

## CCI 635: Qualitative Communication & Information Research Methods I

**SECTION:** 001

**CLASS LOCATION/TIME:** CCI 420, Monday, 11:15 AM-2:00 PM

**INSTRUCTOR:** Dr. Michael J. Palenchar

**OFFICE INFORMATION:** 476 Communications Building, 974-9082, [mpalench@utk.edu](mailto:mpalench@utk.edu)

**OFFICE HOURS:** Monday 9:30-11:00 AM, Tuesday 11:15 AM – 1:00 PM, after class, or by appointment

**TO SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT DURING OFFICE HOURS:** Call Joyce Holloway, CPS, 974-3048, or email her at [adv@utk.edu](mailto: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. Registration Restriction(s): Enrollment is limited to students in the College of Communication and Information or consent of instructor. Minimum student level –graduate.

### **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 and interview transcripts, 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* (6<sup>th</sup> ed.). Washington, DC.
- Emerson, R. M., Fretz, R. I., & Shaw, L. L. (1995). *Writing ethnographic fieldnotes*. IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Goffman, E. (1959). *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*. Anchor Books. ISBN: 0385094027
- Lindlof, T. R., & Taylor, B. C. (2011). *Qualitative communication research methods* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). Los Angeles, CA: Sage.
- McCracken, Grant. (1988). *The long interview*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage
- Morgan, D. L. (1997). *Focus groups in qualitative research* (2<sup>nd</sup> 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* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). Los Angeles, CA: Sage.
- Creswell, J. W. (2006). *Qualitative inquiry & research design* (2<sup>nd</sup> 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* (2<sup>nd</sup> 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* (2<sup>nd</sup> 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* (2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Yin, R. K. (2009). *Case study research design and methods* (4<sup>th</sup> 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, 6<sup>th</sup> 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.

**Open Records Act:** This course adheres to the University's policy regarding the use and release of student records that are governed by Public Law 93-380, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act and the Tennessee Public Records Act, which charges the University and its employees with protecting the confidentiality of the educational records or its prospective, current and former students. One way this affects you is that it means that I cannot share or discuss grades via email.

## **POLICIES**

- 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.
- No extra credit will be given for additional work.
  - Syllabus is subject to change, as instructor deems appropriate and necessary. The listed readings represent a minimum requirement, and the instructor reserves the right to add readings.

- Points will be deducted for spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors, as well as failing to follow assignment directions and requirements, and/or meeting time deadlines.
- All discussions will be ruled by mutual respect for people and their opinions. Effective public relations practice is dependent on gathering and understanding diverse viewpoints. Furthermore, professionalism requires an appreciation for the multicultural society and global economy in which students plan to work.

## ASSIGNMENTS

### General Assignments (10%)

- *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 (5 MINUTES) synthesis of all the readings that day or related to the topic over several days.
- *Research In-Process Spreadsheet*: 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).
- *The Qualitative State of Your Field*: Select three journals in your field. Define your field in any way you choose. Examine the three journals for the past **3+** 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).
- *Lessons Learned/Critique of the CCI Annual Research Symposium*

### 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.

### 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)

### **Textual Analysis (10%)**

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

### **Book Review & Book Club Discussion (10%)**

Concise book review (3 pages maximum, not including cover page or references) of Goffman, E. (1959). *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*. Please tie the review to your research area and discuss how this theory can help your understanding of your particular area of study.

### **Research Proposal or Paper (50%)**

Do sufficient reading, fieldwork, or interviewing to write a 20 page (not including cover page, abstract, references, tables, etc.), qualitative-based, interpretive orientation research proposal and partially to fully complete paper. Your proposal must include some primary research conducted this semester (including IRB approval if necessary) 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 (FLEXIBLE)

### MONDAY, JANUARY 12: Course Introduction, Syllabus

- *A cultural approach to communication.*
- 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.
- Whiteside, E., & Hardin, M. (2011). Women (not) watching women: Leisure time, television, and implications for televised coverage of women 's sports. *Communication, Culture & Critique, 4*, 122-143.

### MONDAY, JANUARY 19: MLK HOLIDAY

### MONDAY, JANUARY 26: Theoretical Traditions and Qualitative Communication Research

- Freedman, D. H. (2010, December 10). Why scientific studies are so often wrong: The streetlight effect. *Discover*. Retrieved from [http://discovermagazine.com/2010/jul-aug/29-why-scientific-studies-often-wrong-streetlight-effect#.UtBdl\\_1wRFw](http://discovermagazine.com/2010/jul-aug/29-why-scientific-studies-often-wrong-streetlight-effect#.UtBdl_1wRFw)
- Lindlof & Taylor, Chapter 1: Introduction to Qualitative Communication Research
- Lindlof & Taylor, Chapter 2: Theoretical Traditions and Qualitative Communication Research
- Gurwitsch, A. (1974). *Phenomenology and the theory of science*. Northwestern University Press. Chapter 1: *The life-world and the phenomenological theory of science*.
- 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 Schultz," in *Social Research, 1962, 29*.
- Supa, D. W. (2009). The origins of empirical vs. critical epistemology in American communication. *American Communication Journal, 11*(3).
- **Due: General Assignment – Research In-Process Spreadsheet**
- **Due: General Assignment – The Qualitative State of Your Field**

