

George Mason University
College of Education and Human Development
School of Education
EDRS 822 001- ADVANCED APPLICATIONS OF QUALITATIVE METHODS
Tuesday, Online - 3 credits, Fall 2020

PROFESSOR

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COURSE DESCRIPTION:

- A. Prerequisite(s):** EDRS 810 and 812 or equivalent coursework.
- B. University catalog course description:** Advanced seminar devoted to study of current topics in qualitative research. Deals with cutting-edge information on selected advanced topics in qualitative research and provides opportunities to apply new skills and knowledge to projects related to students' interests.
- C. Course Overview**

What are the theoretical and practical implications that undergird approaches to qualitative methodology? What are the innate meanings, hidden challenges, and critical juxtapositions that inform the ways in which we "do" research? This course is an advanced seminar that will try to answer these questions and focus on current and emerging issues in qualitative research. In this course, student will explore the philosophical underpinnings of design and application, as well as various analytical techniques. This course consists of three modules, each on a particular aspect of qualitative research including design and theories of qualitative research, methods and analysis and finally quality issues and ethics in conducting qualitative research.

This advanced course offers students flexibility to pursue methodological interests as they build towards their dissertation and the instructor will expect students to work closely with their major advisor in developing the questions and research focus that they will subsequently build on during this course.

COURSE DELIVERY METHOD

This course will be delivered online (76% or more) using an synchronous/asynchronous format via Blackboard Learning Management system (LMS) housed in the MyMason portal. You will log in to the Blackboard (Bb) course site using your Mason email name (everything before @masonlive.gmu.edu) and email password. The course site will be available prior to the start of the Fall 2020 semester.

Under no circumstances, may candidates/students participate in online class sessions (either by phone or Internet) while operating motor vehicles. Further, as expected in a face-to-face class meeting, such online participation requires undivided attention to course content and communication.

Technical Requirements

To participate in this course, students will need to satisfy the following technical requirements:

- High-speed Internet access with standard up-to-date browsers. To get a list of Blackboard's supported browsers see:

https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Getting_Started/Browser_Support#supported-browsers

To get a list of supported operation systems on different devices see:

https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Getting_Started/Browser_Support#tested-devices-and-operating-systems

- Students must maintain consistent and reliable access to their GMU email and Blackboard, as these are the official methods of communication for this course.
- Students will need a headset microphone for use with the Zoom/web conferencing tool.
- Students may be asked to create logins and passwords on supplemental websites and/or to download trial software to their computer or tablet as part of course requirements.
- The following software plug-ins for PCs and Macs, respectively, are available for free download:
 - Adobe Acrobat Reader: <https://get.adobe.com/reader/>
 - Windows Media Player: <https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/help/14209/get-windows-media-player>
 - Apple Quick Time Player: www.apple.com/quicktime/download/

Expectations

- Course Week: Our week will start on Tuesday, and finish on Monday but each week you will receive a communication from me on Sun-Monday outlining the week's plan. This is a CRITICAL email with specific requests and tasks, please ensure you read it carefully. .
- Log-in Frequency: Students must actively check the course Blackboard site and their GMU email for communications from the instructor, class discussions, and/or access to course materials at least 3 times per week.
- Participation: Students are expected to actively engage in all course activities throughout the semester, which includes viewing all course materials, completing course activities and assignments, and participating in course discussions and group interactions.
- Technical Competence: Students are expected to demonstrate competence in the use of all course technology. Students who are struggling with technical components of the course are expected to seek assistance from the instructor and/or College or University technical services.
- Technical Issues: Students should anticipate some technical difficulties during the semester and should, therefore, budget their time accordingly. Late work will not be accepted based on individual technical issues.
- Workload: Please be aware that this course is **not** self-paced. Students are expected to meet *specific deadlines* and *due dates* listed in the **Class Schedule** section of this syllabus. It is the student's responsibility to keep track of the weekly course schedule of topics, readings, activities and assignments due.
- Instructor Support: Students may schedule a one-on-one meeting to discuss course requirements, content or other course-related issues. Students should email the instructor to schedule a one-on-one session, including their preferred meeting method and suggested dates/times.
- Netiquette: The course environment is a collaborative space. Experience shows that even an innocent remark typed in the online environment can be misconstrued. Students must always re-read their responses carefully before posting them, so as others do not consider them as personal offenses. *Be positive in your approach with others and diplomatic in selecting your words.* Remember that you are not competing with classmates but sharing information and learning from others. All faculty are similarly expected to be respectful in all communications.
- Accommodations: Online learners who require effective accommodations to ensure accessibility must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services.
- Phones - Please note that phones are not appropriate for use to access BB in this class.

