

***Sc 554 Qualitative Research Methods in Applied Settings  
SPRING, 2012***

CLASS TIME: WEDNESDAY, 3-5:30.  
CARNEY 205A  
Professor Sharlene Hesse-Biber  
Office: 419 McGuinn Hall  
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**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This course situates the researcher as practitioner and provides a foundation in the application of qualitative methods to applied settings. It offers training in social research designs connected to social issues and problems central to public health, clinical, social science and educational settings. It provides a "hands on" approach to learning methods--focus groups interviews, in-depth interviews, ethnographic techniques, and evaluation designs--that are deployed to answer complex social questions and issues. The course introduces mixed methods designs that bring together qualitative and quantitative methods especially as this relates to infusing a qualitative component into randomized control trial (RCT) experimental designs.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

**1. Class Participation : 15%**

Participation in the discussion of class readings is a vital part of the seminar. Students are responsible for the assigned readings, for taking part in class discussions, and for presenting at the end of the course, their research proposal.

Some of you are working on dissertation topics and others are looking for a dissertation or Masters topic. This course hopes to assist you to move your ideas and research project forward.

The seminar format relies on your informed contributions and therefore it is important that you read all relevant articles before the class in which they will be discussed.

As part of their participation grade, students are required to **co-lead two seminars during semester** where they will discuss the class readings for that seminar and send the class discussion questions the Monday prior to our Wednesday class.

**PLEASE ADVISE ME ON WHAT 2 SEMINARS YOU WOULD LIKE TO CO-LEAD.**

**2. THREE Reflection Papers— ( 4 TO 5 PAGES) 30% PLEASE SELECT THE ARTICLE/S YOU WANT TO =WRITE A REFLECTION PAPER ON. THE REFLECTION PAPER WILL BE DUE THE DAY THE READING IS SCHEDULED FOR CLASS.**

**3. HANDS-ON ASSIGNMENTS ( SEE LAST PAGE OF SYLLABUS FOR MORE INFO)  
: 30%**

**DUE DATES: ASSIGNMENT # 1 IS DUE FEBRUARY 29TH  
ASSIGNMENT #2 IS DUE MARCH 21ST  
( CHOOSE BETWEEN 1 AND 2)  
EVERYONE DOES #3:  
ASSIGNMENT #3 IS DUE APRIL 11TH**

**4. Research Proposal ( Can be qualitative or mixed methods proposal). (25%)**

**FINAL ABSTRACT DUE: APRIL 23RD. MONDAY BEFORE CLASS SEND TO ME BY EMAIL**

**FINAL PROPOSAL DUE: MAY 2ND.**



## REQUIRED READINGS AND RECOMMENDED READINGS:

### Required Texts:

Hesse-Biber, Sharlene and Leavy, Patricia (2011) *The Practice of Qualitative Research*. Thousand Oaks, CA.: Sage Publications SECOND EDITION

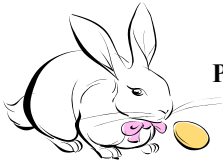
Hesse-Biber, Sharlene.(2010) *Mixed Methods: Merging Theory with Practice 2010*. Guilford Publications

### Additional Course Readings:

Additional readings will be posted on BLACKBOARD and/or will be sent to you individually via email when applicable.

## COURSE OUTLINE AND READINGS

(note: I reserve the right to change the syllabus if need be)



### Part I: Locating the Field of Qualitative Research: Major Paradigms and Perspectives

#### Week 1: January 18<sup>th</sup>: Introduction/Overview; Qualitative Research Paradigms

Going over the Syllabus and assignments and general introduction to the field of qualitative methods.

#### Week 2. January 24<sup>th</sup>: Research paradigms and orientations in social research Research questions and designs

Readings : Hesse-Biber & Leavy, Chapters 1 & 2.

