

**EdC&I 505D: Special Topics in Qualitative Methods:  
Interviewing & Observing**

University of Washington, College of Education

Winter Quarter 2018

Tuesdays, 4:30 – 6:50pm, 3 credits

V3, 1/9/2018

Instructor: Dafney Blanca Dabach, Ph.D.

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**Required Texts:**

- Emerson, R., Fretz, R. & Shaw, L. (2011). *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. University of Chicago Press.
- Additional readings available on our **course website**:  
<https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/1129320>

**Recommended Texts:**

Lofland, J., Snow, D., Anderson, L. & Lofland, L. (2006). *Analyzing Social Settings: A Guide to Qualitative Observation and Analysis*, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition. Belmont: Wadsworth Publishing Company.

Patton, M. Q. (2014). *Qualitative Research & Evaluation Methods*, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications.

Rubin, H. J. and I. S. Rubin. (2005). *Qualitative interviewing: The art of hearing data* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Thousand Oaks: Sage.

**Course Objectives**

In our society we are often exposed to different types of interviews through media: the famous TV talk-show host, the radio personality, and the journalist. Yet producing high quality data from qualitative interviews (or observations) is a different kind of undertaking. Rather than capturing headlines or high TV ratings, we seek to understand our participants' worlds while producing systematic findings. This seminar focuses on using interviews and observations as key methods in qualitative research. We will read texts that explain various approaches to these methods, as well as read and critique research papers that use the methods. By the end of the course, students will have an in-depth understanding of how to choose an appropriate approach given a specific research question and context and how to implement the approach to gather high-quality qualitative data.

Concurrently, students will write and pilot interview protocols for their own research study. Depending on students' stage of research and training, these can be beta versions of dissertation data collection protocols, those used for the yearlong qualitative methods course, those used for a research project, or even for a class paper. Our focus will be on the methods rather than the outcomes from the data (although those are clearly related—we work on the methods to have outcomes to talk about). After the second week, the course will be structured as part class/part workshop: we will spend the first portion of class discussing the readings, looking at artifacts, and discussing the topic of the week, and the last portion minutes as a “workshop” for students' work. Students will be placed in groups in order to maximize feedback and also make sure that the focus also stays on advancing students' work.

**Note:** In an effort to open the course up to more students there is no longer a prerequisite that students have prior qualitative research methods experience. That said, if you do not have prior qualitative research methods experience, it would be helpful to you to do some background reading.

This course assumes that you already have an idea for a research project and some research questions. (If you do not yet, you can develop this within the first week of class.) The focus of the course will be on developing and piloting materials that support your research projects rather than deciding what to investigate.

### **Course Requirements & Assignments:**

In this course, students have one final project: tested versions of interview protocols and observational tools (either fieldnotes or observational protocols). These tools will be bookmarked by an extensive discussion of methodological choices (including research that lead students to their decisions), and a discussion of the process, illustrating what you learned and next steps. There are several assignments along the way to help guide work towards this final product, as well as a peer review. These assignments are described below, as well as expectations for classroom participation:

- 1) **Course project.** Your final course project is a culmination of what you have been working on in the class during our time together. You can think of this as a portfolio that shows your learning in the class. An assignment sheet and grading rubric will be handed out in class. Your final project should adhere to APA 6<sup>th</sup> edition style (Note: If you are coming from another discipline that uses a different style, please indicate this.) There will be three sections of the project:
  - a. *Introduction/Discussion of Methods:* in the front section of the project, you will introduce your research topic, research questions, and the justification for the selected methods. You will also describe the protocols' development—how did they change through the quarter? Why?
  - b. *Protocols:* you will include final versions:
    - i. Interview protocols & fieldnotes appropriate for your research topic.  
or
    - ii. Interview protocols & observation protocols appropriate for your research topic.
  - c. *Analysis/Next Steps:* in the last section of the project, you will discuss the pilot data you gathered using the protocols/fieldnotes, and what they say about the data gathering tools themselves—What did you miss? What will you change for next time?
- 2) **Memos.** Throughout the course, you will have five separate “memos” due about elements of your final project. Elements of these memos should end up being a part of your final project (especially the protocols). More details and a rubric will be given before the assignment is due.
  - a. **First Memo:** Research questions and description of project

