

CCI 635: Qualitative Communication & Information Research Methods I

SECTION: 001

CLASS LOCATION/TIME: CCI 420, Tuesdays, 12:40 – 3:25 PM

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Michael J. Palenchar

OFFICE INFORMATION: 476 Communications Building, 974-9082, mpalench@utk.edu

OFFICE HOURS: Thursdays, 12:30 – 3:30 PM, after class if necessary, or by appointment

TO SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT DURING OFFICE HOURS: Call Joyce Holloway, CPS, 974-3048, or email her at adv@utk.edu

TO SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT OUTSIDE OF OFFICE HOURS: Email Dr. Palenchar

Catalog Description (3 hours):

Introduction to qualitative approaches to research in the fields of communication and information. Theoretical underpinnings of the different approaches are reviewed.

Course Description & Goals

This course is an introduction to qualitative methods of social research. Examples rely heavily on applications in communication. This course addresses both the practical “how to” dimensions of qualitative methodology and method, and the epistemological and theoretical commitments and stances that are tied to these methods. This course will (1) provide students with an introductory understanding of qualitative inquiry in the social sciences; (2) provide an opportunity for students to learn how to conduct and critique research that uses qualitative methodology; (3) understand research ontologies and epistemologies driving qualitative research perspectives that include certain assumptions about humans – that people are active, interpreting individuals who forge purposeful behaviors to undertake everyday life. Individuals construct worlds of meaning and act upon their world, and thus qualitative researchers work to examine the meaningful objects and structures in people’s worlds from the perspective of those being studied. As such, there is no single, determinable truth (concept of truth debatable), and qualitative researchers seek out shared meanings in order to observe and analyze patterns of human behavior; (4) provide an opportunity for students to conduct fieldwork and begin using tools for data collection such as field-based observation, interviewing, and focus group interviews, (5) introduce students to techniques for analyzing textual data documented in field notes, interview transcripts, and from personal narratives, and (6) explore particular difficulties in the interpretation and reporting of qualitative findings. At the conclusion of the course you should have an introductory knowledge of the use of qualitative methods. Proficiency in qualitative research, however, will require further experience.

Student Outcomes of Course

- Building on the general knowledge acquired in CCI 605 of major theoretical traditions and qualitative research, including: phenomenological, sociocultural, and critical traditions.
- Within the sociocultural tradition, this course will focus on the basic premises of three key theoretical influences of qualitative research in the field of communication, including: symbolic interactionism, social construction, and narrative.
- General knowledge of qualitative research methods, including but not limited to: ethnography, participant observation, interviews, focus groups, document analysis, and text analysis.
- Continue to gain familiarity with the available communication and information resources.
- Continue to develop a critical lens in reviewing your own and others research.
- Be able to utilize course materials to propose, develop, and conduct research projects.

- Development of at least one research paper for conference presentation and/or journal publication.

Required Readings:

- Significant number of classic and contemporary journal articles related to the course's theoretical and applied orientation, with a particular emphasis on learning method through these readings.
- American Psychological Association. (2010). *Publication manual* (6th edition). Washington, DC.
- Berger, P., & Luckmann, T. (1966). *The social construction of reality: A treatise in the sociology of knowledge*. New York, NY: Doubleday Dell.
- Emerson, R. M., Fretz, R. I., & Shaw, L. L. (1995). *Writing ethnographic fieldnotes*. IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Lindlof, T. R., & Taylor, B. C. (2011). *Qualitative communication research methods* (3rd ed.). Los Angeles, CA: Sage.
- McCracken, Grant. *The long interview*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage
- Morgan, D. L. (1997). *Focus groups in qualitative research* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Additional Recommended Books:

- Clifford, J., & Marcus, G. E. (Eds). (1986). *Writing culture: The poetics and politics of ethnography*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Corbin, J., & Strauss, A. (2008). *Basics of qualitative research* (3rd ed.). Los Angeles, CA: Sage.
- Creswell, J. W. (2006). *Qualitative inquiry & research design* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Dewalt, K. M., & Dewalt, B. R. (2002). *Participant observation: A guidework for fieldworkers*. Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press.
- Gubrium, J. F., & Holstein, J. A. (1997). *The new language of qualitative method*. Kettering, Northants, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Hammersley, M., & Atkinson, P. (2000). *Ethnography: Principles in practice* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Kozinets, R. V. (2010). *Netnography: Doing ethnographic research online*. Los Angeles, CA: Sage.
- Meloy, J. M. (2002). *Writing the qualitative dissertation: Understanding by doing* (2nd Ed.). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Plummer, K. (2001). *Documents of life 2: An invitation to a critical humanism*. London, UK: Sage.
- Riesman, C. K. (1993). *Narrative analysis*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Rubin, H. J., & Rubin, I. S. (2005). *Qualitative Interviewing: The Art of Hearing Data* (2nd Ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Yin, R. K. (2009). *Case study research design and methods* (4th ed.). Sage.