This course is designed to enable students to:

- Develop an awareness of alternative philosophies and methods of qualitative research in relation to general perspectives of inquiry.
- Develop alternative research designs for various forms of qualitative research.
- Develop and critique various methods of data collection and analysis, depending on emerging and changing research design.
- Critique data collection and analysis techniques in relation to relevant literature on qualitative research methods.
- Critique your research project and suggest areas for improvement.
- Critique empirical qualitative research according to standards for quality research.

PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

Not applicable.

TEXTS

REQUIRED

Crotty, M. (2015). *The foundations of social research*. Los Angeles, CA: SAGE.

Hatch, A. (2002). *Doing qualitative research in educational settings*. Albany, NY: SUNY Press

Other readings as assigned. (Articles available on Blackboard under Course Content).

RECOMMENDED - Supplemental Texts (*just for your information – you do not need to purchase*)

Denzin, N.K. & Lincoln, Y. S. (Eds.) (2013). *The landscape of qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (Eds.). (2011). *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research* (4th ed.). Newbury Park, CA: SAGE.

Holstein, J. A., & Gubrium, J. F. (Eds.) (2003). *Inside interviewing: New lenses, new concerns*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

Luttrell, W. (Ed.). (2010). *Qualitative educational research: Readings in reflexive methodology and transformative practice*. New York: Routledge.

Miles, M. B., Huberman, A. M., & Saldaña, J. (2014). *Qualitative data analysis: A methods sourcebook*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

Patel, L. (2016). *Decolonizing educational research*. New York, NY: Routledge

Saldaña, J. (2015). *Thinking qualitatively: Methods of mind*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

Saldaña, J. (2016). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

COURSE PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS

Each Tuesday, I will be posting an announcement on Blackboard that will also be emailed to you. **These weekly emails are VERY important for your success in the course.** Material will be suggested to you for readings, general observations from your BB posts will be shared, and deadlines and mini-assignments that are part of your grade will be provided. **Please ensure that you are RECEIVING and READING these emails each week.** I am definitely stressing this point because I have found the rare student does neither and then is quite upset that they didn't know what was going on.

1. **Attendance:** Unexcused absences will be reflected as a deduction in your class participation grade. If you find you must miss a week, , please contact the professor *in advance* and arrange for information lost due to your absence. **IF YOU WILL BE MISSING MORE THAN ONE WEEK, PLEASE RECONSIDER TAKING THE CLASS AT THIS TIME.**
2. **Tardiness:** Prompt arrival for the beginning of class is expected. Early departures are considered part of class attendance as an absence unless approved by the instructor.

3. **Participation:** Each student is expected to complete all the assigned readings before the assigned class and participate actively in discussions. It is expected that each student will be attuned to and respectful of group dynamics to ensure the active participation of all in the class.
4. **Absence:** If you must miss a class, you are responsible for notifying me (in advance) and for completing any assignments, or readings, before the start of the next class. Only absences identified in the Mason catalog will be considered excused; other absences will be reflected as part of your participation grade. *If you anticipate being absent for two or more classes, you should reconsider taking this class at another time*
5. **Assignments:** All assignments must be completed in MS Word and sent to your professor as an email attachment or posted on Blackboard, as requirements indicate, on their due date. *Late assignments will not be accepted without making prior arrangements with your professor.*

Course Delivery. Dialogic in nature, EDRS 822 is predicated upon expanding knowledge and understanding through interactive discussion, critical reflection, and research. Course delivery is designed to be learner-focused in multiple ways to meet the course objectives and the needs of participants. A variety of on-line, cooperative, and individualized instructional approaches include:

- *Student and professor directed discussions and dialogic participation;*
- *Discussions (i.e., active involvement of students in learning by asking questions that engage doctoral students in deep critical thinking and engaged verbal interaction);*
- *Cooperative and Collaborative learning (i.e., small group learning interactions emphasizing learning from and with others);*
- *Multimedia*
- *Blackboard web-based course management system to extend classroom learning and foster personal and collaborative reflection.*

My teaching style revolves around dialogic interaction. It is expected that *you will read in advance of class* and continue to try to find the bigger picture as you learn to sort through the findings as you move from one author/study to the next. In addition to classroom attendance and participation, you are expected to participate fully in whole class and small group discussions, group, pair and individual projects, internet research, analyses of case studies and reflections on practice.