### MONDAY, FEBRUARY 2: Designing & Implementing Qualitative Research Projects

- Lindlof & Taylor, Chapter 3: Design I: Planning Research Projects
- Lindlof & Taylor, Chapter 4: Design II: Implementing Research Projects

### MONDAY, FEBRUARY 9: Theoretical Traditions and Qualitative Communication Research

- Goffman, E. (1959). *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*. Anchor Books. ISBN: 0385094027
- PLEASE BRING IN AND BE PREPARED TO DISCUSS FOR 5 MINUTES ONE ARTICLE IN YOUR AREA OF STUDY THAT RELATES TO GOFFMAN'S WORK.
- **Due: Book Review**

### MONDAY, FEBRUARY 16: Interviewing

- Lindlof & Taylor, Chapter 6: Producing Data II: Qualitative Interviewing
- Taylor, R., Haley, E., Wells, L. G., & Pardun, C. J. – *The Interview as an advertising research tool*
- *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)
- PLEASE BRING IN AND BE PREPARED TO DISCUSS FOR 5-10 MINUTES ONE ARTICLE IN YOUR AREA OF STUDY UTILIZING INTERVIEWS AS A QUALITATIVE METHOD

#### **MONDAY, FEBRUARY 23: Interviewing, Analysis & Writing the Writing-Up Process**

- McCracken, G. (1988). *The long interview*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage. Read the rest of the book.
- *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.
- Blee, K. M. (1998). White-knuckle research: Emotional dynamics in fieldwork with racist activists. *Qualitative Sociology*, 21, 381-399.
- PLEASE BRING IN AND BE PREPARED TO DISCUSS FOR 5-10 MINUTES ONE ARTICLE IN YOUR AREA OF STUDY UTILIZING INTERVIEWS AS A QUALITATIVE METHOD

#### **WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 25: CCI ANNUAL RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM – ATTENDANCE IS REQUIRED**

#### **MONDAY, MARCH 2: 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.
- 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](http://info.netbase.com/rs/netbase/images/Netnography_WP.pdf)
- Whyte, W. F. (1993). Revisiting Street Corner Society. *Sociological Forum*, 8(2), 28-298.
- DeSantis, A. D. (2002). Smoke screen: An ethnographic study of a cigar shop's collective rationalization. *Health Communication*, 14(2), 167-198.
- **Due: General Assignment – Lessons Learned/Critique of the CCI Annual Research Symposium**

#### **MONDAY, MARCH 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).
- Emerson, R. M., Fretz, R. I., & Shaw, L. L. (1995). *Writing ethnographic fieldnotes*. IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Palenchar, M. J. (2008). Risk communication and community right to know: A public relations obligation to inform. *Public Relations Journal*, 2(1), 1-26.
- **Due: Long Interview – Friday, March 13**

#### **MONDAY, MARCH 16: SPRING BREAK [no classes]**

#### **MONDAY, MARCH 23: Focus Groups**

- Morgan, D. L. (1997). *Focus groups in qualitative research* (2<sup>nd</sup> 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* (2<sup>nd</sup> 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.
- **Due: Field Observations and Reflections**

#### **MONDAY, MARCH 30: Life Documents, Life Story, Autoethnography & Underpinnings of Qualitative Data Analysis**

- Lindlof & Taylor, Chapter 7: Producing Data III: Analyzing Material Culture and Documents
- Glaser, B. G., & Strauss, A. L. (2009). *The discovery of grounded theory*. Read Chapter 7: New sources for qualitative data.
- 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.
- Tierney, W. G. (1998). Life history’s history: Subjects foretold. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 4.1, 49-70.

#### **MONDAY, APRIL 6: Qualitative Data Analysis & Software Applications**

- 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

#### **MONDAY, APRIL 13: Qualitative Data Analysis & Software Applications**

- 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

#### **MONDAY, APRIL 20: Ethics, Evaluating and Writing Qualitative Research**

- Corbin, J., & Strauss, A. (2008). *Basics of qualitative research* (3<sup>rd</sup> 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.
- **Due: Textual Analysis**

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

- **Due: Assignment 7: Research Proposal or Paper**
- **CCI 635 ANNUAL QUALITATIVE RESEARCH CONFERENCE (10:15 AM – 12:15 PM), Scripps Lab Studio reserved starting at 9 AM, Lunch provided in Scripps Lab Conference Room at noon (approximately).**
  - Will present your work in an academic conference paper format (10 minutes each). The paper topics will be grouped into 2 thematic sessions. Two students will act as a chair for each session, and two students will act as a respondent for each session.