkers*. Alta Mira Press. (pp. 1-82)

**Examples:**

**Observation, Participant Observation and Ethnography assignment**

**Guest Speaker – Professor Jan Kubik**
Jan Kubik is an Associate Professor of Political Science at Rutgers and a recurring Visiting Professor of Sociology, at the Centre for Social Studies at the Polish Academy of Sciences, Warsaw. His work is focused mostly on postcommunist transformations in Eastern Europe and revolves around the relationship between culture and politics and contentious politics. He also is a student of social movements and protest politics. His second area of interest is political anthropology and its relationship with comparative politics. Recently, most of his work has concentrated on regime transitions and processes of democratization. Professor Kubik earned his Ph.D. in anthropology from Columbia University.

**A copy of your preliminary research proposal should be uploaded to Sakai by noon on Sunday, October 31st.**
Week 9 (November 2): Discussion of preliminary research proposals

This class will run from 9 to 12:40

- Review Chapter 2 and read Chapters 6 and 7 of Marshall and Rossman, (2006). *Designing Qualitative Research*

Week 10 (November 9): Case study


Examples:


Case study assignment

**Guest Speaker – Professor Karen O’Neill**
Karen O’Neill is an associate professor in the Human Ecology Department at Rutgers, specializing in contention, inequality, and state power in the U.S. In her book, Rivers by Design (Duke University Press), she shows that while infrastructure projects may appear to be imposed by the central state, campaigns for projects were often initiated by elites in the outlying regions. In the two regions that first demanded flood control aid--the Mississippi and Sacramento valleys--white elites sought environmental controls to ensure an agricultural workforce of new immigrants or former slaves. Professor O’Neill has also researched and written about risk preparedness and response, perceptions of genetically modified food, the social experience of space and place, international conservation, resource planning, and experts and government legitimacy.
Week 11 (November 16): Grounded theory


Examples:

Grounded theory assignment


Week 12 (November 23): Phenomenology and Action research

- Norman K. Denzin & Yvonna S. Lincoln (Eds), (1998), Strategies of Qualitative Inquiry, James A. Holstein & Jaber F. Gubrium, Phenomenology, Ethnomethodology and Interpretive Practice, Chapter 6, pp. 137-150 only.

Examples:

Explanation and presentation assignment

A copy of your final research proposal should be uploaded to Sakai by noon on Sun. 11/28

Week 13 (November 30): Research Proposal Presentation and Discussion

Class will run from 9:30 to 12:40

Week 14 (December 7): Research Proposal Presentation and Discussion

Class will run from 9:30 to 12:40