

EDRS 822: Advanced Applications of Qualitative Research Methods

Joseph Maxwell, George Mason University
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This is an advanced seminar devoted to the study of current topics in qualitative research. The seminar will deal with selected advanced topics in qualitative research 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 a number of modules on particular topics, each including two to four classes. Each module will have a written assignment, due the week after the module ends. Several suggested assignments will be listed for each module, but you may negotiate alternative products with me. The assignments I suggest are designed to be integrated around one topic (possibly 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; you are expected to come to class prepared to discuss the reading assignments, and are encouraged to share with the class other readings and examples that are relevant.

I often "preview" the next class at the end of each class. If you will not be at a class, you should check with another student to get the "preview" information.

Before beginning the readings for a particular module I suggest that you ask yourself what your questions and concerns are about this topic 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?

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

Required Readings

Coffey, A., & Atkinson, P. (1996). Making sense of qualitative data. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

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

Maxwell, J. (2004). Qualitative research design, second edition (draft). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Riessman, C. 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

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

Schram, Thomas (2003). Conceptualizing qualitative inquiry. Merrill Prentice Hall.

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

Course Outline

1/20 Introduction to course.

Module 1: Paradigms in Qualitative Research

1/27 Paradigms and approaches—class cancelled because of weather

2/3 Paradigms and approaches (continued)

No class—Blackboard discussion

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

Pitman & Maxwell, Qualitative Approaches to Evaluation (excerpt)

Maxwell, Qualitative Research Design, 2nd ed. (draft), excerpt on paradigms

2/10 Paradigms and approaches (continued)

Denzin, N. and Lincoln, Y. Introduction: The Discipline and Practice of Qualitative Research. In Denzin & Lincoln, Handbook of Qualitative Research, 2nd edition. Sage Publications, 2000. (On electronic reserve)

Schram, T. Conceptualizing Qualitative Inquiry, Chapter 3, Establishing Your Perspective. Merrill Prentice Hall, 2003. (On electronic reserve)

Rubin, B. Unpacking Detracking: When Progressive Pedagogy Meets Students' Social Worlds. American Educational Research Journal 40 (2), pp. 539-573. (Summer 2003). (On electronic reserve)

2/17 Practitioner and action research

Gary Anderson et al., Studying Your Own School, chapters 1 & 3. (On print reserve)

Natasha Warikoo, "Outcomes of reduced class size in high school math classes", chapter 6 in Meyers & Rust, Taking Action with Teacher Research. (On print reserve)

Niva Piran, "Re-inhabiting the body from the inside out", Chapter 14 in Tolman & Brydon-Miller, From Subjects to Subjectivities. (On print reserve)

Module 2: Qualitative Research Design

2/24 Qualitative and mixed method research design

Maxwell, Qualitative Research Design, 2nd ed (draft), Chapters 1-2 (Blackboard documents)

Al-Ansari, dissertation argument memo (Blackboard document)

Riddle dissertation proposal (Blackboard document)

Maxwell & Loomis, Mixed Method Design: An Alternative Approach. (Sent as email attachment; also on Blackboard)

John Sydenstricker-Neto, Research Design and Mixed-Method Approach. A Hands-on Experience. On the web at <http://trochim.human.cornell.edu/tutorial/Sydenstricker/bolsa.html>

Maxwell, Sandlow, and Bashook, Combining Ethnographic and Experimental Methods in Educational Evaluation: A Case Study. (electronic reserve)

3/2 Conceptual frameworks and concept mapping

Module 1 assignment due

Maxwell, Qualitative Research Design, 2nd ed (draft), Chapters 3-4 (Blackboard documents)

Coffey & Atkinson, Chapter 6

Strauss, Qualitative Analysis for Social Scientists, excerpt on integrative diagrams (electronic reserve)

3/9 Spring break; no class

Module 3: Qualitative Data Collection and Analysis

3/16 Interviewing

Martyn Hammersley & Paul Atkinson, Ethnography: Principles in practice, chapter 5, "Insider accounts" (electronic reserve)

Charles Briggs, Learning how to ask, pp. 1-6, 21-60, 93-111. (electronic reserve)

Helene Cohen, Caught in between, Chapters 2 & 5. (electronic reserve)

3/23 Coding and categorizing analysis

Module 2 assignment due

Coffey & Atkinson, Chapters 1-2, 6

Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes, Chapters 5-6

Katrine Staessens, "Identification and description of professional culture in innovating schools." Qualitative Studies in Education 6 (2), pp. 111-128 (1993). (electronic reserve)

Helene Cohen, Caught in between, Chapter 6. (electronic reserve)

3/30 Narrative and connecting analysis

Coffey & Atkinson, Chapter 3

Riessman, Narrative analysis

Catherine Riessman, "Personal trauma in women and men." In Catherine Riessman, Divorce talk, Ch. 4, pp 120-160. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1990. (focus on the two types of qualitative analysis) (electronic reserve)

Janie Simmons, America is dying slowly: Social constructions of AIDS in Roxbury, pp. iii-iv, 32-38, 64-95. (PhD dissertation, Harvard Graduate School of Education, 1994) (electronic reserve)

4/6 Software for qualitative data analysis

Coffey & Atkinson, Chapter 7

Eben Weitzman, "Data management and analysis methods." In Denzin & Lincoln (Eds), Handbook of qualitative research, 2nd edition. Sage Publications, 2000. (electronic reserve)

4/13 AERA; no class

Module 4: Writing and Validity

4/20 Traditional and alternative approaches to writing

Module 3 assignment due

Coffey & Atkinson, Chapter 5

Miles & Huberman, Qualitative Data Analysis, Ch. 12, pp. 298-306. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1994 (electronic reserve)

Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes, Chapters 7-8

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)

Ellis & Bochner, "Autoethnography, personal narrative, reflexivity: Researcher as subject." In Denzin & Lincoln (Eds), Handbook of qualitative research, 2nd edition. Sage Publications, 2000. (electronic reserve)

Hajj et al., Notes on the fantastic journey of the Hajj, his anthropologist, and her American passport. American Ethnologist (1993). (electronic reserve)

4/27 Cases, vignettes, and life histories

Erickson, F. "Data analysis and reporting," from Qualitative methods in research on teaching, pp. 149-152. In Merlin Wittrock (Ed), Handbook of Research on Teaching. Macmillan, 1986. (electronic reserve)

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

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)

Harry Wolcott, "Adequate schools and inadequate education: The life history of a sneaky kid." Anthropology and Education Quarterly, vol. 14 (1), pp.3-32 (1983) (electronic reserve) (electronic reserve)

5/4 Validity

Maxwell, Qualitative Research Design, 2nd ed (draft), Chapter 6

Reread Charles Briggs, Learning how to ask, pp. 21-26

Harry Wolcott, "On Seeking—and Rejecting—Validity in Qualitative Research." (electronic reserve)

5/11 Wrap up of course, brief reports from work done on modules, and course evaluation.

Module 4 assignment due

Grades

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).

If you decide to do one of the assignments suggested on the syllabus, you need to indicate which assignment (by number) you are doing. Alternative assignments need to be discussed with me and approved prior to handing in the assignment. Page requirements for written assignments are suggestions only. Length is to be determined by the needs of the individual assignments.

Criteria for written assignments: 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 stance toward the material, insightful 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.