

EDUC 6770: Qualitative Methods I

Fall 2016, Wednesdays, 4:30-7:30 PM, EDUC 131

Professor: Victor Lee, Ph.D.

Office: EDUC 227

Office Hours: Wednesdays, 2:30-4:30PM and by appointment

Phone: 435-797-7562

E-Mail: victor.lee@usu.edu

Course Description

Qualitative research involves the collection and rigorous analysis of observations, interviews, and other records of human activity so that we can come to a richer understanding of structures, processes, and perspectives that drive or shape human behavior. This course is a graduate level introduction to qualitative research. We will review a number of research studies that demonstrate different qualitative research methods and examine some of the epistemological foundations that motivate and inform the practices of qualitative inquiry. We will also explore and practice some of the activities associated with executing a qualitative research study relevant to education or other human services fields. This course is akin to a practical survey of methods and approaches. To use any of these methods well would require further concentrated study.

Course Objectives

Through active and consistent participation in this course, it is expected that students will be:

- **Gaining factual knowledge (terminology, classifications, methods, trends)**
Specifically being able to classify studies by method or paradigm and being able to describe different traditions of qualitative research such as ethnography, case study, discourse analysis, and grounded theory
- **Developing specific skills, competencies and points of view needed by professionals in the field most closely related to this course**
Specifically understanding how to record observations or design interview protocols and how to generate and apply a coding scheme for use with qualitative data
- **Gaining a broader understanding and appreciation of an intellectual-cultural activity (namely, qualitative research)**
Specifically by recognizing how and when qualitative inquiry can be productive for the larger endeavor of academic research

Required textbooks and materials

Most readings will be made available to you electronically through the USU Library online course reserves (<https://eres.usu.edu/eres/courseindex.aspx?page=search>). There is one required textbook that you can purchase through the USU Campus store or online.

Saldaña, J. (2012). *The Coding Manual for Qualitative Researchers* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

This text is not required until the second half of the term, so feel free to shop around for the best price. Also, be sure to get the 2nd Edition¹.

Additional Requirements

All students must have successfully completed CITI training for Human Subjects Research by October 5. Students who have completed training already do not need to complete it again. Failure to complete human subjects training will result in an automatic F for a final grade.

Course Format

The course meets face-to-face weekly. As a graduate research methods course, the emphasis will be on class discussions, led in part by the students. There will also be a course website through which you will complete and submit your assignments. It is expected that you will attend each week and have completed all required readings prior to class. There is a lot of assigned reading and online submission expectations, so plan accordingly. The course website is available at <http://usu.instructure.com>

Course Requirements

Everyone is expected to participate actively in weekly class discussions. Failure to do so consistently will result in an automatic drop in a full letter grade.

Reading responses – 30%

For most weeks, you and a reading partner are expected to meet, discuss the readings, and submit the following for each assigned empirical reading:

- A short (2-5 sentence) summary of what you and your reading partner think the authors were arguing or demonstrating (i.e., their thesis).

¹ After the class textbook was decided, a new edition of this text had been published and is apparently cheaper. We will discuss at the beginning of the term if we wish to switch to this book in the interest of reducing costs.

- A brief description (~1 paragraph) of the research methods used/advocated/introduced and how the methods supported the discovery process or argument.
- Any questions you both have about the methods or topic.

You will sort into reading partnerships on the first day of class. Reading summaries and questions must be submitted the day before the class meeting. Your lowest reading response grade will be dropped.

Observation or Interview Protocol Assignment – 20%

You will be required to complete one of the following.

A week of observations	An interview protocol and test
<p>In pairs, you are to make a plan for collecting field notes for <i>at least</i> 3 hour-long observations at the same public field site (e.g., a public library or a supermarket). You are to prepare typed notes and submit those along with a 3-5 page (single-spaced) report that includes the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A brief summary about the field site • A description of how you coordinated and completed your field observations • A synthesis of your observations that produces some claims, hypotheses, or conjectures based on the data you had collected • A reflection paragraph from each partner about the experience and what you would realistically do differently and why if you were to do field observations in the future 	<p>In pairs, you are to produce an interview protocol that you will informally test in <i>at least</i> three interviews. You are to document the responses from the interviews and prepare summaries. You will submit a copy of your interview protocol and the summaries along with a 3-5 page (single-spaced) report that includes the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A brief summary of your motivation and rationale for designing this interview protocol • A description of how you organized and conducted your interviews • A synthesis of your interview responses that produces some claims, hypotheses, or conjectures based on the data you had collected • A reflection paragraph from each partner about the experience and what you would change in your protocol or do differently in this process if you were to conduct interviews on this topic again in the future

While you can leverage overlaps with existing research projects, you **MUST** newly conduct these observations or newly design and test your interview protocol during this semester and in service of this course. This is because we will be focusing on the process and conceptualization of instrument design and observation recording.

