



Promoting Learning & Development Across the Lifespan



College of Education and Human Development IEEL PhD Program

EDRS 812 Section DL2 QUALITATIVE METHODS IN EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH 3 credits Fall 2021

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Course Description

Teaches how to apply qualitative data collection and analysis procedures in educational research, including ethnographic and other field-based methods, and unobtrusive measures.

Prerequisites/Co-requisites: Admission to the Ph.D. Education program or permission from instructor. Satisfactory completion of EDUC 810 or equivalent coursework or experience.

Course Overview

EDRS 812 DL2 is an asynchronous online course introducing the field and practice of qualitative inquiry. Qualitative research is a research paradigm encompassing a large variety of methodologies and methods which researchers use to explore everyday social life as it occurs in its natural environment. The major course requirement is a ‘mini’ research study with a supportive and safe space to learn and especially from productive mistakes. The course entails: (a) conceptualizing and designing qualitative research, (b) practicing and enacting interviewing and observation techniques, (c) analyzing qualitative data, and (d) reporting results. The major purpose of this course is for you to learn and practice qualitative research from conceptualizing your inquiry to data collection and analysis and then apply a reflective turn to what you learned

about your research question and the qualitative research experience. Throughout the course, you are completing a step with the instructor's formative assessment that you insert into your final required paper with the instructor's summative assessment. The course requires your active and collaborative online participation and peer review and with a consistent commitment and with timely submission of each assignment.

Course Delivery Method

This course utilizes a weekly module online format that is collaborative, interactive, and dialogic, i.e., sociocultural and designed within my pedagogical design and application of Neo-Vygotskian tenets of interactive learning. Modules will include week overview, readings, and discussions. Each class session is designed to encourage dialogue with peers about your developing understanding of qualitative theory and practice; less about the quantity of your talk, and more about your sharing of your ongoing, honest, deep and critical analysis of your meaning making with peers and your ability to listen to other's thinking in a respectful and non-judgmental manner, and with an appreciation of the opportunity to learn about your research by participating in your peer's struggles with making sense of qualitative research as well.

This course will be delivered online using an asynchronous format via the 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 or gmue.edu) and email password. The course site will be available on July 2021.

Peer Review through Critical Friend Teams

Virtually all research designs go through some type of peer review process in academia, including the dissertation proposal stage, requests for funding, or when a study is reviewed for publication. For this reason, I am having you involved in an iterative peer review process using critical friend teams designed to be supportive as well as constructive and to give you the opportunity to embrace the value of peer critique for improving the quality of your research. Our work will involve mutual support, collaboration, and continuous peer review in a critical friend team. You will provide, and receive, constructive suggestions to assist you in improving your thinking and in looking at something familiar in a new way. In a collaborative relationship, you are expected to practice your best professional relationship skills in your discussions. This peer review with different peers will provide multiple opportunities for your ongoing professional development after our course has ended. It gives you practice.

Learner Objectives

This course is designed to enable students to:

- Understand the essential characteristics and purposes of qualitative research and the key ways in which this approach differs from other research strategies
- Explore one's researcher identity and positionality in relation to the chosen topic
- Situate a study in an appropriate beginning literature and knowledge base and formulate a beginning line of argument for the study
- Examine ethical considerations when conducting one's study
- Develop and enact a small-scale study to practice data collection and analysis techniques, and validation measures
- Engage in reciprocal peer review as a critical friend to gain multiple perspectives on

- developing an interview protocol and check-coding for analysis
- Describe the qualitative data analysis process specifically associated with ‘coding’ ‘categorization’ and ‘thematic analysis’
- Communicate publically and in writing and with peer review on the design, process, and results of such a study and with attention to establishing a strong argument
- Critique and present one’s research project and identified areas for improvement
- Be able to use these understandings to evaluate and utilize published qualitative research.

Required Course Text

Ravitch, S. M. & Carl, N. M. (2021). 2nd ed. *Qualitative research: Bridging the conceptual, theoretical, and methodological*. Los Angeles, CA: SAGE.

<https://us.sagepub.com/en-us/nam/qualitative-research/book259238>

Student Text Resources: <https://edge.sagepub.com/ravitchandcarl2e/student-resources>

Required Videos: Mason Virtual Guest Speakers:

(former students from this course)

Laurie Capen: Student Perspectives of Support Structures in Undergraduate Mathematics

Vivian Yun: Middle School Teachers’ Classroom Applications of Culturally Responsive Teaching with Ethnically and Linguistically Diverse Students

Xiaorong(Amber) Zhang: Understanding Doctoral Students’ Experience and Reaction When Their Short-Term Goals Are Not Achieved in Course Assignments

Recommended Text

American Psychological Association. (2019). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th ed.). Washington, DC: Author.

Required Articles & Chapters

All of the required readings are available on Bb.

Attride-Sterling, J. (2001). Thematic networks: an analytical tool for qualitative research. *Qualitative Research*. 1 (3), 385-405.

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*; 3 (2), 77-101.

Creswell, J. W. (2013). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Chapter 10, Standards of validation and evaluation*. Los Angeles: Sage.

Koro-Ljungberg, M., Yendol-Hoppey, D., Jude Smith, J., & Hayes, S. B. (2009). (E)pistemological awareness, instantiation of methods, and uninformed methodological ambiguity in qualitative research reports. *Educational Researcher*, 38 (9), 687-699. Only read Table 1, pp. 689-690.

Mears, C. L. (2009). *Interviewing for education and social science research*. NY: Palgrave/Macmillan. Chapter 6.

- Maxwell, J. A., & Miller, B. (2008). *Categorizing and connecting as components in qualitative data analysis*. In P. Leavy & S. Hesse-Biber (Eds.), *Handbook of emerging methods* (pp. 461–475). New York: Guilford.
- Patton, M. Q. (2002). *Qualitative research & evaluation methods*. Thousand Oaks: Sage. Chapter 6: Fieldwork strategies and observation methods (pp. 259-322). (Bb)
- Saldaña, J. (2009). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. (Chs. 1 & 2)
- Samaras, A. P. (2011). Establishing your critical friend team. (excerpt from *Self-study teacher research: Improving your practice through collaborative inquiry*. SAGE).

Course Performance Evaluation

Assignment Summary	Percent of Final Grade	Due Date	Check when Completed
Participation and Readings	10	Weekly	
Researcher Memos w/ 1 CF Video Response w/ at least 1 CF Video Response 1. Curiosity Memo/Artifact 2. Context/Participants 3. Research Identity/Positionality 4. Analytical Memo of Analysis	20 (5@)	September 7 September 14 September 21 October 19	
10 draft Interview Questions w/ 1 CF Review	5	October 5	
Conduct Pilot Interview (not submitted)	formative	October 6-12	
Research Proposal	5	October 12	
Observation Log	5	October 19	
Literature Review	5	October 26	
Draft 1 with 1 CF for Peer Review using tracking feature and comments & check-coding of sample	formative	November 9	
Draft 2 for professor feedback	formative	November 16	
TED talk Presentation w/ 1 ppt slide	participation	December 1	
Final Project	50	December 7	

Technical Requirements

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

- High-speed Internet access with a standard up-to-date browser, either Internet Explorer or Mozilla Firefox is required (note: Opera and Safari are not compatible with Blackboard).
- 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 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://windows.microsoft.com/en-us/windows/downloads/windows-media-player/>
- Apple Quick Time Player: www.apple.com/quicktime/download/

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.

Participation and Readings (10%)

Course Requirements: This is a doctoral level course, and active informed participation is expected and required. Active informed participation is defined as: full attendance, active participation in discussions and activities, demonstration of positive and collaborative dispositions towards colleagues, and satisfactory completion of all project work on time.

