Purpose: The purposes of this seminar are twofold – to utilize and gain proficiency using qualitative methodologies/methods and to examine and critique current research employing these ideas and techniques. The course will focus on approaches to and the design of qualitative studies, selection of data collection methods, data analysis strategies, and writing in research utilizing qualitative data. The class will also discuss the appropriate uses of qualitative methods, theoretical frameworks, research design, operationalization, and measurement issues, such as the validity and reliability of data. While the course will not cover every potential qualitative data collection or analysis method, it will discuss broad categories of data (verbal, observational, textual, visual), different research designs (single methods, triangulation of methods, case studies), and data analysis techniques (coding, memoing, discourse analysis, etc.).

In addition to methodological readings, readings utilizing qualitative research techniques in the area of information (broadly defined) will be used to help students appreciate the broad range of research possibilities in this field (these fields). Readings from outside our area will be used to introduce students to other research methodologies and issues of importance in carrying out a research study.

Learning Objectives: At the end of the term, students in this class will be able to:

- Understand several different philosophical approaches to qualitative research
- Design qualitative research studies
- Perform qualitative data collection, manipulation, and analysis
- Understand the ethical issues involved in qualitative research
- Work with software programs for coding and analyzing qualitative data
- Write up a qualitative study
- Evaluate books and articles featuring qualitative research
Assignments and Grading:

There will be weekly assignments building towards a term project, which should be considered a pilot research study utilizing qualitative methods. Completion of these assignments, demonstration of effort, and participation in the discussions concerning is expected. It is intended that students use the weekly assignments to collect data around a coherent research question. During the course students will examine how philosophical assumptions, research questions, methodological designs, data collection and analysis techniques, and writing up the results are framed in qualitative research as well as disciplinary differences in the use of qualitative methods. At each step, students will turn in each part and receive feedback from the professor and/or colleagues in class.

You may use an existing study in which you are involved for the class, but you must be able to collect new data, alter data collection techniques slights, and perform different types of analysis than you intended. While there may be some overlap with other research in which you are engaged, there is not a one to one match. Part of the goal of the course is to have you experiment with data collection methods to gain and understanding of their strengths and weaknesses in different situations.

Class attendance and participation are mandatory; they are integral parts of the seminar experience. Students should come to class prepared to discuss the readings and their weekly assignment. Students will also take turns leading discussion about the weekly exemplar reading which relates to that week’s topic. The final class will be a 15-minute research presentation.

All assignments should be turned in *electronically* by 9 am the day before class (Sunday) into your class folder on CTools. Assignments should be uploaded in a word processing format. **No pdfs.** Name the file with your surname and the assignment name; example: yakel_researchquestion.doc

Timely assignments are essential both for the class to function properly and for students to receive appropriate feedback on their work. This will give the instructor and your colleagues a chance to review the information for better discussion, questions, and suggestions.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Weekly Topic</th>
<th>Assignments (Due Sunday before class – 9 a.m.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 January 9</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January 16</td>
<td>Martin Luther King Day</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 January 23</td>
<td>Research questions and Philosophical traditions and approaches (cont)</td>
<td>Research questions / IRB completed if necessary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 January 30</td>
<td>Design of Qualitative Studies</td>
<td>Initial design notes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 February 6</td>
<td>Collecting Verbal Data</td>
<td>Interview protocol</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 February 13</td>
<td>Data Analysis (1): Qualitative Analysis Software</td>
<td>Interviews (2 methods) and reflections on data collection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 February 20</td>
<td>Data Analysis (2)</td>
<td>Transcriptions of 2 interviews, Initial code list and definitions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 27</td>
<td>Spring Break</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 March 5</td>
<td>Collecting Observational Data</td>
<td>Coding of 2 transcripts (one yours one your research partner’s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Inter-indexer consistency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Inter-coder discussion results</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 March 12</td>
<td>Data Analysis (3): Reliability and validity in qualitative data</td>
<td>Observational protocol and notes of first observations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 March 19</td>
<td>Data Analysis (4): Discourse Analysis</td>
<td>Analysis of observations Two memos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 March 26</td>
<td>Collecting and Analyzing Textual Data</td>
<td>Discourse analysis memo of verbal or textual data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 April 2</td>
<td>Research ethics and qualitative studies; Data sharing and qualitative data</td>
<td>Draft of final paper: Research question / Introduction, Literature review, Methodology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 April 9</td>
<td>Writing up Results</td>
<td>Findings and Discussion draft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 April 16</td>
<td>Final Research Proposal Presentations</td>
<td>Final Research Paper Due</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 18</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Grading:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Percent of Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Completion of Weekly Assignments</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Attendance &amp; Participation</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Question Draft</td>
<td>March 26, 2012</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literature Review Draft</td>
<td>April 2, 2012</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Design Draft</td>
<td>April 9, 2012</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Presentation</td>
<td>April 16, 2012</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Paper</td>
<td>April 18, 2012</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Readings:

Required Book:


Recommended Books (in ranked order):


Resources

Class resources, some lecture slides, assignments, will be posted on CTools.

