

COURSE TITLE: SOCW 8323 (10724) Qualitative Research

TIME/ ROOM: Mondays, 1 pm – 4 pm (Room: 425)

FACULTY: McClain Sampson, M.S.S.W., Ph.D.

OFFICE HOURS: GCSW, 403

- **Mondays** 11 am – 1 pm;
- **By appointment on other days.** Please submit appointment requests via e-mail.

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I. Course

A. Catalog Description

Qualitative Research methods, including theories, research designs, data collection methods, and analysis approaches. Emphasizes grounded theory, ethnography, participant-observation, and field research.

http://www.uh.edu/grad_catalog/gsw/socw_courses.html

B. Purpose

Prepares students to use qualitative research methods including the use of appropriate theories, research designs, data collection methods, and analysis. Content includes use of grounded theory, ethnography, participation-observation and field research. Examples of qualitative research in social work and related fields are examined.

<http://www.sw.uh.edu/academics/coursecurriculum.php>

II. Course Objectives

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to demonstrate the following competencies:

1. Provide the theoretical and methodological perspectives of qualitative research
2. Involvement in the application of qualitative methods
3. Provide the analytic skills to understand and appreciate qualitative research
4. Consider how qualitative research can be applied to social work research and public policy

III. Course Content

The following topics in Qualitative Research Methods will be presented and discussed in class and relevant readings and assignments are required to

prepare for and show the degree of knowledge and skills acquired. These include:

1. Introduction to Qualitative Research as a Field of inquiry; its features and the personal competencies to do it
2. Guiding Concepts for Qualitative Research
3. Ethics of Qualitative Research
4. Formulating a Research Question and Selecting Theoretical framework
5. Entering the Field – Data collection methods
6. Qualitative interviews
7. Focus Groups
8. Qualitative Content Analysis
9. Qualitative Software Demonstration - NVivo (if time permits and if needed)
10. Writing up
11. Journal reflections
12. Role of Qualitative Research in Social Science Research and Evaluation and its application for policy

IV. Course Structure

This fall 2017 semester course will consist of 15 class periods. The content will be delivered in seminar format, utilizing a variety of teaching and learning techniques including: lectures, in-class group discussions, group activities, case studies, handouts, and online activities via Blackboard.

V. Textbooks

Required:

Creswell, J.W. (2013) *Qualitative inquiry and research design choosing among five approaches*. (3rd ed). SAGE Publications, Inc.

Maxwell, J.A. (2004). *Qualitative Research Design: An Interactive Approach* (Applied Social Research Methods) (2nd ed). SAGE Publications, Inc.

Recommended if you want more specifics on methods:

Josselson, R. (2013) *Interviewing for Qualitative Inquiry. A Relational Approach*. Guilford Press. New York, NY.

Kvale, S. & Brinkmann, S. (2008). *InterViews: Learning the Craft of Qualitative Research Interviewing*. (2nd ed.). SAGE Publications, Inc.

Patton, M.Q. (2001). *Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods*. Sage publications. 3rd edition.

Spradley, J.P. *The Ethnographic Interview*.

Wertz, F.J., Charmaz, K., McMullen, L.M., Josselson, R., Anderson, R. and

McSpadden, E. (2011). *Five Ways of Doing Qualitative Analysis*. Guilford Press. New York, NY.

Forthcoming is a list of Peer Reviewed articles that are required or recommended. Articles typically are used to demonstrate the use of a specific approach and type of analysis.

These will be shared in class and posted to Blackboard

VI. Course Requirements

This class will be in seminar format and require us to all work collaboratively to build knowledge. Thus, students are expected to do the readings and assignments and come to class prepared to discuss them. Homework assignments will be skills based and incremental, culminating in a mini-proposal for a qualitative research study. You will be responsible for many outside of class, experiential activities such as completing a human subjects protections training, conducting field observations, taking field notes, obtaining confidential consent from your participants & conducting 2 semi-structured interviews. We will also do many experiential activities in class such as practice coding transcriptions and discussing articles and videos.