A major part of course participation is reading, presentation, and facilitations of assigned course material. **ALL readings** must be completed for the class date for which they are assigned.

All assignments should be turned in on the due date indicated in the schedule below via Blackboard. The submission deadline for assignments is 11:59pm EST of the due date indicated for each assignment. All projects must be typed, in a legible Times New Roman 12-point font, with one-inch margins, double-spaced, and in APA formatting unless otherwise noted. Writing quality (including mechanics, organization, and content) is figured into the overall points for each writing assignment, so please proofread carefully. ***Late papers and projects will not be accepted without penalty, except in extraordinary circumstances.*** I am happy to clarify and lend assistance on projects and assignments, but please contact me within a reasonable timeframe.

Expectation for Participation:

High quality work (i.e., “A” work) is expected on all assignments and class participation. This online course is **not self-paced**. You will be expected to complete one module every week. Completing a module involves reading, participating in discussions with the whole class, and completing any accompanying assignments associated with that module. You are asked to engage deeply with the subject matter, to take risks in your thinking, and to listen to and learn from your classmates.

- **Course Week:** This course is asynchronous: Because asynchronous courses do not have a “fixed” meeting day, **our week will start on Wednesday and end on Tuesdays.**
- **Log-in Frequency:** Students must actively check the course Blackboard site and their GMU email for communications from the instructor, at a minimum this should be **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 with the instructor to discuss course requirements, content, or other course-related issues via telephone or web conference. Students should email the instructor to schedule a one-on-one session, including their preferred meeting method and suggested dates/times. At the end of each week, please consider any questions that emerged for you from that week's work and don't hesitate to email them to me so I might address them.
- **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 insure accessibility must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services.

Weekly Online Class Discussion of Readings

You are expected to participate in online discussions related to readings with openness, consideration, and effort to "hear for" and "listen to" others as you also seek to be understood. Prompts to reading assignments are located on our Readings Discussion Thread. As part of your participation, you will work to respond to the instructor prompt to dialogue and share insights with classmates on weekly readings. Post statements that provoke our thinking and virtual discussion.

Each week in our class we will have an online group discussion of the readings that are assigned for the module. You are expected to participate in this discussion in a substantive way by both responding directly to the prompt and by responding to at least two other classmate comments. **Students will be expected to respond to each of the discussion questions that the instructor posts.

Readings and discussion thread postings are an important part of your course participation. It is vitally important for each student to complete readings on a weekly basis. Typically, a course meets once weekly for approximately 2.5 hours. For each of the modules, you should spend this

amount of time on the website **in addition** to your weekly readings and work. Successful students in an online learning environment are proactive, self-regulated, and manage their time.

Please note, as this is an online course, all our discussion will be in the form of the electronic discussion board. It is not acceptable to wait until the end of the week to post your comments as you will not be able to engage fully in the discussion, and others will not have an opportunity to engage with your thoughts and comments. **Each module will begin on a Wednesday and run through the following Tuesday. You must start posting for each module by **Saturday at midnight (EST)** so that the class will have time to engage in conversation.

Discussion Board is particularly important in a class such as this as it provides us with a forum for discussion of the topics we will be exploring and an open space to work through our own thoughts and ideas. Some of the richest and most robust discussions I have ever heard (seen) have taken place on a discussion board, and it is my hope that you will actively engage your colleagues in this medium. To provide a bit of a framework for participating in Discussion Board, please see the general “criteria for Blackboard Discussions” below.

Important Note: Discussion board for each module will be “open” only during the week that the module is active. You will always be able to go back and read earlier responses, but you will only be able to physically post in that week’s discussion board during the week we are working on it.

Criteria for Blackboard Discussions

1. Each module begins on a Wednesday. You should **begin** posting by Saturday EST at midnight (at the latest). This will give us time to engage in discussion over the remainder of the module.
2. Postings should be distributed during the discussion period (not concentrated all on one day or at the beginning and/or end of the period).
*Please note: it is acceptable to post your responses to the initial questions at the same time. **However, your responses to your colleagues should be distributed throughout the course of the module and not done at one fall swoop.**
3. Avoid postings that are limited to 'I agree' or 'great idea', etc. If you agree (or disagree) with a posting then say why you agree by supporting your statement with concepts from the readings or by bringing in a related example or experience.
4. Every week you should respond to **each** of the discussion questions that the discussion leader posts. Additionally, you should respond to your CFT posts **unless** otherwise noted in the discussion board prompt.
5. Address the questions as much as possible (don't let the discussion stray).
6. Use quotes from the articles that support your postings. Include page numbers when you do quote.
7. Bring in related prior knowledge if/when you can (work experience, prior coursework, readings, etc.). This greatly adds to the richness of the conversation.
8. Use proper etiquette (proper language, typing, etc.). Please avoid using “text” talk (such as “C U,” “B4,” “cuz,” etc.). It is a graduate level course, so it is important that, while the Discussion Board is meant to be an open and safe space for discussion and exchanges, we should aim to maintain appropriate adherence to grammar and style.

Assignments (40%)

Since the research project is a large-scale endeavor, I have designed a series of professor and peer supported assignments towards your successful project completion. In essence, these mini assignments allow you to build a stronger and higher quality report. If you do not complete the assignments on time, you will not be able to participate adequately in class discussions, and I will not be able to give you the timely feedback you need for the next step. Completing each step gives you the opportunity to insert your draft writing into the research project template.

Students are expected to submit and post all assignments on the discussion thread for each assignment on time electronically on the Blackboard discussion on the day they are due, unless otherwise announced. Late assignments will not be accepted without making prior arrangements with the professor. Please upload all assignments in a file and not in text within the thread. Critical friend responses are to be posted on the thread.

All written assignments are to be word-processed using Times Roman 12 pt font, double-spaced, and submitted electronically on our Bb Discussion Thread. **When you submit your file on Bb, please include in your file name: your last name and the name of the assignment, e.g., Smith.ResProp.09.14.21.** It is required that you save your work in multiple places for safe keeping. Use APA style.

Four Research Memos with CF Responses

To help you build your project, I have designed four researcher memos to scaffold the development of your study. For each researcher memo, please post and then respond to at least one critical friend in a video posted on that thread using the template below coordinating that every member has a response. **Note: *It is important to work with different critical friends in your CFT for the assignments so you might gain multiple perspectives. Please rotate within your group. You are always welcome to respond to more than one critical friend if your time permits.**

Critical Friend Video Response Template

State Author's name:

State your name as the Peer respondent:

- a. What do you find most interesting and significant about this peer writing? Why?
- b. Do you have any questions for your critical friend? (e.g., any points that are unclear to you that you think could be explained more fully.) Why?
- c. Any other comments?

Researcher Memo 1: Research Artifact and Curiosity Memo (5%)

Dr. Todd Kashdan in the Department of Psychology at Mason reminds us of the power and joy in being curious and I add that curiosity is the drive behind “quality” qualitative research!

Please post a research artifact (object or objects) which represents or symbolizes what you are curious about in your research and so we can get to know what you care most about in research. Write a curiosity memo about your research artifact which you can later integrate into your report.

Prompts:

Why does your artifact represent?

Why did you choose it?

What does it mean for your research?

Why should anyone care?

Post your curiosity memo with a photo of your research artifact.

For example, a student who was interested in family's role in improving children's reading brought in an old favorite book. Another student brought a bucket filled with treasures she collected at the beach that highlighted her interest in hands-on science inquiry as a teacher professional development science coordinator. Another interested in studying administrators' perceptions of integrating technology, brought in a jump drive. A student interested in mathematical understanding brought in math manipulatives.

