

**THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK**

Course Number: SW 388R3

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Semester: Summer 2000

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Meeting Time/Place: W 11–4:00 p.m.
SSW 2.130

Office Hours: W 4:00–5:00 p.m.
or by appointment

QUALITATIVE METHODS IN SOCIAL WORK RESEARCH

I. Standardized Course Description

This doctoral level seminar serves as an introductory course in qualitative research methodologies. Students are introduced to qualitative research paradigms, their epistemologies, theories, and methods. The major focus of the course will be to survey qualitative methods of inquiry including research designs, specific data collection methods, and analytic and interpretive procedures. A major portion of the class time is distributed toward a qualitative field experience where students work on a qualitative research project with a faculty member.

II. Standardized Course Objectives

1. Students will become familiar with qualitative research paradigms, their epistemologies and theories, and will be able to discuss and critique the underlying assumptions of qualitative research.
2. Students will understand different research designs and procedures for collecting data in qualitative research.
3. Students will understand a variety of qualitative data collection methods including interviewing, participant observation, and document analysis.
4. Students will become cognizant of the unique contributions of qualitative research and the appropriate applications of the different qualitative methods to the study of practice, including the depth and flexibility of qualitative methods, and the significance of context in understanding human meaning.
5. Students will demonstrate that they can appropriately critique qualitative research methodologies and provide appropriate feedback to their colleagues.
6. Students will learn methods for increasing validity and reliability in qualitative research designs.
7. Students will learn methods for analyzing, interpreting, and writing up qualitative research.
8. Students will be able to conceptualize, design and implement a qualitative research study.

PREREQUISITES: Graduate Student Standing & Consent of Instructor

III. Required Texts

Gilgun, J. F. & Sussman, M. B. (1996). The methods and methodologies of qualitative family research. Binghamton, NY: Haworth Press.

Denzin, N. K. & Lincoln, Y. S. (1998). Strategies of qualitative inquiry. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. ISBN: 0-7619-1435-8

Denzin, N. K. & Lincoln, Y. S. (1998). Collecting and interpreting qualitative materials. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. ISBN: 0-7619-1434-X

IV. Course Requirements

This is a fun but challenging class. Students are expected to attend class sessions regularly and to participate in an interactive learning framework between collegiate students and professor. Students are expected to make a serious attempt to complete the suggested readings, and should be well prepared to participate in discussions, and field experiences. Failure to regularly attend the class and demonstrate through discussions that one has comprehended the readings will be strongly considered in assigning the final grade.

Students are expected to turn in all required assignments on the agreed upon due date. If the due date is a problem for you, see the professor and negotiate another due date.

Students are expected to both learn and apply methods of qualitative research. This requires a search of the literature in a defined area, conceptualizing research design and methods, practice at data collection, interpretive methods, and writing-up the findings of a study.

Students are expected to cooperate with their colleagues and give constructive feedback to help them improve their knowledge of research designs and methods. This means students must be invested in the learning process (both theirs and others) and be willing to work with others in an egalitarian manner as members of a team to help improve research understanding.

Students are expected to uphold the highest standards of ethical research as they conduct their research studies.

Class Requirements

1. **Qualitative Field Experience** Students will work with Dr. Laura Lein on a qualitative field research project that provides hands on experience with collecting and analyzing qualitative research. This field experience will last approximately 40 hours and will include a major part of the class time. Students will meet with Dr. Lein in the first week of class to design the field, learning experience. The field experience includes designing an interview protocol, interviewing people in the field, analyzing and writing-up the data from the field experience.
2. **Three short papers 8-10 pages in length are to be developed from the field experience.** 1) Developing a Guiding framework or Analytic strategy for Qualitative Research 2) Conducting Interviews (Attach Interview Protocol from fieldwork) 3) Analyzing Qualitative data (Include some examples of data analysis from field work). **Specific guidelines for the papers are left open ended to accommodate each students unique learning opportunities and the**

individual experiences encountered in the field work. The only parameter is that each paper is to demonstrate knowledge of the literature and readings (include a bibliography) as well as using the data and experiences from the field work. It is assumed because qualitative researchers work in teams and students will be working on the same research project that written papers may be co-authored.

