

PUB HLTH 439 (section 20)
Qualitative Research Methods
1.0 Credit
Spring 2007 (March 26 – June 8, 2007)

Day/Time: Wednesdays, 6:00 – 9:00 PM

Maximum Enrollment: 15; Consent: No

Classroom Location: Suite 1220, Conference Room – 680 N. Lake Shore Drive

Course Instructor: Madelyn Iris, Ph.D.
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I. Course Description

Qualitative research involves the use of multiple methods to explore social interactions in natural settings. The focus of qualitative research is usually on the underlying meanings of human behaviors, beliefs, attitudes, etc., from the research participant's own view, and in his/her own words, sometimes referred to as an "emic" perspective. Data collection activities can include first-person accounts, life history narratives, life history calendars, visual or documentary records, semi-structured and open-ended interviews, informal and formal observations, as well as other biographical and autobiographical materials. Through triangulation of methods, the researcher attempts to make sense of and interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them. Essentially, qualitative research deals with words, spoken and written.

This course will focus on qualitative research methods and will include investigation of issues related to research design, sampling, data management, analysis and report writing. Methods covered will include unstructured, semi-structured, and structured interviewing, writing and using field notes, cognitive interviewing for survey construction, group interview methodologies, participant observation, cognitive tasks such as decision modeling, domain analysis and the use of mapping techniques in qualitative research. Questions of reliability and validity in qualitative research will be addressed. Data analytic procedures will include thematic analyses and code development, consensus and network analyses, and an overview of qualitative data management programs. We will also explore the relationships between qualitative and quantitative research, and the use of multiple methods in the research setting. Ethical issues related to face to face work with research participants will be addressed. Examples of research and evaluation studies using qualitative methods will be reviewed. The course will emphasize hands-on work with qualitative data and students are encouraged to come with a data set in hand.

II. Prerequisites

None

III. Course Objectives

This course is designed to introduce students to the wide range of qualitative methods and their application in public health research. At the completion of the course, students should be able to:

1. Describe the appropriate use of qualitative methods in a variety of settings related to public health research.
2. Design a qualitative research study and choose appropriate methods for data collection and analysis.
3. Identify the potential for biases and describe methods for avoiding these.
4. Evaluate the quality of research findings conducted using qualitative methods.
5. Identify appropriate uses of qualitative methods for program evaluation.

IV. Teaching Methods

The course will combine lecture and discussion, but will include an experiential component with practice using qualitative methods. Students will work independently and in teams during class, to gain hands-on experience with the research methods under study. Students are expected to complete all readings prior to class as these will be discussed and utilized in demonstrations of methods.

V. Student Evaluation

- A. Homework and classroom participation are essential components of the course and will count toward 20% of the student evaluation.
- B. Each student will be required to complete a research design for a qualitative study, describe sampling strategies and methodologies, data gathering methods and methods of analysis. This will count toward 40% of the student evaluation.
- C. Each student will be required to complete a series of data-gathering and analysis assignments and present these in class, to gain experience in the various methodologies under discussion. This can be based on existing databases (following review by the instructor) or on the collection of new data. This will count toward 40% of the student evaluation.
- D. All students will meet at least once with the instructor for one on one feedback regarding performance.

VI. Course Evaluation

The Programs in Public Health administer web-based course evaluations to students for each course near the end of the quarter. Your completion of both the unit (course) and faculty evaluation components is required; failure to complete either of the evaluations will result in an incomplete grade until the evaluations are submitted. You will be sent the web link and instructions via email later in the quarter. You will have about two weeks time to complete the evaluations before grades are submitted.

VII. Texts**REQUIRED:**

Michael Quinn Patton. *Qualitative Research & Evaluation Methods*. 3rd Edition. Thousand Oaks, CA. Sage Publications. 2002. Referred to in syllabus as QREM.