The research artifact and curiosity memo are pedagogical research tools I designed (Samaras, 2011) as a way for you to begin to think about and articulate your research question and for us to get to know each other's areas of research interests. You are not obligated to research the curiosity you share. It's a place to begin and to experience the process of qualitative research. Embrace it as your beginning for this course and with a "beginner's mind". Don't over think it or worry about it. There is no "right" or "wrong" artifact – only one that's yours and that's what I'm working to help you articulate.

Research Memo 2: Context and Participants (5%)

For this researcher memo, describe the context(s) and participants of your study or research site.

1. Describe your participants and how you chose your participants.
2. Include the type of sampling you plan to use and why.
3. Describe your relationships with you participants.
If you know the participants, describe any concerns you have including possible ethical ones. What might be problematic about your relationship?
4. How will you negotiate these relationships and explain your study?
5. When do you plan to interview participants? What is your timeline? What's your back-up plan for cancelled interviews?
6. If you are planning to conduct observations, what foci do you have for your observations? (see prompts under Observation and Log assignment.)

Researcher Memo 3: Researcher Identity and Positionality (5%)

The purpose of this researcher memo is to help you examine *the nexus of the personal and professional in your research question*; your background, experience, assumptions, feelings, and values as they relate to the topics, people, or settings you plan to study, and to discover what

resources and potential concerns your identity and experience may create. How does the personal inform or possibly misinform your lens? Using a self-study method, it is an opportunity for you to develop a deeper understanding of your researcher identity and researcher bias to better articulate your own perceptions and contributions to the research.

Researchers frequently make a sharp separation between their research and the rest of their lives. This practice is harmful to good research in two main ways. First, it creates the illusion that research takes place in a sterile, "objective" environment, subject only to rational and impersonal motives and decisions. This obscures the actual motives, assumptions, and agendas that researchers have, and leads them to ignore the influence of these on their research process and conclusions. It also leads researchers to hide their actual motives and practices when they don't conform to this ideal, feeling that only they are failing to live up to the goal of scientific neutrality and disinterest. Second, this separation cuts the researcher off from a major source of insights, questions, and practical guidance in conducting their research.

The purpose of this assignment is *not* to write a *general* account of your background and experiences. Instead, *describe specifically* those experiences, and the beliefs, emotions, and motives that emerged from them that have most directly influenced your planned research project, and specifically discuss *how* these have informed and influenced your research. For additional discussion and examples of ways to think about this assignment, see our text.

The memo is intended to be mainly for *your* benefit, not for communicating to someone else; try to avoid substituting presentation for reflection and analysis. I suggest that you begin working on this memo by "brainstorming" whatever comes to mind when you think about your prior experiences that may relate to your site or topic, and jot these down without immediately trying to organize or analyze them. Then, try to identify the issues most likely to be important in your research, think about the implications of these, and organize your reflections. Your memo should address the following points. Try to be as specific as you can.

- a. What prior educational, cultural, and professional experiences have you had that are relevant to your topic or setting? What beliefs and assumptions do you have about this topic or setting as a result of these experiences? How have these influenced the way you are approaching this project?
- b. What questions do you want to answer by doing this study? What do you already believe or expect about the answers to your questions, and why? How have your experiences shaped these questions, beliefs, and expectations?
- c. What potential advantages do you think the assumptions and experiences that you described create for your study? What potential disadvantages do you think these may create for you, and how might you deal with these?

➤ For further reading, this is an interesting seminal article available on e-journals:
Peshkin, A. (1988). In search of subjectivity—One's own. *Educational Researcher*, 17(7), 17-22.

Researcher Memo 4: Analytical Memo (5%)

This is a researcher memo of your meta-conversation with yourself and your critical friends about what you see unfolding during the research based on at least one of your interviews or observations- your thoughts after conducting and after transcribing the interview and/or after your conduct your observation and then re-read your notes about your observation - as these are

two different periods of thinking and interpreting. You are encouraged to catalogue your thoughts for each interview and observation but you are required to submit one memo.

Memoing as Cataloguing the Process

Wolcott (2001) categorized data-gathering techniques in three major headings and depicted them on a tree with three branches to represent the techniques of (a) examination, (b) observation, and (c) interviewing, respectively. Similarly, Hendricks (2006) presents three main data collection techniques: (a) examination of artifacts, including student-generated and teacher-generated work; (b) observational data, such as research logs, videotapes, and checklists; and (c) inquiry data, such as individual interviews, focus group interviews, surveys, and questionnaires.

Referring to the tree diagram representing qualitative research strategies, Wolcott (2001) wrote of expectations that others might add to the tree and “develop sections of the tree in greater detail” (p. 92). Responsive to that call, Samaras (2011) adds **cataloguing as a data-gathering technique** to memo and document the self-study teacher researcher’s metaconversation to him- or herself and to critical friends of the unfolding of understandings and shared insights of his or her research project. That places the researcher inside the research to be at the vantage point of seeing the research from the inside out. The cataloguing documents the welcomed subjective stance of the researcher and the objective stance of critical friends in the data collection and data analyzing process. Presenting your reflective self allows you to make your research lens explicit and serves as an important quality-control procedure (Yin, 2011).

Offering advice to social scientist researchers, Mills (1959) claims that expert researchers take notice, organize, and record their experience because “experience is so important as a source of original intellectual work” (p. 197). Our plans and thinking are not single-shot events in our research, and “by keeping an adequate file and thus developing self-reflective habits, you learn how to keep your inner world awake . . . the file helps you build up the habit of writing” (p. 197).

Mills (1959) calls these memos “intellectual production” (p. 199), which catalogues the raw ideas about your research that you openly share with critical friends. It is in essence a metaconversation about the development and process of your research. It is more than your interesting thoughts. The memos validate that your thinking about your research has extended beyond yourself. They are data which will be useful to writing your final reflections and discussion section. Below are some prompts and ideas for your memos:

- **After conducting the interview, observation, or analysis:** Tell us what you learned. Describe what you heard and what came to mind in terms of any flashes of insight, things that stood out for you, and things that surprised you. What seems to be going on?

Also tell us also about the dissonance you sensed in terms of the data and what didn’t go the way you thought it would.
- **After transcribing the interview or re-reading your observation notes:** What do you notice now on this read that you didn’t notice after conducting the interview? Do you see any patterns in the data? What overall picture do you see at this point in the data collection about your study? Catalogue these events as they are part of your preliminary hunches about your research.

Draft Interview Questions with Peer Review (5%)

First, take some time to view “top interviewers” on the web, e.g., Oprah, Larry King, Barbara Walters, Diane Rehm, etc.). Notice what they do well or not well. What are the qualities of a top interviewer? Next, draft 10 interview questions for your study which carefully align with your research question. How might you phrase these questions to establish and keep rapport with your participants? Consider how each question is purposely designed to help you explore your question. Include possible prompts for each question. Share the draft interview questions with at least one critical friend for their feedback and offer them feedback on their questions. Refine and polish and then pilot them. Submit final interview questions with final report.

The Pilot Interview is a very crucial step in refining your interview questions, gaining experience and confidence, and reflecting on “productive mistakes” therefore the grading is formative. You are not required to submit this however you will note that you are required to offer a brief discussion of your pilot in your final report under the Method section. You might wish to explore how these questions “feel” and work by asking a critical friend to interview you with the questions.

