



COLLEGE of EDUCATION and HUMAN SERVICES
EDUC 6770 – *Qualitative Research Methods I* – FALL 2017
3:30-6:00pm, Wednesdays, Education 130

Instructor Information:

Dr. Travis E. Dorsch
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Email: Travis.Dorsch@usu.edu
Office Hours: Tuesday 2:30pm-4:30pm, or by appointment

Course description:

This applied graduate seminar is designed to qualitative research, theory, and practice. This class will introduce students to a range of philosophies, research designs, and strategies of inquiry associated with qualitative research, while allowing students to apply topics in classroom and real-world “lab” settings. In addition, students will be introduced to case study, ethnography, phenomenology, grounded theory, and narrative research designs.

Prerequisites:

EDUC/PSY 6570, or instructor permission.

Course Fees:

There are no course fees associated with this course.

Course objectives:

1. **Gaining factual knowledge (terminology, classifications, methods, trends).** Students will be introduced to the major philosophies, research designs, and strategies of inquiry associated with qualitative research.
2. **Learning to apply course materials (to improve rational thinking, problem solving and decisions).** Students will be asked to translate the concepts learned in class to lab assignments and their own research proposals.
3. **Develop skills in expressing oneself orally and in writing.** Students will present their ideas in written form on an end-of-semester research proposal, and orally in the form of an end-of-semester presentation and weekly in-class discussions.

Course Materials:

Course Readings

PDFs of all course readings will be placed on Canvas. It is the student's responsibility to utilize hard copies or electronic copies of these readings throughout the semester. Class readings are essential for student success in this course and will comprise the majority of course content. Most weeks, students will be asked to read one chapter from the textbook *Qualitative Inquiry and Research* (Creswell, 2013). To supplement these core readings, students will be assigned one or two additional chapters based on the material to be covered in class. Course readings will be used to guide in-class discussions, quizzes, real-world "lab" experiences, and end-of-semester research proposals.

Assignments:

Attendance (65 pts.)

FIVE points will be given each day for attendance (13 total days). These points cannot be made up; however, if students have an extenuating circumstance, please contact the instructor.

Discussion (100 pts.)

Students will choose THREE readings over the course of the semester on which they will lead the group's in-class discussion. Twenty-five points are possible for each class discussion led. The remaining 25 points will be earned throughout the semester for participation in class discussions. It is expected that students use an integrated presentation strategy, incorporating PowerPoint (or similar) learning aids, handouts, group work/discussion, or whole-class activities. Make it informative AND fun!

In-class Labs (75 points)

THREE labs will be conducted during the semester. Each lab will be conducted during a regularly scheduled class. Lab assignments will be worth 25 points each and cannot be made up. If students are out of class for a University-sponsored event, they should see the instructor at least one week BEFORE the scheduled lab to arrange an alternative assignment. Labs will be designed to apply learned material in "real world" settings over the course of the semester.

Quizzes (75 pts.)

FIVE quizzes will be given over the semester (one for each module). Quizzes will consist of questions based on readings and class discussions. Quizzes will be worth 15 points each and makeup quizzes will not be permitted.

Research Proposal (135 pts.)

Students will craft an executable qualitative research proposal based on a research topic germane to their own area of study. In crafting the proposal, students should conduct a thorough literature search of the topic area. After completing the literature search, students should prepare a 10-15 page proposal describing a hypothetical study that could be conducted in their area of interest. Proposals are worth 135 points and will not be accepted late. Proposals should have the following format:

Introduction (25 points): Provide a general overview of the topic. Define key terms and situate the topic within the existing literature (i.e., what do scientists already know about this topic and what do they have yet to learn?). Explicate the current gap that exists in the literature and discuss why the topic is important to researchers, practitioners, individuals, and families.

Method (70 points): Provide a thoughtful synopsis and justification of the qualitative methods you propose to address your research question. In doing so, be sure to discuss the: (a) role of the researcher; (b) methodological approach; (c) data collection procedures; (d) data analysis procedures; and (e) a timeline for proposed activities.

