

## Qualitative Research Methods<sup>1</sup>

Instructor: Piotr Binder (pbinder@ifispan.edu.pl)

Office hours: by appointment, Zoom

Semester: second (Spring 2024)

Dates of meetings: March 15, 22; April 5, 12, 19, 26; May 10, 17, 24; June 7, 14

Class hours: 14-16:00

Class mode: online, Zoom

### Course description

This course has been developed primarily for students in the early stages of their qualitatively-oriented research projects. Its goals are to discuss selected qualitative methodology issues and support participants in specifying the methods and considering possible approaches to qualitative data analysis while designing efficient and ethical research projects. A vital part of the course will be devoted to the progressive digitization of qualitative methodology and the popularization of digital and AI-powered tools.

The course has the 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 be able to assess academic studies based on qualitative methodology critically. Students are expected to be familiar with current methodological literature and classic examples of applying the discussed research methods. The reading assignments should support students in developing research designs suitable for their research problems, contemplating possible approaches to analyzing data, and defending their choices.

### MEETING 1 (Mar 15, 2024)

[Please note: this session will be 30 min longer, i.e., 14:00-16:30]

#### 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).

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<sup>1</sup> The development of the syllabus in the presented version was possible thanks to the participation of the Graduate School for Social Research in the NAWA PROM program and the author's study visit to University College London (UCL) at the turn of January and February 2022.

## MEETING 2 (Mar 22, 2024)

### Topics

- Ethical Considerations in Qualitative Research
- 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.
- Silverman, David. (2017). *Doing Qualitative Research 5E*. London: Sage. Ch 7. Using Theories (pp. 131-155).
- National Sciences Centre. The Ethics Issues - Guidelines for Applicants: [https://www.ncn.gov.pl/sites/default/files/pliki/regulaminy/2019\\_10\\_wytyczne\\_dla\\_wnioskodawcow\\_kwestie\\_etyczne\\_ang.pdf](https://www.ncn.gov.pl/sites/default/files/pliki/regulaminy/2019_10_wytyczne_dla_wnioskodawcow_kwestie_etyczne_ang.pdf)

## MEETING 3 (Apr 05, 2024)

### Topics

- Designing Qualitative Research
- Developing 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 (Apr 12, 2024)

### 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 (Apr 19, 2024)

### 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 (Apr 26, 2024)**

##### Topics

- The Practice of Online Interviewing
- (In-Person, Hybrid and Remote) Qualitative Longitudinal Research (QLR)

##### Readings

- Thunberg, Sarah, and Linda Arnell. (2022). Pioneering the use of technologies in qualitative research – A research review of the use of digital interviews. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology* (pp. 1–12).
- 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 (May 10, 2024)**

##### Topics

- Digital Ethnography
- Digital/AI 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 Places (pp. 139-170).

#### **MEETING 8 (May 17, 2024)**

##### 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 (May 24, 2024)**

##### 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 (June 07, 2024)

#### Topic

- (Reflexive) Thematic Analysis
- Re-analysis 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 (June 14, 2024)

#### Topics

- Facilitating Data Analysis with QDAS with AI Assist
- Qualitative Data Management and Archiving

#### 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).
- National Sciences Centre. Data Management Plan – Guidelines for Applicants. [https://www.ncn.gov.pl/sites/default/files/pliki/regulaminy/wytyczne\\_zarzadzanie\\_danymi\\_06\\_2020\\_ang.pdf](https://www.ncn.gov.pl/sites/default/files/pliki/regulaminy/wytyczne_zarzadzanie_danymi_06_2020_ang.pdf)

## 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. The book is expected to 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 Apr 19, 2024**. 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.

Each paper should include the author's name, a word count (of essay text excluding the abstract and bibliography), an abstract preceding the main text (up to 250 words), references in the body of the text, a bibliography at the end, and page numbers.

If a student cannot submit the essay on time, then s/he should provide good reasons **to the GSSR Academic Director** (jfells@gssr.edu.pl) to obtain permission to submit the text later. Medical certificates should be provided in case of absence or delay due to sickness. Essays submitted after the deadline will be penalized at a rate of one grade per day (i.e., "A" becomes "A-"). The maximum grade for the essays submitted two weeks or more after the deadline is "D."

Deadline for essays: June 28, 2024 - 5:00 pm. All essays should be submitted via e-mail to pbinder@ifispan.edu.pl.