

P12 EdPOL 549B: Special Topics in Qualitative Methods: Observations & Interviewing

University of Washington, College of Education

Spring Quarter 2015

Wednesdays, 4:30 – 6:50

Dempsey Hall, Room 124

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Office hours: Wednesdays, 2:30-3:30 + by appointment

Recommended Text

Patton, M. Q. (2014). *Qualitative Research & Evaluation Methods, 4th Edition*. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications.

Course Objectives

This seminar focuses on using interviews and observations as key methods in qualitative research. We will read texts that explain various approaches to these methods, as well as read and critique research papers that use the methods. By the end of the course, students will have an in-depth understanding of how to choose an appropriate approach given a specific research question and context and how to implement the approach to gather high-quality qualitative data.

Concurrently, students will write and pilot both interview and observation protocols for their own research study. Depending on individual students' doctoral level, these can be beta versions of dissertation data collection protocols, those used for the yearlong qualitative methods course, those used for a research project, or for a class paper. Our focus will be on the methods rather than the outcomes from the data (although those are clearly related—we work on the methods to have outcomes to talk about!).

After the second week, the course will be structured as part class/part workshop: we will spend the first hour and a half discussing the readings, looking at protocols, and discussing the topic of the week, and the last 45 minutes as a “workshop” for students' work on methods. In addition to the assigned reading and writing assignments, then, students will be required to both workshop their own writing and read/critique their colleagues' writing.

In this course, students have one final project: tested versions of interview and observation protocols. These protocols will be bookmarked by an extensive discussion of methodological choices (including research that lead students to their decisions), and a discussion of the process, illustrating what students' learned and next steps. There are several assignments along the way to help guide work towards this final product, as well as a peer review. These assignments are described below, as well as expectations for classroom participation:

- 1) **Course project.** Your final project should adhere to APA 6th edition style. A detailed assignment sheet and grading rubric will be handed out in class. In addition to the final project, students will turn in a final draft and a peer review. There will be three sections of the project:
 - a. *Introduction/Discussion of Methods:* in the front section of the project, you will introduce your research topic, research questions, and the justification for the selected methods. You will also describe the protocols' development—how did they change through the quarter? Why?
 - b. *Protocols:* you will include final versions of both interview and observation protocols appropriate for your research topic.
 - c. *Analysis/Next Steps:* in the last section of the project, you will discuss the data you gathered using the protocols, and what those say about the protocols themselves—What did you miss? What will you change for next time?

Due dates: Draft 5/27 (4:30pm); Peer Review 6/3 (4:30pm); Final Project 6/8 (midnight)

- 2) **Memos (5).** Throughout the course, you will have five separate “memos” due about elements of your final project. Elements of these memos should end up being a part of your final project (especially the protocols). More details and a rubric will be given out in the class before the assignment is due. All assignments are to be uploaded to Canvas by 4:15pm before class.
 - a. *First Memo:* Research questions and description of project; due: 4/8
 - b. *Second Memo:* Draft of interview protocol + justification; due: 4/15
 - c. *Third Memo:* Interview data + discussion; due: 4/29
 - d. *Fourth Memo:* Draft of observation protocol + justification; due: 5/13
 - e. *Fifth Memo:* Observation data + discussion; due: 5/27
- 3) **Peer Reviews.** Starting in the third week of the course, students will read peers' writing for our workshop. You will provide feedback on your peers' writing that is specific, actionable, and tied to what we are learning about qualitative methods. The person whose work is being workshopped will post their work to Canvas by Monday night, others will have until class time to read and comment on the papers (also on Canvas).
- 4) **Class participation.** This class relies on active and thoughtful participation to make it work. I have the following expectations about class participation: a) students attend class consistently and promptly; b) students come to class having read the readings carefully and critically; and c) students participate in class in an active, thoughtful, and respectful manner. Your grade will also reflect the degree to which you come to class prepared to discuss the readings and your peers' writing. Please note that you cannot pass the course if you miss more than two class sessions, and late assignments will be graded down one grade for every day they are late (from an A to an A-, an A- to a B+, etc).

