

**George Mason University  
College of Education and Human Development  
Graduate School of Education  
Research Methods**

**EDRS 822 B02 - ADVANCED QUALITATIVE METHODS  
3 Credits, Summer 2024  
T/R, 9:00am-11:40am (Zoom)  
SYNCHRONOUS ONLINE DISCUSSION via Zoom**

**Faculty**

Name: L. Earle Reybold  
Office hours: By Appointment  
Office: West 2203, Fairfax Campus  
Office phone: 703-993-9174 (email preferred)  
Email address: [ereybold@gmu.edu](mailto:ereybold@gmu.edu)

**Prerequisites/Corequisites**

**Required Prerequisites:** (EDRS 810<sup>B-</sup> or 810<sup>XS</sup>) and (EDRS 812<sup>B-</sup> or 812<sup>XS</sup>).

<sup>B-</sup> Requires minimum grade of B-.

<sup>XS</sup> Requires minimum grade of XS.

Enrollment is limited to Graduate level students.

**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.

**Course Overview**

This course is an advanced seminar that focuses on current and emerging issues in qualitative research. The seminar will deal with selected advanced topics and will provide students with opportunities to apply new skills and knowledge to projects related to their own interests. We will spend considerable time exploring the philosophical underpinnings of design and application, as well as various analytical techniques.

Assignments consist of three modules, each on a particular aspect of qualitative research. Each module will have a written assignment. Assignment topics for each module will be negotiated. I suggest you meet with your major professor (if applicable) to determine how these assignments might support your dissertation or proposal.

I expect you to come to class prepared to discuss the reading assignments, and I encourage you to share with the class other readings and examples you have found that are relevant. Before beginning the readings for a particular module I suggest that you ask yourself what your questions and concerns are

about this issue and that you list them. After finishing a reading ask yourself how it related to your questions or concerns. Outline the author's main points and consider these questions:

- Did the reading answer your questions? Did it raise new issues?
- Do you agree or disagree with the author?
- If an example of a qualitative article is also assigned, analyze it in terms of the methodological readings: How do the ideas apply? How do they not apply? What are their implications for this study?

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

This class will be collaborative and interactive—be prepared for discussion! Questions are encouraged and expected, and alternative viewpoints are welcome. I value contributions to our discussions and ask you to speak up! However, I do expect you to support your assertions. Also, I expect all of us to create an educational climate of open debate that is respectful and democratic. Further, be familiar with the [GMU Honor System and Code](#). Your participation as a class member will be evaluated, not by the *quantity* of your contribution, but by the *quality* and *integrity* of your contribution.

Please note that course readings are listed for the day on which they will be discussed. Also note assignment due dates. Contact me if you have questions or concerns about this material. I am available via e-mail to schedule an appointment.

NOTE: When printing non-graded materials, I encourage you to print front and back.

### **Course Delivery Method**

This course will be delivered online (76% or more) using a synchronous 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. We will meet by Zoom on Tuesdays and Thursdays, 9am-11:40am. We will supplement course meetings with asynchronous Blackboard dialogue sessions at the end of each module. See syllabus for details.

**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](https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Getting_Started/Browser_Support#supported-browsers)
- 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://support.microsoft.com/en-us/help/14209/get-windows-media-player>  
Apple Quick Time Player: [www.apple.com/quicktime/download/](http://www.apple.com/quicktime/download/)

### Expectations

- **Course Week:** Our course week will begin on the day(s) that our synchronous meetings take place as indicated on the Schedule of Classes.
- **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 one time per week. In addition, students must log-in for all scheduled online synchronous meetings.
- **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. Those unable to come to a Mason campus can meet with the instructor 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.
- **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.

## Learner Outcomes or Objectives

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

- 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)

## Required Texts

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

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

*Other readings as assigned. (Articles are available on Blackboard in the Readings Folder.)*

## Recommended Texts (We will discuss which texts might be useful based on your interests.)

Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (2013). *The constructivist credo*. Left Coast Press.

Patton, M. Q. (2015). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.). SAGE.

Saldaña, J. (2021). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.). SAGE.

## Course Performance Evaluation

Students are expected to submit all assignments on time in the manner outlined by the instructor (e.g., Blackboard, VIA, hard copy). **All assignments will be submitted as a Word document by email to the instructor by 9am on the due date.**

- **Assignments and Examinations**

### Participation

This is an advanced methods course, and engagement is expected and necessary. Everyone in the class is a learner, and everyone is a teacher. I want to emphasize our obligation to critical thinking, reasoned discussion, and self-critique. Participation is not equivalent to attendance!

