Course Introduction

This course provides students with a broad introduction to the nature of qualitative, anthropological research and its various traditions. This includes an introduction to different epistemological orientations and to the fundamental issues within each paradigm. This course will also provide students the opportunity for more in depth study of the type(s) of qualitative research methodology in which they have the greatest interest.

This course is also a practicum. Students will conduct a mock qualitative study of their choosing. Specific strategies and methods for collecting and analyzing field data will be studied. Students will be expected to bring their work to class and share with the class the status of their research. In turn, the class will provide feedback to them.

There are a number of important reasons for addressing these topics. First, students need to understand and use a systematic mode of inquiry in order to execute their dissertation research. Second, educational administrators make a large number of decisions which affect the opportunities, interests and well being of others (especially children). It is incumbent upon administrators to ensure that they make the best decisions possible.

Course Objectives

1. Develop and educate leaders of educational organizations.
2. Socialize "students" into new roles as educational research "professionals".
3. Introduce students to the nature of inquiry, from informal investigations to formal research.
4. Apply systematic modes of inquiry to administrative problem solving and decision making.
5. Write the major portions of the methodology section of your dissertation proposal and dissertation.
6. Explicate the area you are interested in researching.
7. Actively engage in and experience the research process.
8. Develop an awareness of and effectively use yourself as an instrument in social inquiry.
9. Examine the moral, legal and ethical issues that can arise when conducting qualitative research and understand the conventional solutions that have been applied by field researchers.
10. Develop an awareness of the multiple traditions in qualitative research.
11. Acquire an in depth understanding of at least one qualitative research tradition.
12. Understand the nature of the scientific venture.
13. Understand and be able to explicate a qualitative research design(s).
14. Understand the types of research questions for which qualitative research is appropriate.
15. Understand how a conceptual framework is used in the research process.
16. Understand the principles of inference in research and decision making.
17. Introduce the tasks of analytic decision making and the potential threats the undermine the validity of decision making.
18. Understand and address the technical issues of sampling, validity and reliability as applied to qualitative research.
19. Become familiar with and acceptably perform the data collection techniques of observation, interviewing and document/archival collection. (Experiencing, Inquiring, and Examining)
20. Become familiar with basic and varied approaches to qualitative data analysis.
21. Develop an in depth understanding of at least one approach to qualitative data analysis.
22. Learn to use computer software as a tool in data analysis.
23. Implement a systematic approach to data logging and recording.
24. Learn how to keep a journal which tracks your field work. The journal will consist of three levels: a.) Description of the event. What happened. Empirical Data; b.) Analysis. Concept Application. Make sense of the event(s); Personal Response to event(s). What that tells you about yourself.
25. Learn to track, process, and reflect on the process of inquiry and decision making.
26. Learn to speak and write as a professional.

**Administration**

The course is designed to be a collaborative effort with each student responsible for their own learning. Students are expected to be actively involved with readings as well as class discussions. The instructor's responsibility is to provide stimulus materials and a structure within which the student is free to learn. To this end, class structures and processes will be based on student and instructor interests and are subject to change.

Each student is responsible for:

1. The required readings for each class prior to the topic.
2. Outside readings as assigned and negotiated
3. Participation in class discussions and lab (20% of the grade).
   You are expected to attend all class sessions, to be on time, and to contribute to the class discussions and the lab. All three of these expectations will provide the basis for the participation factor of your final grade. If emergencies arise, you should notify me as soon as possible and secure class notes and assignments from fellow classmates.
4. Seven (7) written assignments (See below). The specific content of the written
assignments will be assigned and negotiated with each student based on student interest and professional goals. Each assignment should be between 5-10 pp. and include a bibliography. (35% of the grade).

a. Purpose of the research
b. Self as an instrument in social inquiry
c. Moral, legal and ethical issues in qualitative research - HSRC
d. A qualitative research tradition
e. Research Design - Miles & Huberman: Chapter 2 - A, B, C, D & E, 5 mini reports
f. Data collection technique(s) and instrumentation
g. Validity and Reliability in Social Science Research

5. Conduct a mock field study research project. Gather, record and analyze data on your phenomena of interest. In this project you should demonstrate an in depth understanding of an approach to qualitative data analysis. As part of this project you should log field notes and keep a journal of your experiences and reactions to your research process.

The journal will consist of three sections.

a. Description of the event. What happened. Empirical Data
b. Analysis. Concept Application. Make sense of the event(s).
c. Personal Response to event(s). What that tells you about yourself

The completed project should be reported in a paper of the appropriate length for the phenomena researched and findings discovered. (35% of the grade).