Discussion (25 points): In highlighting the potential benefits of the research, share why the research findings will further our interdisciplinary understanding in your topic area, add to the literature base in a new and innovative way, and spur follow-up research in related fields. Additionally, discuss any potential real-world application(s) of the findings/interpretations.

References (15 points): Be sure to list all sources in APA format at the end of the proposal.

All proposals should be written in APA style (<http://www.apastyle.org/learn/tutorials/basics-tutorial.aspx>) and must be submitted in hardcopy and electronic format prior to the due date. Academic honesty is expected and any indication of cheating will be dealt with per the USU Student Code:

<http://www.usu.edu/student-services/student-code/article6.cfm>.

Research Presentation (50 pts.)

Students will give a 15-minute presentation outlining their research proposals. Through qualitative research methodology(ies), students will propose an empirically sound investigation and present the proposed research to the class. Presentations are worth 50 points and cannot be made up. Points will be assigned as follows:

Introduction (10 points): Demonstrate thorough understanding of: (a) the topical literature in your chosen area of study; (c) current gaps that exists in that literature; and (d) the importance and appropriateness in addressing these gaps via qualitative research

Method (20 points): Provide a thoughtful synopsis of the methods you will employ in conducting your study. In doing so, be sure to thoroughly describe the: (a) role of the researcher; (b) methodological approach; (c) data collection procedures; (d) data analysis procedures; and (e) timeline for the proposed activities.

Discussion (10 points): Share why the research will: (a) further interdisciplinary understanding of your topic area; (b) add to the literature base; and (c) spur the innovation of future research or applied programming in related areas

Professionalism (5 points): In presenting to the class, look, sound, and act like an expert. This means: (a) being well-dressed and prepared; (b) being concise but thorough in your presentation style; and (c) handling questions thoughtfully and accurately

Engagement (5 points): Elicit a genuine interest from class members in your project.

Course grading:

Assignment	Value	Points	Percentage	Grade
Attendance	65	470-500	94% and above	A
Discussion	100	450-469	90 – 93.9%	A-
Labs	75	435-449	87 – 89.9%	B+
Quizzes	75	420-334	84 – 86.9%	B
Research Proposal Manuscript	135	400-19	80 – 83.9%	B-
Research Proposal Presentation	50	385-399	77 – 79.9%	C+
TOTAL	500	370-384	74 – 76.9%	C
		350-369	70 – 73.9%	C-
		335-349	67 – 69.9%	D+
		300-334	60 – 66.9%	D
		000-299	59% and below	F

Policies and Reminders:

Late Work

Late work due to procrastination will not be accepted. Late work due to University-related travel or legitimate personal/family emergencies may be accepted at the instructor's discretion. If late work is accepted, it is

expected that it will be turned in within one week of the original due date unless other arrangements have been made with the instructor. The due date and time associated with quizzes, presentations, the topic paper, and exams are stated clearly below. If you have questions regarding due dates please email the instructor prior to the due date.

Students with Special Needs

Students with ADA-documented physical, sensory, emotional or medical impairments may be eligible for reasonable accommodations. Veterans may also be eligible for services. All accommodations are coordinated through the Utah State University Disability Resource Center (DRC) in Room 101 of the University Inn, (435)797-2444 voice, (435)797-0740 TTY, (435)797-2444 VP, or toll free at 1-800-259-2966. Please contact the DRC as early in the semester as possible. Alternate format materials (Braille, large print, digital, or audio) are available with advance notice.

Communication

Students will receive course announcements via Email. I also welcome all feedback from students in the course. My office hours are listed at the tip of the syllabus or you can email me anytime at Travis.Dorsch@usu.edu. I will make an effort to respond to student emails within 24 hours on weekdays, and I will check email occasionally on weekends. If it is urgent, please indicate this in the subject heading! If you experience a legitimate emergency (according to my standards) that will prevent you from completing required coursework on time, I expect you to communicate with me at the earliest reasonable opportunity. Please state the nature of the emergency, and when you expect to turn in the coursework.