You must submit a proposal and have it approved by the instructor by the due date listed in the schedule below.

Final Coding Project – 30%

In pairs, you are to analyze an existing qualitative data set by generating and applying a coding scheme relevant to one or more researchable questions. The data set should come from an existing project with which you are affiliated OR if you do not have access to such data, the instructor will provide data that you can use. For this project, you will submit a report 15-20 double-spaced pages in length that includes the following:

- Research Questions and Motivation
- Summary of Data Sources
- Summary of Analysis Procedures and Coding Scheme
- Summary of Coded data
- Interpretations and Conclusions

Additionally, each person will privately submit a reflection no longer than 1 single-spaced page on the coding project.

You must submit a proposal and have it approved by the instructor by the due date listed in the schedule below.

References do not count toward the page limit.

Grading

Your final grade will be computed based on the following percentages. There is no curve for the class. Grades will be assigned based on the scale below, with your final grade rounded to the nearest tenth of a percentage point. Further below are a few notes about grading policies and procedures.

Grade Weightings

Reading Responses	40%
Observation/Interview	25%
Coding Project	35%

Grading scale	
A	93 – 100%
A-	90 – 92.9%
B+	87 – 89.9%
B	83 – 86.9%
B-	80 – 82.9%
C+	77 – 79.9%
C	73 – 76.9%
C-	70 – 72.9%
D+	67 – 69.9%
D	63 – 66.9%
D-	60 – 62.9%

Course Schedule

Readings must be completed before each class meeting. Assignments (separate from reading discussion posts) are due by 11:59PM on the specified date. Late assignments **will not** be accepted.

Empirical readings denoted by *

Date	Topic	Readings	Due Dates
August 31	Introduction	None	
BUFFET OF QUALITATIVE EXEMPLARS			
September 7	Case Studies	Flyvbjerg (2006) *McGee & Martin (2011) *McDermott (1996)	
September 14 No class meeting	Ethics and the role of qualitative research	News Articles: Desmond (2016) Lewis-Krauss (2016) Luntz (2014)	Human Subjects Training due
September 21	Ethnography	Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw (1995) *Barton (2001) *Sheridan, Halverson, et al. (2014) Stevens, O'Connor, Garrison, et al. (2008)	
September 28	Interviewing	McAdams – Life Story Interview *Cabrera (2014) *Drake (2006) *Lee & Drake (2013) (read all, pick 2 for response)	
October 5	Cognitive perspectives and techniques	*Wineburg (1998) Chi (1997) Bruner (1994)	
October 12	Conversation & Discourse Analysis	Gee (2013) *O'Connor & Michaels (1993) Sacks & Schegloff (1973) *Lam (2000)	Proposal for Observation /Interview assignment due
October 19	Visual Research	Kress & van Leeuwen (1996) *Orellana (1999) *Lee (2010) Saldana (2016) pp 57-64	
EPISTEMOLOGIES OF QUALITATIVE RESEARCH			
October 26	Qualitative Epistemologies	Lincoln, Lynham, & Guba (2011) Brantlinger, Jimenez, Klingner, et al. (2005)	
November 2	Theory	Shavelson & Towne (2002)	Proposal for

	development	Charmaz (2006)	Coding Project due
PRACTICAL ASPECTS OF QUALITATIVE RESEARCH			
November 9	Planning Qualitative Research	Creswell (2005) Ch 10 Azevedo (2012)	Observation /Interview assignment due
November 16	Coding	Saldaña (2012) Ch1-2	
November 23	THANKSGIVING		
November 30	Coding	Saldaña (2012) Ch3-4	
December 7	Coding	Saldaña (2012) Ch5-6	
December 14	Project Presentations	none	Final Project Written Reports

Plagiarism

As stated in the USU Student Code, plagiarism is “the act of 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.”

Plagiarism is harmful both for the author of the original work and for the plagiarizer. Any individuals involved in plagiarizing work will receive an automatic fail for the assignment or project and will be immediately reported to the university administration.

Persons with Disabilities

Students with documented disabilities who are in need of academic accommodations should immediately notify the instructor and/or contact the Disability Resource Center at (435) 797-2444 and fill out an application for services. Accommodations are individualized and in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1992.

Incompletes

In accordance with University policy, incompletes are not to be given for poor performance. There will be no incompletes given except for conditions beyond the student's control, including:

- Incapacitating illnesses that prevent a student from attending classes for a period of at least two weeks
- A death in the immediate family

- Financial responsibilities requiring a student to alter course schedule to secure employment
- Change in work schedule as required by an employer

Other, *unexpected* emergencies may be considered on a case-by-case basis. Regardless of the cause for the incomplete, appropriate documentation of the circumstances is required for an extension to be considered.