### Module Papers (3)

Using criteria discussed in class and noted below, you will write a critical essay for each of the three module areas: philosophy, design and methods, and quality. 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 the assignments may be used in either your proposal or dissertation.

### Weighting for Assignments

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

- **Other Requirements**

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**

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

### **Assessment Rubric(s)**

#### *Module Papers*

You will write a scholarly essay for each of the three modules in this course: philosophy, design and methods, quality. We will discuss these topics and paper parameters in class. Each paper should address the following areas:

1. Topic development. What topic or issue did you choose for your paper? Why did you choose this—what were your goals in exploring this topic?
2. Topic coverage. What aspects of this topic are covered in our readings? What are you exploring beyond class material? Is your focus broad (breadth of topic) or narrow (depth of topic)? What theories, beliefs, or expectations did you have about this topic? Where did these questions and expectations come from? How did they change as a result of this assignment?

3. Discussion and critique. Have you developed each of your major points and connected them to the course material? Have you reflected on the material and considered alternative viewpoints? Does your essay critique both the content covered and assumptions about that content?
4. Application to personal research. How might this topic impact your dissertation or other research projects? Why? What ‘makes sense’ to you and why? What is not useful to you and why?
5. Technical. This is a scholarly assignment in an advanced doctoral methods course. APA guidelines for writing and referencing are expected.

Each paper should be no longer than 10 typed pages (not including cover page, abstract, and references), double-spaced, 12pt font – standard APA guidelines for research papers. Appendices should be addressed sufficiently in text.

### Assignments: General Guidelines/Assessment Rubric

#### *Module Papers*

General topics are identified in the syllabus. Papers should be no longer than 10 pages (not including title page, references, and appendices), double spaced, one-inch margins, APA for research papers. Evaluation criteria for papers: (see Bloom’s Revised Taxonomy, Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001):

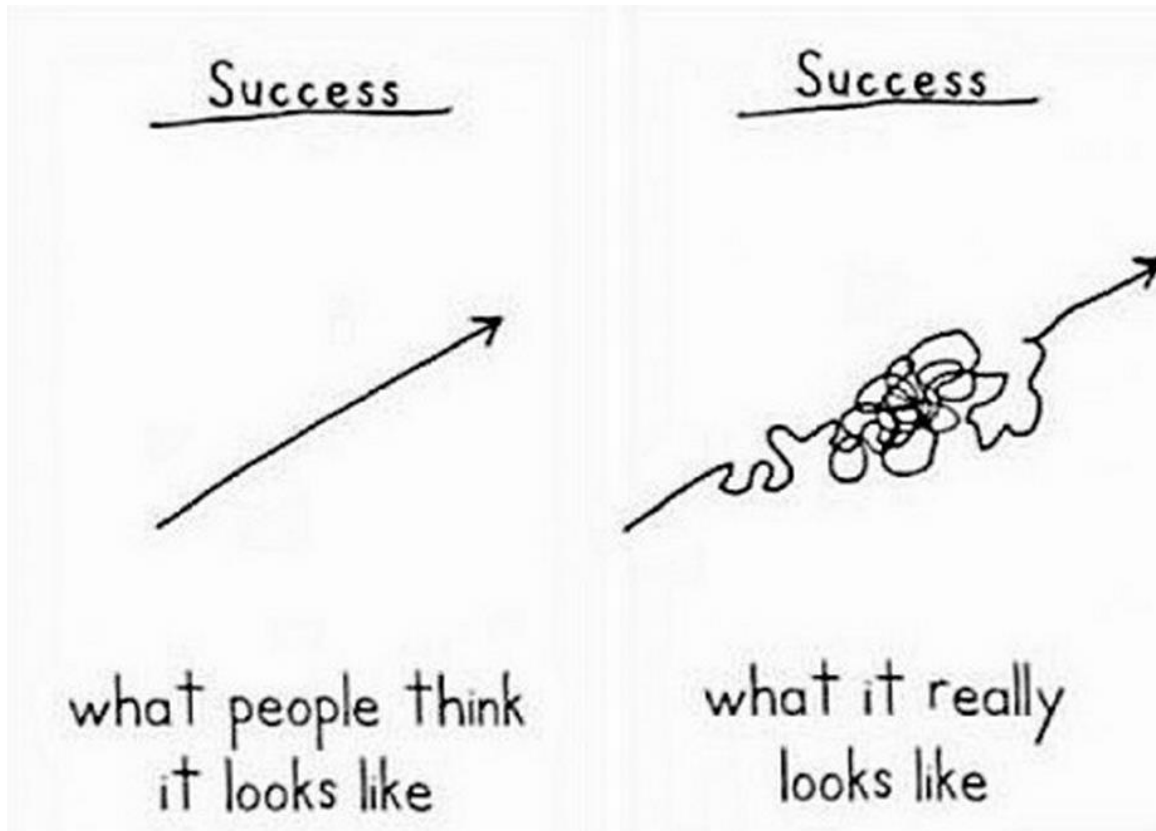
**Reflection and Critique:** avoids surface presentation and summary of topic; identifies and meets relevant need; provides neutral presentation of strengths and weaknesses of topic; evaluates strengths and weaknesses; states and supports position.