Grading

Final Project:	50pts.
Memos:	30pts.
Peer Review:	5pts.

Classroom Participation: 15pts.

Students with disabilities

If you would like to request academic accommodations due to a disability, please contact Disabled Student Services, 448 Schmitz, 543-8924 (V/TDD). If you have a letter from Disabled Student Services indicating you have a disability that requires academic accommodations, please present the letter to me so we can discuss the accommodations you might need for class.

Schedule of classes:

Module 1: Introduction

Week 1 (4/1): Introductions, Research Questions, & Epistemology

- Readings:
 - Glesne, C. (2011). Chapter 1: Meeting qualitative inquiry. In *Becoming Qualitative Researchers* (pp. 1-26). Boston: Pearson.

- Assignments Due: None

Module 2: Interviews

Week 2 (4/8): Question Types

- Readings:
 - Spradley, J. P. (1979). Chapter 4: Asking descriptive questions. In *The ethnographic interview* (pp. 78-91). Fort Worth: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich College Publishers.
 - Spradley, J. P. (1979). Chapter 7: Asking structural questions. In *The ethnographic interview* (pp. 120-131). Fort Worth: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich College Publishers.
 - Spradley, J. P. (1979). Chapter 9: Asking contrast questions. In *The ethnographic interview* (pp. 155-172). Fort Worth: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich College Publishers.

- Assignments Due:
 - **First Memo:** Research questions and description of project, including epistemology (2 pages max)

Week 3 (4/15): Interviewing Techniques

- Readings:
 - Patton, M. (2015). Qualitative interviewing (Chapter 7). In *Evaluation and research methods*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
 - Lin, A. C. (2000). *Reform in the making: The implementation of social policy in prison*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
 - Read chapter 1, 3, and Appendix 1
 - Optional, but interesting (and an easy read): Appendix 2

- Assignments Due:
 - **Second Memo:** Draft of interview protocol + justification
 - **Peer Review #1**

Week 4 (4/22): Special Topics in Interviewing: Focus Groups

- Readings:

- Krueger, R. A., & Casey, M. A. (2015). Focus Groups: A practical guide for applied research, 5th edition. Thousand Oaks: Sage. Chapters 1-3.
- Lukas, C. V., & Cunningham-Sabo, L. (2011). Qualitative Investigation of the Cooking with Kids Program: Focus Group Interviews with Fourth-Grade Students, Teachers, and Food Educators. *Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior*, 43(6), 517-524.
- Optional Readings:
 - Allen, M. D. (2014). Telephone focus groups: Strengths, challenges, and strategies for success. *Qualitative Social Work*, 13(4), 571-583.
 - Auerbach, S., & Collier, S. (2012). Bringing high stakes from the classroom to the parent center: Lessons from an intervention program for immigrant families. *Teachers College Record*, 114(3), 1-40.
- Assignments Due:
 - **Peer Review #2**

Week 5 (4/29): Special Topics in Interviewing: Large Research Projects + Interviewing Children

- Readings:
 - Sample transcripts from MIST interviews
 - Docherty, S., & Sandelowski, M. (1999). Focus on qualitative methods: Interviewing children. *Research in Nursing & Health*, 22(2), 177-185.
- Optional Readings:
 - Messiou, K. (2008). Understanding children's constructions of meanings about other children: implications for inclusive education. *Journal of Research in Special Educational Needs*, 8(1), 27-36.
 - James, N. (2007). The use of email interviewing as a qualitative method of inquiry in educational research. *British Educational Research Journal*, 33(6), 963-976.
- Assignments Due:
 - **Third Memo:** Interview data + discussion
 - **Peer Review #3**