VII. Evaluation and Grading

A. Grading Distribution:

- 1) Observations/broad research question 5 points **Due Sept 12**
- 2) Concept map 10 points.
- 3) Conceptual framework and narrative. Narrative includes your theoretical underpinnings. 20 points.
- 4) Finalized research questions and interview questions 10 points.
- 5) Memos due with broad themes 10 points.
- 6) Abstract 15 points (200 words or less).
- 7) Mini-proposal 30 points (e.g., background, research questions, theoretical framework, and proposed approach). You will present your mini-proposal as though it were your proposal defense.

Expectations and instructions for homework assignments will be explained in further detail in class discussion and written form.

- B. Grading Scale:** Scores from each written assignment and the class participation grade will be converted according to the grading distribution indicated above. The scores will then be combined and final letter grades will be based on the following grading scale:

Letter Grade	Range	Letter Grade	Range
A	100-96	C+	79.9-76
A-	95.9-92	C	75.9-72
B+	91.9-88	C-	71.9-68
B	87.9-84	D	67.9-64
B-	83.9-80	F	Below 64%

VIII. Policy on grades of “I” (Incomplete):

Please refer to the UH Graduate and Professional Studies Bulletin for the university policy regarding a grade of Incomplete (I). Incompletes will be given only in accordance with this policy. Assignments are due at the beginning of the class session for which they are due, as indicated in the course outline below. Late assignments will be reduced by 5 points for each day they are late. Please plan accordingly so that you are able to complete and submit your assignments on time, and inform me ASAP should any problems arise. If an emergency prevents you from attending class on the day an assignment is due, you must notify me prior to the class so that appropriate arrangements may be planned. An **unexcused** absence will also result in a grade of zero (0) on any in-class assignments administered on the day of the absence.

IX. Policy on academic dishonesty and plagiarism

Please click the link below for the full explanation of the Academic Honesty policy and procedure

Policy: <http://www.uh.edu/provost/policies/honesty/documents-honesty/academic-honesty-policy.pdf>

Definitions:

“Academic dishonesty” means employing a method or technique or engaging in conduct in an academic endeavor that contravenes the standards of ethical integrity expected at the University of Houston or by a course instructor to fulfill any and all academic requirements. Academic dishonesty includes but is not limited to, the following:

Plagiarism

- a. Representing as one’s own work the work of another without acknowledging the source (plagiarism). Plagiarism includes copying verbatim text from the literature, whether printed or electronic, in all assignments including field.

Cheating and Unauthorized Group Work

- b. Openly cheating in an examination, as copying from another’s paper; c. Being able to view during an examination, quiz or any in-class assignment an electronic device that allows communication with another person, access to unauthorized material, access to the internet, or the ability to capture an image, unless expressly permitted by the instructor;
- d. Using and/or possessing “crib notes,” as unauthorized use of notes or the like to aid in answering questions during an examination;
- e. Giving or receiving unauthorized aid during an examination, such as trading examinations, whispering answers, and passing notes, and using electronic devices to transmit or receive information;
- f. Securing another to take a test in the student’s place. Both the student taking the test for another and the student registered in the course are at fault;

Fabrication, Falsification, and Misrepresentation

- g. Changing answers or grades on a test that has been returned to a student in an attempt to claim instructor error;

- h. Using another's laboratory results as one's own, whether with or without the permission of the owner;
- i. Falsifying results in laboratory experiments;
- j. Misrepresenting academic records or achievements as they pertain to course prerequisites or corequisites for the purpose of enrolling or remaining in a course for which one is not eligible;
- k. Representing oneself as a person who has earned a degree without having earned that particular degree

Stealing and Abuse of Academic Materials

- l. Stealing, as theft of tests or grade books, from faculty offices or elsewhere, or knowingly using stolen tests or materials in satisfaction of exams, papers, or other assignments; this includes the removal of items posted for use by the students;
- m. Mutilating or stealing library materials; misshelving materials with the intent to reduce accessibility to other students;

Complicity in Academic Dishonesty

- n. Failing to report to the instructor or departmental hearing officer an incident which the student believes to be a violation of the academic honesty policy;

Academic Misconduct

- o. Any other conduct which a reasonable person in the same or similar circumstances would recognize as dishonest or improper in an academic setting.