Noel Gough “ Blank spots, blind spots and methodological questions in postgraduate research”(pdf file will be sent to students directly)

Athens, L. Scientific criteria for evaluating qualitative studies, *Studies in Symbolic Interaction*, 5: 259-268.

#### Week 3: January 31<sup>st</sup>: Qualitative Approaches to Social Research in Applied Settings

**This week we will learn about some of the most dominant qualitative traditions that are practiced in a range of disciplines/applied settings.**

- “ Distinguishing Qualitative Research” pp. 1-15. In HESSE-BIBER & LEAVY: *Approaches to Qualitative Research* Oxford University Press (2004)  
(known hereafter as QUAL APPROACHES). BLACKBOARD
- Guba and Lincoln, "Competing Paradigms in Qualitative Research: Theories and Issues." In *Qualitative Approaches*, Chapter 1. BLACKBOARD
- Ponterotto, J. G. (2005). Qualitative research in counseling psychology: A primer on research paradigms and philosophies of Science. *Journal of Counseling Psychology* 52, 126-136. BLACKBOARD.



## Part II: Strategies of Inquiry: Ethics, Qualitative Research Designs & Data Collection Methods

### A. Research Design & Ethical Dilemmas

#### Week 4 : February 1st: Research Design and Ethical Dilemmas in Research

Developing research questions  
Combining Qualitative/Quantitative  
Ethical and political considerations

Readings:

- Hesse-Biber and Leavy, *The Practice of Qualitative Research* Chapters 3 & 4.
- Bell hooks. "Culture to Culture: ethnography and cultural studies as critical intervention." *In Yearning: race, gender, and cultural practices*. Boston, MA: South End Press. BLACKBOARD
- Thome, Barrie. "'You still takin' Notes?' Fieldwork and Problems of Informed Consent" Chapter 7 BLACK BOARD

Recommended:

- Merlinda Weinberg, "Biting the Hand That Feeds You, and Other Feminist Dilemmas in Fieldwork." Pp. 79-94, *Walking the Tightrope : Ethical Issues for Qualitative Researchers*. 2002. Toronto: University of Toronto Press. BLACKBOARD

#### Week 5.: February 8th: QUALITATIVE RESEASRCH PROBLEMS AND THE QUALITATIVE RESEARCH PROPOSAL

Hays and Singh," Seelcting a Topic," Chapter 4.

BLACKBOARD

Hays and Singh, " Writing and Presernting Qualitative Research.

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Deborah K. Padgett, " Writing a Qualitative Methods Proposal for External Funding."

BLACKBOARD

Example of a Qualitgative Proposal

Anne M.P. Michalek, " The Experience of Success for Adolescents Diagnosed with Attention- Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder. BLACKBOARD

Recommended: Athens, L. Scientific criteria for evaluating qualitative studies, *Studies in Symbolic Interaction*, 5: 259-268. BLACKBOARD

### B. Qualitative Data Collection Methods in Applied Settings



#### Week 6: February 15th: WHAT IS ETHNOGRAPHY? HOW IS ETHNOGRAPHY DONE IN APPLIED SETTINGS?

Readings:

Hesse-Biber and Leavy, *The Practice of Qualitative Research*, Chapter 8.

Noblit, George W. " The Prospects of an Applied Ethnography for Education: A Sociology of Knoweldge Interpretation" BLACKBOARD

**Ethnographic Research Examples:**

Elijah Anderson, "Jelly's Place." In Carolyn D. Smith and William Kornblum (Eds.)  
*In the Field* (Second Edition) Westport CT: Praeger, 1996 BLACKBOARD

OR

Kristin L. Anderson and Debra Umberson. "Gendering Violence: Masculinity and  
Power in Men's Accounts of Domestic Violence." Hesse-Biber/Yaiser  
BLACKBOARD

**EVERYONE:**

Mohr, W.K. 2004. " Surfacing the life phases of a mental health support group. *Qualitative Health  
Research.*, 14(1): 61-77. BLACKBOARD