Research Proposal (5%)

Designing a quality research proposal is the essential element and foundation for your final project. Having said that, you are learning how to design one so this can be revisited and as you move through the process. Approach this assignment from where you are and honor its incompleteness as part of the research process and revisit it often. Below are the main points that you should address in your research proposal. You will see where this fits into your final project headings in the parenthesis. Include a timeline or schedule for your study; especially your interviews and submit with this proposal and then again with your draft 1.

1. Why is this topic important? (Rationale and Argument)

Articulating a strong rationale is important to making a case for why your study matters to you and to others. Have you ever found yourself talking on and on about something to someone that you haven’t quite figured out for yourself? The same is true about explaining an undeveloped research proposal. Your goal is to articulate a clear, crisp research rationale and proposal. Why have you selected this particular topic, and this setting or category of interviewees? Who would benefit from your investigation and how? Why is it worth knowing about this topic? What will you gain from studying this topic? Be explicit (but brief) about any important personal or practical reasons you have, as well as your professional and scholarly interests; if we don't know what these are, we can't give you good feedback on their possible consequences.

2. How do you propose to go about exploring this topic? (Conceptual Framework and Literature Review)

What are some possible sources for exploring this topic? Where might you begin your search? What do you or others already know about this topic? Where is your study situated within the literature on this topic? Who might you speak to about this topic? Who could be a resource for you? It's too early to address a conceptual framework but know that's where you are headed.

3. What is your research question - really? (Research Question)

Reread your curiosity memo. Look at questions and statements you posed and how they relate to and/or connect to each other. What is the topic (problem, issue, question, situation) that seems to call you to investigate it? What is your goal (not your research question) of this study? What do you want to learn about this topic by doing this study? Now, try to articulate your research question in one sentence.

4. Who would be involved in this search? (Method: Context, Participants, Data Collection)

If you are conducting observations, what sort of setting do you plan to observe. Who do you plan to interview? When, where, using what type of interview method? Describe your participants.

- Describe the site or context of your study or research site. If you are planning to conduct observations, what foci do you have for your observations?
- Describe your participants and how you chose them. Include the type of sampling you plan to use and why.
- Describe your relationships with you participants? Consider the implications of this for your researcher identity/positionality memo.
- If you know the participants, describe any concerns you have including ethical ones. How did you negotiate these relationships and explain your study?
- When do you plan to interview participants? Observe? What's your back-up plan?!

5. What concerns do you have? (Validity Issues)

What potential difficulties (personal, practical, conceptual, or methodological) do you foresee in doing this project? How do you think you could deal with these? Does your investigation raise any ethical concerns? Again, this is a sketch but write your concerns down early. Please see <http://www.gmu.edu/research/ORSP/HumanSubjects.html> for HSRB forms and application.

6. What are the limitations of your study? Limitations relate to time, place, participants, and scope of study. Limitations are not the same as validity issues.

Observation and Log (5%)

1. Conduct an hour observation of a setting; if possible- connected in some way to your research interest and study and with considerations of any ethical concerns.
2. In your observation log, document:

Design: Draft/design a research question that your observation might help you explore.

Purpose: Articulate your interest in choosing this setting to observe.

Focus: Choose a focus for the observation, e.g., analyzing a social scene, roles, relationships, leadership, identities, norms, conflict, division of labor, positionality, etc.

Place: Describe the setting and participants.
Include date of observation and length of observation.

Data: Unobtrusively take notes of what you see, hear, and learn from just hanging around in the setting and looking broadly.

- You might choose to draw a map or diagram of the site. You can also map out dynamics, interactions, relationships. Experiment with sketching out what you “see” hear, and notice.
- You might make two columns: in one playing the role of “judge” and in the other, playing the role of “witness”. This will help you see what you might be inserting into your “seeing”.

Document and Analyze: Write a brief summary log of your observation - being sure to try to distinguish and check for facts versus your inferences, hunches, and assertions.

Self-Assess: Consider the quality of your experience as an observer and what you learned about collecting data through an observation. Noticing areas for improvement receives extra credit!

Literature Review (5%)

Conduct a “working” review of the literature related to your topic. Include in your discussion an integrated conceptual mapping of topics, theories, and phenomena that framed and shaped your study and were informed by the literature reviewed. Note you must include two dissertations in your literature review.

- What is the problem or topic set within the existing knowledge base of this topic?
- What does your study address that is missing in the literature?
- How does your study extend the existing knowledge base of this topic?
- Provide a beginning literature review of the seminal and contemporary literature on your topic.
- Discuss the issues studied, and the theories and methods used for studying it.
- What is the history of the research in this area?
- In what databases have you searched? Tell us.

DRAFT 1 for CF Review (participation)

For draft 1, please use tracking feature and comment bar to offer constructive feedback to at least one CF assuring that each member has a response. Please check that all CFT members have someone to peer review. This reciprocal feedback will help you “see” your own draft more fully.

Check-code sample of a CF Interview (participation)

Exchange with a sampling of one of your interviews with a CF so they can read through and provide their interpretations and possible codes. Do not include your coding of the sample. Then compare their interpretations to your preliminary coding.

DRAFT 2 for Professor Review (participation)

For draft 2, your professor will provide feedback on your working draft.

Research Project (50%)

The project is designed for you to *get into the habit of writing analytical memos* throughout the

research process which will be useful to you as a researcher. The research project is an opportunity for you to demonstrate your understanding and application of qualitative research. Seize that opportunity to delve and dabble into your possible dissertation topic. Use this assignment to move you toward and forward in your Ph.D. path.

You will develop and conduct a small-scale study of your methods based on your research interests and program of study. This project results in a comprehensive paper of roughly 6,000 words or 25 pages, not including references and appendix. The range of possible projects that you can conduct is extremely broad. The main requirement is that the project has to be genuinely qualitative in nature. Almost any setting, or set of participants, is a potential source of data for your research. I have included some formative assignments (with less weight) designed to scaffold and build your final research project.

1. **No covert research.** This is 1) ethically problematic, 2) too difficult to manage for someone just beginning to learn qualitative research, 3) restricts your research options, and 4) doesn't allow you to learn the key skill of negotiation with those you study. **You must have the informed consent of the participants in your research** even though you will not need actual HSRB approval for your course project since it is a class project. Nonetheless, ethical considerations are paramount in any research you conduct and you must become familiar with completing an IRB form.

2. **No primarily comparative studies.** Your main research question cannot focus on a difference between two groups or settings or between two categories of people. While explicitly comparative studies are a valid and important form of qualitative research, they are not a useful way to learn how to do qualitative research. Comparison is likely to 1) push you toward more quantitative questions and modes of thinking, 2) reduce the depth of understanding you can gain of one group, setting, or category, and 3) make it more difficult for you to learn what is essential in qualitative research.

3. **The Pilot Interview** is a very crucial step in refining your interview questions, gaining experience and confidence, and reflecting on “productive mistakes” therefore the grading is formative.

4. **Interviews:** A minimum of: 3 hours of semi-structured interviews, recorded, and transcribed. This will involve interviewing at least 3 different participants. Collect consent using university consent form. The hour interview may run between 45 minutes to one hour. You may elect to also complete a second follow-up interview with each participant. Plan that interviews and observations might get cancelled and allow for time to reschedule if needed.

You are **strongly** encouraged to transcribe at least one of your interviews yourself. It is well worth the time as it provides you with more detail and analysis and gives you an opportunity to listen more carefully to the interview. It also allows you to recognize patterns, hear tones and expressions, and overall it will allow you a much richer hands-on experience as a researcher. There are companies who provide the service (e.g., transcribeme.com; rev.com) but it can be pricey and you will need to some spend time fixing mistakes after reviewing.

*Copies of your interview transcripts must be included in the appendix of report, along with a transparency of your data analysis. Check for no identifying information in that data.

