

## *Course Syllabus*

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### **Course Information**

**EPPS 6346 Qualitative Research Methods**

**Section 001**

**Fall 2019**

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### **Professor Contact Information**

**Bobby C. Alexander, Ph.D.**

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**PLEASE use regular UTD e-mail instead of eLearning to reach me. Thank you.**

**Office: GR 2.532**

**Office Hours: 3:45 – 4:30 p.m. Mondays, and by appointment if these times do not fit your schedule**

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### **Course Pre-requisites, Co-requisites, and/or Other Restrictions**

None

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### **Course Description**

This course provides a comprehensive understanding of Qualitative Research -- its underlying, alternative views of the nature of society and social institutions; placement of the researcher in the research; research methods, including the various main approaches by which to frame, focus, and carry out research -- Case Study, Grounded Theory, Phenomenology, Ethnography, and Narrative, along with Content Analysis; benefits and drawbacks of the various approaches; and the scientific contribution of Qualitative Research to social science research, mixed methods research, and to public policy. Students are encouraged to relate their course research design to their qualitative or mixed methods Dissertation or Master thesis.

**NOTE:** Students will create a Qualitative Research Design as the main course product. I encourage students to create a design they can implement in order to conduct research for their dissertations and Master theses.

The Research Design will become the foundation of the course that follows: EPPS 7V81 Special Topics in Social Science Research Methodology: Qualitative Research Practicum. In that course, I will guide students in completing the IRB application to conduct research involving

human subjects, in collecting and analyzing their data – using NVivo, a popular Qualitative Data Analysis (QDA) software suit, and in writing their Written Report.

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### Student Learning Objectives/Outcomes

The course objective is to gain an understanding of qualitative research by studying:

- alternative views of social life that guide field researchers' research,
- alternative approaches that are available to shape and undertake their research,
- the methods of collecting data, including observations and interviews,
- procedures of data analysis,

and by creating a Qualitative Research Design.

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### Required Textbooks and Other Readings

Course readings include two books: *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing among Five Approaches*, by John W. Creswell (Sage), and *A Guide to Qualitative Field Research* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Pine Forge Press), by Carol A. Bailey. Both books are available at the UTD Bookstore and Off Campus Books.

Other readings include selected chapters from books on qualitative research and a publication by the National Science Foundation (NSF) placed on Electronic Reserve at the McDermott Library: 1) *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Data Analysis*, by Uwe Flick, Editor (Sage Publications), 2) *Social Research Methods*, by Alan Bryman (Oxford University Press), and 3) “Workshop on Scientific Foundations of Qualitative Research.”

The URL for E-Reserve is tba.

The password for E-Reserve is tba.

Students will do additional reading on one of the main approaches in qualitative research from a scholarly source referenced by Creswell (above) with which they will frame their Research Design. Students also will read five scholarly sources on their research topic for the literature review section of their Research Design (below).

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### Assignments and Academic Calendar

- **Research Design.** The Research Design is the main course product, which other assignments—Class Exercises, Small Group Discussion, Class Presentations, and the Mid-Term Exam—contribute to. Students will write a 5-to-7-page Research Design on their proposed research for a topic they choose and the course instructor approves. Students are encouraged to use the assignment to work on their research for their dissertation or Master Thesis.

- **Mid-Term Exam.** Students will write a Mid-Term exam, which essentially is a review of foundational information in qualitative research methods. The exam will be a short-answer and essay format. Exam questions will be handed out one week before the exam is due.
- **Class Exercises.** Students also will work together on and complete a series of Class Exercises.
- **Two Class Presentations.** Students will make two class presentations on their Research Designs. The purpose of the presentations is to get comments and help from classmates and me in developing our Research Designs.
- **Small Group Discussions.** Students will discuss with other members of their groups their Research Designs, offering helpful critiques and suggestions.

I will provide and go over all instructions. All instructions will be posted on eLearning.

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August 19

## **Orientation to the Course**

### **What Are Qualitative Research Methods, What Is the Importance of Theory in Qualitative Research, and How Is Qualitative Research Scientific?**

Read: Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design*:

Chapter 1 “Introduction,” and

Chapter 2 “Philosophical Assumptions and Interpretive Frameworks”

Bailey, *A Guide to Qualitative Field Research*: Chapter 1 “Introduction to

Qualitative Field Research,” pp. 1-7 and 11-12, and

Chapter 4 “The Infrastructure of Qualitative Field Research,” pp. 50-57

Recommended Reading (NOTE: Not on Electronic Reserve):

Bryman, *Social Research Methods*:

Chapter 17 “The Nature of Qualitative Research”

## **Class Exercise #1**

### **Qualitative Research and Public Policy**

Read: Electronic Reserve:

