



Department/Program: School of Social Work
Year: January 2012
Course Title: SOWK 654: Advanced Qualitative Inquiry
Course Schedule: Friday, 9:00 – 12:00
Location(s): Jack Bell Building (2080 West Mall) room 122

Instructor: Deborah O'Connor/ Pilar Riaño-Alcalá & Brian O'Neill
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Office phone: (604) 822-5299/7-5493 & 2-2460
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Revised February 14, 2012

Course Description (from calendar):

This focus of this course will be to develop a sophisticated understanding of a wide range of approaches to qualitative research. It will promote a more reflective/reflexive approach to research in the social sciences with a particular focus on positioning qualitative research approaches. Attention will be paid to the interpretive, political and rhetorical nature of qualitative research.

Objectives:

- To develop a critical analysis/interpretation of a broad range of approaches to qualitative research;
- To operationalize the link between epistemology, methodology and method;
- To develop expertise with one approach to inquiry

Pre requisites and/or Course Restrictions (from calendar):

SOWK 554 or equivalent. Students must have some experience conducting qualitative research.

Students entering this course will be expected to have a basic familiarity with qualitative research including experience analyzing qualitative data and writing up a qualitative research study.

Format of the course:

Based on an assessment of the learning goals and needs of course participants, classes will include short lectures, discussion of readings, small group work, peer presentations and completion of a series of assignments throughout the term. The content and schedule of topics, and value of assignments may be revised based on students' learning goals and needs.

Required and Recommended Reading:

Denzin, N. K. & Lincoln, Y. S. (2011) *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Research*, 3rd edition. Thousand Oaks: SAGE.

This text will be used as a general reference point – chapters will be recommended each week as appropriate. It has been selected because it is probably one of the best known and most comprehensive reference texts available about qualitative research – if you are only going to purchase one book on qualitative research this is usually the book that is recommended. Finally, this is just out, so I thought made a particularly useful contribution for establishing the state of knowledge in this area.

This text will be supplemented with a reading package and students are expected to read beyond the required readings.

Course Assignments, Due dates and Grading:

1. Critiquing qualitative research: Select a journal article outlining a qualitative study related to the topic you will be researching and
 - a) write a critique of it using class readings and discussions;
 - b) Step back and begin to articulate the framework you used for critiquing. IE. What did you look at, what questions did you ask the text?.... We will discuss this in class.

This assignment will be completed in class (March 2nd) by a group critique of two articles. There will be no mark for this exercise

Suggested Readings to assist with assignment:

Frankl, R. and K. Devers (2000) *Qualitative Research: A consumers guide. Education for Health Change in Training and Practice*13(1) pp. 113-122

Sheppard, M. (2004) *Appraising and using social research in the human services*. Chapter 10 – Qualitative Evaluation. Philadelphia: Jessican Kingsley Press.

Locke, L., Silverman, S., & Spirduso, W. W. (2004) *Reading and Understanding Research*, chapter 8 – Reading reports of qualitative research – critically. Thousand Oaks: SAGE.

Stige, B., Malterud, K. & Midtgarden, T. (2009) Toward an agenda for evaluation of qualitative research. *Qualitative Health Research* 19(10) 1504-1516.

See also recommended readings in week 13 – they all focus on criteria/standards for evaluating qualitative research.

2. Critical examination of an approach to qualitative research

The purpose of this assignment is to develop familiarity and expertise with an approach to qualitative research by applying it to a research problem of your choice. You will be expected to: a) clearly articulate what approach/ideas you are using to guide your approach to research; b) apply this particular approach to design a study; c) critically analyze the strengths and limitations associated with using this particular approach. This assignment will be developed and presented in two ways:

a) ***Class presentation:***

Objectives of assignment:

- Assist others to understand this way of approaching qualitative research;
- Obtain peer feedback to assist in developing your ideas;
- Develop skills as an instructor;

Length: 1.5 hour

Value: 40% - grading will be done collaboratively by peers and instructor

Due: Class presentations will take place in **March 30th**. This is a one day seminar.

b) **Methodology¹ section of proposal** – see Evaluation Criteria for further information.