- b. **Second Memo (draft memo- exchange with a peer):** Draft of interview protocol + justification
  - c. **Third Memo (revision of second memo):** Interview data + discussion
  - d. **Fourth Memo:** Fieldnotes or draft of observation protocol + justification
  - e. **Fifth Memo:** Final course reflection
- 3) **Peer Reviews.** Students will read peers' writing for our workshop. You will provide feedback on your peers' writing that is specific, actionable, and tied to what we are learning about qualitative methods.
- 4) **Leading Discussion.** Students will take turns leading discussion each week. When leading discussion, it is expected that you prepare by thoroughly reading the course readings (more than once), highlight key issues or themes that you deem to be significant, and pose questions in ways that engage others in discussion in order to deepen our understanding of the readings. In discussing texts, the idea is to shed light and connect the dots. When leading discussion you may wish to prepare a handout, focus on key passages or page numbers, prepare a summary or presentation, while also making sure to allow ample time for discussion. The idea is **not** to replicate what is in the reading via summary but to highlight key issues for discussion. Consider: What is especially important? What might be missing or obscured? Balance critique with recognition of value. Also bring genuine questions to the table. One thing to consider is posing an array of questions and allowing space for genuine questions to emerge from others.
- 5) **Class participation.** This class relies on active and thoughtful participation to make it work. I have the following expectations about class participation: a) students attend class consistently and promptly; b) students come to class having read the readings carefully and critically; and c) students participate in class in an active, thoughtful, and respectful manner. Your grade will also reflect the degree to which you come to class prepared to discuss the readings and your peers' writing. Please note that you cannot pass the course if you miss more than two class sessions, and late assignments will be graded down. However, if you face serious circumstances, please do contact the instructor, ideally ahead of time.

### **A Note on Participation within a Classroom Community**

As a classroom community, we all reap the benefits of everyone's shared participation. Any learning environment requires the participation of multiple people for maximum effect. To that end, I ask that you think deeply about the nature of your participation in this course. How does your participation affect others? Do you share the floor to allow others to speak? Do you keep your thinking to yourself, meaning that others do not have access to your contributions? As a fellow collaborator in this course, think about what you can do to ensure maximum participation for everyone. Challenge yourself to ensure that we have as much democratic participation as possible.

Additionally, in this age of texting, email and phone use, think about how you can model the behaviors you would like in your own classroom. Texting, emailing, and Internet use during class time (about things that are unrelated to class) creates a breach of community because this changes the nature of your participation. I expect that we will be fully present during class time, which also means refraining from texting and emailing about non-related topics. On the other hand, technology

use within class that adds to our understanding of content (for example, looking up additional references on-line) is welcome.

**Grading:**

Assignment & Point Value	Due Date	Point Value
Memos	1 <sup>st</sup> Memo: Week 2: 1/16 2 <sup>nd</sup> Memo: Week 4: 1/30 3 <sup>rd</sup> Memo: Week 6: 2/13 4 <sup>th</sup> Memo: Week 8: 2/27 5 <sup>th</sup> Memo: 3/9	30 pts. (6 pts each)
Leading Discussion	Variable	10 pts.
Classroom Participation	Throughout course	10 pts.
Final Project	3/9	50pts.

**Accommodations**

Your experience in this class is important to me. If you experience barriers based on a disability or temporary health condition, please seek a meeting with Disability Resources for Students (DRS) to discuss and address them. If you have already established accommodations with DRS, please communicate your approved accommodations to me at your earliest convenience so we can discuss your needs in this course and present documentation materials that will help me understand the kinds of accommodations that would be helpful.