Lareau, Annette. 2002. " Invisible Inequality: Social Class and  
Childrearing in Black Families and White Families." *American Sociological Review* 67:747-76.  
BLACKBOARD



**Week 7. February 22nd: IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWING**

- Hesse-Biber and Leavy, *The Practice of Qualitative Research*. Chapter 5

Readings: Khanna, Nikki and Catheryn Johnson. 2010. "Passing as Black: Racial  
Identity Work among Biracial Americans." *Social Psychology Quarterly* 73:380-97.  
BLACKBOARD

Boydell, K.M., Goering, P., & Morrell-Bellai, T.L. (2000) . Narratives of identity: Re-presentation of self in people who  
are homeless. *Qualitative Health Research* 10(1) 26-38. BLACKBOARD

**Week 8. February 29th: FOCUS GROUP RESEARCH**

**Note : ASSIGNMENT 1 (IF YOU SELECTED THIS ASSIGNMENT) IS DUE TODAY FEBRUARY 29TH**



Hesse-Biber and Leavy. *The Practice of Qualitative Research* Chapter 7 .

- Morgan, David L. "Focus Groups." Chapter 13 In Hesse-Biber and Leavy's,  
Approaches to Qualitative Research  
[http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/1997/nsf97153/c3app\\_c.htm](http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/1997/nsf97153/c3app_c.htm) Sample focus group  
topic guide

Readings:

Leonard, M. 2006. Teenagers telling sectarian stories. *Sociology* 40(6).  
1117-1133. BLACKBOARD

Peter McDermott and Julia Rothenberg " Why Urban Parents Resist Involvement in  
Their Children's Elementary Education. " Chapter 14 In Hesse-Biber and Leavy, Approaches to Qualitative Research.  
BLACKBOARD

Hyde, Abbey, Etaoine Howlet, Dympna Brady and Jonathan Drennan. 2005. "The  
Focus Group Method: Insights from Focus Group Interviews on Sexual Health with Adolescence." *Social Science  
and Medicine* 61:2588-2599. BLACKBOARD

**SPRING BREAK MARCH 5 TO MARCH 9**

**Week 9. MARCH 14TH Mixed Methods Research**



Hesse-Biber, Chapters 1-4;  
Hesse-Biber & Leavy, *The Practice of Qualitative Research* Chapter 11.

Researching reducing health disparities: Mixed-methods approaches. *Social Science & Medicine*, 66, 1406-1417.. BLACKBOARD

Mark R. Rank: “ The Blending of Qualitative and Quantitative Methods in Understanding Childbearing Among Welfare Recipients. Hesse-Biber and Leavy, *Approaches to Qualitative Research* BLACKBOARD

Torres, V. (2006). A Mixed Method Study Testing Data-Model Fit of a Retention Model for Latino/a Students at Urban Universities. *Journal of College Student Development*, 47(3), 299-318. Available online: [muse.jhu.edu/journals/journal\\_of\\_college\\_student\\_development/v047/47.3torres.html](http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/journal_of_college_student_development/v047/47.3torres.html)



**Week 10. MARCH 21ST. EVALUATION RESEARCH: INFUSING QUALITATIVE RESEARCH IN RANDOMIZED CONTROL TRIALS**

**ASSIGNMENT #2 IF YOU SELECTED THIS ASSIGNMENT IS DUE TODAY MARCH 21ST.**

Trochim (2006) has available a web-directed materials on evaluation methods. It also has links to a range of evaluation resources. READ SECTION ON PROGRAM EVALUATION  
<http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/evaluation.php>

Bickman, L., and Reich, S.M. (2009). “Randomized controlled trials: A gold standard with feet of clay?” In S.I. Donaldson, C.A. Christie, and M.M. Mark (Eds.) *What counts as credible evidence in applied research and evaluation practice?* Pp.51-77). Thousand Oaks, CA.: Sage.  
BLACKBOARD

Davis, Peter (2010). *Exploring the long-term impact of development interventions within life-history narratives in rural Bangladesh.* BLACKBOARD