4. Data collection must take place across the semester. You cannot rely mainly on previously collected data, or conduct all of your observations or interviews in a brief period (one week or less). You need to be able to learn from your experiences, and to take time to contemplate and make corrections to your study design and techniques.

5. You will need to share your project for peer review. Any arrangements that you make with participants in your study must not prevent you from discussing your fieldnotes and interview transcripts (with pseudonyms used) with peers. *Class members will be required to respect the confidentiality of this information. Dialoging about your work is the only way that I can really assess the actual process of your research, and is also an important part of that process. You cannot do the work of this class in isolation.

If you are studying a setting where you have a prior role, or are interviewing people with whom you have a prior relationship, that is fine for this project but you need to **discuss the validity issues that this raises**, and will need to address these issues in your final report. You are free to use as a setting for your research project the same site that you are using in work for another course. However, if you do this, the amount of work involved must be appropriate for the total amount of credit--normally, you can't use the same work (e.g., turning in the same report) to get credit for two courses. In any case, if you are using the work to satisfy two different courses or requirements, you **must submit, both to me and to the other instructor or supervisor, a written description of how you will use your work in this setting to satisfy the requirements of both courses**, and get our signatures indicating our approval of your plans.

Recommended Equipment:

- You can use an audio recorder with software that allows you to listen to a recording from your computer. This will be important for the fieldwork project. There are a variety of ways that you can securely and safely record and subsequently transcribe.
- InqScribe (<https://www.inqscribe.com/>) is a great tool to support the transcription process. There is a free, trial version that will likely suffice for the purposes of the course. Also audacity.com can be used to slow down recording for transcribing. Check your computer. Some Apple and Ipad computers transcribe.
- Some of you may be interested in exploring computer assisted qualitative data analysis software packages (CAQDAS) (e.g., NVivo, ATLAS.ti, MAXQDA, Dedoose). You are NOT required to use these tools for this course. There are limitations that are inherent to many of these packages – all designed to support the analysis process NOT ‘do’ or ‘complete’ qualitative data analysis.

Participation Rubric

Category	<i>Exemplary 10 pts.</i>	<i>Accomplished 9pts</i>	<i>Developing 8 pt</i>	<i>Undeveloped Below 7 pts</i>
Attendance and activity in online participation are critical components of this course. It gives you the opportunity to learn from and contribute to building a positive classroom experience and learning community. Participants contribute to each others' learning by actively listening, exchanging ideas, sharing learning from readings and websites, peer view, and supporting each other's efforts.	Outstanding and consistent participation in online discussions and class activities. Promotes conversation focused on the topic. Comments demonstrate a high level of understanding from assigned readings. Listens actively to peers. Embraces peer review; Prompts peer feedback, critique, and input. Purposely shares leadership roles in group work.	Participates in online discussions and activities on a regular basis; questions and comments reveal thought and reflection and contribution from assigned readings. Frequently involves peers in discussion. Conducts peer review; Shares leadership roles in group work.	Does not contribute online discussions or activities very often, but generally reveals some thought and reflection and some contribution from assigned readings. Follows rather than leads group activities. Solicits some peer discussion and peer review. Somewhat shares leadership roles in group work.	Few contributions online class discussions. Little evidence of participation and contribution. Shows little concern for peers' learning or input or peer review. Does not share leadership roles in group work.

5 pts. Assignments	Assignment Rubric Description
A+ Exemplary 5+ points	Establishes an exemplary narrative with thoughtful and relevant detail which demonstrates a very high level of understanding and application from assigned readings. Submission reflects outstanding participation in online discussions and class activities and active listening and serious feedback with peers. Submitted on time.
A Excellent 5 – 4.7 points	Provides a very adequate narrative with thoughtful and relevant detail which demonstrates a high level of understanding and application from assigned readings. Submission reflects excellent participation in online discussions and class activities and active listening and a high level of feedback with peers. Submitted on time.
A- Approaching Excellence 4.65-4.5 points	Provides an adequate narrative with thoughtful and relevant detail which demonstrates a good level of understanding and application from assigned readings. Submission reflects good participation in online discussions and class activities and active listening and serious feedback with peers. Submitted on time.
B+ Developing Less than 4.5 points	Provides a fair narrative with thoughtful and relevant detail which demonstrates an average level of understanding and application from assigned readings. Submission reflects average level of participation in online discussions and class activities and active listening and serious feedback with peers. Needs more work. Submitted late.

Final Research Project Headings Template and Assessment (50%)

On the title page, include a running head with an abbreviated title in uppercase letters flush left with the page number flush right, and the title of the paper, author's name, and author's professional affiliation centered on the page.

Although not typically required for papers, please include a **Table of Contents** with page as that will help you prepare for understanding the structure of your dissertation.

Abstract (2%)

An abstract is a single, articulate, concise paragraph of 150-200 words that describes your purpose and the context, method, key findings, and significance of your research. Create a page break from the title page. The running head and page numbering continue throughout the report.

- Have you provided a single, articulate, concise paragraph of no more than 150 words?
- Does you abstract concisely describe your purpose, context, method, key findings, and significance?

Keywords Provide 3-5 keywords that are strong descriptors of your research.

[Include the title of your paper centered on the page.] (3%)

As per American Psychological Association (APA) style, the introduction does not need a heading; the first paragraphs are assumed to be the introduction. Introduce the purpose of the study set within the context. A good introduction allows your readers to gain an overview and outline of the purpose of your paper.

Present your *topic*, *goals*, and a *rationale*.

- What literature do you draw on in conceptualizing the study? Open paper with some seminal citations related to this topic from which your argument will flow.
- What is the main topic or issue addressed in this report? Why did you choose this—what were your goals in using this topic for your course project?
- What theories and assumptions (explicit or implicit) do you have about the issue or topic studied? How did this knowledge, theories, and assumptions inform and influence the study?
- How did your own background and experience (including your knowledge of the literature on your topic) influence this decision? Integrate your Curiosity Memo and Researcher Identity Memo here. Discuss the personal significance of this work to you as a researcher and the broader educational significance. Include your experiences, perspectives, and goals that influenced and shaped your interest in this research.

Conceptual framework and Literature Review (10%)

Conduct a “working” review of the literature related to your topic. Include in your discussion an integrated conceptual mapping of topics, theories, and phenomena that framed and shaped your study and were informed by the literature reviewed. Note you must include two dissertations in your literature review.

- What is the problem or topic set within the existing knowledge base of this topic?
- What does your study address that is missing in the literature?

- How does your study extend the existing knowledge base of this topic?
- Provide a beginning literature review of the seminal and contemporary literature relevant to your topic.
- Discuss the issues studied, and the theories and methods used for studying it.
- What is the history of the research in this area?
- In what databases have you searched? Tell us.

Research Questions (5%)

- State your research question clearly and concisely.
- What questions about your topic, setting, or participants did you focus on?
- What theories, beliefs, or expectations did you have about the answers to these?
- Where did these questions and expectations come from?
- How did they change during your study?

Method (10%)

Research Setting, Participants, and Relationships

Provide a detailed description of the research context including the immediate and broader environment. Provide a detailed description of the research participants.

- Include discussion of your piloting of interview questions and pilot interview.
- How did you choose a setting and participants for your study?
- What prior connections did you have with this setting or the participants?
- How did you negotiate a research relationship with these participants?
- How do you think you were perceived by them?
- How did these relationships (including prior relationships) influence your study?
- What ethical issues did you encounter in doing your study, and how did you deal with these?

