Qualitative Research

Course Description

This course is experientially based on the philosophy, design, and practice of qualitative research. It is understood that participants have a solid background in methods (as defined by the positive and post-positivist tradition) and statistics. Students will situate qualitative inquiry/research in their philosophical, theoretical, and historical situations, learn methods of qualitative design, and develop a capacity to collect, analyze, and interpret qualitative empirical materials.

Learning Objectives

This course is designed to meet 2016 CACREP doctoral standards (Section 6) for Counselor Education and Supervision:

- **CACREP Standard B4a**: Research designs appropriate to quantitative and qualitative research questions
- **CACREP Standard B4c**: Qualitative designs and approaches to qualitative data analysis
- **CACREP Standard B4d**: Emergent research practices and processes
- **CACREP Standard B4g**: Research questions appropriate for professional research and publication
- **CACREP Standard B4j**: Design and evaluation of research proposals for a human subjects/institutional review board
- **CACREP Standard B4l**: Ethical and culturally relevant strategies for conducting research

By the end of this course, students will also be able to:

- Describe the philosophical underpinnings of qualitative approaches to scientific research, including historical roots, major philosophical debates, relevance, and factors leading to the emergence of interest in qualitative methods.
- Explain how qualitative and quantitative paradigms complement each other and identify when each would be more appropriate for specific research questions.
- Identify and compare a variety of qualitative research approaches including constructivist (naturalistic inquiry), grounded theory, phenomenology, narrative, and ethnography.
- Explain and apply, in a beginning way, a variety of qualitative data collection methods including interviewing, observation, focus groups, nonverbal communication, and documents and records.
- Articulate an understanding of “Person as Instrument” and demonstrate the role reflexivity plays in qualitative and naturalistic inquiry.
- Discuss and demonstrate understanding of qualitative constructions of trustworthiness appropriate to various qualitative research designs.
• Describe and demonstrate beginning skills in the analysis and interpretation of qualitative data according to naturalistic inquiry tenets.
• Describe and demonstrate beginning skills in the collection, analysis, and interpretation of qualitative data including but not limited to coding, categorizing, sampling, memos, and diagrams used in various qualitative approaches.
• Discuss pros and cons of using computer programs in analysis of data and identify current programs available on the commercial market.
• Identify and practice basic skills necessary to write, present, and report qualitative research results in a clear, easy to understand format.
• Identify ethical issues related to the use of qualitative methods.
• Value diverse orientations to knowledge development and personally explore different ways of knowing.

Learning Outcomes

The primary student learning outcomes for this course include the following:

• Learning Outcome: Students will develop a line of inquiry that can be pursued from a qualitative perspective and design a study to address that inquiry in an ethical and responsible way, including an IRB protocol for a qualitative research project that demonstrates understanding of requirements of ethical research standards for working with human subjects (CACREP B-4-a, c, g, j, l). Outcome will be assessed by 85% of students earning a rating of 80% or above on the IRB Protocol and Semester Project.
• Learning Outcome: Students will construct documents that demonstrate requirements of ethical research standards in qualitative designs that involve human subjects (CACREP B-4-l). Outcome will be assessed by 85 percent of students earning a rating of 80% or above on the Critique of Peer’s Protocol and IRB Protocol.
• Learning Outcome: Students will design a qualitative study utilizing a particular qualitative design orientation, including at minimum terminology, research questions, data collection and analysis proposal, plans to establish trustworthiness/credibility, and reflexivity and role of researcher from the orientation chosen (CACREP B-4-a, c). Outcome will be assessed as met by 85% of students earning a rating of 80% or above on the IRB Proposal and Semester Project, and data collection and analysis assignments, and Final Examination.
• Learning Outcome: Students will collect data and generate themes and interpret data using sound qualitative methods that are ethical and culturally relevant (CACREP 4-B-c). Outcome will be assessed as met by 85% of students earning a rating of 80% or above on data collection and analysis assignments (photographs, journals, semi-structured interview questions, interview, initial and group data analysis)
• Learning Outcome: Students will critique qualitative research in terms of design, reporting, ethical considerations, multicultural considerations, and rigor (CACREP B-4-a, c, g, l). Outcome will be assessed as met by 85% of students earning a rating of 80% or above on Critique of Qualitative Article and Critique of Qualitative Dissertation.

