

George Mason University
College of Education and Human Development
PhD Program

EDRS 836 001 – Narrative Inquiry
3 credits, Spring 2018
Thursdays, 7:20pm – 10:00pm, Peterson Hall 2408 – Fairfax Campus

Faculty

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Prerequisite

EDRS 812

University Catalog Course Description

Teaches theory behind narrative inquiry and application of narrative data collection and analysis procedures in educational research. Builds students' abilities to conduct narrative data collection and analysis.

Course Overview

This advanced qualitative research methods course explores the theory and practice of Narrative Inquiry through readings, discussion, and fieldwork. Narrative Inquiry has become a popular qualitative method in education and this course will help students learn a variety of ways to both collect and analyze the data.

Course Delivery Method

This course will be delivered using lecture, seminar, and fieldwork formats. Some online work will be included.

Learner Objectives

This course is designed to enable students to do the following:

1. Articulate the historical and theoretical foundations of narrative inquiry;
2. Describe the common characteristics of narrative inquiry;
3. Discuss common practices associated with designing narrative inquiry studies;
4. Outline ethical considerations common to the narrative inquiry process;
5. Describe the various types of data collected in narrative inquiry studies;
6. Design a narrative inquiry study;
7. Conduct narrative data collection; and
8. Conduct narrative data analysis.

Professional Standards (that are met through this course):

Not applicable

Required Texts

There are three required texts for this course:

- Riessman, C. K. (2008). *Narrative methods for the human sciences*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Webster, L., & Mertova, P. (2007). *Using narrative inquiry as a research method: An introduction to using critical event narrative analysis in research on learning and teaching*. London: Routledge.
- Maynes, M. J., Pierce, J. L., & Laslett, B. (2012). *Telling stories: The use of personal narratives in the social sciences and history*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press..

In addition to these texts, we will be reading some primary pieces in the field of narrative inquiry and exemplary articles. Some of them are listed here:

- Adame, A. and Knudson, R. (2007). Beyond the counter-narrative: Exploring alternative narrative of recovery from the psychiatric survivor movement. *Narrative Inquiry*, 17(2), 157-178.
- Bruce, E. (2008). Narrative inquiry: A spiritual and liberating approach to research. *Religious Education*, 103(3), 323-338.
- Causton-Theoharris, J., Ashby, C. and Cosier, M. (2009). Islands of loneliness: Exploring social interaction through the autobiographies of individuals with autism. *Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities*, 47(2), 84-96.
- Goldston, M. and Nichols, S. (2009). Visualizing culturally relevant science pedagogy through photonarratives of Black middle school teachers. *Journal of Science Teacher Education*, 20, 179-198.
- Guenette, F. and Marshall, A. (2009). Time line drawings: Enhancing participants voice in narrative interviews on sensitive topics. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 8(1), 85-92.
- Hunter, S. (2009). Beyond surviving: Gender differences in response to early sexual experiences with adults. *Journal of Family Issues*, 30(3), 391-412.
- Kambutu, J. and Nganga, L. (2008). In these uncertain times: Educators build cultural awareness through planned international experiences. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 24, 939-951.
- Knight, L. and Sweeney, K. (2007). Revealing implicit understanding through enthymes: a rhetorical method for the analysis of talk. *Medical Education*, 41, 226-233.
- Mischler, E. (1995). Models of narrative analysis: A typology. *Journal of Narrative and Life History*, 5(2), 87-123.
- Norton, N. (2008). Singing in the spirit: Spiritual practices inside public school classrooms. *Education and Urban Society*, 40(3), 342-360.
- Pinnegar, S. and Daynes, J. (2008) Locating narrative inquiry historically: Thematics in the turn to narrative. In D.J. Clandinin (Ed.) *Handbook of Narrative Inquiry: Mapping a Methodology*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Smith, B. and Sparkes, A. (2008). Narrative and its potential contribution to disability studies. *Disability and Society*, 23(1), 17-28.

In addition, you should find some articles of interest to you in the journal Narrative Inquiry. This will help you connect the methodology to your substantive field. One of your assignments will require this kind of additional reading.

Any other required readings will be posted as pdf files on Blackboard.

Course Performance Evaluation

Students are expected to submit all assignments on time in the manner outlined by the instructor (e.g., Blackboard, Tk20, hard copy).

You may resubmit field assignments, given my feedback in order to earn the grade you desire. Letter grades will be given on all assignments. The following weights will be utilized to compose the course grade.

Assignments	Points (each point = 1% of final grade)
1. Narrative Inquiry in Your World	15
a. Statement	5
b. Annotated Bibliography	10
2. Fieldwork	85
a. Data sample	20
b. Data Analyses (3)	20 each x 3 = 60 total
c. <u>Reflection on fieldwork</u>	5
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	100

The points/percentages above are intended to reflect the balance of priorities in the learning process.