CCI Diversity Statement: CCI recognizes and values diversity. Exposing students to diverse people, ideas and cultures increases opportunities for intellectual inquiry, encourages critical thinking, and enhances communication and information competence. When all viewpoints are heard, thoughtfully considered, and respectfully responded to, everyone benefits. Diversity and fairness unite us with the wider professional and global community.

Disability Accommodation Statement: “Any student who feels he or she may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) at 865-974-6087 in 2227 Dunford Hall to document their eligibility for services. ODS will work with students and faculty to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities.”

University Civility Statement: Civility is genuine respect and regard for others: politeness, consideration, tact, good manners, graciousness, cordiality, affability, amiability and courteousness. Civility enhances academic freedom and integrity, and is a prerequisite to the free exchange of ideas and knowledge in the learning community. Our community consists of students, faculty, staff, alumni, and campus visitors. Community members affect each other's being and have a shared interest in creating and sustaining an environment where all community members and their points of view are valued and respected. Affirming the value of each member of the university community, the campus asks that all its members adhere to the principles of civility and community adopted by the campus: <http://civility.utk.edu/>.

Academic Integrity: "An essential feature of Tennessee, Knoxville is a commitment to maintaining an atmosphere of intellectual integrity and academic honesty. As a student of the university, I pledge that I will neither knowingly give nor receive any inappropriate assistance in academic work, thus affirming my own personal commitment to honor and integrity."

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY: This course adheres to the university's Academic Standards of Conduct and Honor Statement, as presented in the student handbook *Hilltopics*. All students are expected to be honorable and to observe standards of conduct appropriate to a community of students and scholars. All work in this course should be the **original work of the student**. Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course, dismissal from the program and dismissal from the University. Since dishonesty harms the individual, all students, and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. Scholastic dishonesty includes **plagiarism**, which according to Webster is: "to take (ideas, writings, etc.) from (another) and pass them off as one's own." Therefore, handing in work that contains material written by someone else, whether it is a current or former student, or a secondary source and presenting it as your own efforts is a clear example of plagiarism.

APA Ethics Code Standard 8.11, Plagiarism: This course also adheres to the American Psychological Association's ethics code regarding plagiarism and self-plagiarism (pp. 15-16, APA Publication Manual, 6th edition). "Just as researchers do not present the work of others as their own (plagiarism), they do not present their own previously published work as new scholarship (self-plagiarism)" (p. 16). This includes work completed for a previous class or any other circumstance including work, conference paper, book chapter, book or personal reasons, and any material under review for presentation or publication.

POLICIES

- This course adheres to the university's Academic Standards of Conduct and Honor Statement, as presented in the student handbook *Hilltopics*.
- Students are expected to attend all classes, arrive on time, and participate in class discussion.
- In general, students are not allowed to make up missed work without advance notice. Plans should be made to turn assignments in early if you are traveling to a conference. Exceptions will be rare and at the discretion of the instructors.
- Syllabus is subject to change as instructors deem appropriate and necessary.
- Please turn off all handheld devices, including mobile phones, pagers, PDAs, etc. during class. Mobile devices can be used for course-related reasons only. Other uses (email, IM, Facebook, general browsing) are incredibly disrespectful.

ASSIGNMENTS

Lead Discussant/Respondent: Each student will lead class discussion for several assigned readings throughout the semester, as well as be a synthesis respondent at the end of class periods. This is not a formal presentation. The objective of this assignment is for each student to lead a critical discussion of reading assignments, reviewing the main topic of the paper, methodology analysis, critique of results and discussion sections, as well as analyzing the writing style and academic outlet of the assigned piece. This can include elements such as background of the author(s), submission policy of the journals, editorial board of the journal, benefits to the body of knowledge, commonalities with other assigned readings that day, research stream of the authors, university affiliations, etc. The synthesis respondent will provide a concise synthesis of all the readings that day or related to the topic over several days.

Standard Written Assignments (7)

Assignment 1: Research In-Process Spreadsheet (5%)

Create a table, spreadsheet, or any other tool that personally works for you regarding your research in process. Areas to track include: conference papers, journal articles, book chapters, as well as general ideas you have but have not initiated (rows). You can cross list those with the working titles of your paper, author(s), which outlet, and comments about status (columns).