Attendance and Participation (28 points (2 points for 14 weeks))

We will be meeting 6 times this semester at our scheduled time of a face to face class which is 7:20-10:00 pm. These dates are – Aug 25, September 8, September 22, October 20, November 10, November 17, and December 1. We will meet in a Zoom Classroom, and the link will be shared via your GMU email the first week of class.

The rest of the course will be made up of weekly activities that will be shared every week. Your participation in these is critical to your success in this course.

Class participation is important not only for each individual student's learning, but for the learning and success of our class as a whole. Class participation is a factor in grading; instructors may use absences, tardiness, or early departure in both on-line and campus class sessions as de facto evidence of non-participation and as a result lower a student's grade (Mason Catalog 2011-12).

Your presence alone is not a reason to get full points. Active participation in preparation, class discussion, group work and timely follow up for paper deadlines (more on that in class), will be considered. At the end of the semester, you will be provided with a rating sheet to reflect on and address your participation as an individual and in comparison, to your classmates. I will take this reflection into consideration as I determine your participation grade.

ASSIGNMENTS**Module Papers (3)**

Over the course of the semester, you will write three scholarly papers. One way to look at these three papers is that together they will become a draft of your chapter three for your dissertation. If you are not doing a qualitative dissertation, or you are not ready to write your chapter three, then these three papers will stand as scholarly explorations of the three main topics of the course: **theory and philosophy; design and methods; and quality.** All papers will be sent via EMAIL to me by the due date.

Module Paper 1 -Theory and Philosophy (25 points): This paper should be 10-pages long, where you explore particular ontological and epistemological perspectives in greater depth. Your goal is to answer the question someone might pose to you asking "Hmm, you seem to define yourself as a, tell me what you mean by that?" So - this paper would depend on you preparing to defend your answer using literature beyond what you are exposed to in class. You might address the history of a particular stance or even two stances, the major definitions, the critiques that exist in the field, and how these stances makes sense to you as a researcher.

For this paper - Final grade will be determined by the following checklist:

1. Has the author provided a clear rationale for the selection of the particular ontology and epistemology for their paper (3 points)?
2. Has the author provided a clear understanding of the background and history, the debates and the critiques of this particular theoretical stance (5 points)?
3. Has the author provided at least 8-10 citations beyond the class readings describing their theoretical stance that go beyond assigned readings? (8 points)?
4. Clarity of writing, effort, and APA formatting, and careful editing will earn 4 points. Each mistake after the first one will result in a loss of points.

Module Paper 2 - Design and Methods (25 points): This paper should be 10-pages long, and should explore either your understanding of one or two designs, similar to Module Paper 1 or it should explain your choice of design for your dissertation and present all components of that design. For Option 1, you would present an in-depth understanding of two designs: the history, the definitions and critiques. For option 2, you will present one design and defend your choice of that design exploring the definitions and critiques. Again, this would be to answer the question "Hmm - I see you are selecting XYZ as your design - tell me why?" In addition, you will be exploring the components of your design including but not limited to selection of site and participants, methods/tools of data collection, and analysis as well as a clear defense of why you are making the decisions you are making.

For this paper - Final grade will be determined by the following checklist:

1. Has the author provided a clear rationale for the selection of the particular design for their paper (3 points)?
2. Has the author provided a clear understanding of the background and history, the debates and the critiques of this particular design and how it fits in with their ontological and epistemological stance? (5 points)?
3. Has the author provided critical decision points that would emerge from the choice of design to extrapolate to complete their understanding of the design (8 points)?
4. Has the author provided at least 4-5 citations beyond the class readings describing various components of the design? (5 points)?
5. Clarity of writing, effort, and APA formatting, and careful editing will earn 4 points. Each mistake after the first one will result in a loss of points.

Module Paper 3 – Quality (22 points): This paper should be 10-pages long and should explore the components that affect the fidelity or quality of your study. This Module paper will explore the issues of researcher reflexivity, bias, positionality, ethics, limitations, and other components that are aligned with your ontological and epistemological positions as well as in congruence with your choices of design. This paper would answer the question “Hmm, How do I trust your work?” This addresses issues of transparency, rigor and quality of your work and is critical to the trust the reader puts into your work.

For this paper - Final grade will be determined by the following checklist:

1. Has the author provided a clear understanding of what quality means to them in a qualitative study? (4 points)?
2. Has the author provided a clear understanding of how their understanding of quality is linked to ontology, epistemology and design (4 points)?
3. Has the author identified and described 4-5 key issues of quality that they are particularly concerned about or are linked to their previous module papers (8 points)?
4. Has the author provided at least 6-8 citations beyond the class readings to further understand issues of quality (5 points)?
5. Clarity of writing, effort, and APA formatting, and careful editing will earn 4 points. Each mistake after the first one will result in a loss of points.