6. Class Presentations. Present the findings from your field project to the class. Presentations will be 15 minutes in length and will be scheduled the last day of class. (10% of the grade).
REQUIRED READINGS:


Course Pack – E-Reserves, EMU Library

SUGGESTED READINGS:


TOPICS AND READING ASSIGNMENTS
1. **Course Introduction**

2. **The Nature of the Scientific Venture**

   **Required Readings:**
   a. Barott/Iannaccone - A Simplified View of the Scientific Venture [handout]

3. **Getting Started**

   **Required Readings:**
   a. Lofland and Lofland - Introduction, Chapters 1 - 2
   b. Spradley, P/O - Chapters 1 - 3
   c. Spradley, E/I - Chapters 1 - 3

   **Suggested Readings:**
   a. Patton, Part I, Chapters 1 & 4
   b. Bogdan & Bilkin, Chapter 2, pp. 58-61

   **Assignments:**
   a. Explicate the area you are interested in researching
   b. Write a research purpose statement
      1. Self
      2. Practice
      3. Knowledge Base

4. **First Days in the Field - Getting In**

   **Required Readings:**
   a. Lofland & Lofland - Chapter 3
b. Spradley, P/O - Part 2, Step 1  
c. Spradley, E/I - Part 2, Step 1  

Suggested Readings:  
a. Bogdan & Bilkin, Chapter 3, pp. 79-87

Assignments:  
a. Select the site for your field work.

Class #2: September 22, 2007

5. The Self as an Instrument in Social Inquiry
Required Readings:

a. Lofland & Lofland - Chapter 4
b. Spradley, P/O - Part 2, Step 2

6. Moral, Legal and Ethical Issues in Qualitative Research

Required Readings:

a. Lofland & Lofland - Chapter 4
b. Spradley, P/O - Chapter 2, pp. 20-25
c. Spradley, E/I - Chapter 3, pp. 34-39
Suggested Readings:
   a. Bogdan & Bilkin, Chapter 1, pp. 49-55
   b. Patton, The power of interviews: Impacts and ethics - pp. 353-359
      In Ethnography and qualitative design in educational research, (2nd

Discipline Area Ethics Statements:
      Responsibility.
      Conduct for Educators.

Assignment:
   a. Begin your field work

Class #3: October 6, 2007

7. Research Traditions

Required Readings:

Suggested Readings:
a. Patton - Part 1, Chapters 2 & 3

8. **Research Design - Selecting and Sampling**

Required Readings:

**Suggested Readings:**

a. Patton - Part II, Chapter 5  
b. Bogdan & Bilkin - Chapter 2, pp. 62-78 

**9. Data Collection: Participant Observation**

**Required Readings:**

b. Miles and Huberman, Chapter 2, pp. 34-39  
c. Lofland & Lofland - Chapter 5 (except pp. 78-89)  
d. Spradley, P/O - Part 2, Steps 3 & 4

**Suggested Readings:**

a. Patton - Part II, Chapter 6  
b. Bogdan & Bilkin - Chapter 3, pp. 88-96  
c. Bogdan & Bilkin - Chapter 4, pp. 106-128  

**10. Data Collection: Interviewing, Documents, Unobtrusive Measures, etc.**
**Required Readings:**
- a. Lofland & Lofland - Chapter 5, pp. 78-89
- b. Spradley, E/I, Part 2, Steps 2, 3 & 4

**Suggested Readings:**
- a. Patton - Part II, Chapter 7
- b. Bogdan & Bilkin - Chapter 3, pp. 96-105
- c. Bogdan & Bilkin - Chapter 4, pp. 128-152

**Class #4: October 20, 2007**
11. **Beginning Analysis - Sociological and Social Psychological Approaches**

**Required Readings:**


**Required Readings:**

**Suggested Readings:**

13. **Data Displays - Explaining & Predicting**

**Required Readings:**

**Suggested Readings:**

14. **Ethnographic Analysis**

**Required Readings:**

**Suggested Readings:**

15. **Grounded Theory**

**Required Readings:**

**Suggested Readings:**

Class #5: November 3, 2007

16. **Validity & Reliability in Qualitative Research**
Readings:


Suggested Readings:


17. **Overviews of Qualitative Research**

a. Miles and Huberman - Chapter13, Conclusion and Overview


Class #6: November 17, 2007

18. **Writing and Producing Reports**


**Suggested Readings:**


19. **Student Presentations, Review, Processing and Wrap Up**

**Required Readings:**

a. Readings as assigned and/or negotiated

---

**REFERENCE LIST**


University - IRB application kit, example of parental consent, and list of previously reviewed tests, questionnaires, and instruments.