Assignment 2: The Qualitative State of Your Field (10%)

Select three journals in your field. Define your field in any way you choose. Examine the three journals for the past **five** years for qualitative research articles. Write a five-page report (excluding reference but please provide a reference page) on the status of qualitative research in your field. Consider the topics addressed, authors, methods used, trends, explanations of qualitative approaches, whatever appears interesting and relevant. Make page 5 of your report a bibliography of articles located. Minimum number of articles is eight. If you find fewer than eight, search wider (more journals) or deeper (more years).

Assignment 3: Long Interview (10%)

Conduct an in-depth interview. The interview topic should be the same as for your final proposal. In fact, you will use findings from your interview in the literature section of the final proposal. Audiotape and transcribe the interview verbatim and turn in both.

Assignment 4: Field Observations and Reflections (10%)

You will conduct one observation (preferably related to your research proposal) in a natural setting for two hours. Unless you have a particular research question in which you are interested, the question you need to address is: "What's going on here?" (Consider using this observation as a pilot for your proposal and integrating the observation into the proposal). Use the first five minutes to write a somewhat detailed description of the site. Then, pay attention to the people, how they look, how they interact, their behavior, etc. While on site, you will take condensed field notes. (Those taken on the field: reminders to yourself of things seen and heard. If you are writing too much, you won't be able to observe what is going on around you). Allow yourself the hour immediately after the observation to prepare your expanded field notes. (These are extensive notes. Write all you remember, but try not to make value judgments). When taking notes, I recommend that you divide the page in two columns. On one column write your observations, on the other jot down your thoughts and feelings.

You should turn in:

- Your condensed field notes

- Your expanded field notes
- A brief account of your observations; did you find an answer to your initial question? If so, what is your answer? If not, what precluded you from answering the question?
- A written reaction to the project including: Reflections on the experience of being an observer (what you learned about being an observer, about yourself, and about your comfort level with this method)

Assignment 5: Textual Analysis (10%)

To be determined depending on the research interest of the class.

Assignment 6: Book Review (10%)

Two-three page book review of Berger, P., & Luckmann, T. (1966). *The social construction of reality: A treatise in the sociology of knowledge*. New York, NY: Doubleday Dell. Please tie the review to your research area and discuss how this theory can help your understanding of your particular area of study.

Assignment 7: Research Proposal or Paper (40%)

Do sufficient reading, fieldwork, or interviewing to write a 20+ page, qualitative-based, interpretive humanism orientation research proposal and partially to fully complete paper. Your proposal must include some primary research conducted this semester (including IRB approval) utilizing the methods covered in class and should address the purpose/goal of the research, research questions, data gathering and analysis, and time frame to complete your study. If you have developed a proposal in another graduate class, this would be a great time to complete that paper for this assignment.

GRADE: Grading is done on a traditional, graduate-level A through F scale with A representing superior performance, B representing satisfactory performance, and C representing less than satisfactory performance.

COURSE SCHEDULE

TUESDAY, JANUARY 15: Course Introduction, Syllabus

TUESDAY, JANUARY 22: Theoretical Traditions and Qualitative Communication Research

- Lindlof & Taylor, Chapter 1: Introduction to Qualitative Communication Research
- Lindlof & Taylor, Chapter 2: Theoretical Traditions and Qualitative Communication Research
- Morse, J. M. (1996). Is qualitative research complete? *Qualitative Health Research*, 6(3), 3-5.
- **Due: Assignment 1: Research In-Process Spreadsheet (5%)**

TUESDAY, JANUARY 29: Theoretical Traditions and Qualitative Communication Research (cont.) & Designing Qualitative Research Projects

- Jackson, R. L., Drummond, D. K., & Camara, S. (2007). What is qualitative research? *Qualitative Research Reports in Communication*, 8(1), 21-28.
- Lindlof & Taylor, Chapter 3: Design I: Planning Research Projects
- Gurwitsch, A. *The common-sense world as social reality and the theory of social science*. Originally published as "The common-sense world as social reality – a discourse on Alfred Schutz," in *Social Research*, 1962, 29.
- Blumer, H. (1969). *Symbolic interactionism*. Prentice-Hall.
- Stahl, B. C., Lichtenstein, Y., & Mangan, A. The limits of risk management – A social construction approach. *Communications of the International Information Management Association*, 3(3), 15-22.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 5: Theoretical Traditions and Qualitative Communication Research (cont.) Implementing Qualitative Research Projects