Additional required reading material will be provided through the online Course Management System – Blackboard at <https://courses.northwestern.edu/webapps/login/>. The online Course Management System, Blackboard, will be used to transmit and share all course and email correspondence.

You will see that there are multiple readings for each class session. I have tried to spread a wide net with readings, in order to capture the scope of ideas and approaches relevant to each topic. Each student will likely find some readings of more interest than others, depending upon research project topic and the methods used.

SUGGESTED TEXTS:

James. Spradley. *The Ethnographic Interview*. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich. 1979.

Matthew Miles and A. Michael Huberman. *An Expanded Sourcebook: Qualitative Data Analysis*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications. 1994.

Syllabus

NOTE: Reading assignments may change over the course of the semester – in order to accommodate the various research projects you undertake and methods you choose to use.

Week	Topics	Readings
March 28	Overview of the course Discussion of readings and course requirements Introduction to Qualitative Research Methods	Please come to class on March 28 th having read QREM, pps 3-73 and 124-128 on grounded theory. If you are interested in the philosophical or epistemological foundations of research methods theory, read Chapter 3.
April 4	The qualitative interview and how to ask questions	J Spradley. <i>The Ethnographic Interview</i> . Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich. 78-119. QREM pp. 259-332; 339-390; 419-427; K DeWalt, B DeWalt, C Wayland. Participant Observation. In HR Bernard, ed. <i>Handbook of Methods in Cultural Anthropology</i> . 1998. pp. 259-299. HR Bernard. Field Notes and How to Take, Code and Manage Them. From <i>Research Methods in Anthropology</i> . 2 nd Ed. Altamira Press:CA. 1995. 180-207. 1995.

	<p>Creating an Interview Guide</p> <p>Participant Observation: Observing and interpreting human behavior</p> <p>Taking field notes</p>	<p>QREM pp.302-306</p>
April 11	<p>Research Design and Sampling Issues</p> <p>Application of Qualitative Methods to Evaluation Research</p> <p>Logic Models and Why We Should Not Hate Them</p>	<p>QREM pp. 230-257</p> <p>G Guest, A Bunce, L Johnson. How many interviews are enough? An experiment with data saturation and variability. <i>Field Methods</i> 18(1):59-82.</p> <p>QREM pp. 143 – 205</p> <p>O Werner, HR Bernard. Ethnographic Sampling. Short Takes 13. <i>Cultural Anthropology Methods</i>. June, 1994.</p> <p>I hope to distribute free copies of the Guide to Evaluation published and distributed by the Kellogg Foundation.</p>
April 18	<p>The group interview: focus groups</p>	<p>QREM. Pp. 385-390.</p> <p>CASE STUDY: A Miller & M Iris. Health Promotion Attitudes and Strategies in Older Adults. <i>Health Education & Behavior</i> 29(2):249-267.</p> <p>CASE STUDY: KE Ormond, M Iris, S Banuvar, J Minogue, GJ Annas, & S Elias. What do patients expect: Informed consent models for genetic carrier testing. Accepted, <i>Journal for Genetic Counseling</i>.</p>
April 25	<p>Theoretical Models of Qualitative Data Analysis</p> <p>Methods of Data Analysis: themes and codes</p> <p>Qualitative data management programs and other alternatives</p>	<p>MQ Patton. QREM. Chapter 8, pp. 431-477.</p> <p>GW Ryan and HR Bernard. Techniques to Identify Themes. <i>Field Methods</i> 15(1), 85-109. 2003.</p> <p>O Werner. Semantic Accent and Folk Definitions. Short Take 10. <i>Cultural Anthropology Methods</i>. June, 1993.</p> <p>O Werner. Constructed Folk Definitions from Interviews. Short Take 11. <i>Cultural Anthropology Methods</i>. October, 1993.</p>