ORIGINAL WORK

Unless otherwise specified in an assignment, all submitted work must be your own, original work. Any excerpts from the work of others must be clearly identified as a quotation, and a proper citation provided. Any violation of the School's policy on Academic and Professional Integrity (stated in the Master's and Doctoral Student Handbooks) will result in severe penalties, which might range from failing an assignment, to failing a course, to being expelled from the program, at the discretion of the instructor and the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs.
ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

If you think you need an accommodation for a disability, please let me know at your earliest convenience. Some aspects of this course, the assignments, the in-class activities, and the way we teach may be modified to facilitate your participation and progress. As soon as you make me aware of your needs, we can work with the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) to help us determine appropriate accommodations. SSD (734-763-3000); http://www.umich.edu/~sswd/) typically recommends accommodations through a Verified Individualized Services and Accommodations (VISA) form. I will treat any information you provide as private and confidential.

CLASSROOM ETIQUETTE

Students are encouraged to bring notebook computers to class and to use them actively as learning tools. Students should:

- use laptops for taking notes, conducting research required for activities, and other specific classroom tasks as assigned by the instructor. During class, students should not check e-mail, chat, IM, play games, or perform other off-task activities.
- engage in-class activity as actively as they would in any other class. The computer should not become a barrier to one-on-one interaction, but instead should help facilitate the exchange of ideas and engagement in classroom contact.
- demonstrate sensitivity to others. Students should not display screen images, including wallpapers and screen savers, which might be distracting or offensive to other members of the class.
Class Schedule

**January 9: Introduction:** Theory, Metatheory and Philosophical Underpinnings

- Who we are (Introductions)
- What this course is about
- Expectations / assignments

**Required:**


**January 23: Discussion of Research Questions / Potential Projects**

- Formulating research questions and sub-questions
- Ethics
- Moving from research questions to design


Creswell, Chapter 5: Five different Qualitative Studies, 85 – 100 (Reports on studies)

Creswell, Chapter 6, Introducing and Focusing the Study, 101-116

**January 30: Designing Qualitative Studies**

- Research design
- Sampling
- Operationalization
- Matching design to questions

**Required:**
Miles and Huberman, Chapters 2 and 3: Focusing and Bounding the Collection of Data

Glaser and Strauss, III: Theoretical Sampling

Creswell, Chapter 3: Designing a Qualitative Study
February 6: Collecting Verbal Data

- Interview Methodology and mechanics – applications, types of research questions that can be addressed, note taking, audio taping, videotaping
- Structured and semi-structured interviews
- Interviewing techniques (Email, chat, face-to-face (recorded and notes), telephone/Skype (recorded and notes))


Using Verbal Data:

Derek Hansen; Mark S. Ackerman; Paul Resnick; Sean Munson, “Virtual Community Maintenance with a Repository,” Proceedings of the American Society for Information Science and Technology (ASIS&T) Annual Meeting (2007)


February 13: Data Analysis (1) Qualitative Data Analysis Software: N-Vivo and Atlas.ti

Creswell, Chapter 8: Data Analysis and Representation, 147-176

Miles and Huberman, Appendix, Choosing Computer Programs for Qualitative Data Analysis

February 20: Data Analysis (2)

- Keeping track of data
- Creating and managing codes
- Memoing

Miles and Huberman, 4: Early Steps in Analysis; Chapter 11: Ethical Issues in Analysis

Glaser and Strauss, V: The Constant Comparative Method of Qualitative Analysis


**February 27: Spring Break!**

**March 5: Collecting Observational Data**

- Observational methodologies
- Participant observation / Fly on the wall
- Observational mechanics and protocols
- Field notes


Research using observation:


March 12: Data Analysis (3)

- Validity
- Legitimization
- Generalizability

Miles and Huberman, Chapters 5: Within-Case Displays and 7: Cross-Case Displays. Appendix: Choosing Computer Programs for Qualitative Data Analysis.


Creswell, Chapter 10: Standards of Validation and Evaluation


March 19: Discourse Analysis

- Approaching text as a social phenomena
- Interpretative analysis


Research using discourse analysis:


March 26: Diary Studies and the Interpretative Process

- Diary Studies
- Interpretative framing

Miles and Huberman, Chapter 10: Drawing and Verifying Conclusions


Diary Studies:


Elaine G. Toms and Wendy Duff: “I spent 1 ½ hours sifting through one large box. . . .”: Diaries as information behavior of the archives user: Lessons learned, *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology* 53/14 (2002): 1232-1238

**April 2: Ethics in Qualitative Research and Data Sharing**

- Ethical issues
- Data sharing and qualitative research


April 9: Writing up Qualitative Research

Miles and Huberman, Chapter 12: Producing Reports

Creswell, Chapter 9: Writing a Qualitative Study


April 16: Final Presentations