

# ***QUALITATIVE RESEARCH METHODS***

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WWS 513/POP 507

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## ***Objectives:***

This seminar seeks to deepen expertise about the logic and application of qualitative methodologies. Our goals are to

- ◆ Explore the epistemological and technical issues surrounding ethnographic research, in-depth interviewing, participant observation, community mapping, and other similar approaches.
- ◆ Investigate the role of qualitative research as part of a rigorous methodology in the social sciences.
- ◆ Design and implement fieldwork projects relevant to the interests of the participants.
- ◆ Examine alternative modes to present findings derived from qualitative research.

The first hour of our weekly meetings will consist of a formal presentation by the instructor focusing on main themes and readings. This will be followed by student presentations on ethnographic research relevant to particular projects and discussions of individual research problems.

## ***Requirements:***

- (a) Demonstrated familiarity with the readings assigned,
  - (b) Half-an-hour presentation based on a small number of ethnographic publications relevant to a particular research agenda,
  - (c) Design and implementation of an exploratory fieldwork project consistent with long-term goals.
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## ***SYLLABUS***

### **February 4, 11**

**Thinking Systematically in the Social Sciences.** The purpose of theory. Concepts and variables. Problems and hypotheses. Association, correlation, causality. Reliability and plausibility. Ethical questions. The value and logic of qualitative research.

**Durkheim, Emile** [1895] 1982. *The Rules of the Sociological Method*. The Free Press (Chapters 1 and 2).

**Wright Mills, C.** 1959. *The Sociological Imagination*. Oxford University Press. (Chapters 1, 2, 6, 8).

### **February 18, 25**

**Ethnographic Approaches:** Origins and evolution. Epistemological issues. Structure and process. Unobtrusive Methods. Participant Observation. The Extended Case Method. Community Mapping. Fieldwork. Bridging macro- and micro- levels of analysis.

**Burawoy, Michael.** 1991. *Ethnography Unbound: Power and Resistance in the Modern Metropolis*. University of California Press (Chapter 2, 13).

**Haney, Lynne.** 1996. "Homeboys, Babies, Men in suits: The State and the Reproduction of Male Dominance." *American Sociological Review* Vol. 61, No. 5 (October): 759-778

**Strauss, Anselm L. and Juliet M. Corbin.** 1998. *Basics of Qualitative Research: Techniques and Procedures for Developing Grounded Theory*. Sage Publications.

### **March 3**

**The Interview Method.** Focused and open-ended designs. Context and setting. Framing the question. Organizing the questionnaire. Time and space considerations. Interviewing as performance and engagement. Life histories. The post-modern critique.

**Meloy, Judith M.** 1994. *Writing the Qualitative Dissertation: Understanding by Doing*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

**Weiss, Robert Stuart.** 1995. *Learning from Strangers: The Art and Method of Qualitative Interview Studies*. Free Press.

**March 10, 24**

**A Survey of Research Strategies.** Studying organizational structures. Action research. Live history methodology. Organizations as cultures. Cognitive maps. Critical theory and organizational analysis. Ethnographic approaches to Census data. Social network analysis.

**Lofland, John and Lyn H. Lofland.** 1994. *Analyzing Social Settings: A guide to Qualitative Observation and Analysis.* Wadsworth, Publishing Company.

**Wolcott, Harry F.** 1999. *Ethnography: A Way of Seeing.* Altamira Press.

**March 31**

**Evaluation and Applied Research.** Program design. Defining goals, measuring success. Focus Groups. Substantive, ideological and political considerations.

**Krueger, Richard A. and Mary Anne Cassey.** 2000. *Focus Groups: A Practical Guide for Applied Research.* Sage Publications.

**Schwartzman, Helen.** 1992. *Ethnography in Organizations.* Sage Publications.

**April 7**

**Analyzing Qualitative Findings.** Briefs and logs. Making sense of the data. Patterns and exceptions. Ethnographic approaches to Census data. Triangulation. The role of typologies. The feminist critique.

**Emerson, Robert M.** 1995. *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes.* University of Chicago Press.

**Kohler Riessman, Catherine.** 1993. *Narrative Analysis.* Sage Publications

**April 14**

**Using Computers in Qualitative Research.** Problems and potential. Software. Analysis needs and program capabilities. Computational paradigms. Event structure. Practical and ethical problems.

**Dey, Ian.** 1993. *Qualitative Data Analysis: A User-Friendly Guide for Social Scientists.* Routledge.

**April 21, 28**

**Writing Based on Qualitative Data.** Fieldwork, culture and ethnography. Authority and authenticity. Objectivity and neutrality. Narrative alternatives.

**Van Maanen, John.** 1988. *Tales of the Field on Writing Ethnography.* University of Chicago Press.

**Geertz, Clifford.** 1990. *Works and Lives: The Anthropologist as Author.* Stanford University Press.