Important Considerations

Each paper will address the topics covered during that particular segment of the class. Guidance for these papers will be relatively individual as the papers will be representations of where each of you is located as a scholar.

There are clear parameters of what these papers should and should not be:

- a. They are not a regurgitation of the readings assigned. The readings assigned are a snapshot of the field. You will be expected to find literature that addresses your stance, design or concerns on quality. These papers will represent what you are learning as you explore your identity as a qualitative researcher.
- b. **These papers should not provide more than a single page that focuses on your research interests.** While you may draw upon methodological issues from literature in your chosen topic, none of these papers are to be about reviewing your literature on the topic. These are to be research methods focused and as such you can connect to your field, but will draw upon methodological considerations.
- c. These papers should be technically correct and between 9-12 pages in length. APA guidelines for writing and referencing are expected. Points will be deducted for repetitive mistakes.
- d. These papers will allow you to interact personally with the material based on your own research interests and dissertation development. I suggest you communicate directly with your major professor/dissertation advisor about these assignments, as they may be used in either your proposal or dissertation. I would be happy to discuss this with you and your advisor via e-mail.

Due to the individualized nature of these papers and the different needs of students, the instructor may provide additional guidance or make alterations to these general expectations.

Course Assessment

<u>Assignment</u>	<u>Points</u>
Participation	28
Module One Paper	25
Module Two Paper	25
Module Three Paper	22
Total	100

Grades on assignments turned in late will be reduced 10%, and assignments more than one week late will not be accepted. Attendance is very important to class participation; one point will be deducted per class-hour absence.

Grading Scale:

At George Mason University, course work is measured in terms of quantity and quality. A credit normally represents one hour per week of lecture or recitation or not fewer than two hours per week of laboratory work throughout a semester. The number of credits is a measure of quantity. The grade is a measure of quality. The system for grading graduate courses is as follows:

Grade	GRADING	Graduate Courses
A+	100	Satisfactory / Passing
A	94-99	Satisfactory / Passing
A-	90-93	Satisfactory / Passing
B+	85-89	Satisfactory / Passing
B	80-84	Satisfactory / Passing
C	70-79	Does not meet requirements of the School of Education
F	<69	Does not meet requirements of the School of Education

All assignments will be evaluated holistically using a mastery grading system; the general rubric is described below. A student must demonstrate “mastery” of each requirement of an assignment; doing so will result in a “B” level score. Only if a student additionally exceeds the expectations for that requirement – through quality, quantity, or the creativity of her/his work – will she/he be assessed with an “A” level score. With a mastery grading system, students must *choose* to “go above and beyond” in order to earn “A” level scores.

- “A” level score = Student work is well-organized, exceptionally thorough and thoughtful, candid, and completed in a professional and timely manner. Student followed all format and component guidelines, as well as including additional relevant component. Student supports assertions with multiple concrete examples and/or explanations. Significance and/or implications of observations are fully specified and extended to other contexts. Student work is exceptionally creative, includes additional artifacts, and/or intentionally supports peers’ efforts.
- “B” level score = Student work is well organized, thorough, thoughtful, candid, and completed in a professional and timely manner. Student followed all format and component guidelines. Student supports assertions with concrete examples and/or explanations. Significance and/or implications of observations are fully specified.
- “C” level score = Student provides cursory responses to assignment requirements. Student followed all format and component guidelines. Development of ideas is somewhat vague, incomplete, or rudimentary. Compelling support for assertions is typically not provided.
- “F” level score = Student work is so brief that any reasonably accurate assessment is impossible

PROFESSIONAL DISPOSITIONS

Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times. See <https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/polices-procedures/>

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/>.

NETIQUETTE

As we will be working together in an online environment, netiquette will be significantly important in terms of creating a community of thinkers and learners. Netiquette is a way of defining professionalism through network communication; it is a way to foster a safe on-line learning environment. All opinions and experiences, no matter how different or controversial they may be perceived, must be respected in the tolerant spirit of academic discourse. You are encouraged to comment, question, or critique an idea but you are not to attack an individual. For our class, here are the netiquette guidelines for working and communicating online:

- Do not use offensive language.
- Never make fun of someone's ability to read or write.
- Keep an "open-mind" and be willing to express even your minority opinion.
- Think before you push the "Send" button.
- Do not hesitate to ask for feedback.
- When in doubt, always check with your instructor for clarification
- Popular emoticons such as ☺ or / can be helpful to convey your tone but do not overdo or overuse them.