Sharlene Hesse-Biber “ Employing a Multi-Methodology Praxis to Enhance the Credibility of Mixed Methods Randomized Control Trials” BLACKBOARD

HIGHLY RECOMMENDED: McDavid *Applying Qualitative Evaluation Methods*  
[http://www.sagepub.com/upm-data/6195\\_Chapter\\_5\\_McDavid\\_I\\_Proof\\_3.pdf](http://www.sagepub.com/upm-data/6195_Chapter_5_McDavid_I_Proof_3.pdf)

**C. Analysis and Interpretation & Writing up of Qualitative Research**



**Week 11 MARCH 28TH . ANALYSIS of QUALITATIVE DATA**

Analyzing textual data  
The Coding Process  
Comparing and Contrasting Different Analytical Styles: Grounded Theory, Listening Guide, Narrative Analysis

“ Analysis, Interpretation and the Writing of Qualitative Data. “ Hesse-Biber and Leavy, *The Practice of Qualitative Research* Chapter 12

Charmaz, Kathy. *Constructivist Grounded Theory Methods.* BLACKBOARD

Carol Gilligan, Renee Spencer, M. Katherine Weinbert and Tatiana Bertsch.” *On the Listening Guide: A Voice-Centered Relational Method.* BLACKBOARD

Ruthellen Josselson “ Narrative Research: Constructing, Deconstructing and Reconstructing Story. Chapter 8. BLACKBOARD.

**Week 12. APRIL 4TH. Computer-Assisted Software for Analyzing Qualitative Data: Pros & Cons**

What is Analysis? Interpretation?

Intro to Computer software for tdata analysis

Class discussion of issues and challenges of using Computer-Assisted Software

- Sandelowski, M. (2001) Real qualitative researchers do not count: The use of numbers in qualitative research, *Research in Nursing and Health* 24(3) 230-240. BLACKBOARD



- .Vincent Flaherty (2010). “Qualitative Data Analysis: By Computer or by Hand?”
- Vincent Flaherty (2010). “Applying the QDA Model –Coding, memoing, Concept Mapping, and Theme Development “
- Introduction to HyperResearch: Computer Software for Analyzing Qualitative Data
- Free Fully Functional Software Demo available for download from [www.researchware.com](http://www.researchware.com)
- Karen M. Staller. “ Musings of a Skeptical Software Junkie and the HyperRESEARCH Fix.” *Qualitative Social Work* Vol 1 (4) BLACKBOARD
- Bringer, J. Johnston, L. and Brackenridge, C. (2006) Using Computer-Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software to Develop a Grounded Theory Project, *Field Methods*, 18(3) pp.245-266 BLACKBOARD

NOTE: EASTER WEEKEND STARTS APRIL 5 AND ENDS APRIL 9<sup>TH</sup>. WE WILL HAVE CLASS ON APRIL 4<sup>TH</sup>.



**Week 13. April 11 and April 18th : Representation and Writng & Proposal Writing**

**ASSIGNMENT #3 IS DUE APRIL 11TH**

- Writing about Qualitative Research
- Format
- Integrating Data
- Assessing interpretive validity
- Class discussion of issues and challenges

Hesse-Biber and Leavy, *Practice of Qualitative Research*, Chapter 13.

Denzin, Norman K. 'The Art and Politics of Interpretation.' In Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln

Chapter 4 “ Linking Up.” Harry Wolcott. 2ND EDITION-- *Writing Up Qualitative Research*. Thousand Oaks,Sage BLACKBOARD

Laural Richardson “ Writing: A Methods of Inquiry” Chapter 22 Hesse-Biber and Leavy, *Approaches to Qualitative Research* BLACKBOARD



**Week 15 & 16: APRIL 25TH & MAY 2ND Presentation of Research Proposals to the Class  
PROPOSAL ABSTRACTS ARE DUE THE MONDAY BEFORE CLASS—APRIL 23RD.  
FINAL PROPOSAL IS DUE MAY 2ND.**

## **BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF CLASS REFLECTION PAPERS, HANDS-ON ASSIGNMENTS AND RESEARCH PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS.**

This is a short synopsis of the assignments. I will hand out more detailed instructions for the “Hands –On” Assignments and the Proposal.

