

EDRS 822: ADVANCED APPLICATIONS OF QUALITATIVE RESEARCH METHODS

Tentative Syllabus

Joseph Maxwell, George Mason University
Spring, 2005

This is an advanced seminar devoted to the study of some important current issues in qualitative research. The seminar will deal with selected advanced topics and will provide students with opportunities to apply new skills and knowledge to projects related to their own interests. Prerequisite: EDRS 812 or equivalent coursework or experience.

Course Procedures and Requirements

This course consists of four modules, each on a particular aspect of qualitative research; each module consists of two to four classes. Each module will have a written assignment, due (except for the last one) two weeks after the module ends. I'll provide several suggested assignment topics for each module, but you may negotiate alternative assignments with me. The assignments I suggest are designed to be integrated around a single planned (or ongoing) study, such as a dissertation topic, and would provide useful preparation for writing a dissertation or a dissertation proposal. If you propose alternate assignments, I'd like you to integrate the work across the modules in a way that is appropriate for your interests.

Class meetings will be run as seminars. I expect you to come to class prepared to discuss the reading assignments, and encourage you to share with the class other readings and examples you have found that are relevant.

Before beginning the readings for a particular module I suggest that you ask yourself what your questions and concerns are about this issue and that you list them. After finishing a reading ask yourself how it related to your questions or concerns. Did it answer your questions? Did it raise new issues? Do you agree or disagree with the author? Then, outline the author's main points. If an example of a qualitative article is also assigned, analyze it in terms of the methodological readings: How do the ideas apply? How do they not apply? What are their implications for this study?

We will often be reading articles or book chapters presenting different perspectives on the same topic. Think about each author's approach to qualitative research as you read his/her section for a particular module, and how this fits into the different approaches we have discussed.

Grading

Grading will be based on the assignments for each module, and on class participation.

Written assignments

You are expected to do a written assignment for each of the four modules. These will count for 90% of the grade (22.5% for each assignment). Alternative assignments need to be discussed with me and approved prior to handing in the assignment. Page lengths for written assignments are suggestions only. Length is to be determined by the needs of the individual assignments.

My criteria for evaluating written assignments are: understanding of the material discussed in the module (through your discussion of the material and your application of it to your research topic), demonstration of an analytic/critical stance toward the material, appropriate application of the ideas in the module, and clarity in organization and writing. A grading rubric will be presented and discussed in class. This general rubric can be modified by mutual agreement for individual assignments.

Class participation

Class participation will count for 10% of the grade. Class participation grades will be based on informed, relevant, productive, and considerate contributions (questions as well as comments and responses) to class discussions.

Appointments

I do not have regular office hours; meetings are by appointment. My office phone number is 703-993-2119. My office is Robinson A353D. Please use email for questions that do not require a face-to-face meeting. My email address is jmaxwell@gmu.edu.

Assigned Readings

Coffey, Amanda, & Paul Atkinson (1996). *Making sense of qualitative data*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Mason, Jennifer (2002). *Qualitative researching*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Maxwell, Joseph A. (2004). *Qualitative research design*, second edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Riessman, Catherine K. (1993). *Narrative analysis*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Other required chapters, excerpts, and articles are listed for each module. They will be available on either electronic reserve or Blackboard.

Supplementary Readings

Emerson, R., R. Fretz, & L. Shaw (1995). *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes*. Chicago: University

of Chicago Press.

Hammersley, Martyn, & Paul Atkinson (1995). *Ethnography: Principles in practice*, 2nd edition. London: Tavistock.

Miles, Matthew B., & Huberman, A. Michael (1994). *Qualitative data analysis: An expanded sourcebook*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage

Wolcott, Harry (2001). *Writing up qualitative research*, 2nd ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

COURSE OUTLINE

1/25 1. Introduction to the course.

Module 1: Paradigms in Qualitative Research

2/1 2. Paradigms and traditions

Maxwell, Qualitative Research Design, Chapter 3, section on paradigms (pp. 36-37)
 Mason, Jennifer, *Qualitative Researching*, Introduction and Chapters 1 & 3
 Schram, Thomas, “Establishing Your Perspective” and “Making Decisions About Traditions.” Chapters 3 and 6 in Schram, *Conceptualizing Qualitative Inquiry*. (electronic reserve)

Recommended:

Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes*, Chapter 1

2/8 3. Interpretive approaches

Lincoln, Yvonna, and Egon Guba, “Paradigmatic Controversies, Contradictions, and Emerging Confluences.” In Denzin & Lincoln (Eds), *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, 2nd edition, pp. 163-188. (electronic reserve)
 Schwandt, Thomas, “Three Epistemological Stances for Qualitative Inquiry: Interpretivism, Hermeneutics, and Social Constructivism”. In Norman Denzin & Yvonna Lincoln (Eds), *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, 2nd edition, pp. 189-213. (electronic reserve)
 Nell Keddie, “Classroom Knowledge.” In Eric Bredo and Walter Feinberg, *Knowledge and Values in Social and Educational Research*, pp. 219-251 (electronic reserve)

Recommended:

Rabinow, Paul, and William Sullivan, “Introduction.” In Rabinow and Sullivan, *Interpretive Social Science: A Reader*.
 Menzel, Herbert, “Meaning: Who Needs It?” In Michael Brenner et al. (Eds), *The Social Contexts of Method*.