Wheelan, excerpt from *Introduction to Public Policy*

August 26

### **Designing a Qualitative Study and Ethical Issues**

Read: Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design*:  
Chapter 3 “Designing a Qualitative Study,” and  
Chapter 7 “Data Collection,” pp. 151-bottom of 154

Bailey, *A Guide to Qualitative Field Research*:  
Chapter 2 “Ethical Issues in Qualitative Field Research,” pp. 16-19, 24-29,  
Chapter 3 “Prelude to Qualitative Fieldwork,” pp. 33-46, and  
Chapter and pages on IRB Application

### **Class Exercise #2**

### **The Main Qualitative Approaches**

Read: Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design*:  
Chapter 4 “Five Qualitative Approaches to Inquiry”

### **Class Exercise #3**

**Due: Topic for Research Design due**

**September 2 NO CLASS: University Holiday: Labor Day**

September 9

### **Narrative Study and Phenomenology Approaches**

Read: Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design*:  
Chapter 5 “Five Different Qualitative Studies,” pages 111-116 only,  
Appendix B: “A Narrative Research Study,” and  
Appendix C: “A Phenomenological Study”

Electronic Reserve:

Flick, *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Data Analysis*:  
Chapter 14 “Narrative Analysis: The Constructionist Approach” by Esine,  
Fathi, and Squire, and  
Chapter 13 “Phenomenology as a Research Method” by Thomas S. Eberle

### **Class Exercise #4**

September 16

### **Grounded Theory, Ethnography, and Case Study Approaches**

Read: Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design*:  
 Chapter 5 “Five Different Qualitative Studies,” pages 116-128 only,  
 Appendix D: “A Grounded Theory Study,”  
 Appendix E: “An Ethnography,” and  
 Appendix F: “A Case Study”

Electronic Reserve:

Flick, *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Data Analysis*:  
 Chapter 11 “Grounded Theory and Theoretical Coding” by Kathy Charmaz and  
 Thornberg,  
 Chapter 3 “Analytic Inspiration in Ethnographic Fieldwork” by James A.  
 Holstein, and Gubrium  
 Chapter 7 “Qualitative Comparative Practices: Dimensions, Cases and  
 Strategies” by Palmberger and Andre Gingrich

### **Class Exercise #5**

September 23

### **Content Analysis**

Read: Electronic Reserve:

Flick, *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Data Analysis*:  
 Chapter 12 “Qualitative Content Analysis” by Margrit Schreier, and  
 Bryman, *Social Research Methods*:  
 Chapter 13 “Content Analysis”

Recommended Reading (NOTE: Not on Electronic Reserve):

Hardy, Melissa A., and Alan Bryman. 2009. *Handbook of Data Analysis*. Sage  
 Publications: chapter on “Content Analysis.”  
 Walter, Maggie A. 2010. *Social Research Methods*. Oxford University Press:  
 chapter on “Content Analysis.”  
 Flick, *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Data Analysis*:  
 Chapter 22 “Conversations and Conversation Analysis” by Merran Toerien.  
 Bryman, *Social Research Methods*:  
 Chapter 22 “Language in Qualitative Research” (Conversation Analysis and  
 Discourse Analysis).  
 Hardy, Melissa A., and Bryman, Alan. 2009. *Handbook of Data Analysis*.  
 Sage Publications: chapters on “Conversation Analysis” and “Discourse  
 Analysis.”  
 Walter, Maggie. 2010. *Social Research Methods*. Oxford University Press:  
 chapter on “Discourse Analysis.”

## **Framing and Focusing Qualitative Research**

Read: Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design*:  
Chapter 6 “Introducing and Focusing the Study”

### **Discussion Groups: Research Designs**

### **Mid-Term Exam questions handed out**

September 30

### **Research Design for Course Product**

### **Discussion Groups: Research Designs**

### **Class Exercise #6**

### **Due: Mid-Term Exam**

October 7

## **Data Collection**

Read: Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design*:  
Chapter 7 “Data Collection”

Electronic Reserve:

Bryman, *Social Research Methods*:

Chapter 20 “Interviewing in Qualitative Research”

Flick, *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Data Analysis*:

Chapter 20 “Analysing Interviews” by Kathryn Roulston

Bailey *A Guide to Qualitative Field Research*:

Chapter 5 “Methodology,” pp. 63-77,

Chapter 7 “Interviews,” pp. 95-110,

Chapter 6 “Observations,” pp. 79-93, and

Chapter 8 “Field Notes and Leaving the Field,” pp. 113-122

Recommended Reading (NOTE: Not on Electronic Reserve):

Flick, *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Data Analysis*:

Chapter 21 “Analysing Focus Groups” by Roslyn S. Barbour Bryman,

*Social Research Methods*:

Chapter 22 “Focus Groups,” and

Chapter 28 “E-research: Internet Research Methods”