**Integration and Evidence:** provides comprehensive connections across course material (i.e., readings, discussions, previous learning, and personal experiences); balances theory and practice; provides appropriate and adequate support for ideas, facts, and propositions.

**Technical Soundness:** characterizes scholarly writing; attends to audience composition; exhibits drafting and editing appropriate for graduate-level work; adheres to APA 6<sup>th</sup> Edition guidelines.

_____ Grammar	_____ Readability	_____ APA Style
_____ Punctuation	_____ Tone/Voice	_____ Cover page
_____ Spelling	_____ Language	_____ Abstract
_____ Agreement	_____ Flow	_____ Citations
_____ Sentence structure	_____ Transitions	_____ Quotations
_____ Paragraph structure	_____ Preview/Summary	_____ References

In other words....



MeaningfulMag.com

### *Participation*

The following criteria are expected:

- ✓ Prepared for discussion and tasks. This includes reading material and attending any team meetings.
- ✓ Maintains balance between speaking and listening roles. I do not expect you to 'time' yourself; be aware, though, 'strong' personalities overpower a discussion. Monitor your team and classroom interactions!
- ✓ Listens attentively and offers constructive feedback. All contributions should be considered and negotiated.
- ✓ Accepts diversity in viewpoints and negotiates differences. You are not expected to agree with one another at all times! However, we will be respectful and professional.
- ✓ Shares leadership roles. While it is comfortable to let 'managers' and 'organizers' plan team strategy, this will result in a vision defined by one person.

## 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 <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 VIA should be directed to [viahelp@gmu.edu](mailto:viahelp@gmu.edu) or <https://cehd.gmu.edu/aero/assessments> . 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, sexual harassment, interpersonal violence, and stalking:**

As a faculty member, I am designated as a “Non-Confidential Employee,” and must report all disclosures of sexual assault, sexual harassment, 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 or support measures from Mason’s Title IX Coordinator by calling 703-993-8730, or emailing [titleix@gmu.edu](mailto:titleix@gmu.edu).

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

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**Now, to figure out what a photo of a meerkat sitting on a camera has to do with qualitative research....**



**Class Schedule (\*indicates non-required reading)****MODULE ONE: Philosophy and Theory of Qualitative Research**

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**05/28 Introduction to Course**

We will discuss the syllabus and course requirements, as well as your research projects and what you are hoping to achieve through this course.

NOTE: \* indicates further reading for those more interested in this particular topic. You will notice I have selected other readings from various sources, with attention to breadth and depth. This means a LOT of readings! These are resources for continued exploration, and I will draw from these in class discussions and connect them to the required readings.

**05/30 Overview of QR Paradigms and Conceptual Frameworks**

Reybold (2009) Theoretical Frameworks [review]  
 Saldaña (2015) Chpt. 1, Thinking about Thinking  
 Charmaz (2004) Qualitative Foundations  
 \*Patton (2015) Chpts. 1-2, QR Nature, Themes  
 \*Willis (2007) Chpt. 1, World Views and Paradigms

**06/04 The Ongoing Debate: The Value of Qualitative Research Questioned**

Holstein & Gubrium (2003) Chpt. 1, Inside Interviewing  
 Howe, K. R. (2009) Isolating Science from the Humanities  
 Saldaña (2015) Chpts. 2-4, Thinking Analytically, Realistically, Symbolically  
 \*Hammersley, M. (2000) Relevance of QR  
 \*Patton (2015) Chpts. 3-4, QR Frameworks, Applications

**06/06 Transition to Module Two: Connecting Design to Orientation**

Koro-Ljungberg et al. (2009) Methodological Ambiguity  
 Pascale (2010) Chpt. 1, Intro: Cartographies of Knowledge  
 Saldaña (2015) Chpt. 5, Thinking Ethically  
 \*Patton (2015) Chpt. 5, QR Design

**06/11 Dialogue: Module One Open Forum (Asynchronous Bb Discussion across the week)**

We will review and critique material across Module 1. We will focus on readings, class discussions, connections to other materials, and impact on application. I will provide guided discussion options for the Module One General Discussion Forum, but you also have the option of blending ideas or adding in your own!