2/15 4. Critical approaches

Kincheloe, Joe, “Introduction: Teachers as Researchers, Good Work, and Critical Inquiry.” In *Teachers as Researchers: Qualitative Inquiry as a Path to Empowerment*, pp. 1-25 (electronic reserve)

Rubin, Beth “Unpacking Detracking: When Progressive Pedagogy Meets Students’ Social Worlds.” *American Educational Research Journal* 40 (2), pp. 539-573. (Summer 2003). (electronic reserve)

Recommended:

Kincheloe, Joe, and Peter McLaren, “Rethinking Critical Theory and Qualitative Research.” In Norman Denzin & Yvonna Lincoln (Eds), *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, 2nd edition, pp. 279-314. (electronic reserve)

Erin McNamara Horvat, Elliot B. Weininger, and Annette Lareau, “From Social Ties to Social Capital: Class Differences in the Relations Between Schools and Parent Networks.” *American Educational Research Journal* 40 (2), pp. 319-351. (Summer 2003). (electronic reserve)

Module 2: Qualitative Research Design

2/22 5. Qualitative research design

Maxwell, *Qualitative Research Design*, Chapters 1-2
 Mason, Jennifer, *Qualitative Researching*, Chapter 2
 Al-Ansari, Mohamed, “dissertation argument memo” (Blackboard)

3/1 6. Mixed method design

Module 1 assignment due

Maxwell & Loomis, “Mixed Method Design: An Alternative Approach”. In Abbas Tashakkori and Charles Teddlie, *Handbook of Mixed Methods in Social and Educational Research*. (Blackboard)

3/8 7. Conceptual frameworks and concept mapping

Maxwell, *Qualitative Research Design*, Chapters 3-4
 Coffey & Atkinson, *Making Sense of Qualitative Data*, Chapter 6
 Strauss, Anselm, *Qualitative Analysis for Social Scientists*, excerpt on integrative diagrams (electronic reserve)

3/15 Spring break; no class

Module 3: Qualitative Data Collection and Analysis

3/22 8. Interviewing*Module 2 assignment due*

Mason, Jennifer, *Qualitative Researching*, Chapter 4
 Martyn Hammersley & Paul Atkinson, *Ethnography: Principles in Practice*, chapter 5,
 "Insider accounts" (electronic reserve)
 Briggs, Charles, *Learning how to ask*, pp. 1-6, 21-60, 93-111. (electronic reserve)
 Cohen, Helene, *Caught in between*, Chapters 2 & 9. (electronic reserve)

Recommended:

Maxwell, *Qualitative Research Design*, Chapter 5

3/29 9. Coding and categorizing analysis

Mason, Jennifer, *Qualitative researching*, Chapters 8-9
 Coffey & Atkinson, *Making Sense of Qualitative Data*, Chapters 1-2, 7
 Cohen, Helene, *Caught in between*, Chapter 6 (electronic reserve)
 Weitzman, Eben, "Software and qualitative research." In Norman Denzin & Yvonna
 Lincoln (Eds), *Handbook of qualitative research*, 2nd edition. (electronic reserve)

Recommended:

Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes*, Chapter 6

4/5 10. Narrative analysis

Coffey & Atkinson, *Making Sense of Qualitative Data*, Chapter 3
 Riessman, *Narrative analysis*
 Catherine Riessman, "Personal trauma in women and men." In Catherine Riessman,
Divorce talk, Chapter 4, pp 120-160. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press,
 1990 (electronic reserve)

4/12 AERA; no class**Module 4: Qualitative Writing****4/19 11. Cases, vignettes, and life histories**

Module 3 assignment due

Seidman, *Interviewing as Qualitative Research*, Chapter 8, pp. 98-112 (on electronic reserve)

Graue & Walsh, "Vignettes." In *Studying children in context*, pp. 218, 221-228. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1998. (electronic reserve)

Graue, M. E. (1993) "Fulton Elementary", in *Ready for what? Constructing meanings of readiness for kindergarten*, pp. 63-88, 270-271. Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 1993. (electronic reserve)

Recommended:

Robert Stake, "Writing the report," "Reflections," and "Harper School," in *The Art of Case Study Research*, chapters 8-10. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1995. (electronic reserve)

4/26 12. Alternative approaches to qualitative writing

- Coffey & Atkinson, *Making Sense of Qualitative Data*, Chapter 5
- Miles & Huberman, *Qualitative Data Analysis*, Chapter 12, pp. 298-306. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1994 (electronic reserve)
- Ellis & Bochner, "Autoethnography, Personal Narrative, Reflexivity: Researcher as Subject." In Denzin & Lincoln (Eds), *Handbook of qualitative research*, 2nd edition, pp. 733-768. (electronic reserve)
- Hajj et al., "Notes on the fantastic journey of the Hajj, his anthropologist, and her American passport." *American Ethnologist* (1993). (electronic reserve)
- Rogers, Annie, "Voice, play, and a practice of ordinary courage in girls' and women's lives." *Harvard Educational Review* 63(3), pp. 265-295.

Recommended:

Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes*, Chapter 7

5/3 13. Validity

- Maxwell, *Qualitative Research Design*, Chapter 6
- Reread Charles Briggs, *Learning How to Ask*, pp. 21-26

5/10 14. Wrap up of course, brief reports from work done on modules, and course evaluation.

Module 4 assignment due