Major Course Requirements

• Complete reading assignments for each class in order to fully benefit from in-class learning activities including articles critiques, data collection, participation in focus group, data analysis, and other applied learning activities. Full participation in class activities and discussion that reflects completion of reading assignments is expected. 25 points
• **Prepare IRB protocol** using [600.01 Template, Protocol Template](#) from the Research Compliance Office webpage (IRB forms) for semester project (*not to be submitted to IRB*). **100 points**

• **Critique one peer’s IRB protocol.** Utilize template noted above for your critique. **25 points**

• **Data collection. 100 points**
  o During the first month of class, **take or identify and print at least 6-8 photographs** that represent *Joy* to you. Bring paper copies of photos/pictures to class for visual analysis during class learning activity on assigned date. Analysis information will become part of a data set.
  o Beginning the first week of classes, keep a **reflective journal** about *joy* by making a minimum of **two journal entries each week**. Journals will be used as part of a data set to be analyzed by your peers. Be aware that journal entries or parts thereof will be used in group analysis of a data set, and make your entries with that knowledge in mind. In addition, copies of your journals will be turned in to the instructor. Note: You will be able to redact information prior to providing it to peers and the instructor. *For the first week of class, the journal prompt is* Joy… **Thereafter, journal prompts will be designed in class for each successive week.**
  o **Design 5-7 semi-structured questions** to address the topic of joy in accordance with the overarching question designed in class. **Interview one of your peers and transcribe the interview.**

• **Data analysis. 100 points**
  o Complete an initial data analysis of interview to arrive at initial themes.
  o Work collaboratively in small groups to analyze group data.

• **Critique a qualitative research article.** Obtain approval from professor for article selection and use analysis guidelines provided by the instructor. Use the rubric form provided in this syllabus for main headings in the paper. Include both a numerical rating and a rationale based on scholarly writings about qualitative research. Use the rubric form that is provided in this syllabus for the format of the paper. *The article must be a purely qualitative design. Mixed methods research is not acceptable for this assignment.* **100 points**

• **Critique an approved qualitative dissertation.** *Mixed methods studies may not be used.* Some choices are located in Blackboard. Use the rubric form provided in this syllabus for the main topics in the paper. Include both a numerical rating and a rationale based on scholarly writings about qualitative research. **150 points**

• **Design a qualitative semester research project** using proposal guidelines distributed by professor. **Prepare and present a poster to class and post relevant information to Blackboard.** The presentation must include citations for literature of topic and methodology. Project will demonstrate mastery of learning objectives. **200 points**

• **Final examination.** Complete and submit the final examination by the due date on the course schedule. **200 points**

**Evaluation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100</td>
<td>“Joy” data collection (photography, reflective journal, individual interview)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100</td>
<td>IRB proposal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>IRB proposal critique</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Evidence of preparation for class discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100</td>
<td>Collaborative data analysis and discussion of results</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100</td>
<td>Analysis of qualitative journal article</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>150</td>
<td>Analysis of dissertation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200</td>
<td>Final Examination</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
200  Semester Project (Research design, poster of qualitative methodology including electronic handout & reference list)

1000  Total Grade

Grade Distribution

A = 900-1000;  B = 800-890;  C = 700-790;  D = 600–690;  F = 590 and below

Required and Recommending Readings

Textbooks:

The textbooks adopted for this course are:


Recommended Reading:


[Note: You may find the SlideShare available at https://www.slideshare.net/pava/7soni/constructing-grounded-theory useful; however, please do not make the mistake of thinking the slideshare information is sufficient to understand Charmaz’s methods!]

Bibliography and Additional Recommended Readings

The knowledge bases that support course content and procedures include:


**Selected Journal Article Publications**


Selected Dissertations


Walker, M. E. (2007). *Because it is my heart: A qualitative case study of the influence of spirituality and creativity in the recovery of a mother and daughter from childhood incest trauma.*


**State Adopted Proficiencies for Teachers and/or Administrators/Counselors (NA)**

**TExES Competencies (NA)**

**University Policies***

**Grade Appeals**
As stated in University Rule 13.02.99.C2, Student Grade Appeals, a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details, including the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see University Rule 13.02.99.C2, Student Grade Appeals, and University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures. These documents are accessible through the University Rules Web site at [http://www.tamucc.edu/provost/university_rules/index.html](http://www.tamucc.edu/provost/university_rules/index.html). For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Office of Student Affairs.