Disability Resources for Students offers resources and coordinates reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities and/or temporary health conditions. Reasonable accommodations are established through an interactive process between you, your instructor(s) and DRS. If you have not yet established services through DRS, but have a temporary health condition or permanent disability that requires accommodations (this can include but not limited to; mental health, attention-related, learning, vision, hearing, physical or health impacts), you are welcome to contact DRS at 206-543-8924, 206.543.8925/TTY or [uwdrs@uw.edu](mailto:uwdrs@uw.edu) or [disability.uw.edu](http://disability.uw.edu)

**Additional Resources & Recommended Texts:**

*General Qualitative Methods Texts:*

Glesne, C. (2016). *Becoming qualitative researchers: An introduction*, fifth edition. Boston, MA: Pearson.

Merriam, S. B. (2009). *Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Huberman, M., & Miles, M. B. (2002). (Eds.) *The qualitative researcher’s companion*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Miles, M. B., Huberman, A. M., & Saldana, J. (2013). *Qualitative Data Analysis: A Methods Sourcebook*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Patton, M. Q. (2014). *Qualitative Research & Evaluation Methods, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Also see different books from Margaret LeCompte and colleagues (in a multi-volume series: “Ethnographer’s Toolkit”) including:

LeCompte, M. D., & Schensul, J. J. (1999). *Designing and conducting ethnographic research*. vol. 1. Lanham, MD: Altamira Press.

Schensul, S., Schensul, J. & LeCompte, M. (1999). *Essential ethnographic methods: Observations, interviews & questionnaires*. vol. 2. Lanham, MD: Altamira Press.

Schensul, J., LeCompte, M., Nastasi, B., & Borgatti, S. (1999). *Enhanced ethnographic methods: Audiovisual techniques, focused group interviews, and elicitation techniques*. vol. 3. Lanham, MD: Altamira Press.

*Additional resources:*

Ochs, E. & Capps, L. (2001). *Living narrative: Creating lives in everyday storytelling*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Seidman, I. (2013). *Interviewing as qualitative research: A guide for researchers in education and the social sciences*. New York, NY: Teachers college press.

Spradley, J. (1980). *Participant observation*. Orlando, FL: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.

Spradley, J. (1979). *The ethnographic interview*. Orlando, FL: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.

Weiss, R. *Learning from strangers: The art and method of qualitative interview studies*.

Wei, L., & Moyer, M. (Eds.). (2009). *Blackwell guide to research methods in bilingualism and multilingualism*. John Wiley & Sons.

Also see journals that publish qualitative studies and on qualitative methods, for example: *Anthropology & Education Quarterly, International Journal of Qualitative Methods*.

## **A Living Syllabus**

This syllabus is a living document. Your feedback is welcome. During the course of the quarter we may alter the syllabus in order to take advantage of unique opportunities that arise (i.e., the availability of guest speakers) and to better adapt the course to your needs. I will formally request your feedback at the mid-point of the quarter and also at the end of the quarter, however, you are welcome to give me feedback at any point in the course.

## **Course Reading Schedule (Subject to Change)**

### ***Part 1: Introduction***

#### **Week 1 (1/9): Introduction to the Course**

### ***Part 2: Interviews***

#### **Week 2 (1/16): Research Paradigms & Question Types**

- Readings:
  - Glesne, C. (2011). Chapter 1: Meeting qualitative inquiry. In *Becoming Qualitative Researchers* (pp. 1-26). Boston: Pearson.

- Spradley, J. P. (1979). Chapter 4: Asking descriptive questions. In *The ethnographic interview* (pp. 78-91). Fort Worth: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich College Publishers.
- Spradley, J. P. (1979). Chapter 7: Asking structural questions. In *The ethnographic interview* (pp. 120-131). Fort Worth: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich College Publishers.
- Spradley, J. P. (1979). Chapter 9: Asking contrast questions. In *The ethnographic interview* (pp. 155-172). Fort Worth: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich College Publishers.
- **Assignment Due:**
  - **First Memo:** Research questions and description of project (2 pages max) (**due in class and online**)

### **Week 3 (1/23): Interviewing Techniques**

- Readings:
  - Patton, M. (2015). Qualitative interviewing (Chapter 7). In *Evaluation and research methods*. Thousand Oaks: Sage. (**Note this chapter is very long—almost book length—allow enough time to read and digest it**).
- Optional Readings:
  - Dabach, D. B. (2011). Teachers as agents of reception: An analysis of teacher preference for immigrant-origin second language learners. *The New Educator*, 7(1), 66-86.
  - Dabach, D. B. (2015). Teacher placement into immigrant English learner classrooms: Limiting access in comprehensive high schools. *American Educational Research Journal*, 52(2), 243-274.