Process:

Students shall have the responsibility of reporting incidents of alleged academic dishonesty to the instructor of record involved or to the appropriate authority if the alleged act is not associated with a specific class within 5 class days of the incident. Faculty or instructor of record shall have the responsibility of reporting incidents of alleged academic dishonesty through their college hearing officer within 5 class days of the incident. The faculty should include the recommended sanction in the report. The college hearing officer will notify the student of the report and recommended sanction. The student can accept the sanction and waive a hearing or request a college hearing. A hearing shall be set within 10 days and would be consist of two faculty and three students chosen by the hearing officer.

X. Course Schedule and Reading Assignments

A FRAMEWORK FOR THINKING ABOUT QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

Class 1

Monday, August 21: Course Introduction

- Course overview & logistics: Introductions, syllabus, assignments, Blackboard site
- Overview of Qualitative research theoretical underpinnings and basic approaches. We will discuss underlying philosophies of Qual, ethics, why it is useful and when, the importance of your questions
- Course Syllabus & Review Blackboard Site

Homework: complete Human Subjects training online either through UH (http://www.research.uh.edu/Home/Division-of-Research/Compliance-and-Committees/Conflict-of-Interest/COI-Training-Requirement/COI_CITI_Training) or NIH (<http://phrp.nihtraining.com/users/login.php>). Print your certification of completion and bring to class as proof of completion.

Fieldwork: field observations and notes, formulate a broad research question. A “why” or “how” question.

Required Readings for weeks 1 & 2:

Creswell 1& 2; Maxwell chapter 1

Recommended: Bowen. Lessons Learned (journal article on Bb)

GATHERING DATA

Class 2 Monday, Aug. 28: Conceptualizing your research

Lecture: Continue to discuss epistemology. Discuss the importance of theoretical orientation and concept mapping.

In class: discuss plans for observations and share your budding questions. Be prepared to discuss how your research question was informed.

Required Readings for week 2& 3:

Maxwell. C. 3: Conceptual Framework

Creswell: C. 3 Designing a Qualitative Study

Shaw: Ethics in Qualitative Research

Class 3 Sept. 4 Labor Day Holiday, NO CLASS

Class 4 Monday Sept. 11: Overarching approach- in depth or descriptive, capturing content, looking for themes

Discuss the use of focus groups and appropriate analysis

Discuss interviewing in Qual research

Required Readings:

Linhorst: A Review of the Use of Focus Groups in SW; Braun & Clark: Thematic Analysis (on Bb); Sandelowski: Whatever happened to Qualitative descriptive (on Bb).

Recommended if you want more on Content Analysis

Graneheim & Lundman: Qualitative content analysis in nursing research.....

Hsieh & Shannon: Three Approaches to Qualitative Content Analysis.

Assignment Due: Observation Notes & Broad research question (*this question will be refined as we move through the course*). This assignment is a brief (1 and ½ page maximum) written account of what you observed and a written broad research question. Be sure to write why you chose to observe what you did and write why and how you came about choosing your research question. **At this time you must also tell me what**

your research topic and proposed methods are so we can submit for class IRB approval.