Length: 20 pages

Value: 50%

Due: April 27, 2012

3. Reflexive journal: (see guidelines enclosed)

Throughout the course maintain a journal documenting your thoughts and reactions to the course readings and discussions. *Be prepared to share this journal with other members of the class.* The objectives of this assignment are: a) to encourage you to critically reflect upon the readings and your own learning; b) to foster the practice of journaling which is an important skill, art and practice associated with good qualitative research.

Value: 10%

Due: last class

¹ Please note: this paper is about the *methodology* you will use to study a topic and NOT about a *substantive* topic! Provide only a very basic overview of the issue in order to orient the reader.

Grading Criteria

Assignment 2 - Critical Examination of an approach to Qualitative Research (Written)²

- I. Description of Approach (25 marks maximum):
 - 25- Provides comprehensive overview of main aspects associated with particular approach. Draws on 'classical' readings in the area and supplements with newer emerging perspectives;
 - 20 - major attendance to most of above
 - 16 - minor attendance to most of above
- II. Originality and Analysis (30 points max.)
 - 35 - original idea or approach: effort to integrate previously unintegrated material; creative development of ideas; management of difficult conceptual task; perceptive critique of relevant literature
 - 29- major attendance to most of the above
 - 25 - minor attendance to most of the above - ie. repetition of material from references with only minor modification
- III Implications on Research Design (25 points max.)
 - 25- In-depth and explicit analysis of the link between epistemological issues and practical implications of particular approach on all aspects of the research process including: sampling, data collection; options for analysis; researcher's role, ethical issues and validity issues;
 - 20- Less sophisticated analysis of implications
 - 16- Superficial description of implications
- IV Presentation of Ideas
 - a) Logical Development (10 points)
 - well developed, logically sequenced initial orientation, body and final summary; sense of continuity and connection of ideas; clear transitions between paragraphs; focussed;
 - b) Style (10 points)
 - excellent sentence construction and choice of words; correct use of technical terms and abbreviations; adherence to all APA requirements

² I am re-noting: **Do keep in mind that this paper is about the *methodology* you will use to study a topic and NOT about a *substantive* topic!** Provide only a very basic overview of the issue in order to orient the reader and provide a foundation for your research question.

Course Schedule:

Week 1 - Introduction – What do we want to know?

Week 2 - Developing a 'map' for analyzing approaches

Required Reading:

Lincoln, Y. & Guba, E. (2011) Introduction (chapter 1) and Paradigmatic Controversies, Contradictions and Emerging Confluences, Revisited (chapter 6).

O'Connor D. L. (2001) Journeying the Quagmire: Exploring the discourses that shape qualitative research. *Affilia*, 16(2)

Supplementary Reading:

Mallozzi, C. (2009) Voicing the interview: A researcher's exploration on a platform of empathy. *Qualitative Inquiry* 15(6), 1042-1060.

Preissle, J. (2006) Envisioning qualitative inquiry: a view across four decades. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education* 19(6), pp. 685 - 695

Cheek, J. (1999) Influencing Practice or simply Esoteric? Researching health care using postmodern approaches. *Qualitative Health Research* 9(3):383-392.

Week 3 - Critical Research: Power, positioning and politics

Readings:

Handbook chapters: Part II, chapter 7 -9

Supplemental Reading

Creswell, J. (2007) *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing among five traditions*. 2nd edition Thousand Oaks: SAGE – **This book is highly recommended as a background to beginning to situate different approaches but it has serious limitations!**

Greckhamer, T. & Koro-Ljungberg (2005) The erosion of method: examples from grounded theory. *International Journal of qualitative studies in education*. 18(6), 729-750.

Starks, H. & Trinidad, S. (2007) Choose your method: a comparison of phenomenology, discourse analysis, and grounded theory. *Qualitative Health Research* 17(10):1372-1380.

Slaughter, S., Dean, Y., Knight, H., Krieg, B., Mor, P., Nour, V., Polegato, E., Seneviratne, C., Shenfield, D., Sherwood, E. (2007) The inevitable pull of the river's current: Interpretations derived from a single text using multiple research traditions. *Qualitative Health Research* 17(4):548-561.

Tavory, I. & Timmermans, S. (2009) Two cases of ethnography: grounded theory and the extended case method. *Ethnography* 10(3):243-263.

