

UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA  
College of Education  
Department of Teaching, Learning and Sociocultural Studies  
Program: Language, Reading & Culture

**LRC 605: Qualitative Research Methods in Education**

Spring 2011  
(Section 001)

Thursdays 7:00 – 9:30 pm. COE # 337

Instructor: Eliane Rubinstein-Avila, Ed.D. (**Dr. R-A**), Associate Professor

Office: COE # 525

Office hours: Tuesdays noon – 2pm. I can also be available to meet most Tuesdays afternoon—check with me through GMAIL, and by appt.

Office Phone: 621-1488 (no voice mail)

LRC Office: 621-1311 (**for messages**)

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**Course Description**

This review course introduces doctoral students to the theoretical, epistemological and methodological underpinnings that inform qualitative inquiry—with a focus on education. Students will be exposed to ways in which conceptual/theoretical frameworks, epistemologies, methodologies, and the researchers' positionality shape the research process and “product.” Students will be exposed to an array of methodologies and data gathering techniques under the qualitative research umbrella: ethnography, action research, case study, oral history, cultural studies, etc. (note that these are not mutually exclusive). Throughout the course students will be guided (step-by-step) in designing an individual qualitative research proposal. Each student is expected to conceptualize her/his own research questions, and inquiry process. However, students will be supported—throughout the course—by peer-review “pods.”

This course is **highly** interactive and participatory; participation is **not** optional—it is required. Plan to spend time outside of class-time (see note on page 5) piloting data gathering techniques, engaging in on-going weekly revisions to proposal sections, etc. The last hour of each class meeting will be dedicated to student-peer-review pods. Students will be expected to provide and receive feedback (i.e., constructive criticism) on their work toward the final proposal. **Plan to bring 3 copies of your ongoing work to each pod meeting** (one will be turned in to me—not for a grade).

Please note that **ALL** assignments for this course will be expected to be completed in **TIMES NEW ROMAN font, #12 and double-spaced (including the reference list)**. If you are a COE student you'll be expected to use APA (American Psychological Association) citation style—6<sup>th</sup> edition. If you are not a COE student, be sure to indicate clearly the citation style you will be using (Chicago, AAA, etc.).

## Course Objectives

Upon successful completion of this course, students will not be experts in qualitative research; however, students should be able to:

1. Explain the multiple roles qualitative inquiry play in educational research
2. Describe and apply several qualitative research techniques
3. Compose viable and doable research questions (RQs), and align RQs with probable qualitative methodologies and research techniques
4. Provide, and receive, constructive feedback and revise their work as a result of the peer-review process
5. Plan and design a viable/doable/coherent qualitative research proposal (a competence you will need to graduate)
6. Pinpoint and address the challenges, and ethical dilemmas, across the process of conducting inquiry with humans (especially in regards to minors and other vulnerable populations).
7. Conduct a face-to-face interview, transcribe and analyze data through open-coding (at least at a basic level)
8. Recognize “tier 1-3” peer-review journals in your particular field or subfield
9. Compose a mini-profile (from your interview transcript)
10. Apply new knowledge to dissecting and critiquing data-driven qualitative research articles (which is very helpful for composing literature reviews).
11. Present your work publically “like a PRO” (and be ready to present at the LRC Colloquy next year, a regional, state and even a national/international research conference).

## Required Texts

Heath, S. B. & Street, B. V. (2008). *On ethnography: Approaches to language and literacy research*. NCRL; New York: NY, Teachers College Press

Marshall, C. & Rossman, G. (2010). *Designing qualitative research*. 5<sup>th</sup> Edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

Seidman, I. (2006). *Interviewing as qualitative research*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Please note: Additional readings, journal articles and book chapters, will either be available to be downloaded (course d2l site—under CONTENT), or available to be read online/downloaded through the UofA scholarly databases.

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- Additional readings, journal articles and book chapters, will be available to be downloaded (course d2l site) or available online through the UofA scholarly databases.
- At some point in the semester, there will be no assigned readings. From that point on, students are expected to retrieve and read texts that pertain to their research proposals.

### **Recommended Texts** (among many others)

- Bogden, R. C. & Biklen, S. K. (2006). *Qualitative research for education: An introduction to theories and methods* (5<sup>th</sup> ed.). Boston: MA, Perason.
- Galvan, J. L. (2004). *Writing literature reviews*. Glendale, CA: Pyrezak Publishing.
- Lawrence-Lightfoot, S. & Davis, J. H. (1997). *The art and science of portraiture*. San Francisco: CA, Jossey –Bass Publishers.
- Maxwell, J. (2005). *Qualitative research design: An interactive approach*. 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Saldana, J. (2009). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers*. Thousand Oaks, CA.: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Schesul, S. L., Schesul, J. J. & LeCompte, M. D. (1999). *Essential ethnographic methods*. Walnut Creek: CA. Altamira Press
- Smith, L. T. (1999). *Decolonizing methodologies: Research and Indigenous peoples*. New York: Palgrave.