Course Grades

Qual Field Experience	55%		90–100 points=A
Three short papers (Averaged for total)	45%		80–89 points = B
Total	100		70–79 points = C
			60–69 points = D
			Below 60 points=F

Grading Scale: (Grades are rounded up to the next number at .5). Grading of all written assignments will take into account the quality of the writing as well as the content. The APA format should be followed. Written material should be carefully proof-read and corrected for errors in punctuation, typographical errors, and spelling errors. Good writing requires a reiterative process that must be followed if quality is to improve. It is a good idea to read your paper several times and if possible have someone else read it.

V. Course Schedule

June 7 Course Overview and Introduction

Read syllabus and meet with Dr. Lein

June 21 Theories and Guiding Frameworks for Qualitative Research

Denzin & Lincoln, Strategies of qualitative research, Chapters 1-3 & 10
Denzin & Lincoln, Methods of collecting and analyzing qualitative materials, Chapter 1
Franklin, C. & Jordan, C. (1997). Qualitative research methods. In R.M. Grinnell, Jr. (Ed.) Social work research and evaluation: Quantitative and qualitative approaches (5th ed.). Itasca IL: Peacock.
Gilgun, J. F. (1995). We shared something special: The moral discourse of incest perpetrators. Journal of Marriage and the Family, 57, 265-281.
Gilgun & Sussman Chapter 1
Handel, G. (1996). In Sussman & Gilgun
Padgett, D. K. (1998). Does the glove really fit? Qualitative research and clinical social work practice. Social Work, 43 (4), 373-381.

Ethnography/Ethnomethodology

Denzin & Lincoln, Strategies of qualitative research, 5 & 6
Goldstein, et. al. (1996). In Sussman & Gilgun book.
Hamon, R.R. (1996). In Sussman & Gilgun
Newfield, N, Sells, S.P., Smith, T.E., Newfield, S. & Newfield, F. (1996). Ethnographic research methods: Creating a clinical science of the humanities. In D.H. Sprenkle & S.M. Moon (Eds.) Research methods in family therapy (25-63). New York: Guilford.
Newfield, N.A., Joanning, H.P. Kuel, B. P., & Quinn, W.H. (1991). We can tell you about “psychos” and “shrinks”: An ethnography of the family therapy of adolescent drug abuse.

In T.C. Todd & M.D. Selekman (Eds.), Family therapy approaches with adolescent substance abuse. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Case Studies

- Denzin & Lincoln, Strategies of qualitative research, Chapter 4 & 11
Franklin, C. (1996). (1996). In Sussman & Gilgun book
Franklin, C. & Jordan, C. (1995). Qualitative assessment: A methodological review. Families in Society.
Matocha, L. (1992). Case study interviews: Caring for persons with AIDS. In Gilgun, J., Daly, K., & Handel, G (Eds.). Qualitative methods in family research (66-84). Newbury Park: Sage.
Moon, S.M. & Trepper, T. (1996). Case study research. In D.H. Sprenkle & S.M. Moon (Eds.) Research methods in family therapy (393-410). New York: Guilford.
Orum, A.M. Feagin, J.R., & Sjoberg, G. (1991). Introduction, The nature of the case study. In J.R. Feagin, A.M. Orum, & G. Sjoberg. A case for the case study (1-26). Chapel Hill NC: The University of North Carolina Press.

Grounded Theory

- Denzin & Lincoln, Strategies of qualitative research, Chapter 7
Gilgun, J. (1994). Hand into Glove: The grounded theory approach and social work practice Research. In E. Sherman, & W.J. Reid (Eds.). Qualitative research in social work (115-125). New York: Columbia Univ. Press.
Mizrahi, T. & Abramson, J.S. (1994). Collaboration between social workers and physicians: An emerging typology.
Rafuls, S.E. & Moon, S.M. (1996). Grounded theory methodology in family therapy research. In D.H. Sprenkle & S.M. Moon (Eds.) Research methods in family therapy (64-80). New York: Guilford.