Week 4 – Post-structural Research: Texts, tensions and fragmented realities Feb 17 - Pilar

Readings:

Handbook chapters: Chapters 11 – 13, chapter 23

Supplemental Readings

Evans, M., Hole, R., Berg, L., Hutchinson, P. & Sookraj, D. (2009) Common Insights, Differing Methodologies. *Qualitative Inquiry* 15(5):893-910.

Bartlett, J., Iwasaki, Y., Gottlieb, B., Hall, D. & Mannell, R. (2007) Framework for Aboriginal-guided decolonizing research involving Metis and First Nations persons with diabetes. *Social Science & Medicine* 65:2371-2382.

Tuhiwai Smith, L. (1999) *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous peoples*. London: Zed Books.

Nicholls, R. (2009) Research and Indigenous participation: critical reflexive methods. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*. 12(2), 117-126.

Saukko, P. (2000) Between voice and discourse: Quilting interviews on Anorexia. *Qualitative Inquiry* 6(3) 299-217.

Wilkinson, S. & Kitzinger, C. (2003) Constructing Identities: A feminist conversation analytic approach to positioning in action. In Harre, R. and F. Moghaddam (eds) The self and others. London: Praeger

Week 5: Implementing and Anchoring Paradigms: Strategies of Inquiry March 2 - Brian

Required Reading:

Handbook, Part III – chapters 15 – 21

Week 6 - Putting methodology to work: Design decisions March 9 – Pilar

Panel with *PhDers* recently graduated and with others who have recently completed their research..

Readings

Handbook, chapters 25 – 27, 29

Carter, S & Little, M. (2007) Justifying knowledge, justifying method, taking action: Epistemologies, methodologies and methods in qualitative research. *Qualitative Health Research* 17(10), 1316-1328.

Week 7 Analysis: Categorizing and Contextualizing March 16 - Brian

Handbook chapters 35,36,39

Week 8 Interpretation, Evaluation and Presentation March 23 - Pilar

Required Readings

Handbook, chapter 23, 24, 34,40, 41

Recommended:

Lather, P. (1993). Fertile obsession: Validity after poststructuralism. *Sociological Quarterly*, 34, 673-693.

Lincoln, Y. S. (1995). Emerging criteria for quality in qualitative and interpretive research. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 1(3), 275-289.

Augen, M. J. (2000). Evaluating interpretive inquiry: Reviewing the validity debate and opening the dialogue. *Qualitative Health Research*, 10(3), p. 378, 18p.

Hammersley, M. (2007) The issue of quality in qualitative research. *International Journal of Research & Method in Education*. 30(3) pp. 287-301.

Week 9 – 12 TBA based on student presentations – one article to be identified (and provided) by each presenter to class at least one week before presentation. March 30 – Pilar & Brian – all day

Week 13 – April 3 (TBC) The future

Required Reading:

Handbook, chapter 42 – 43 and Epilogue

Attendance:

Students are expected to attend all classes and to be on time. Please notify me of absences and request any handouts. This course depends upon the participation of achieve maximum usefulness and interest!

The University accommodates students with disabilities who have registered with the Disability Resource Centre. The University accommodates students whose religious obligations conflict with attendance, submitting assignments, or completing scheduled tests and examinations. Please let your instructor know in advance, preferably in the first week of class, if you will require any accommodation on these grounds. Students who plan to be absent for varsity athletics, family obligations, or other similar commitments, cannot assume they will be accommodated, and should discuss their commitments with the instructor before the drop date.

Participation:

Students are expected to contribute to discussion in classes based on the weekly readings and to present their own study for feedback.

Academic Dishonesty: Please review the UBC Calendar “Academic regulations” for the university policy on cheating, plagiarism, and other forms of academic dishonesty. Also visit www.arts.ubc.ca and go to the students’ section for useful information on avoiding plagiarism and on correct documentation.

Students should retain a copy of all submitted assignments (in case of loss) and should also retain all their marked assignments in case they wish to apply for a Review of Assigned Standing. Students have the right to view their marked examinations with their instructor, providing they apply to do so within a month of receiving their final grades. This review is for pedagogic purposes. The examination remains the property of the university.