### **Course Requirements/Assignments**

- 1. Physical Attendance (10%)** Students are expected to arrive on time and remain in class until class is officially over. Two “tardies” will be counted as an absence. ONE absence will be accepted during the semester. Two absences will likely impact your final grade; 3 absences **will** result in a drop of a letter grade. There will be a sign-up sheet circulating during the first, 5 minutes of every class. Please make sure to sign in promptly. Signing up is YOUR responsibility.
- 2. Active participation/engagement (10%)** in this course entails: a) coming to every class prepared to discuss the readings and having **2-3 written** discussion questions and/or statements which relate directly to the readings; b) leading ONE class discussion with a classmate; c) bringing with you **3 copies** of a new on-going proposal (section) for “pods” **AND 1 copy of your revised section** to turn in.
- 3. 2-Page Plus Draft of partial Qualitative Research Proposal (0%):** Although this partial draft will not be graded, **you are required to turn it in as an assessment of ‘where you are.’** Make sure you keep the original draft WITH my comments; you will be required to attach it to your final proposal.
- 4. Mini exam (15%):** The purpose of the mini-exam is to evaluate your grasp of course readings and mini lectures up until that point.
- 5. Qualitative Article Dissection (10%):** You will be provided with guidelines for this assignment. You will be expected to search and retrieve a **data-driven**, scholarly qualitative article (hopefully in your particular area of study) to dissect and critique. If by then you are still **not 100% sure** what a data-driven article is, make sure to let me know BEFORE you complete this assignment. You will **not** have a second chance to redo the assignment.

6. **Interview transcript and profile—(10%):** You will be expected to conduct ONE face-to-face interview, transcribe it (at least 10 double-spaced pages), open-code it, and compose a “profile.” The transcript and the profile will become required appendices to your final (graded) proposal.
7. **Final Qualitative Research Proposal (w/appendices) (40%):** Guidelines will be posted on d2l and will be explained in class. Note that your proposal is expected to be between **9 -10 pages + references AND appendices** (10 page of text max.)
8. **Human Subjects (Behavioral Social Science) online test (5%):** Federal law requires that ALL graduate students pass this test before they complete the mandated IRB (Internal Review Board) process. Log on to the University of Arizona IRB site at <http://www.irb.arizona.edu> and look for the testing link at <http://www.citiprogram.org>. Make sure to select the Behavioral Social Sciences test—NOT the test for Biomedical Research. The ethical dilemmas addressed in the exam are pertinent to those we will discuss in class.

Requirements/Assignments	Percentage of total grade
Class Attendance	10%
Active Participation (includes leading class discussion ONCE, 3 copies of 2-3 questions/statements for group discussion, 3 copies of <i>new</i> proposal sections for pods and 1 copy of your <i>revised</i> section)	10%
Mini-exam	15%
Qualitative Article Dissection	10%
Interview transcript (coded) + profile	10%
Final Research Proposal (w/appendices) & Presentation	40%
Human Subject Online Test (Behavioral Social Sciences)	5%
TOTAL	100%

Final grades (calculated throughout the semester on the d2l site):

A = 90 – 100%	B = 80 – 89%	C = 70- 79%	D = 60 – 69%	E = 59% and below
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Please note:

A = OUSTANDING WORK (Superior work—quality and timeliness; there was evidence that the student went above and beyond in **all/most** of the assignments/course requirements)

B = Good work (course requirements were met in a timely fashion and sections were revised regularly). A grasp of the material was evident.

C = Average (course requirements were barely met—inconsistent attendance and/or revisions, late assignments, lots of excuses, and the work was nothing to write home about)

**LRC 605 Tentative Course Schedule**

**(Spring 2011) Rubinstein-Avila**

<b>Day/Date</b>	<b>In Class</b>	<b>Pods</b>
Thu 1/13 Week 1	Course syllabus and introductions Qual. Quant vocabulary The research proposal as a piece puzzle	No pods Active Participation! Student Info. Sheet <b>Sign up (in pairs) to facilitate ONE class discussion</b>
Thu 1/20 Week 2	Qualitative research paradigms and epistemologies, and theoretical underpinnings Guest Speaker/presentation	Pods: Discuss a proposal example (under content)
Thu 1/27 Week 3	--Formulating appropriate and doable research questions --Rationale for conducting a study; what is your contribution? Filling in the gap	Pods: Bring your RQs (draft)
Thu 2/3 Week 4	--Challenges to conducting QR --The role and stance of the researcher—positionality	Pods: Revise/hone RQs and bring purpose statement & rationale
Thu 2/10 Week 5	--Why (and how to) review the research literature? Pointing to the gaps in the research lit.	Pods: Revise purpose & rationale, and bring positionality statement
Thu 2/17 Week 6	Theoretical frameworks & Lit. Review	<b>Due: 2-page proposal plus</b>
Thu 3/3 Week 7	--Portraiture: Art & social science--Case study (multiple cases) –Ethnography	Pods: Revised theoretical approach and 2-page lit. review
Thu 3/10 Week 8	--Interview ROLE PLAY <b>Mini-exam</b>	Pods: Bring your interview questions

<b>Day/Date</b>	<b>In Class</b>	<b>For Pod Workshop</b>
Thu 3/17 Week 9	SPRING BREAK ☺  No class	
Thu 3/24 Week 10	Data gathering techniques (Cont.)	Pods: 1 <sup>st</sup> draft of methods section + 2-page lit. review
Thu 3/31 Week 11	QR Validity & Ethics	Pods: 2 <sup>nd</sup> draft of Data Collection of methods section <b>DUE: Qual. Article dissection</b>
Thu 4/7 Week 12	Data analysis: Open coding,  Profiles, discourse analysis, etc.	Pods: Bring interview transcripts  <b>DUE: Interview transcript + short profile</b>
Thu 4/14 Week 13	Research significance and potential implications (for future research, practice and policy)	Pods: Bring a complete <b>draft</b> of proposal + revised positionality statement
Thu 4/21 Week 14  Attendance required	Proposal presentations panels  (10 min)	No pods
Thu 4/28 Week 15  Attendance required	--Proposal presentations (Cont.)  --Course evaluation	No pods
<b>"EXAM"</b>  DAY  (TBA)	Have a magnificent Summer!!!!	<b>DUE:</b>  <b>QR Proposal (Max. 12 pgs) + Refs &amp; Appendices</b>