### Three (3) Reflective papers (30%)

These should be between 4 and 5 pages. This is not a summary of the article, but should contain your analytical reflections. Your paper takes the standpoint of an academic scholar who is assessing the thesis/argument and how the author (if an empirical study) brings evidence to bear to answer their main thesis. Do you agree with the research design? How well is this study carried out in terms of methods the researcher selects and how research findings? How well is the method presented? How well is the method linked to the research question? Is this the appropriate method /s to use? Why or Why not?

What is the main contribution of this article? What is the main drawback? Your reflection paper is due the Monday evening before our Wednesday class. Please send to class members via email with an attachment and bring copies of your paper to class.

### TWO HANDS ON ASSIGNMENTS (30%):

Assignment #1 ( choice between 1 or 2):

#### **SELECT ONE OF THE FOLLOWING METHODS ASSIGNMENTS ( 1 OR 2)**

##### **1. Assignment number ONE: In the field:**

###### Observation and Participant Observation

You will receive a separate handout on this assignment. You will be asked to select a field site (setting) where you can gather information either through direct observation or participant observation. You will be asked to log in field notes and write up your findings in a short paper. **I will provide a detailed description of this assignment in class.**

Choose a public setting to conduct field observations. Bring a notebook and maintain a presence there for 1-2 hours. Carefully observe and take notes on the setting- what do you see, hear, smell, and feel? What are people doing and saying? How are they interacting with others and/or you? What is the environment like? Note every detail, even the small ones, of what is happening around you. Upon returning home, try to immediately continue your reflection on the field experience: what larger impression do you have of the scene? What feelings did it stimulate in you? As a researcher, what kinds of questions were stimulated by your observation? If you decided to conduct a qualitative research project related to your observation, what would the topic and research questions be? What do you want to know more about?

##### **2. Assignment number TWO. Intensive Interview OR Focus Group Interview**

You will receive a separate handout on this assignment as well. You can carry out either an intensive interview with an individual or small group of individuals ( focus group) or you may engage in a project of a textual and/or visual (content) analysis or perhaps a project that combines interviewing and textual/visual analysis. You should plan to submit a complete record of your data collection and analysis materials ( transcript, code sheets) as well as an analysis paper summarizing your results. I encourage you to explore an area of research you are interested in working on for either a master’s paper/thesis or Ph.D. project, etc. **I will provide a detailed outline of this assignment in class.**

**Some Additional notes: For assignments 1 and 2, please see me early so that we can discuss your project and make sure it is within the time limits of the course.**

**EVERYONE:**

**ASSIGNMENT 3. Analysis Assignment: ANALYSIS ASSIGNMENT.**

**You will be asked to analyze two interviews I will provide, using a range of qualitative analysis techniques. More information will follow in a separate handout.**

**RESEARCH PROPOSAL ASSIGNMENT 30%:**

YOU ARE ASKED TO PREPARE A 10 + PAGE RESEARCH PROPOSAL ON A TOPIC OF YOUR CHOICE ( QUALITATIVE AND/OR MIXED METHODS PROPOSAL). You may work on a previous proposal and fine tune the qualitative aspects of this proposal, etc. I will meet individually with students to discuss where they are in their proposal process. If you are not comfortable, writing a proposal at this stage of your career, you can substitute this for a review of the literature paper or another type of paper that we can discuss.

This assignment is intended to help you move your research forward, especially if you are at the masters thesis or Ph.D. dissertation phase of your work, or if a newcomer to the proposal process, to help you gain the skills to do a first-rate research proposal. More specific details will follow in a separate handout.