**Disabilities Accommodations**
The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability
requiring an accommodation, please call or visit Disability Services at (361) 825-5816 in Corpus Christi Hall 116.

If you are a returning veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom or on campus, please contact the Disability Services office for assistance at (361) 825-5816.

**Statement of Academic Continuity**

In the event of an unforeseen adverse event, such as a major hurricane and classes could not be held on the campus of Texas A&M University–Corpus Christi; this course would continue through the use of Blackboard and/or email. In addition, the syllabus and class activities may be modified to allow continuation of the course. Ideally, University facilities (i.e., emails, web sites, and Blackboard) will be operational within two days of the closing of the physical campus. However, students need to make certain that the course instructor has a primary and a secondary means of contacting each student.

**Dropping a Class**

I hope that you never find it necessary to drop this or any other class. However, events can sometimes occur that make dropping a course necessary or wise. Please consult with me before you decide to drop to be sure it is the best thing to do. Should dropping the course be the best course of action, YOU must initiate the process to drop the course by going to the Student Services Center and filling out a course drop form. Simply discontinuing your attendance and participation WILL NOT automatically result in you being dropped from the class. **November 9** is the last day to drop a course with an automatic grade of “W” this term.

**Statement of Civility**

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi has a diverse student population that represents the population of the state. The University’s goal is to provide you with a high quality educational experience that is free from repression. To assist in meeting this goal, you are responsible for following the rules of the University, city, state, and federal government. You are expected to behave in a manner that is dignified, respectful, and courteous to all people; regardless of gender, ethnic/racial origin, religious background, age, sexual orientation or disability. Behaviors that infringe on the rights of another individual will not be tolerated.

*See additional university and class policies specifically related to this course in next section.*

**CNEP 6384 Course Outline and Policies**

*The following schedule is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor to accommodate needs of class, guest lecturers, and other issues that might arise. Class members will be notified in advance of changes.*

