

Qualitative Research Methods

(Spring 2023)

Instructor: Piotr Binder

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Office hours: by appointment, Zoom

Semester: second

Dates of meetings: Feb 24; Mar 3, 10, 17, 24, 31; Apr 7, 14, 21, 28; May 5

Class hours: 16:00-18:00

Class mode: online

Course description

This course has been developed primarily for students in the early stages of their research projects. Its central goal is to provide the participants with basic training in qualitative methods and support participants in specifying the methods they will apply within their research projects, shaping their research strategies, and considering possible approaches to qualitative data analysis. A vital element of the course will be designing research to be both safe and productive.

The course has a format of a seminar. Its duration is the equivalent of thirty class hours. The material is divided into eleven two-hour (120 min) sessions with a short break after the first hour. Each session will focus on two main topics distinguished in the syllabus. The participants are expected to engage in class discussions based on the included list of readings.

Learning outcomes

By the end of the course, students should understand the role of non-statistical research methods in social sciences, their advantages and limitations, and critically assess academic studies based on qualitative methodology. Students are expected to be familiar with current methodological literature and classic examples of applying the discussed research methods. The reading assignments should allow students to develop research designs suitable for their research problems, contemplate possible approaches to analyzing data, and defend their choices.

MEETING 1 (Feb 24, 2023)

[Please note: this session will be 30 min longer i.e. 16:00-18:30]

Topics

- Organizational issues (syllabus, course requirements, and assessment, up to 30 min.)
- The Nature of Qualitative Research
- Qualitative Research After the COVID-19 Pandemic

Readings

- Paulus, Trena M. and Jessica N. Lester. (2021). *Doing Qualitative Research in a Digital World*, London: Sage. Ch 1: Introduction to Doing Qualitative Research in a Digital World (pp. 1-30).

MEETING 2 (Mar 03, 2023)

Topics

- Qualitative Research Ethics
- Theoretical Issues in Qualitative Research

Readings

- Flick, Uwe. (2022) Diversity, Ethics and Transparency as Continuing Challenges in Designing. Qualitative Research (pp. 1-16). In: Uwe Flick (ed). *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Research Design*. London: Sage.
- Kelle, Udo. (2014). Theorization from Data (pp. 554-568). In: Uwe Flick. (ed). *Qualitative Data Analysis*. London: Sage.
- Silverman, David. (2017). *Doing Qualitative Research 5E*. London: Sage. Ch 7. Using Theories (pp. 131-155).

MEETING 3 (Mar 10, 2023)

Topics

- Designing Qualitative Research
- Research Questions

Readings

- Paulus, Trena M. and Jessica N. Lester. (2021). *Doing Qualitative Research in a Digital World*, London: Sage. Ch 2. Qualitative Research Design in a Digital World (pp. 31-76).
- Rapley, Tim. (2022). Developing Research Questions: The Social Lives of Ideas, Interests and Questions (pp. 1-25). In: Uwe Flick (ed). *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Research Design*. London: Sage.

MEETING 4 (Mar 17, 2023)

Topics

- Field Research
- Participant Observation

Readings

- Flick, Uwe. (2009). *An Introduction to Qualitative Research*. Ch 17. Observation and Ethnography (pp. 221-238).
- Babbie, Earl. (2010). *The Practice of Social Research 12E*. Ch 10. Qualitative Field Research (pp. 295-328).
- Emerson, Robert M., Rachel I. Fretz, and Linda L. Shaw (2011). *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes*, Ch 2. In the Field - Participating, Observing, and Jotting Notes (pp. 21-43).

MEETING 5 (Mar 24, 2023)

Topics

- Individual In-Depth Interview (IDI)
- Focus Group Interview (FGI)

Readings

- Flick, Uwe. (2009). *An Introduction to Qualitative Research*. Ch. 13. Interviews (pp. 149-175); Ch. 15. Focus Groups (pp. 194-206).
- Kvale, Steinar and Svend Brinkmann. (2009). *InterViews Learning the Craft of Qualitative Research Interviewing*. London: Sage. Ch 7. Conducting an Interview (pp. 123-142).