		<p>M Markovic. Analyzing qualitative data: Women with gynecological cancer. <i>Field Methods</i> 18(4):413-429. 2006.</p> <p>E McLellan, K MacQueen, J Neidig. Beyond the qualitative interview: Data preparation and transcription. <i>Field Methods</i> 15(1):63-84.</p> <p>D Hruschka, D St. John, E Picone-Decaro, R Jenkins, J Carey. Reliability in coding open-ended data: Lessons learned from HIV behavioral research. <i>Field Methods</i> 16(3):307-331.</p> <p>GW Ryan. Using a Word Processor to Tag and Retrieve Blocks of Text. <i>Field Methods</i> 16(1), 109-130. 2004.</p> <p>N La Pelle. Simplifying Qualitative Data Analysis Using General Purpose Software Tools. <i>Field Methods</i> 16(1), 85-108.</p>
<p>May 2</p>	<p>Elicitation and analysis of conceptual domains: cultural consensus modeling (student exercises)</p>	<p>GW Ryan, JM Nolan, PS Yoder. Successive Free Listing: Using Multiple Free Lists to Generate Explanatory Models. <i>Field Methods</i> 12(2), 83-107. 2000.</p> <p>AK Romney, SC Weller & WH Batchelder. Culture as Consensus: A Theory of Culture and Informant Accuracy. <i>American Anthropologist</i>, new series, 88(2). 2006:313-338.</p> <p>RD Baer, SC Weller, J Garcia De Alba Garcia, A Salcedo Rocha. A Comparison of Community and Physician Explanatory Models of AIDS in Mexico and the United States. <i>Medical Anthropology Quarterly</i> 18(1):2-22.</p> <p>KJ Conrad, M Iris, J Ridings. Elder Self-Neglect: Conceptualization and Item Development Using Concept Mapping. Ms.</p> <p>CASE STUDY: W Dressler and James Bindon. The health consequences of cultural consonance: Cultural dimensions of lifestyle, social support, and arterial blood pressure in an African American community. <i>American Anthropologist</i> 102(2), June 2000:244-260.</p>

May 9	Eliciting and Analyzing Domain Structures, Actions and Decisions: Taxonomies, Flow Charts, Verbal Action Plans and Decision Tables	<p>HR Bernard. <i>Qualitative Data Analysis II: Models and Matrices</i>. In <i>Research Methods in Anthropology: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches</i>. 4th ed. 522-528. Sage Publications. 2006. BLACKBOARD</p> <p>O Werner. How to Record Activities. Short Take 7. <i>Cultural Anthropology Methods</i>.</p> <p>O Werner. Decision Tables. Short Take 14. <i>Cultural Anthropology Methods</i> Oct. 1994.</p> <p>CASE STUDY. M Balter (Iris). A new approach to Navajo kinship. Unpublished ms. 1973.</p>
May 16	Interpretation	MQ Patton. QREM. Chapter 8, pp. 477-512.
May 23	Linking qualitative and quantitative research	<p>LJ Bauman and E Greenberg. The Use of Ethnographic Interviewing to Inform Questionnaire Construction. <i>Health Education Quarterly</i> 19(1), 9-23. 1992.</p> <p>P Weitzman, S Levkoff. Combining qualitative and quantitative methods in health research with minority elders: Lessons from a study of dementia caregiving. <i>Field Methods</i> 12(3):195-208.</p>
May 30	Cross-cultural interviewing, other methods, and ethical concerns	<p>QREM 391-418.</p> <p>CASE STUDY: R Trotter, R Needle, E Goosby, C Bates. A methodological model for rapid assessment, response, and evaluation: the RARE program in public health. <i>Field Methods</i> 13(2):137-159.</p> <p>M Edwards, S Thomsen, C Toroitich-Ruto. Thinking aloud to create better condom use questions. <i>Field Methods</i> 17(2):183-199.</p> <p>O Werner. Short Take 21. <i>Cultural Anthropology Methods</i>. February 1997. Multi-Stage Translation.</p>
	Team Projects	
June 6	Presentations of projects	QREM pp. 506-515.