Grievance Process

Students who feel they have been unfairly treated may file a grievance through the channels and procedures described in the Utah State University Student Code:

<http://catalog.usu.edu/content.php?catoid=6&navoid=1080&hl=%22grievance%22&returnto=search>

Emergency Preparedness

In the case of an emergency, classes will be notified to evacuate by the sound of an emergency alarm system or by a building representative. In the event of a disaster that may interfere with standard notification procedure, use common sense to evacuate as the situation dictates (i.e., in an earthquake when shaking ceases or immediately when a fire is discovered). In such an event, turn off computers and take any personal items with you. Elevators should not be used; instead, use the closest stairway.

Academic Dishonesty

The Instructor of this course will take appropriate actions in response to academic dishonesty, as defined the University's Student Code (<http://www.usu.edu/student-services/studentcode/article6.cfm>). Acts of academic dishonesty include but are not limited to:

1. Cheating: (a) using or attempting to use or providing others with any unauthorized assistance in taking quizzes, tests, examinations, or in any other academic exercise or activity, including working in a group when the instructor has designated that the quiz, test, examination, or any other academic exercise or activity be done "individually"; (b) depending on the aid of sources beyond those authorized by the instructor in writing papers, preparing reports, solving problems, or carrying out other assignments; (c) substituting for another student, or permitting another student to substitute for oneself, in taking an examination or preparing academic work; (d) acquiring tests or other academic material belonging to a faculty member, staff member, or another student without express permission; (e) continuing to write after time has been called on a quiz, test, examination, or any other academic exercise or activity; (f) submitting substantially the same work for credit in more than one class, except with prior approval of the instructor; or (g) engaging in any form of research fraud.

2. Falsification: altering or fabricating any information or citation in an academic exercise or activity.
3. Plagiarism: representing, by paraphrase or direct quotation, the published or unpublished work of another person as one's own in any academic exercise or activity without full and clear acknowledgment. It also includes using materials prepared by another person or by an agency engaged in the sale of term papers or other academic materials.

Course Calendar:

Date	Topic	Readings	Assignments
Module 1: Introduction			
8/30	- Course Introduction - What is qualitative Research and why is it important?	Creswell: 1-14 Peshkin (1993)	Sign up for Readings
Module 2: Designing a Qualitative Study			
9/06	- Philosophical frameworks - Honing the study purpose - Appropriate research questions	Creswell: 15-34 Creswell: 35-52 Creswell: 101-114 Marshall & Rossman (1999)	M2 Quiz opens (DUE online 9/13 by 3:30pm)
9/13	LAB 1 - Research Design		
9/20	NO CLASS – Work individually on research proposal		
Module 3: Five Approaches to Qualitative Research			
9/27	- Narrative research	Creswell: 53-57 Clandinin & Huber (in press)	
10/4	- Phenomenological research	Creswell: 57-62 Groenewald (2004)	
10/11	- Grounded theory research	Creswell: 62-67 Corbin & Holt (2010) Kenny & Fourie (2015)	
10/18	- Ethnographic research	Creswell: 68-72 Atkinson & Hammersley (1994)	
10/25	- Case study research	Creswell: 73-75 Flyvbjerg (2006) Stake (2005)	M3 Quiz opens (DUE online 11/1 by 3:30pm)
Module 4: Data Collection			
11/01	- Fieldwork (observation) - Interviewing	Patton (2002a) Patton (2002b)	M4 Quiz opens (DUE online 11/8 by 3:30pm)
11/08	LAB 2 - Data Collection		
Module 5: Data Analysis			
11/15	- Strategies of Analysis	Creswell: 147-176 Huberman & Miles (1994) Thorne (2000)	M5 Quiz opens (DUE online 11/22 by 3:30pm)
11/22	NO CLASS – THANKSGIVING BREAK		
11/29	- Quality Considerations LAB 3 - Data Analysis	Sparkes & Smith (2009)	
12/06			Research proposal presentations Research proposal (Due FRIDAY 12/08 by 5:00pm)