MEETING 6 (Mar 31, 2023)

Topics

- The Practice of Online Interviewing
- Qualitative Longitudinal Studies

Readings

- James, Nalita, and Hugh Busher. (2016). Online Interviewing (pp. 245-260). In: David Silverman (ed). *Qualitative Research 4E*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Henwood, Karen, and Fiona Shirani. (2022). Qualitative Longitudinal Design: Time, Change, Interpretive Practices (pp. 1-25). In: Uwe Flick (ed). *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Research Design*. London: Sage

MEETING 7 (Apr 07, 2023)

Topics

- Qualitative Online Research
- Digital Tools in Qualitative Research

Readings

- Markham, Annette and Simona Stavrova. Internet/Digital Research (pp. 227-244). In: David Silverman (2016). *Qualitative Research 4E*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Paulus, Trena M. and Jessica N. Lester. (2021). *Doing Qualitative Research in a Digital World*, London: Sage. Ch 5: Generating Data from Pre-Existing Digital Plances (pp. 139-170).

MEETING 8 (Apr 14, 2023)

Topics

- Transcription as an Analytical Act
- Current Trends in Recordings Transcription

Readings

- Paulus, Trena M. and Jessica N. Lester. (2021). *Doing Qualitative Research in a Digital World*, London: Sage. Ch 7. Transcribing Innovations (pp. 207-246).

MEETING 9 (Apr 21, 2023)

Topics

- Qualitative Content Analysis
- The Practice of Grounded Theory Method

Readings

- Rapley, Tim. (2016) Some Pragmatics of Qualitative Data Analysis (pp. 331-346). In: David Silverman (ed). *Qualitative Research 4E*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Charmaz, Kathy and Antony Bryant. (2016). Constructing Grounded Theory Analyses (pp. 347-362). In: David Silverman (ed). *Qualitative Research 4E*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

MEETING 10 (Apr 28, 2023)

Topic

- Using Thematic Analysis
- Reanalysis of Qualitative Data

Readings

- Braun, Virginia, and Victoria Clark. (2006). Using Thematic Analysis in Psychology. "Qualitative Research in Psychology" Vol. 3(2), pp. 77-101.

- Bishop, Libby. (2016). Secondary Analysis of Qualitative Data (pp. 395-413). In: David Silverman (ed). *Qualitative Research 4E*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

MEETING 11 (May 05, 2023)

Topics

- Facilitating Data Analysis with QDAS
- Using QDAS Efficiently

Readings

- Paulus, Trena M. and Jessica N. Lester. (2021). *Doing Qualitative Research in a Digital World*, London: Sage. Ch 8: Managing and Analyzing Data (pp. 247-292).

Course requirements and assessment

Regular attendance

Participation in classes is mandatory. If one has a legitimate reason for being late regularly, they notify the instructor at the beginning of the course. Excessive absences, persistent lateness, or leaving too early will unfavorably affect the final course mark by a “-“ (i.e., “B” goes to “B -“). Any health-related issues will be taken into consideration.

Contribution to the in-class discussions (10% of the grade)

Class discussions are an essential element of this course. Everyone is expected to come to class prepared for a meaningful discussion of the readings. The overall mark for the course may be modified (by "+" or "-") in recognition of the active involvement in the classroom debates. Such recognition will be based on the quality of the contribution.

Essay (90% of the grade)

Students are required to submit an essay of about 3,000 words (+/- 5%) in English (plus abstract and bibliography). Participants will analyze a monograph, where qualitative methods were the essence of the empirical part. The book must be an example of an academic study. It is expected that the book will address subjects within the area of PhD project profile. The analysis should include three essential elements: (1) a brief description of the qualitative methods used by the author(s); (2) a critique of it; (3) suggestions for a revised research design.

Participants should consult the title of the selected book with the instructor by meeting 5 (Mar 24). In case of difficulties with choosing a book, participants should report it to the instructor by the same date. Students will then receive selection suggestions from the instructor.

All essays should be submitted via the Turnitin platform, an Internet-based plagiarism detection service. Each paper should include a half-page abstract preceding the main text, a word count (of essay text excluding the abstract and bibliography), name of the author, and page numbers.

If a student cannot submit the essay on time, then s/he should supply good reasons to the Academic Director to obtain permission to submit the text later. In case of absence or delay due to sickness, medical certificates should be provided. Essays submitted after the deadline will be penalized at a rate of one grade per day (i.e., A becomes A-). Essays submitted two weeks, or more, after the deadline will receive a mark of “Fail,” “D-“ or “D.”

Deadline for essays: June 20, 2023.