Class 5 Monday, September 18: Approaches Often Used in Social Sciences

Narrative, Ethnographic, Phenomenology, Grounded Theory, CBPR, Content Analysis, Case study

NOTE: WE WILL NOT HAVE TIME TO COVER ALL APPROACHES. I SUGGEST COVERING: descriptive (including content analysis), case study, grounded theory, ethnography, community based participatory research (CBPR)

Required reading:

Creswell: chapter 4 Five Qualitative Approaches to Inquiry; Chapter 3, Maxwell

IN CLASS DISCUSSION/TIPS FOR DOING CONCEPT MAPPING. In 2016 We learned about focus groups and went through Sampson AA focus group article.

ORGANIZING AND INTERPRETING MEANING OF DATA

Class 6 Monday, Sept. 25: Approaches continued

In class activities: discuss the article/book chapter and approach. Focus on **ethnographic and narrative approach.**

Video: Preschool across 3 cultures.

Required reading: Narrative: Josselson on narrative (on Bb)

Ethnographic interviewing techniques: Gallagher journal article (on Bb)

Recommended for further examples:

Creswell: an ethnography, p.309

Creswell Narrative study, p. 251

Class 7 Monday, October 2: Qualitative Approaches continued:

Focus on approaches of **phenomenology, grounded theory, CBPR**

Required Readings: Starks: Choose your Method.

In Readings folder: Beck 1993 Grounded Theory on PPD and Beck 2002 Phenomenology on PPD to help see differences in the 2 approaches

Phenomenological: Creswell. p. A Phenomenological Study p. 265

CBPR: Davison et al, "Family Centered Action Model" Obesity OR

FINAL CONCEPT MAP DUE with a narrative is due

COLLECTING AND ANALYZING DATA

Class 8 Monday, October 9: Finish discussion on CBPR and introduce photovoice as method. The Art & Skill of Interviewing as a Method

Photovoice: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l4zAdktMUNg>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ICTVdvcUoU>

Lecture: brief ppt. of purpose of interviews and types of. Describe what difference between research questions and interview questions is.

Required Readings:

Kvale & Brinkmann: chapter 7: Conducting an Interview (box 7.1 is especially helpful)

Kvale & Brinkmann chapter 8: Interview Variations

Homework: come up with no more than 6 interview questions (you can craft these during the in class practice with your colleagues)

Assignment Due: Written narrative on 3 potential conceptual/theoretical frameworks that might fit your research interest

YOU SHOULD BE FINALIZING A CONSENT FORM. MAKE SURE THE CONSENT FORM IS APPROVED BY DR. SAMPSON BEFORE USING. A TEMPLATE IS ON BB.

In class: Practice in dyads with some questions you are thinking of asking and see what type of information you get. 2016—THEY DID NOT HAVE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS READY SO WE WATCHED A VIDEO ON CULTURAL HUMILITY AND CBPR

You should be scheduling and conducting interviews around this time. Aim to have the interviews completed by Week 10 at latest so you have time to transcribe.

Class 9 Monday October 16: The Importance of Good Research Questions

Continue discussion on approaches from previous class

Discussion of finalizing your ideas/rough sketch research question (s) and corresponding approach

Required Readings: Maxwell: chapter 4 Research Questions (refer back to concept maps. In class we may work on fleshing out the difference between research question and interview questions)

Class 10 Monday, October 23: Data collection considerations

Lecture: Sampling depends on research questions and approach. Revisit the importance of ethics in data collection. Ppt: Data collection and Analysis (this class and next)

1-2 pm Guest speaker, Rebecca Mauldin, teaching about NVivo

Required Reading:

Creswell chapter 7: Data Collection. Maxwell chapter 5: Methods Posted to BB

Assignment Due: Written Interview Questions and Finalized Research Questions

Class 11 October 30: What to do with the data?
Discuss Memos and process
Guest speaker: mixed methods
Required Readings: Creswell : Mixed Methods (post on BB under peer review articles) You may also want to refer to previous readings on descriptive analysis to know how to code and look for themes.
BE PREPARED TO TALK ABOUT WHAT YOU HAVE HEARD IN YOUR INTERVIEWS. WE CAN HELP THINK THROUGH FINDINGS.
Charmaz, chapter 4 How to do memo writing
Optional Assignment Due: Abstract rough draft. (Significance of problem, research question, methods, analysis, what findings might inform).