Module 3: Observations

Week 6 (5/6): Observation: from structured to participant observation

- Readings:
 - Glesne, C. (2006). Chapter 3: Being there: Developing understanding through participant observation. In *Becoming qualitative researchers: An introduction*. Fourth edition. (pp. 63-100). Boston: Pearson.
 - Hilberg, R. S., Waxman, H. C., & Tharp, R. G. (2004). Introduction: Purposes and perspectives on classroom observational research. In H. C. Waxman, R. G. Tharp, & R. S. Hilberg (eds.), *Observational research in U.S. classrooms: New approaches for understanding cultural and linguistic diversity* (pp. 1-20). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. [Read pp. 1-11 only]
- Recommended Reading:
 - Patton, M. Q. (2014). *Qualitative Research & Evaluation Methods: Integrating Theory and Practice*. SAGE Publications. Chapter 6: Fieldwork Strategies and Observation Methods.

- Assignments Due:
 - *Peer Review #4*

Week 7 (5/13): Observations: taking field notes [Special Guest: Morva McDonald]

- Readings:
 - Lofland & Lofland (1995). Chapter 5: Logging Data. In *Analyzing social settings: A guide to qualitative observation and analysis* (pp. 66-98). Belmont: Wadsworth Publishing Company.
 - McDonald, M., Brayko, K., & Bowman, M. (2013). Learning to see students: Opportunities to develop relational practices of teaching through community-based placements in teacher education. *Teachers College Record*, 115(4).
- Optional Reading:
 - Miles, M. B. and Huberman, A. M. (1994). Excerpts from Chapter 4: Early Steps in Analysis. In *Qualitative data analysis: An expanded sourcebook*. Second edition. Thousand Oaks: Sage. Read pp. 50-55 and 72-76.
- Assignments Due:
 - *Fourth Memo*: Draft of observation protocol + justification
 - *Peer Review #5*

Week 8 (5/20): Observing Classrooms + Children [Special Guest: Kristen Bottema-Beutel]

- Readings:
 - Datnow, A. & Yonezawa, S. (2004). Observing school restructuring in multilingual, multicultural classrooms: Balancing ethnographic and evaluative approaches. In H. C. Waxman, R. G. Tharp, & R. S. Hilberg (eds.), *Observational research in U.S. classrooms: New approaches for understanding cultural and linguistic diversity* (pp. 174-205 and pp. 170-171). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
 - Bottema-Beutel, K. (2011). The negotiation of footing and participation structure in a social group of teens with and without autism spectrum disorder. *Journal of Interactional Research in Communication Disorders*, 2, 61-83.
- Assignments Due:
 - *Peer Review #6*

Week 9 (5/27): Special topics in observations: using video [Special Guest: Katie Taylor]

- Readings:
 - Derry, S. J., Pea, R. D., Barron, B., Engle, R. A., Erickson, F., Goldman, R., . . . Sherin, M. G. (2010). Conducting video research in the learning sciences: Guidance on selection, analysis, technology, and ethics. *The Journal of the Learning Sciences*, 19(1), 3-53.
 - Taylor, K. H., & Hall, R. (2013). Counter-mapping the neighborhood on bicycles: Mobilizing youth to reimagine the city. *Technology, Knowledge and Learning*, 18(1-2), 65-93.
- Assignments Due:

- *Fifth Memo*: Observation data + discussion
- *Draft*: Final project

Module 4: Bringing it all together

Week 10 (6/3): Where the researcher comes in

- Readings:
 - Peshkin, A. (1988). In Search of Subjectivity—One's Own. *Educational Researcher*, 17(7), 17-21.
 - Rigby, J. (2012). First-Year principals' engagement with instructional leadership: The presence, pathway, and power of institutional logics. *Unpublished doctoral dissertation. University of California, Berkeley*. Chapter 3: Study design and methodology
- Optional Readings:
 - LeCompte, M. D. & Goetz, J. P. (1982). Problems of reliability and validity in ethnographic research. *Review of Educational Research*, 52(1), 31-60.
- Assignments Due:
 - Project peer review

Final Project Due: midnight, June 8th