

Qualitative Research Methods

JRSM 7085-001, M50

Fall 2018

Monday, 5:30-8:30PM

Meeman 106

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COURSE REQUIREMENTS

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Familiarization with in-depth interviews, focus groups, participant observation, and content analysis; practical experience in collecting and analyzing qualitative data.

PREREQUISITE/COREQUISITE:

JRSM 7050

TEXTBOOKS:

Required

Berg, B.L. & Lune, H. (2012) *Qualitative Research Methods for Social Sciences* (8th Edition). ISBN: 0-205-80938-3

Zhou, S. & Sloan, W.D. (2015) *Research Methods in Communication* (3rd Edition). ISBN: 978-1-885219-53-4

Altheide, D.L. (1996) *Qualitative Media Analysis*. ISBN: 0-7619-0199-X

Wolcott, H.F. (1990) *Writing Up Qualitative Research*. ISBN: 0-8039-3793-8

COURSE OVERVIEW:

At its core, graduate study is research. To that end, this course develops the understanding and skills needed to conduct mass communication research and apply it to a communications problem or phenomenon. The course will cover qualitative research approaches in various fields: social science mass communication, mass media history, cultural and critical studies, and visual media. Students will complete a research project by the end of the semester. That project will be submitted to a regional conference in the field.

CLASSROOM FORMAT:

This is a graduate seminar with lecture and class discussion. Each week, we will discuss a new topic and selected readings. You must be prepared to discuss those readings each week. Please note that failure to attend class or to actively participate, even if all your assignments are turned in on time and done acceptably, will significantly affect your final grade.

Participation

This is a seminar course, which means the richness of this experience depends on your participation. Your participation is essential and required, with class participation comprising a significant portion of your final grade.

Weekly Reading Reviews

Each week you will write a short review of that week's reading. This analysis must show your grasp of the concepts discussed in that week's readings. It is important for you as a novice researcher to spend time with the readings so that you come to class prepared to discuss the topics, ask appropriate questions, and develop a deeper understanding of the material.

Midterm Exam

You will complete a midterm exam that covers the first half of the semester. The exam will assess your knowledge of the concepts of qualitative research methods and methodology. The exam will consist of broad discussion questions.

Research Colloquium

Graduate students must attend and write a one-page reflection paper about at least one Research Colloquium sponsored by the Department. Attendance and papers will count for at least 2% of your course final grade. Those who cannot attend will receive instructions about remote viewing from your instructor. Students enrolled in more than one course may write multiple reflections of one research presentation as long as the topic is customized to the individual class

RESEARCH PAPER:

Your research paper of between 5,000 to 6,000 words (count only text, not cover sheet, references or endnotes) is to be based upon individual research conducted by each student on some aspect of the course. Research must be original, but the interpretation of the findings must reflect an appropriate review of the literature. Paper topic ideas must be approved by the instructor. Because IRB (Institutional Review Board) usually requires several weeks, I would strongly suggest that your research not include interviewing human subjects. A textual analysis or an historical analysis, for example, would not require IRB approval.

For your citations style, you must use the Chicago Manual of Style or APA. Your papers will be graded on content, including writing quality, comprehensiveness of research, adherence to complete and proper citation style, grammar, punctuation and spelling. All of these will be analyzed to determine a final paper grade. Avoid overusing long or block quotes. Within your paper, you will have an introduction, a review of pertinent literature, research questions or hypotheses, method, findings and discussion.

GRADING:

- | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------|
| • Participation | 50 points |
| • Research Colloquium | 50 points |
| • Weekly Reading Reviews | 100 points (10 points each) |
| • Research Proposal | 100 points |
| • Midterm Exam | 200 points |
| • Research paper | 500 points |
| • Total | 1,000 points |

A = 92%-100%
A- = 90%-91%
B+ = 87%-89%
B = 82%-86%
B- = 80%-81%
C+ = 77%-79%
C = 72%-76%
C- = 70%-71%
D = 65%-69%
F = 0%-64%

HYBRID CLASSROOM FORMAT

- Blue Jeans is a web-based video conferencing platform. Students in the M50 section will receive an invitation to join Blue Jeans from your instructor.
- This hybrid class, with students on campus and also online synchronously, operates in a seminar format.
- Online students must have a stable Internet connection, speakers and a microphone (or a headset with a built-in mic). Headsets can be purchased for approximately \$20. Students will need to be able to have video turned on for the entire class. Online students will not be permitted to attend class using a cellphone.
- Class time will primarily be spent in discussion of theories, issues, and applications. To that end, on campus and online students must complete the assigned readings and be prepared to discuss the night's topic. Please note that failure to attend class or to actively take part — even if all your assignments are turned in on time and done acceptably — will significantly affect your final grade.