Paper #1 Theories and Guiding Framework Paper due on June 28

July 5 Data Collection Methodologies: Interviewing

- Denzin & Lincoln (1998) Methods of collecting and analyzing qualitative materials, Chapter 2
Farnsworth, E.B. (1996). In Sussman & Gilgun book.
Gilchrist, V.J. (1992). Key Informant Interviews. In B.F. Crabtree & W.L. Miller, Doing qualitative research. Newbury Park CA: Sage.
Hall, L.D. & Zvonkovic, A.M. (1996). In Sussman & Gilgun book
Kivnick, H.Q. & Jernstedt, H.L. (1996). In Sussman & Gilgun book
Olsen, C..S. (1996). In Sussman & Gilgun book
Meadows, L.M. (1996). In Sussman & Gilgun book.
Piercy, F.P. & Nickerson, V. (1996). Focus groups in family therapy research. In D.H. Sprenkle & S.M. Moon (Eds.) Research methods in family therapy (173-185). New York: Guilford.

Observations

- Denzin & Lincoln (1998) Methods of collecting and analyzing qualitative materials, Chapters 3 & 6
Gilgun, J. (1992). Observations in a clinical setting: Team decision-making in family incest treatment. In Gilgun, J., Daly, K., & Handel, G. (Eds.). Qualitative methods in family research (236-259). Newbury Park: Sage.
Jorgensen, D. L. (1989). The methodology of participant observation. Participant observation: A methodology for human studies. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

- Lightburn, A. (1992). Participant observation in special needs adoptive families: The mediation of chronic illness and handicap. In Gilgun, J., Daly, K., & Handel, G. (Eds.). Qualitative methods in family research (217-235). Newbury Park: Sage.
- Solomon, C. (1994). Welfare workers' response to homeless welfare applicants. In Riessman, C. (Ed.). Qualitative studies in social work research (153-168). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Paper # 2 Conducting Interviews Due on July 5

July 12 Data Analysis: Analytic and Interpretive Procedures

- Crabtree, B. F. & Miller, W.L. (1992). A template approach to text analysis: Developing and using codebooks. In B. F. Crabtree & W.L. Miller (Eds.) Doing qualitative research (93-109).
- Denzin & Lincoln (1998) Methods of collecting and analyzing qualitative materials, Chapter 7
- Firestone, W. A. (1993). Alternative arguments for generalizing from data as applied to qualitative research. Educational Researcher, 22 (4), 16-23.
- Lang, N. C. (1994). Integrating the data processing of qualitative research and social work practice to advance the practitioner as knowledge builder: Tools for knowing and doing. In E. Sherman, & W.J. Reid (Eds.). Qualitative research in social work (265-278). New York: Columbia Univ. Press.
- Phillips, D.C. (1987). Validity in Qualitative Research: Why the Worry About Warrant Will Not Wane. Education and Urban Society, 20 (1), 9-24.

Bring Data from field experiences to class for Data Analysis Exercise.

Additional Readings on Computer Data Analysis

- Barry, C. A. (1998). Choosing qualitative data analysis software: Atlas/ti and Nudist compared [15 pages]. Sociological Research Online [Online serial], 3(3). Available <http://www.socresonline.org.uk/socresonline/3/3/4.html>.
- Bazeley, P. (1999). The bricoleur with a computer: Piecing together qualitative and quantitative data. Qualitative Health Research, 9 (2), 279-287.
- Bazeley, P. (1998, October). Shifting data between N4 and SPSS: Some tricks of the trade. QSR NUD*IST XI Newsletter, 9.
- Buston, K. (1997). NUD*IST in action: Its use and its usefulness in a study of chronic illness in young people [15 pages]. Sociological Research Online [Online Serial], 2 (3). Available <http://www.socresonline.org.uk/socresonline/2/3/6.html>.
- Kelle, U. (1997). Theory building in qualitative research and computer programs for the management of textual data [16 pages]. Sociological Research Online [Online Serial], 2(2). Available <http://www.socresonline.org.uk/socresonline/2/2/1.html>.
- Lewins, A. CAQDAS networking project [Online, 8 pages]. Available <http://www.soc.surrey.ac.uk/caqdas>.

July 25 Writing-Up Your Study

- Denzin & Lincoln (1998) Methods of collecting and analyzing qualitative materials, Chapter 14

Class Evaluation and Wrap Up

Paper # 3 on Data Analysis Due on July 25