Class 12 Monday, November 6: Standards of evaluation and validity in Qualitative
Lecture on rigor and validity (week "12" ppt) 1 hour
IF YOU HAVE TRANSCRIPTS YOU CAN BRING THEM IN FOR HELP WITH CODING. Practice coding, memos with my transcripts. 1 hour. ***I SUGGEST YOU TURN IN DRAFTS OF ABSTRACTS NOW.***
Required Reading
Maxwell chapter 6: Validity; chapter 7: Research proposals
Suggested:
Lietz & Zayas, "Evaluating Qualitative Research for Social Work Practitioners"
Creswell chapter 10: Standards of evaluation and validity

Assignment Due: Memo and FINAL abstract due

Class 13 Monday, November 13: Program Eval. Using Dr. Bell's article and powerpoint. 1 hour
Guest lecture , TBD
Required readings:
Bell: Case Management

Class 14 Monday, November 20: presentations of mini proposals
Class 15 Monday, November 27: presentations and last day of class
Final proposal in writing due BY Tuesday December 6, 2017 5pm.

*****The instructor reserves the right (and flexibility) to alter the Course Outline or schedule in order to better accommodate learning goals and time constraints. Student flexibility and tolerance for any necessary agenda shifts may be required.*****

XI. Bibliography available on request as needed since readings change each semester.

XII. POLICY ON ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES. The University of Houston System complies with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, pertaining to the provision of reasonable academic adjustments/auxiliary aids for students with a disability. In accordance with Section 504 and ADA guidelines, each University within the System strives to provide reasonable academic adjustments/auxiliary aids to students who request and require them. If you believe that you have a disability requiring an academic adjustments/auxiliary aid, please contact the UH Center for Disabilities at 713-743-5400.

XIII. Counseling and Psychological Services

Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) can help students who are having difficulties managing stress, adjusting to college, or feeling sad and hopeless. You can reach CAPS (www.uh.edu/caps) by calling 713-743-5454 during and after business hours for routine appointments or if you or someone you know is in crisis. Also, there is no appointment necessary for the “Let’s Talk” program, which is a drop-in consultation service at convenient locations and hours around campus. http://www.uh.edu/caps/outreach/lets_talk.html.

XIV. CONSULTATION

This course will be delivered by Dr. Sampson. My office is located on the fourth floor of the GCSW. My office telephone number is (713) 743-6719. Scheduled office hours are indicated on page 1 and posted on my office door. If you need to meet with me at a time other than the allotted office hours, please schedule an appointment. My email is mmsampson@UH.edu

XV. EXPECTATIONS FOR MAINTAINING A SAFE, RESPECTFUL LEARNING ENVIRONMENT AND CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR

Cellular Phones and Pagers: Students are asked to turn off (or activate the vibrator mode on) cellular phones and pagers during class time. Disruptions of this nature compromise the academic process, and therefore will not be tolerated. If you have extenuating circumstances that prevent you from honoring this classroom rule, please schedule a meeting with me as soon as possible to advise me of your situation.

Classroom Behavior: The **GOLDEN RULE** for expected behavior in the classroom is to ***be respectful of yourself and your colleagues***. By virtue of the nature of our profession, we will often engage in content and discussions in this course that elicit varied opinions, perspectives, and emotions. This will provide a well-rounded educational experience for all of us, if we practice and demonstrate the core values of social work. Social Work classes are a good training ground for professional conduct.

Attendance: Please be on time to class. If you are more than 20 minutes late it will be counted as an unexcused absence. More than two unexcused absences will be subject to a drop in one letter grade. Assignments are due at beginning of class period. Late assignments will be penalized with points lost.