**Some classes MAY use on-line instructional processes, including discussion threads. Such assignments will utilize BlackBoard.**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Readings/Assignments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>08/27</td>
<td>Overview of course; theoretical foundations &amp; diverse orientations to knowledge development; comparison of qualitative &amp; quantitative methods; criteria for selecting qualitative methods; qualitative research questions and semester projects</td>
<td>Chapter 1 C&amp;P text</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09/3</td>
<td>Qualitative research design: Essential components of semester research projects; Naturalistic inquiry: phenomenology, narrative, ethnology, grounded theory; review of components of qualitative article</td>
<td>Chapters 2 &amp; 10, C&amp;P text</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09/10</td>
<td>In-class journal article analysis for demonstration purposes; continued discussion re qualitative inquiry frameworks</td>
<td>Chapters 3 &amp; 4 C&amp;P text</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09/17</td>
<td><em>No in-class meeting. Appts. as needed regarding semester project</em></td>
<td>Chapters 1 &amp; 2, S text</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09/24</td>
<td>Applications of qualitative inquiry. Semester project selection due.</td>
<td>Chapter 5, C&amp;P text</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Additional Information</td>
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<tr>
<td>10/01</td>
<td>IRB procedures and processes; ethical considerations in qualitative research</td>
<td>Material on Human Subjects Research related to your planned IRB assignment, including recruitment templates and relevant informed consent templates (see research.tamucc.edu/compliance/forms.html#irb.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/08</td>
<td>Framing questions for research; designing interview questions. In-class demonstration and practice.</td>
<td>Submit draft purpose and research questions for semester project due via Bb messages. Chapter 6, C&amp;P text</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/15</td>
<td>Fieldwork strategies &amp; observational methods; person (researcher) as instrument; data collection (interviewing, focus groups, observation, nonverbal [e.g., art, photos, music], communications, documents, records</td>
<td>Chapter 7, C&amp;P text Photovoice material on Bb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/22</td>
<td>Qualitative interviews: in-class demonstration and practice; in-class demonstration of focus group.</td>
<td>Submit IRB document for critique by peer. Provide copy to instructor (via Bb Messages). Journal article critique due via Bb Assignments by 11:59 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/29</td>
<td>Credibility in qualitative research; differing models for different theoretical underpinnings; demonstration and practice of interviewing with pictures and/or photoelicitation</td>
<td>Bring 6-8 photos visually representing joy to you for in-class analysis. Read articles by Hunt (2011), Tracy (2010); Hays &amp; Wood (2011); IRB critique due. (copy to peer and instructor via Bb messages by 11:59 p.m.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/05</td>
<td>Qualitative analysis and interpretation; lens and role of researcher; coding, categorizing, theoretical sampling (or not); memos, diagrams; analysis suitable for design; in-class practice with data analysis/interpretation</td>
<td>Chapter 8, C&amp;P text Chapters 2 &amp; 3, S text Final IRB protocol due via Bb Assignments by 11:59 p.m. Bring reflective journal entries concerning joy to class for practice in analysis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/12</td>
<td>Qualitative analysis and interpretation, continued</td>
<td>Chapters 4-6, S Submit initial themes, etc., from transcribed interview (due via Bb messages by 11:59 p.m.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/19</td>
<td>Computer-assisted qualitative data analysis programs: pros and cons; overview of qualitative dissertation</td>
<td>Complete readings from 11/05 and 11/12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/26</td>
<td>In-class practice with data analysis</td>
<td>Bring interview transcripts with initial analysis completed. Scan and upload to Bb messages by 11:59 p.m. Qualitative dissertation critique due. Upload to Bb assignments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/03</td>
<td>Poster presentations in class</td>
<td>Poster presentation due as Bb assignments upload AND as Discussion Board post by 11:59 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/10</td>
<td>Final Examination</td>
<td>Submission due by 11:59 via BlackBoard</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Class Policies

Attendance, participation, and general information
Reading assignments are to be completed prior to class, and students are expected to be prepared and participate in seminar-style discussions of material and other class activities. Learning objectives must be met in order to pass the course. Attendance is required, and instructor must be notified and approve of excused or unavoidable absences. Excessive absences (more than 3) will result in semester grade being lowered by one letter grade. Late work will result in 10% deduction of points. Style for written work should follow APA formatting insofar as it fits the assignment (e.g., 12 pt. font, double spaced, 5 space indentsions for paragraphs, 1 inch margins, appropriate citations and references).

Late work
I understand that doctoral students have lives, families, jobs, and other responsibilities. However, work must be submitted on time unless there is prior deliberation with me or a true emergency. This is particularly important since some of your peers’ ability to complete their work on time and the ability for class learning activities to be most effective is dependent on each individual completing their work by due dates.

Electronic devices
Electronic devices may not be used in class unless related to the course. Students who must have cell phones on are required to set them to silent/vibrate, and shall not accept calls or respond to texts unless there is an emergency.

Academic integrity and plagiarism
Academic honesty must be observed, and plagiarism or other forms of academic dishonesty will result in a 0 for that work, filing of academic dishonesty paperwork with the appropriate university office, filing of a Student Competency Evaluation in the department, and perhaps a failing grade in the course. In addition, students should be aware of TAMUCC Graduate Catalog (current version) information regarding academic integrity and plagiarism.

Professional behavior
In addition to the requirements of TAMUCC’s Student Code of Conduct, doctoral students are expected to behave in a manner that is consistent with that of counselor educators and professional counselors. Students should be familiar with the Codes of Ethics of ACA and TSBEP as well as with the Doctoral Student Handbook. Doctoral students should be aware that professional behavior extends to social media use.

Incomplete grades
Incomplete grade requests are granted only in extraordinary circumstances and must be requested in advance by the student. University and COEHD policy require that the work for the course be substantially complete.