Data Collection

- Provide a detailed description of the data sources you collected to help you understand the research topic.
- How did you collect the data for your study?
- For interviews, what did you ask about, and how did you follow up on responses?
- Include both a description of your methods, and a table giving the dates and length of your observations and/or interviews.

Data Analysis

- Provide a detailed and transparent data trail describing your data analysis.
- Include the procedures used to make meaning of your data and formulate preliminary and concluding interpretations including dialogue, critique, and validation through check-coding with your critical friends.
- How did you analyze your data?
- What methods did you use, and why?
- What did each of these methods contribute to your understanding of your data?

Findings (5%)

Provide a discussion and an explanation of your interpretations of your data analysis with evidence for your claims. Include the themes identified through your analysis as subheadings

- What are the key conclusions or findings about your topic, setting, or participants that emerged from your study?
- How are the things you learned related to one another—how do they form a coherent story or picture of what you discovered?
- Is the perspective of the participants clearly studied and presented?
- Is the influence of the specific context of the study addressed?
- How are the conclusions or findings supported and illustrated with data with key quotes?
- How persuasive is this support?

Limitations (2.5%)

Provide a discussion and reflection what the findings suggest set within a discussion of the limitations of the study and possible areas for further study. Limitations relate to time, place, participants, and scope of study. There are not the same as validity issues.

Validity Issues (2.5%)

Present issues of validity that may be related to your study.

- What important validity threats or alternative interpretations to the research results did you encounter? How did you address these?
- How did you respond to feedback from the participants, critical friends, and/or the professor, when this feedback implied the need to make changes related to validity in the research?

Discussion and Self-Critique (5%)

- A good conclusion should make clear what you believe the paper has contributed to your understanding of researching. What did you learn from your participants?
- Circle back to the research question you posed and what you discovered. Explain how your research helped you understand that question.
- Discuss how your research helped you rethink your question.
- Present how your research links or does not link to what other researchers have found about this topic. Cite relevant literature that connects to your study and how your study extends the existing literature.
- What unexpected incidents did this research raise?
- While you learned a great deal from this research, discuss what questions presented themselves for further study.

Self-Critique

- What were the most important things that you personally learned about qualitative research by doing this study?

- How has your research influenced your thinking about your topic?
- How reflective and critical are you about all of the issues raised above, and how did this reflection inform the report?
- Knowing what you now know about qualitative research, what would you do differently? Why? [This is also your final TED video talk.]

References (5% for References, Appendix, Technical Soundness, and Organization)

You should only include references you have actually cited in your report. Nothing should be listed in the bibliography if it has not been cited in the report. Use APA style for references.

Appendix

The appendix can include data that will help the reader better understand your research but perhaps are not needed within the body of your report (e.g., interview protocol, interview transcriptions, field notes, critical friend work, concept maps, additional displays of data). Label your appendix items within the report and also title them in the appendix (e.g., within the report, “Field Notes and Initial Analysis” [see Appendix A]). **Include your interview protocol in the appendix. Please also attach copies of all transcripts and evidence of data analysis and coding process. Be sure to use pseudonyms for participants and settings and with no identifying information.**

Organization

The report should be no longer than 25 typed pages, double-spaced, 12pt font standard

APA guidelines

- Are all references cited in the research report included in the references?
- Have you provided a complete reference list of all print and non-print (internet) references?
- Does the report include a cover page with project title, author’s name, and professional affiliation?
- Is the report grammatically correct, coherent, and well-organized?
- Does the report have your distinctive focus and voice?
- Have you written in an accessible style and presentation?
- Have you used professional language? i.e., no jargon

Final Report Grading Scale:

Exemplary: 50 points

Exceeds meeting criteria, multiple sources of evidence that substantially exceeds requirements.

Accomplished 49 - 45 points

Provides convincing evidence of sound work, substantially meets requirements.

Developing: 44 - 41 points

Provides basic and somewhat convincing evidence that moderately meets criteria.

Undeveloped: 40 points and below: No evidence or little evidence of meeting the criteria.

EDRS 812 Schedule Fall 2019

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

Class 1	August 25 – August 31
General Topics	Introduction to Qualitative Research Critical Friend Work for Peer Review Research/Writing as Process
Readings	Establishing your critical friend team, Samaras (2011)
Assignments Due	*Discussion Board Please upload a <u>3 min video to introduce yourself</u> and something you really having going for you! Please say hello to each other and offer a comment on that thread. View and experience " <u>Coloring outside the lines</u> " and post your sketch on the discussion board for at least one critical friend (CF) input. non-graded Sketch due August 31; CF Response due Sept 7

Class 2	September 1 – September 7
General Topics	Ways of Knowing as relates to your conceptual frame Design Matters – a lot!
Readings	Chapter 1, Ravitch & Carl & note “dialogical engagement” p. 16
Assignments Due	*Discussion Board Post Researcher Memo 1: Research Artifact w/ Memo due Sept 7 CF Video Response using Template due Sept 14

Class 3	September 8– September 14
General Topics	Conceptual Framework & Literature Review Researcher Relationships. Site & Participant Selection Research Ethics
Readings	Chapters 2, 4, & 7, Ravitch & Carl Koro-Ljungberg, et al. (2009). <u>Only read Table 1, pp. 689-690.</u> Visit Library Folder: Melville, Education Librarian. Refresher!
Assignments Due	*Discussion Board Post Researcher Memo 2: Context & Participants due Sept 14 CF Video Response using Template due Sept 21 Start digging through the literature

Class 4	September 15 – September 21
General Topics	From Research Question to Research Proposal Establishing Your Argument
Readings/Videos	Chapters 3 & 10, Ravitch & Carl View Virtual Guest Student Speakers Videos
Assignments Due	*Discussion Board Post Researcher Memo 3: Research Identity due Sept 21

	CF Video Response using Template due Sept 28
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Class 5	September 22– September 28
General Topics	Data Collection Designing and Aligning Interview Questions
Readings	Chapter 5 & Ravitch & Carl Mears (2009) Chapter 6
Assignments Due	*Discussion Board Schedule your pilot interview and formal interviews.

Class 6	September 29– October 5
General Topics	Observations
Readings	Patton (2002) Chapter 6
Assignments Due	*Discussion Board Post Draft Interview Questions due Oct 5 CF Review due Oct 12

Class 7	October 6– October 12
General Topics	Overview Data Analysis
Readings	Chapter 8, Ravitch & Carl Attride-Sterling (2001) Braun & Clarke (2006) Saldaña (2009) Chs. 1 & 2
Assignments Due	*Discussion Board Post Research Proposal due October 12 Conduct Pilot Interview this week.

Class 8	October 13 – October 19
General Topics	Coding and Analysis
Readings	Chapter 9, Ravitch & Carl
Assignments Due	*Discussion Board Practice coding with Weimer exemplar. Conference with CF to compare Post Researcher Memo 4: Analytical Memo due Oct 19 CF Review of Memo 4 due Oct 26 Post Observation log due Oct 19 (no CF review for log)

Class 9	October 20 – October 26
General Topics	Standards of Validation
Readings	Creswell (2013) Chapter 10
Assignments Due	*Discussion Board Post Literature Review due Oct 26

Class 10	October 27– November 2
General Topics	Categories and Connections in Analysis Transparency and Trustworthiness & Dialogical Validity
Readings	Chapter 6, Ravitch & Carl Maxwell & Miller (2008)
Assignments Due	*Discussion Board: No posts this week

Class 11	November 3– November 9
General Topics	Writing Your Analysis, Results, and Discussion
Readings	Chapter 10, Ravitch & Carl
Assignments Due	*Discussion Board Post Draft 1 due Nov 9 with CF Review due Nov 16

Class 12	November 10 – November 16
General Topics	Self and Peer Review
Readings	No readings this week.
Assignments Due	*Discussion Board Post Draft 2 for professor review due Nov16

Class 13	November 17 – November 23
General Topics	Writing your Abstract Presenting your Argument
Readings	No readings this week.
Assignments Due	Work on final paper

No class November 24-November 28. University Thanksgiving Recess

Class 14	December 1
General Topics	Finalizing and Celebrating the Researcher Journey!
Assignments Due	*Discussion Board Post TED 5 min video with 1 ppt slide due Dec 1 Include in your presentation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your argument • Your RQ • Key discoveries • Key insights including productive mistakes ➤ Offer class members a comment and congrats on their presentation! Post Final paper and presentation due Dec 7

Professional Dispositions See <https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/policies-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/>

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://ds.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.