Required Readings

- Azevedo, F. S. (2012). The Tailored Practice of Hobbies and Its Implication for the Design of Interest-Driven Learning Environments. *Journal of the learning sciences*, 22(3), 462-510. doi: 10.1080/10508406.2012.730082
- Barton, A. C. (2001). Science education in urban settings: Seeking new ways of praxis through critical ethnography. *Journal of Research in Science Teaching*, 38(8), 899-917.
- Brantlinger, E., Jimenez, R., Klingner, J., Pugach, M., & Richardson, V. (2005). Qualitative studies in special education. *Exceptional children*, 71(2), 195-207.
- Bruner, J.S. (1994). The remembered self. In U. Neisser, & R. Fivush (Eds.), *The remembering self: Construction and accuracy in the self-narrative* (pp. 41–54). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Cabrera, N. L. (2014). Exposing whiteness in higher education: white male college students minimizing racism, claiming victimization, and recreating white supremacy. *Race Ethnicity and Education*, 17(1), 30-55. doi:10.1080/13613324.2012.725040
- Charmaz, K. (2006). *Constructing grounded theory : a practical guide through qualitative analysis*. London ; Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage Publications.
- Chi, M. T. H. (1997). Quantifying qualitative analyses of verbal data: A practical guide. *Journal of the learning sciences*, 6(3), 271-315.
- Creswell, J. (2005). *Research design: Planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research*: Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson/Merrill Prentice Hall.
- Desmond, M. (2016). The eviction economy. *New York Times*.
<http://www.nytimes.com/2016/03/06/opinion/sunday/the-eviction-economy.html?smprod=nytcare-iphone&smid=nytcare-iphone-share>
- Drake, C. (2006). Turning points: Using teachers' mathematics life stories to understand the implementation of mathematics education reform. *Journal of Mathematics Teacher Education*, 9(6), 579-608.
- Emerson, R. M., Fretz, R. I., & Shaw, L. L. (1995). *Writing ethnographic fieldnotes*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Flyvbjerg, B. (2006). Five Misunderstandings About Case-Study Research. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 12(2), 219-245. doi: 10.1177/1077800405284363
- Gee, J. P. (2013). *An introduction to discourse analysis: Theory and method*: Routledge.
- Kress, G. R., & van Leeuwen, T. (1996). *Reading images : the grammar of visual design*. London ; New York: Routledge.
- Lam, W. S. E. (2000). L2 Literacy and the Design of the Self: A Case Study of a Teenager Writing on the Internet. *TESOL Quarterly*, 34(3), 457-482. doi:10.2307/3587739
- Lee, V. R. (2010). Adaptations and continuities in the use and design of visual representations in

- US middle school science textbooks. *International Journal of Science Education*, 32(8), 1099-1126.
- Lee, V. R., & Drake, J. (2013). Digital physical activity data collection and use by endurance runners and distance cyclists. *Technology, Knowledge and Learning*, 18(1-2), 39-63. doi:10.1007/s10758-013-9203-3
- Lincoln, Y. S., Lynham, S. A., & Guba, E. G. (2011). Paradigmatic controversies, contradictions, and emerging confluences, revisited. *The Sage handbook of qualitative research*, 97-128.
- McDermott, R. P. (1996). The acquisition of a child by a learning disability. In S. Chaiklin & J. Lave (Eds.), *Understanding practice: Perspectives on activity and context* (pp. 269-305). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- McGee, E., & Martin, D. B. (2011). From the hood to being hooded: A case study of a black male PhD. *Journal of African American Males in Education*, 2(1), 46-65.
- O'Connor, M. C., & Michaels, S. (1993). Aligning academic task and participation status through revoicing: Analysis of a classroom discourse strategy. *Anthropology and Education Quarterly*, 24, 318-335.
- Orellana, M. F. (1999). Space and place in an urban landscape: Learning from children's views of their social worlds. *Visual Studies*, 14(1), 73-89.
- Shavelson, R. J., & Towne, L. (Eds.). (2002). *Scientific research in education*. Washington, DC: National Academy Press.
- Schegloff, E., & Sacks, H. (1973). Opening up closings. *Semiotica*, 8(4), 289-327.
- Sheridan, K., Halverson, E. R., Litts, B., Brahm, L., Jacobs-Priebe, L., & Owens, T. (2014). Learning in the Making: A Comparative Case Study of Three Makerspaces. *Harvard Educational Review*, 84(4), 505-531.
- Stevens, R., O'Connor, K., Garrison, L., Jocuns, A., & Amos, D. M. (2008). Becoming an engineer: Toward a three dimensional view of engineering learning. *Journal of Engineering Education*, 97(3), 355-368.