Extra credit
Extra credit opportunities will not be extended in this course. Course grades should be reflective of the proficiency level students are able to demonstrate through all course assignments and assessments. Requests to award additional points without just cause or to assign alternative/additional work for credit will be denied.
CNEP 6384 Evaluation of Qualitative Research Poster Presentation

Each poster will be evaluated according to the appropriateness and quality of each of the 14 components (1 = component not present or woefully inadequate; 2 = component present but merely adequate; 3 = component good but of average quality; 4 = component very good but may lack rigor, detail, & clarity; 5 = component clearly outstanding with rigor, detail, & clarity). N/N=Not Necessary in opinion of reviewer.

Title of Poster

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Title (indicates nature &amp; scope of study)</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>N/N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>II.</td>
<td>Statement of problem</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>N/N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III.</td>
<td>Research question</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>N/N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV.</td>
<td>Significance of the study</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>N/N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V.</td>
<td>Qualitative approach</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>N/N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI.</td>
<td>Participants &amp; context of study</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>N/N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII.</td>
<td>Data collection</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>N/N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIII.</td>
<td>Data analysis</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>N/N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IX.</td>
<td>Trustworthiness</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>N/N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X.</td>
<td>Role of the Researcher</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>N/N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XI.</td>
<td>Limitations</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>N/N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XII.</td>
<td>Organization and Readability</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>N/N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XIV.</td>
<td>Presenter’s style, knowledge</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>N/N</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comments:

Instructor Only:
200 possible points
I, XI, XII, XIV less weighted
Total Points Earned__________

Date:___________                                                                         Name_____________________

Copy and utilize this form for your review of a qualitative journal article and dissertation. For each element, highlight your numerical rating (see next paragraph). Then provide your rationale immediately under the element, citing qualitative research scholars to support your evaluation. If elements are missing, address the impact of the omission.

Your critique will be evaluated according to the following: 1 = evaluation not present or woefully inadequate; 2 = evaluation present but merely adequate; 3 = evaluation good but of average quality; 4 = evaluation very good but may lack rigor, detail, & clarity; 5 = evaluation clearly outstanding with rigor, detail, & clarity. Note: Failure to provide scholarly support for your evaluation will result in at minimum half off for that element (e.g., in a dissertation critique, there will be a deduction of at least one point per each element without citation[s]).

1. Statement of problem 1 2 3 4 5
2. Research question 1 2 3 4 5
3. Significance of the study 1 2 3 4 5
4. Qualitative approach 1 2 3 4 5
5. Participants & context of study 1 2 3 4 5
6. Data collection 1 2 3 4 5
7. Data analysis 1 2 3 4 5
8. Trustworthiness 1 2 3 4 5
9. Role of the Researcher 1 2 3 4 5
10. Results & Implications 1 2 3 4 5

Comments:

10 points each for journal article (100 pts.)  Total Points Earned________
20 points each for dissertation (200 pts.)
IRB Protocol Grading Rubric

Below 70: Elements essential to human subject research are not present or are sufficiently unclear as to make evaluation of HSR considerations difficult. Confusing, fails to address all of the required elements, critical information either missing or presented in such a way as to not be understandable; may be presented in a way that lacks logic and coherence; may have significant writing problems. Checklists, where appropriate, are not used to support decisions.

70-79 pts.: Addresses most required elements, but of insufficient depth to provide required information; may lack critical information; may have mechanical errors in writing; may be missing checklists where appropriate.

80-89 pts.: Addresses all required elements, addresses key issues critical to IRB, may have minor omissions, may lack some clarity; may have minor mechanical writing issues

90-100 pts.: Excellent, with all required elements presented with clarity; provides all information that would be required by IRB to make thoughtful decision

IRB Protocol Critique Grading Rubric

Below 17.5: Misses critical elements of human subject protection feedback. Failed to address other significant issues in the protocol, including missed elements or confusing presentation, and/or failed to address specific strengths; failed to address writing issues present in the protocol; generally unhelpful critique

17.5-19 pts.: Provided some information that will be helpful to author; however, several points of important feedback are missing

20-22 pts.: Provided generally useful information; addressed most potential issues in the protocol but missed some important information

22.5-25 pts.: Excellent review with helpful information included; clearly helped make the protocol better; where protocol already excellent, identifies what makes it so.