GMU Policies and Resources for Students

For COVID 19 procedures in Fall 2020: Students, please be aware of and follow all policies and procedures for Mason's Safe Return to Campus: <https://www2.gmu.edu/Safe-Return-Campus>

Policies

- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the Mason Honor Code (see <https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/honor-code-system/> <http://oai.gmu.edu/the-mason-honor-code/>).
- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing (see <https://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 <https://ds.gmu.edu/>).
- Students must silence all sound emitting devices 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 <https://its.gmu.edu/knowledge-base/blackboard-instructional-technology-support-for-students/>.
- For information on student support resources on campus, see <https://ctfe.gmu.edu/teaching/student-support-resources-on-campus>

Notice of mandatory reporting of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking:

As a faculty member, I am designated as a "Responsible Employee," and must report all disclosures of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking to Mason's Title IX Coordinator per University Policy 1202. If you wish to speak with someone confidentially, please contact one of Mason's confidential resources, such as Student Support and Advocacy Center (SSAC) at 703-380-1434 or Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at 703-993-2380. You may also seek assistance from Mason's Title IX Coordinator by calling 703-993-8730, or emailing titleix@gmu.edu.

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

Recommended: Course Materials and Student Privacy

- Videorecordings of class meetings that are shared only with the instructors and students officially enrolled in a class do not violate FERPA or any other privacy expectation.
- All course materials posted to Blackboard or other course site are private; by federal law, any materials that identify specific students (via their name, voice, or image) must not be shared with anyone not enrolled in this class.
- Videorecordings of class meetings that include audio or visual information from other students are private and must not be shared
- Live Video Conference Meetings (e.g. Collaborate or Zoom) that include audio or visual information from other students must be viewed privately and not shared with others in your household

PROPOSED CLASS SCHEDULE

Note - Faculty reserves the right to alter the schedule as necessary, with notification to students (GREEN CLASSES ARE SYNCHRONOUS MEETINGS)

Date	Topic/Learning Experiences	Readings and Assignments
WEEK 1 August 25	Course and Class Introductions	Readings Pryor (2010) Agee (2009) Pascale Chap 1 and 2 Trafford and Leshem (2009) Opening Assessment
WEEK 2 September 1	Place and value of QR and the central focus on question	Readings Crotty Chapter 1 Erickson 2011 Wright 2006 Labaree, D. F. (1998) Creswell and Miller (2000) Demerath 2006 Module Paper Exercise
WEEK 3 September 8	Delving into paradigmatic boundaries	Readings Hatch 1 Lather (2006) Koro-Ljungberg, M. Yendol-Hoppey, D., Smith, J. J., & Guba & Lincoln (n.d).
WEEK 4 September 15	Paradigms unpacked	Crotty 2-4 Knoblauch 2013
WEEK 5 September 22	Paradigms unpacked cont.	Crotty 5-7 Hatch 2-3 PEER FEEDBACK
WEEK 6 September 29	Letting it all come back together	Crotty 8-9 Koro-Ljungberg and Barko, 2012

Week 7 October 6	Understanding design	Hatch 4-5 MODULE PAPER 1 DUE
Fall break - no class on October 13		
Week 8 October 20	Selection and Decision points in design	Brown, L., & Durrheim, K. (2009). Baily 2018 Kvale 2006 Quinlan 2008
WEEK 9 October 27	Data Collection Techniques - The Why rather than the how...	Gubrium, E., & Koro-Ljungberg, M. (2005). Enosh, G., & Buchbinder, E. (2005). Wolgemuth and Donohue. (2006).
WEEK 10 November 3	Techniques, analysis and making meaning NO CLASS - Election Day	Colley 2010 Bathmaker 2010 Noyes 2010 Gorard 2010
WEEK 11 November 10	Ethics of Design	Anfara, Jr., V. A., Brown, K. M., & Mangione, T. L. (2002). Nind et al (2012) Polkinghorne 2007 Leigh 2014 Module Paper Two due
WEEK 12 November 17	Researcher Identity - Taking on the mantle of researcher.	Freeman, M. (2000). Harrison, MacGibbon, & Morton (2001) Ghaffar-Kuchar, A. (2014). Writing culture; inscribing lives: a reflective treatise on the burden of representation in native research. <i>International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education</i> . Cho, J., & Trent, A. (2006).
November 24	Trust and Rigor Representing the "other" in qualitative research.	Tracy 2010 Vanner 2015
WEEK 14 December 1	Ethics in Qualitative Research Wrapping up	Charmaz 2004 Module Paper Exercise - PEER FEEDBACK Closing assessment - Evaluations
Module Paper Three DUE December 4th		