REPETITION OF COURSES AND COURSEWORK:

Students may not use or submit work from a previous course, even if it is the same course being repeated, to fulfill requirements for assignments in another course. If students wish to substantially rework the original submission, or to work with the same general idea, that may be permissible upon discussion with and written approval from the professor of the current course. All written work will be checked for policy adherence via TurnItIn.com. All creative work will be checked for policy adherence by the professor, and judged against previous submissions. The only exception to this policy is the student's online portfolio and its attendant pieces (for example, the resume and logo).

CLASS SCHEDULE

WEEK 1, Aug. 27 Introduction/What is Qualitative Research

Readings: Berg & Lune Chapter 1, Zhou & Sloan Chapters 1-2

WEEK 2, Sept. 3 No Class Labor Day

WEEK 3, Sept. 10 Qualitative Research in Action

Readings: See Packet on eCourseware

Homework: Reading Review 1 (due by the beginning of class)

WEEK 4, Sept. 17 Ethnographic Research

Discuss research project topic ideas in class

Readings: Berg & Lune: Chapters 6-7, Zhou & Sloan: Chapter 16, See packet on eCourseware

Homework: Reading Review 2 (due by the beginning of class)

WEEK 5, Sept. 24 Interviewing/Focus Groups

Readings: Berg & Lune: Chapter 4-5, Zhou & Sloan: Chapter 18, See packet on eCourseware

Homework: Reading Review 3 (due by the beginning of class), Research Proposal (due Sunday, Sept. 23 at 11:59 p.m.)

WEEK 6, Oct. 1 Textual/Document Analysis

Readings: Berg & Lune: Chapter 11, Altheide (entire book)

Homework: Reading Review 4 (due by the beginning of class)

WEEK 7, Oct. 8 Textual/Document Analysis Part 2

Readings: See packet on eCourseware

Homework: Reading Review 5 Coding assignment

WEEK 8, Oct. 15 Fall Break/Midterm

Midterm Exam (take home) Due Sunday, Oct. 21 at 11:59 p.m.

WEEK 9, Oct. 22 Historical Analysis

Readings: Berg & Lune: Chapter 9, Zhou & Sloan: Chapter 15 & 17, See packet on eCourseware

Homework: Reading Review 6 (due by the beginning of class), Research Project Intro & Literature Review Due (Sunday, Oct. 14)

WEEK 10, Oct. 29 Cultural & Critical Studies

Readings: Zhou & Sloan: Chapter 19, See packet on eCourseware

Homework: Reading Review 7 (due by the beginning of class)

WEEK 11, Nov. 5 Writing Up Qualitative Research

Readings: Wolcott (entire book),

Homework: Reading Review 8 (due by the beginning of class), Research Project Findings/Discussion & Conclusions (Due Sunday, Nov. 11 at 11:59 p.m.)

WEEK 12, Nov. 12 Research Meetings

Individual Research Meetings with Instructor

Homework: Reading Review 9 (due by the beginning of class)

WEEK 13, Nov. 19 Research Project Work

Catch up day, Discuss Research Projects in Class

Homework: Full Draft of Research Project (Due Sunday, Nov. 25 at 11:59 p.m.)

WEEK 14, Nov. 26 Wrap Up Week

Review for presentations, Final discussions of research projects

WEEK 15, Dec. 3 Research Presentations

Formal research presentation to class.

Reading Review 10: Critique of classmates' presentations (Due by the end of class.)

DEPARTMENT POLICIES

PORTFOLIO REQUIREMENT:

All students in the Department of Journalism and Strategic Media are required to develop and maintain an active portfolio of their work. Undergraduate students are to begin the portfolio in JRSM 3900 and contribute to it from every course thereafter. The portfolio should contain samples of the student's work from his/her courses and/or professional experience and should develop as the student builds skills. Portfolios will undergo a final, external review while students are enrolled in the capstone course for their majors.

Students may use any type of web hosting for their portfolios, but it must have an independent and professional URL. The department requires students to use WordPress to build their portfolio sites. Students are encouraged to consider purchasing a URL and hosting if they plan to use the portfolio for a long term, but must keep the portfolio active for six months following graduation from the University of Memphis.