GMU Email and Web Policy: Mason uses electronic mail (www.gmu.edu/email) to provide official information to students. Examples include notices from the library, notices about academic standing, financial aid information, class materials, assignments, questions, and instructor feedback. Students are responsible for the content of university communication sent to their Mason e-mail account and are required to activate that account and check it regularly (Mason catalog). All communication sent for this course will be sent to your Mason email account.

All communication sent for this course will be sent to your Mason email account. I will respond to emails as soon as I can, but always within 24 hours.

Grading Policy: Since this is a doctoral level course, high quality work is expected of all participants. Participation in all classes for the entire class is a course expectation. In order to qualify for a final grade of A+, a participant enrolled in EDRS 812 must (in addition to scoring the maximum possible points) participate in all class discussions, activities and projects. Only University absences identified in the Mason Catalog will be considered ‘excused’.

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

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 university-wide system for grading graduate courses is as follows:

Grade	GRADING	Grade Points	Interpretation
A+	=100	4.00	Represents mastery of the subject through effort beyond basic requirements
A	94-99	4.00	
A-	90-93	3.67	
B+	85-89	3.33	Reflects an understanding of and the ability to apply theories and principles at a basic level
B	80-84	3.00	
C*	70-79	2.00	Denotes an unacceptable level of understanding and application of the basic elements of the course
F*	<69	0.00	

Note: “C” is not satisfactory for a licensure course; “F” does not meet requirements of the Graduate School of Education

Integrity of Work: All students must adhere to the guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code (see <http://oai.gmu.edu/the-mason-honor-code/>.) The principle of academic integrity is taken very seriously and violations are treated as such.

Violations of the Honor Code include:

1. Copying a paper or part of a paper from another student (current or past);
2. Reusing work that you have already submitted for another class (unless express permission has been granted by your current professor **before** you submit the work);
3. Copying the words of an author from a textbook or any printed source (including the Internet) or closely paraphrasing without providing a citation to credit the author. For examples of what should be cited, please refer to:
<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/589/02/>

Incomplete (IN): This grade may be given to students who are in good standing, but who may be unable to complete scheduled course work for a cause beyond reasonable control. The student must then complete all the requirements by the end of the ninth week of the next semester, not including summer term, and the instructor must turn in the final grade by the end of the 9th week. Unless an explicit written extension is filed with the Registrar's Office by the faculty deadline, the grade of IN is changed by the registrar to an F (Mason catalog). Faculty may grant an incomplete with a contract developed by the student with a reasonable time to complete the course at the discretion of the faculty member. The faculty member does not need to allow up to the following semester for the student to complete the course. A copy of the contract will be kept on file in the APTDIE office.

Late Work/Submissions: At the graduate level all work is expected to be of high quality and submitted on the dates due. *Work submitted late will be reduced one letter grade for every day of delay.* Because we live in uncertain times, if you have any extraordinary circumstances (*think* flood, earthquake, evacuation) that prevent you from submitting your work in a timely manner, it is your responsibility to contact the instructor as soon as possible after the circumstances occur and make arrangements to complete your work. *It is up to the discretion of the instructor to approve the late/makeup work.*

Course Withdrawal with Dean Approval: For graduate and non-degree students, withdrawal after the last day for dropping a course requires approval by the student's academic dean, and is permitted only for nonacademic reasons that prevent course completion (Mason catalog). There is no guarantee that such withdrawals will be permitted.

Netiquette: Something vital for our consideration as a class is netiquette. Netiquette, a combination of “internet” and “etiquette”, is the set of protocols we will observe for our online communication throughout this course. 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 that is a safe and productive space.

Whether we are engaging in dialogue in a collaborative discussion, or working in groups on a collaborative project, please keep the following norms in mind. These will form the basis for our online netiquette protocol:

- Write concisely and clearly - don't make others “guess” what you want to say.

- Post early in the module to give the discussion time to develop and honor the established timeline for responses. In projects, do not procrastinate; others are counting on your timely input for project to be successful.
- Make use of subject lines to help others know what you are writing about in your post.
- Read others' posts before making your own so everyone isn't saying the same thing.
- Refer to others' posts - we want to develop a dialogue in which we are talking *with* each other, not *at* each other.
- You are encouraged to comment, question, or critique an idea but you are not to attack an individual.
- Be respectful: 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 can disagree... respectfully.
- Watch sarcasm - it doesn't always translate well online, and we have yet to develop a sarcasm font.
- Do not use offensive language.
- Avoid using all caps - IT IS LIKE YELLING.
- Watch overusing exclamation marks!!!!!!!!!!!!!!
- Popular emoticons such as ☺ or / can be helpful to convey your tone but do not overdo or overuse them. ☺☺☺☺☺☺☺☺☺☺
- Think before you push the "send" button.
- Remember that you are not competing with classmates, but sharing information and learning from others.
- Do not hesitate to ask for feedback.

As our work will unfold in an online environment, we need to be mindful that what we say and how we say it may translate in different ways when our words are read rather than heard.

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://coursessupport.gmu.edu/>.
- 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/> .

Emergency Procedures

You are encouraged to sign up for emergency alerts by visiting the website <https://alert.gmu.edu>. Further information about emergency procedures exists on <http://www.gmu.edu/service/cert>

Qualitative Research Resources

Additional Interviewing Resources

- Kosnik, C., Cleovoulou, Y, & Fletcher, R. (2009). The use of interviews in self-study research (pp. 53-69). In C. A. Lassonde, S. Galman, & Kosnik, C. (Eds.). *Self-study research methodologies for teacher educators*. Rotterdam: Sense.
- Fontana, A., & Frey, J. (2000). The interview: From structured questions to negotiated text. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (2nd ed., pp. 645-672). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Hycner, R. H. (1985). Some guidelines for the phenomenological analysis of interview data. *Human Studies*, 8, 279-303.
- Kvale, S. (2009). *InterViews: Learning the craft of qualitative research interviewing*. (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Mears, C. L. (2009). *Interviewing for education and social science research*. NY: Palgrave/Macmillan. Chapter 7 (Bb)
- *Roulston, R. S. (2014). Analyzing interviews. In U. Flick (Ed.). *The Sage Handbook of data analysis*. (pp. 297-312). SAGE. [check Mason library].
- Seidman, I. (2006). *Interviewing in qualitative research*. NY: Teachers College Press.
- Spradley, J. P. (1998). *The ethnographic interview*. New York: Holt, Rinehart Winston.
- Weiss, R. (1994). *Learning from strangers: The art and method of qualitative interview studies*. NY: Free Press.

Literature Reviews

- Fink, A. (2010). *Conducting research literature reviews*. Los Angeles: Sage.
- Hart, C. (2001). *Doing a literature search*. Los Angeles: Sage.
- Kennedy, M. M. (2007). Defining a literature. *Educational Researcher*, 36, (3), 139-147. (EJ)
- Maxwell, J. A. (2006). Literature reviews of, and for, Educational Research. *Educational Researcher*, 35 (9), 28-31).