- Christians, C. G., & Carey, J. W. (1989). The logic and aims of qualitative research. In G. H. I. Stempel & B. H. Wesley (Eds.), *Research methods in mass communication* (pp. 354-374). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Supa, D. W. (2009). The origins of empirical vs. critical epistemology in American communication. *American Communication Journal*, 11(3).
- Lindlof & Taylor, Chapter 4: Design II: Implementing Research Projects
- Fisher, W. R. (1985). The narrative paradigm: An elaboration. *Communication Monographs*, 52, 347-367.
- Sunwolf, & Frey, L. R. (2001). Storytelling: The power of narrative communication and interpretation. In W. P. Robinson & H. Giles (Eds.), *The new handbook of language and social psychology*. Wiley & Sons.
- Russell, L. D., & Babrow, A. S. (2011). Risk in the making: Narrative, problematic integration, and the social construction of risk. *Communication Theory*, 21, 239-260.
- **Due: Assignment 2: The Qualitative State of Your Field (10%)**

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 12: Ethnography & Netnography

- Lindlof & Taylor, Chapter 5: Producing Data I: Participating, Observing, and Recording Social Action (PP. 133-136).
- Gold, R. L. (1997). The ethnographic method in sociology. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 3(4), 388-402.
- Wolcott, H. F. (1997). *Ethnographic research in education*. In R. M. Jaeger (Ed.), *Complementary methods for research in education* (pp. 155-172).
- Dunlap, E., & Johnson, B. D. (1998). Gaining access to hidden populations: Strategies for gaining cooperation of drug sellers/dealers and their families through ethnographic research. *Drugs Sociology*, 14(1-2), 127-149.
- Palenchar, M. J. (2008). Risk communication and community right to know: A public relations obligation to inform. *Public Relations Journal*, 2(1), 1-26.
- Kozinets, R. V. (2010, March). *Netnography: The marketer's secret weapon: How social media understanding drives innovation*. NetBase.
http://info.netbase.com/rs/netbase/images/Netnography_WP.pdf
- Whyte, W. F. (1993). Revisiting Street Corner Society. *Sociological Forum*, 8(2), 28-298.
- Suggested:
 - Geertz, C. (1974). "From the native's point of view": On the nature of anthropological understanding. *Bulletin of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences*, 28(1), 26-45.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 19: Participating, Observing & Recording Social Action

- Lindlof & Taylor, Chapter 5: Producing Data I: Participating, Observing, and Recording Social Action (PP. 136 – rest of chapter)
- Shenton, A. K. (2010). Etic, emic, or both? A fundamental decision for researchers of young people's information needs. *New Review of Children's Literature and Librarianship*, 16, 54-67.
- Ashworth, P. D. (1995). The meaning of "participation" in participant observation. *Qualitative Health Research*, 5(3), 366-387.
- Muir, K. B., & Seitz, T. (2004). Machismo, misogyny, and homophobia in a male athletic subculture: A participant-observation of deviant rituals in collegiate rugby. *Deviant Behavior*, 25, 303-327.
- Walcott, H. F. *Confessions of a "trained" observer*.
- Nathan, R. (2006). *My freshman year: What a professor learned by becoming a student*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press. (Just read the "Afterward: Ethics and ethnography" for class but I do recommend this book as a popular press ethnography).

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 26: Field Research

- Emerson, R. M., Fretz, R. I., & Shaw, L. L. (1995). *Writing ethnographic fieldnotes*. IL: University of Chicago Press.
- DeSantis, A. D. (2002). Smoke screen: An ethnographic study of a cigar shop's collective rationalization. *Health Communication*, 14(2), 167-198.

TUESDAY, MARCH 5: Interviewing

- Taylor, R., Haley, E., Wells, L. G., & Pardun, C. J. – *The Interview as an advertising research tool*
- Lindlof & Taylor, Chapter 6: Producing Data II: Qualitative Interviewing
- *Listening to consumers: The Qualitative interview*. Chapter 4 in Morrison, M. A., Haley, E., Sheehan, K. B., & Taylor, R. E. (2011). *Using qualitative research in advertising: Strategies, techniques, and applications*. Los Angeles, CA: Sage.
- Haley, E. (1996). Exploring the construct of organization as source: Consumers' understandings of organizational sponsorship of advocacy advertising. *Journal of Advertising*, 25(2), 19-35.
- McCracken, G. (1988). *The long interview*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage. Read: Sections 1 & 2 (pp. 9-28)
- **DUE: Assignment 6: Book Review (10%)**