Students should have a professional email address they plan to use throughout their professional life, via a common email service, such as Gmail or Yahoo.

All portfolios must contain the following items:

- Samples of work from courses and/or professional activities. (Example: Broadcasting students must include a video reel)
- A current résumé
- A personal profile
- Contact information/means of contact
- Social media links

Students might wish to include a blog, video reels, photograph galleries, SoundSlides presentations, design PDFs, audio files, and Storify pieces as examples of professional work. The professional work should ultimately be tailored to the career the student seeks after graduation. Thus, each student's portfolio should show a unique blend of work.

EMAIL:

You must have your UM email account activated. If you are using another provider such as Google, you are required to have your UM email forwarded to that account. Go to the <http://iam.memphis.edu> website to implement forwarding of UM email. You are required to check your email daily. You are responsible for complying with any email sent to you by your professor or the University.

MOBILE PHONES AND LAPTOPS:

Some classes require a tablet, laptop or a smartphone. Others do not. Your instructor will set the policy for her/her specific class.

ATTENDANCE:

Class attendance is mandatory in the Department of Journalism and Strategic Media. You may be assigned a failing grade for the semester for nonattendance, or habitual late arrival. No late work will be accepted without prior arrangements, which are acceptable to your professor. Students may not be permitted to make up any missing work unless it is for an absence because of illness or other catastrophic emergency such as a death in the family that can be documented (e.g. with a doctor's note or a copy of the newspaper obituary). This is a professional program for journalists who are expected to understand and comply with deadlines. If you have some problem making it to class on time make arrangements to fix the problem or consider taking another class. You should consider this class your "job" in the educational process and be on time just as you would elsewhere.

CHEATING:

In addition to university-wide policies stated in the Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities, the Department of Journalism and Strategic Media considers making up quotes from sources, turning in substantially the same assignment for credit in two different courses, or a student receiving any assistance from others for work assigned to be done on his/her own, as acts of cheating punishable to the degree determined appropriate by the course instructor and department chair. That may include grade reductions or seeking dismissal of the student from the university.

Further, as this is a journalism/mass communication class, students are expected to comply with copyright law, and must have sufficient permission to use any copyrighted materials used in creative projects, unless otherwise informed in cases of exercises or reproduction.

"Your written work may be submitted to Turnitin.com, or a similar electronic detection method, for an evaluation of the originality of your ideas and proper use and attribution of sources. As part of this process, you may be required to submit electronic as well as hard copies of your written work, or be given other instructions to follow. By taking this course, you agree that all assignments may undergo this review process and that the assignment may be included as a source document in Turnitin.com's restricted access database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism in such documents. Any assignment not submitted according to the procedures given by the instructor may be penalized or may not be accepted at all." (Office of Legal Counsel, October 17, 2005)

ONLINE SETEs:

You are urged to complete the SETEs evaluation of this course. Once your instructor has posted your grade, you can immediately see that grade, provided you completed a teacher evaluation for that class. How to access your evaluation forms: Log in using your UUID and email password; click on the gray "Student" tab; complete an evaluation for each course listed and hit the "Submit" button at the bottom of the form. It will only take a few minutes of your time. We take the evaluations very seriously and use them to improve courses and instructional quality. Your feedback is essential and will be appreciated.

DEADLINES:

Remember there's a reason "DEAD" makes up half the word "deadline." All deadlines are firm. This is journalism and strategic media. If you get into trouble, talk to your instructor. Exceptions will be made for reasonable circumstances if the student notifies the instructor prior to the due date.

AP STYLE AND GRAMMAR:

All written work in this class should follow the AP Stylebook and accepted rules of grammar and punctuation. If you don't know the style for a particular phrase, look it up or ask your classmates or the instructor.

DISABILITY:

Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact your instructor privately to discuss your specific needs. Please contact the Office for Disability Services at 901-678-2880 in 110 Wilder Tower Hall to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities.

DIVERSITY:

Students are required to respect the differences of others and treat all persons with respect. Discriminatory, derogatory and threatening language or behavior will not be tolerated. Further, students are expected to consider their work through a diverse mind. Mass communications reach a mass audience, and students should be aware of how those messages are received by a diverse audience.

WEATHER POLICY:

Always check with local media and the University of Memphis website regarding inclement weather. If the university is closed or classes are canceled, this course will not meet. However, students will still be responsible for that day's work.