**MODULE TWO: Design and Methods of Qualitative Research**

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**06/13 Selection: A Critique of Convenience**

Holstein & Gubrium (2003) Chpt. 7, Race and Subjectivity  
 Freeman, M. (2000) Constructing Culture  
 Reybold et al. (2013) Participant Selection as Thinking Forward  
 \*Patton (2015) Chpt. 6, Fieldwork and Observation

**Module Paper One due****06/18 Evaluating Qualitative Methods of Data Collection (Interview)**

Holstein & Gubrium (2003) Chpts. 2, 4, 8 (various “types” of participants... think about this)  
 Kvale, S. (2006) Dominance through Interviews  
 Enosh & Buchbinder (2005) Narrative Styles of Interview  
 \*Patton (2015) Chpt. 7, Interviewing

**06/20 Evaluating Qualitative Methods of Data Collection (Observation, Documents)**

Brown, L., & Durrheim, K. (2009) Mobile Interviewing  
 Perry et al. (2014) Occupational Choice during Segregation  
 Ramos (2017) FotoDialogo Method  
 Reybold, et al. (2016) Policy Paradox

**06/25 Coding and Beyond: Interpreting and Generating Meaning**

Attride-Stirling (2001) Thematic Networks  
 Holstein & Gubrium (2003) Chpts. 15 & 18, GT Analysis, Institutional Ethnography  
 Saldaña (2015) Chpts. 6 & 9, Thinking Multidisciplinarily, Interpretively  
 \*Adair & Pastori (2011) Developing QR Coding Frameworks  
 \*Patton (2015) Chpt. 8, Analysis and Interpretation

**06/27 Narrative, Phenomenology, and Discourse Techniques**

Holstein & Gubrium (2003) Chpts. 16-17, 19 (various “types” of techniques...)  
 Saldaña (2015) Chpts. 7 & 10, Thinking Artistically, Narratively  
 Muccio, Reybold, & Kidd (2015) Portraiture, Aesthetics, Quality

**07/02 Dialogue: Module Two Open Forum (Asynchronous Bb Discussion across the week)**

We will review and critique material across Module 2. We will focus on readings, class discussions, connections to other materials, and impact on application. I will provide guided discussion options for the Module Two General Discussion Forum, but you also have the option of blending ideas or adding in your own! Discussion can focus on a comprehensive review and/or assessment of the material covered thus far. Or we might consider how the theory of qualitative research impacts the methods of qualitative research.

**07/04 No Class--holiday**

**MODULE THREE: Quality Issues in Qualitative Research**

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**07/09 Quality in QR**

Holstein & Gubrium (2003) Chpts. 20 & 24, Representational Issues  
Reybold et al. (2018) Reclaiming Triangulation  
Saldaña (2015) Chpts. 8 & 11, Thinking Summarily, about Thinking  
Cho & Trent (2006) Validity in Qualitative Research Revisited  
\*Patton (2015) Chpt. 9, Quality

NOTE: Consider the language of quality in your own research from the perspective of your researcher identity, socialization and training, and disciplinary affiliation.

*Module Paper Two due*

**07/11 Ethics in Qualitative Research**

Ghaffar-Kucher (2014) Burden of Representation in Native Research  
Leigh (2014) Insider Dilemma  
Nind et al. (2012) Methodological Innovation and Research Ethics  
Reybold, L. E. (2008) Social and Political Structuring of Faculty Ethicality

**07/16 Dialogue: Module Three Open Forum (Asynchronous Bb Discussion across the week)**

We will review and critique material across Module 1. We will focus on readings, class discussions, connections to other materials, and impact on application. I will provide guided discussion options for the Module One General Discussion Forum, but you also have the option of blending ideas or adding in your own! Discussion topics are decided by class focus. This can be a comprehensive review and/or assessment of the material covered thus far. We might consider how the **theory** and **application** of qualitative research intersect with the **evaluation** of qualitative research. For example, how might your research choices be evaluated by your Committee and/or discipline?

**07/18 Threading the Needle and Dealing with Loose Ends**

Final paper discussion and general discussion toward dissertation and/or publication goals.

**07/23 NO MEETING**

*Module Paper Three due*

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