Your work should be original, thoughtful, rigorous, and thorough. Plagiarism in any form is not acceptable. Please err on the side of documenting and citing sources.

Assignment Descriptions

Narrative Inquiry In Your World

- Statement of the potential for narratives with respect to your own research interests. This assignment will be no more than one page long. You will include an interest that seems well-suited to the use of narrative in your field – articulate a research question and a justification for using narrative inquiry.
- Annotated Bibliography. You will review at least 5 research articles in your field (as similar to your topic of interest as possible) that use some form of narrative inquiry to produce an annotated bibliography. You will summarize the bibliography by noting trends, strengths, and weaknesses across the articles.

Fieldwork Assignments

- Data Sample. You will collect and prepare for analysis (which would include transcribing if needed), one piece of narrative data using one of the techniques taught in class, such as

personal narrative interviews, stories or myths, images, or critical events. You will submit the data (transcribed if interview, original image if appropriate, etc.) and a 1-2 page written reflection on the data collection process, describing how you collected data, your participant(s), any challenges or surprises, ethical concerns, questions about the process, etc.

- Data Analyses. You will submit three examples of the following five types of analyses which you apply to your data sample: critical event, thematic, structural, performative, and visual. You will learn several ways to do each type of analysis which will give you a choice in terms of ways to do each of the above types. You will select the three analyses based on what would work best for your data and research interests.
- Reflection on Fieldwork. You will submit a two-page reflection on the analyses and data collection procedures, including questions, ethical concerns, challenges, surprises, etc.

Grading

The following is the grading scale. As noted above, your final grade is based on the number of points you earn throughout the semester.

Grading Scale

A+	98-100%	B+	88-89%	C	70-79%
A	93-97%	B	83-87%	F	below 70%
A-	90-92%	B-	80-82%		

Professional Dispositions

See <https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/polices-procedures/>

Class Schedule

Date	Topic	Readings	Assignments Due
Jan 25	Introduction What are “narratives”? How are they different from other data?	W&M 1 R 1 MP&L Introduction	
Feb 1	Narrative Theory: An Introduction	MP&L 1 W&M 3 Pinnegar & Daynes Stirling & Green	
Feb 8	Narrative in Inquiry	W&M 2 MP&L 2 Bruce OR Smith & Sparkes Mischler Optional: Ochs & Capps	Statement of the potential for narratives with respect to your own research interests
Feb 15	Collecting Narrative Data – Examples in General	W&M 4 MP&L 3 R2	
Feb 22	Personal Narrative Interviews	MP&L 4 Guenette & Marshall Causton-Theoharris et al	Annotated Bibliography
Mar 1	Stories, myths, images	Green Brotchie	
Mar 8	Critical Events	W&M 5	Data Sample
Mar 22	Thematic Analysis	R 3 Hunter Kambutu & Nganga	Critical Events Analysis
Mar 29	Structural Analysis	R4 Knight & Sweeney Cruz & Kellam	Thematic Analysis
Apr 5	Performance Analysis	R5 Norton Marais	Structural Analysis
Apr 12	<i>Class not held due to AERA</i>		
Apr 19	Visual Analysis	R6 Goldston & Nichols	Performance Analysis
Apr 26	Discussion on Validity and Ethics	R7 W&M 6 M,P&L 5 Crimmins	Visual Analysis
May 3	Narrative Inquiry Frameworks	W&M 7 Mischler Ochs & Capps	Reflection on Fieldwork

Note: Faculty reserves the right to alter the schedule as necessary, with notification to students.

Core Values Commitment

The College of Education and Human Development is committed to collaboration, ethical leadership, innovation, research-based practice, and social justice. Students are expected to adhere to these principles: <http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/>.

GMU Policies and Resources for Students

Policies

- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the Mason Honor Code (see <https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/honor-code-system/>).
- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing (see <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/>).
- Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their Mason email account and are required to activate their account and check it regularly. All communication from the university, college, school, and program will be sent to students solely through their Mason email account.
- Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services. Approved accommodations will begin at the time the written letter from Disability Services is received by the instructor (see <http://ods.gmu.edu/>).
- Students must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be silenced during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.

Campus Resources

- Support for submission of assignments to Tk20 should be directed to tk20help@gmu.edu or <https://cehd.gmu.edu/aero/tk20>. Questions or concerns regarding use of Blackboard should be directed to <http://coursesupport.gmu.edu/>.
- For information on student support resources on campus, see <https://ctfe.gmu.edu/teaching/student-support-resources-on-campus>

For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, please visit our website <https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/> .