## **Discussion Groups: Research Designs**

October 14

### **Qualitative Data Analysis**

Read: Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design*:  
Chapter 8 “Data Analysis and Representation”

Electronic Reserve:  
Bryman, *Social Research Methods*:  
Chapter 24 “Qualitative Data Analysis”

Bailey, Bailey *A Guide to Qualitative Field Research*:  
Chapter 9 “Coding, Memoing, and Descriptions,” pp.125-138,  
Chapter 10 “Typologies, Taxonomies, Visual Representations,” pp. 143-158,  
Chapter 11 “Storytelling, Critical Events, and Analytic Induction,” pp. 161-172

## **Discussion Groups: Research Designs**

October 21

### **Writing Qualitative Research**

Read: Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design*:  
Chapter 9 “Writing a Qualitative Study”

## **First Class Presentation of Research Design**

October 28

### **“Validation”/Credibility/Trustworthiness and Evaluation**

Read: Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design*:  
Chapter 10 “Standards of Validation and Evaluation”

## **First Class Presentation of Research Design Continued**

November 4

### **Alternative Approaches to a Qualitative Study**

Read: Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design*:  
Chapter 11 “Turning the Story and Conclusion”

## **Discussion Groups: Research Designs**

November 11

### **The Science of Qualitative Research**

Read: Electronic Reserve:

Ragin, Nagel, and White, "Workshop on Scientific Foundations of Qualitative Research," published by the National Science Foundation (2004):

I. "General Guidance for Developing Qualitative Research Projects," pp. 9-16

II. "Recommendations for Designing, Evaluating, and Strengthening Qualitative Research in the Social Sciences," pp. 17-19

Session 1: "Defining Qualitative Research":

"Qualitative Versus Quantitative: What Might This Distinction Mean?" by David Collier, pp. 71-76

Session 2: "Qualitative Research and Theory":

"Thoughts on Alternative Pathways to Theoretical Development: Theory Generation, Extension, and Refinement" by David Snow, pp. 133-136, and "A Note on Science and Qualitative Research" by Sudhir Venkatesh, pp. 141-144

## **Discussion Groups: Research Designs**

November 18

### **The Science of Qualitative Research Continued**

#### **Mixed Methods**

Read: Electronic Reserve:

Ragin, Nagel, and White, "Workshop on Scientific Foundations of Qualitative Research," published by the National Science Foundation:

Session 3: "Designing Qualitative Research":

"Improving Qualitative Research Proposal Evaluation" by Vilna Bashi, pp. 39-43, and

"Designing Qualitative Research Projects" by Susan Silbey, pp. 121-125

Session 5: "Combining Qualitative and Quantitative Methods":

“Combining Qualitative and Quantitative Research” by Charles Ragin, pp. 109-115, and  
 “Complementary Articulation: Matching Qualitative Data and Quantitative Methods” by Robert Smith, pp. 127-132

### **Second Class Presentation of Research Design**

**November 25: No Class: Fall Break / Thanksgiving Holiday**

December 2

### **Second Class Presentation of Research Design Continued**

December 9

**Due: Research Design**

**NOTE: Students will turn in their Research Designs in my office (GR 2.532) at 1 p.m. during the scheduled final exam period.**

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### **Grading Policy**

The percentage distribution for each of the graded assignments, attendance, and class participation (total equals 100%) for the course grade follows.

35%: Research Design  
 10%: Mid-Term Exam  
 15%: Class Exercises  
 20% the two Class Presentations  
 10%: Group Discussions  
 10%: Attendance and Class Participation

The grading scale follows.

A = 94-96  
 A- = 90-93  
 B+ = 87-89  
 B = 84-86  
 B- = 80-83  
 C+ = 77-79  
 C = 74-76  
 C- = 70-73  
 D+ = 67-69  
 D = 64-66  
 D- = 60-63

F = 59 and below

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### **Course and Instructor Policies**

**Attendance is required. Students automatically will be excused from one class; no documentation is required if students miss only one class. Students who miss more than one class will be excused if they have a legitimate reason (for example, being out sick) and provide documentation.**

The intent of this policy is to help students perform well on assignments by keeping up with lectures and discussion.

**Students must submit hard copies of all assignments on the due dates. Electronic submissions will not be accepted, unless the student has a legitimate reason for being absent from class to turn in assignments. Late papers will not be accepted without the prior approval of the instructor, with the exception of emergencies.**

This requirement is intended to help students turn in their work on time and to promote fairness among students who submit their work on time.

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### **University Policies**

**To view university policies on Student Conduct, Grade Appeals, Disability Services, Religious Holy Days, Campus Carry, Resources to Help You Succeed, and others, please go to the link that follows.**

<http://go.utdallas.edu/syllabus-policies>

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