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 27: CCI 35TH ANNUAL RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM (ATTENDANCE REQUIRED)

TUESDAY, MARCH 12: Interviewing, Analysis & Writing the Writing-Up Process

- *Projective and elicitation techniques*. Chapter 5 in Morrison, M. A., Haley, E., Sheehan, K. B., & Taylor, R. E. (2011). *Using qualitative research in advertising: Strategies, techniques, and applications*. Los Angeles, CA: Sage.
- McCracken, G. (1988). *The long interview*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage. Read the rest of the book.
- Blee, K. M. (1998). White-knuckle research: Emotional dynamics in fieldwork with racist activists. *Qualitative Sociology*, 21, 381-399.
- **Due: Assignment 4: Field Observations and Reflections (10%)**

TUESDAY, MARCH 19: Focus Group & Analysis

- Morgan, D. L. (1997). *Focus groups in qualitative research* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Madriz, E. (2000). Focus groups in feminist research. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.) *Handbook of qualitative research* (2nd ed.; pp. 835-850). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Hardin, M., & Whiteside, E. (2012). Consequences of being the "team mom": Women in sports information and the friendliness trap. *Journal of Sports Management*, 26(4), 309-321.
- Brannen, J. & Pattman, R. (2005). Work-family matters in the workplace: The use of focus groups in a study of a UK social services department. *Qualitative Research*, 5, 523-542.

TUESDAY, MARCH 26: SPRING BREAK [no classes]

TUESDAY, APRIL 2: Life Documents, Life Story, Autoethnography & Underpinnings of Qualitative Data Analysis

- Lindlof & Taylor, Chapter 7: Producing Data III: Analyzing Material Culture and Documents
- Hodder, I. (2000). The interpretation of documents and material culture. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 703-727). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Glaser, B. G., & Strauss, A. L. (2009). *The discovery of grounded theory*. Read Chapter 7: New sources for qualitative data.
- Tierney, W. G. (1998). Life history's history: Subjects foretold. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 4.1, 49-70.
- **Due: Assignment 3: Long Interview (10%)**

TUESDAY, APRIL 9: Qualitative Data Analysis

- Lindlof & Taylor, Chapter 8: Sensemaking: Qualitative Data Analysis and Interpretation
- *In-Class Assignment: Data Analysis Exercise*
- Additional reading assignments regarding data analysis will be determined according to the class' research interests and the progression of the class

TUESDAY, APRIL 2 – THURSDAY, APRIL 4: CCI SOCIAL MEDIA WEEK

TUESDAY, APRIL 16: Qualitative Textual Analysis

- Lindlof & Taylor, Chapter 8: Sensemaking: Qualitative Data Analysis and Interpretation
- *In-Class Assignment: Data Analysis Exercise*
- Additional reading assignments regarding data analysis will be determined according to the class' research interests and the progression of the class

TUESDAY, APRIL 23: Ethics, Evaluating and Writing Qualitative Research

- Corbin, J., & Strauss, A. (2008). *Basics of qualitative research* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. Read Chapter 14: Criteria for Evaluation, pp. 297-312.
- Ryan, P. (2006). Researching Irish gay male lives: Reflections on disclosure and intellectual autobiography in the production of personal narratives. *Qualitative Research*, 6, 151-168.
- Boman, J., & Jevne, R. (2000). Pearls, pith, and provocation: Ethical evaluation in qualitative research. *Qualitative Health Research*, 10(4), 547-554.
- Wahab, S. (2003). Creating knowledge collaboratively with female sex workers: Insights from a qualitative, feminist, and participatory study. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 9(4), 625-642.
- Lindlof & Taylor, Chapter 9: Writing, Authoring, and Publishing.
- Lovitts, B. E. (2008). The transition to independent research: Who makes it, who doesn't, and why. *The Journal of Higher Education*, 79(3), 296-325.
- ***Due: Assignment 5: Textual Analysis (10%)***

CCI 635 ANNUAL QUALITATIVE RESEARCH CONFERENCE

- Date to be determined – will present your work in this class in an academic conference paper format (10 minutes each). The paper topics will be grouped into thematic sessions (3 session topics; 3 papers per session). Three students will also be respondents for each session.

MONDAY, MAY 6: ELECTRONIC COPY DUE BY 12:15 PM (FINAL EXAM TIME FOR THIS CLASS)

- ***Due: Assignment 7: Research Proposal or Paper (40%)***