Handbooks

- Denzin, N. K. & Lincoln, Y. S. (2018). (Eds.) *SAGE Handbook of qualitative research*, 5th ed. SAGE. (Also see: Morse, J. Reframing rigor in qualitative inquiry; Brinkman, S. The interview; and Kincheloe, J. et al, Critical pedagogy and qualitative research in this handbook.)
- Flick, U. (2014). (Ed.). *The SAGE Handbook of qualitative data analysis*. SAGE. (Also see: Kowal, S. et al. Transcription as a crucial step in data analysis in this handbook.)

Also see: *SAGE Encyclopedia of Qualitative Research Methods* (2 vols, 2008), edited by Lisa Given; Thomas Schwandt's *The SAGE Dictionary of Qualitative Inquiry*, third edition (2007).

There are specialized handbooks in qualitative research, e.g., the *Handbook of the Arts in Qualitative Research* (Knowles and Cole, 2007), *International handbook of self-study of teaching and teacher education practices* (2020), and the *Ethnographer's Toolkit*.

Journals

Anthropology, Education Quarterly, International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education, Qualitative Inquiry, and Qualitative Research

Websites

There are several web resources that you may find useful. Many of these sites have listservs that you can join if you are interested in receiving regular updates and information regarding qualitative research methodologies and methods.

- The International Institute for Qualitative Methodology's Webinar series:
<http://www.iiqm.ualberta.ca/WebinarSeries/MasterClassWebinarSeries.aspx>
- Methodspace (<http://www.methodspace.com/>)
- The Qualitative Report (<http://www.nova.edu/ssss/QR/index.html>)
- Top Qualitative Research Blogs (<http://www.qualitative360.com/news-and-blogs/11-editor-s-pick-top-qualitative-research-blogs>)

Association for Qualitative Research (AQR)

According to this web site, "AQR is an international organisation which aims to further the practice and study of qualitative research." *Web site:* <http://www.aqr.org.au/>

International Center for Qualitative Inquiry

According to this web site, "The International Center for Qualitative Inquiry is a multidisciplinary institute at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign."

Web site: <http://www.c4qi.org/iaqi/home.html>

Qualpage

According to this web site, "QualPage was originally designed as a private repository of information for graduate students learning about qualitative data analysis software (QDAS). Originally a Gopher site, it evolved into a Web page around 1994."

Web site: http://www.qualitativeresearch.uga.edu/QualPage/e_journals.htm

Qualitative Research Special Interest Group of the American Educational Research Association.

*The SIG offers and Outstanding Qualitative Research Dissertation Award.

University of Georgia, College of Education, Lifelong Education, Administration, and Policy

This website lists journals focusing on qualitative research.

Web site: <http://www.coe.uga.edu/leap/qual/research/journals.html>

For Further Reading

Becker, H. S. (2007). *Writing for social scientists: How to start and finish your thesis, book, or article*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Chapter 6: Risk by P. Richards. (Bb).

Butler-Kisber, L. (2010). *Qualitative inquiry: Thematic, narrative and arts-informed perspectives*. Los Angeles: Sage.

Emerson, R., Fretz, R., & Shaw L., (2012). *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes* (2nd edition). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Freedman, M. et al. (2007). *Standards of evidence in qualitative research: An incitement*

- to discourse. *Educational Researcher*, 36, (1), 25-32. (EJ)
- Glesne, C. (2011). *Becoming qualitative researchers: An introduction* (4th ed.). Boston: Pearson Education.
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- Meskin, T., Singh, L., & van der Walt, T. (2014). Putting the self in the hot seat: Enacting reflexivity through dramatic strategies. *Educational Research for Social Change (ERSC)*, 3(2), 5-20. Retrieved from http://ersc.nmmu.ac.za/view_edition.php?v=3&n=2#
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- Pithouse-Morgan, K., & Samaras, A. P. (2020). Methodological inventiveness in writing about self-study research: Inventiveness in service. In J. Kitchen, A. Berry, S. M. Bullock, A. R. Crowe, M. Taylor, H. Guðjónsdóttir, & L. Thomas (Eds.), *2nd International Handbook of Self-Study of Teaching and Teacher Education* (pp. 427-460). Singapore: Springer Singapore. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-13-6880-6_13
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- Ryan, G. W., & Bernard, H. R. (2003). Techniques to identify themes. *Field Methods*, 15, 85-109.
- Samaras, A. P. (2011). *Self-study teacher research: Improving your practice through collaborative inquiry*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. Chapters 7 & 12 (Bb)
- Samaras, A. P., & Sell, C. (2013). Please write: Using critical friend letters in teacher research. *Teacher Education Quarterly*, 40 (4), 93-109.
- Samaras, A. P. & Pithouse-Morgan, K. (2020.) Polyvocal self-study in transdisciplinary higher education communities. In J. Kitchen, Berry, A., Bullock, S. Crowe, A. Guojonsdottir, H., Taylor, M. & Thomas, L. (Eds.). *2nd International Handbook of Self-Study of Teaching and Teacher Education Practices* (pp. 1291-1321). 2nd. Edition. Dordrecht, The Netherlands. Springer. doi.org/10.1007/978-981-13-1710-1_43-1
- Wolcott, H. F. (2009). *Writing up qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Additional Qualitative Research Resources

- Bogdan, R. C., & Biklen, S. K. (2007). *Qualitative research for education: An introduction to theory and methods* (5th ed). Boston: Pearson.
- Charmaz, K. (2006). *Constructing grounded theory: A practical guide through qualitative analysis*. Los Angeles: Sage.
- Coia, L. & Taylor, M. (2013). Uncovering feminist pedagogy: A co/autoethnography. *Studying Teacher Education*, 9(1), 3-17.
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- Pinnegar, S., & Hamilton, M. L. (2009). *Self-study of practice as a genre of qualitative research: Theory, methodology, and practice*. The Netherlands: Springer.
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- Yin, R. K. (2009). *Case study research: Design and methods*. Los Angeles: Sage.
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Writing Resources

- Boice, R. (1994). *How writers journey to comfort and fluency: A psychological adventure*: Westport, CT: Praeger.
- Boice, R. (1996). *Procrastination and blocking: A novel, practical approach*. Westport, CT: Praeger.
- Brodkey, L. (1994). Writing on the bias. *College English*, 56(5), 527-550.
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- Lamott, A. (1995). *Bird by bird: Some instructions on writing and life*. NY: Anchor.
- Strunk, W. Jr., & White, E. B. (1979). *The elements of style* (3rd ed.). NY: Macmillan.
- Williams, J. M. (1994). *Style: Ten lessons in clarity and grace* (4th ed.). NY: Harper Collins College Publishers.

Publishing Resources

- Boice, R. (1997). Strategies for enhancing scholarly productivity. In J. M. Moxley, & T. Taylor (Eds.). *Writing and publishing for academic authors*. (2nd ed., pp. 19-34). Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.
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- Cantor, J. A. (1993). *A guide to academic writing*. Westport, CT: Praeger.
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- Moxley, J. M. (1997). If not now, when? (pp. 127-140). In J. M. Moxley, & T. Taylor (Eds.). *Writing and publishing for academic authors*. (2nd ed. pp. 3-18). Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.
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Websites on Publishing

- Academic Writing, Wendy Belcher <http://www.wendybelcher.com/index.html>
- Getting published as a graduate student in the sciences, Richard Reis see archives <http://chronicle.com/jobs/2000/11/2000112402c.htm>
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