### **Week 4 (1/30): Special Topics in Interviewing: Transcription & Elicitation Techniques**

- Readings:
  - Transcription:
    - Ochs, E. (1979). Transcription as theory.
  - Elicitation Techniques (Photographs, Images & Sentence Completion Tasks):
    - Wineburg, S. (2001). Historical thinking and other unnatural acts. (Chapter 5)
  - Recommended:
    - Suárez-Orozco, C. & Todorova, I. (2006). Projecting the voices of Mexican-origin children. *Research in Human Development*, 3(4), 211-228.
    - Bagnoli, A. (2009). Beyond the standard interview: The use of graphic elicitation and arts-based methods. *Qualitative research*, 9(5), 547-570.
    - Holtby, A., Klein, K., Cook, K., & Travers, R. (2015). To be seen or not to be seen: Photovoice, queer and trans youth, and the dilemma of representation. *Action Research*, doi: 1476750314566414.
- **Assignment Due:**
  - **Second Memo:** Draft of interview protocol + justification (**due in class and online**)

### **Week 5 (2/6): Special Topics in Interviewing: Focus Groups**

Readings:

- Schensul, J. (1999). Focused group interviews. Chapter 2 in In (Eds.) J. Schensul, M. LeCompte, Nastasi & S. Borgatti *Enhanced Ethnographic Methods*, vol 3. NY: Alta Mira Press.
- Recommended Readings:
  - Krueger, R. A., & Casey, M. A. (2015). Focus groups: A practical guide for applied research, 5<sup>th</sup> edition. Thousand Oaks: Sage. Chapters 1-3.
  - Allen, M. D. (2014). Telephone focus groups: Strengths, challenges, and strategies for success. *Qualitative Social Work*, 13(4), 571-583.
  - Auerbach, S., & Collier, S. (2012). Bringing high stakes from the classroom to the parent center: Lessons from an intervention program for immigrant families. *Teachers College Record*, 114(3), 1-40.
  - Messiou, K. (2008). Understanding children's constructions of meanings about other children: implications for inclusive education. *Journal of Research in Special Educational Needs*, 8(1), 27-36.
  - Docherty, S., & Sandelowski, M. (1999). Focus on qualitative methods: Interviewing children. *Research in Nursing & Health*, 22(2), 177-185.

### **Part 3: Observations**

#### **Week 6 (2/13): Observation: Fieldnotes, Part 1**

- Readings:
  - Glesne, C. (2006). Chapter 3: Being there: Developing understanding through participant observation. In *Becoming qualitative researchers: An introduction*. Fourth edition. (pp. 63-100). Boston: Pearson.
  - Emerson et al. (2011). Preface to 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. & Chapters 1-2.
- Recommended Reading:
  - Patton, M. Q. (2014). *Qualitative Research & Evaluation Methods: Integrating Theory and Practice*: SAGE Publications. Chapter 6: Fieldwork Strategies and Observation Methods.

#### **Assignment Due:**

- **Third Memo:** Interview data + discussion (**due in class and online**)

#### **Week 7 (2/20): Observation Protocols**

- Readings: [**Subject to Change**]
  - Hilberg, R. S., Waxman, H. C., & Tharp, R. G. (2004). Introduction: Purposes and perspectives on classroom observational research. In H. C. Waxman, R. G. Tharp, & R. S. Hilberg (eds.), *Observational research in U.S. classrooms: New approaches for understanding cultural and linguistic diversity* (pp. 1-20). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. [Read pp. 1-11 only]
  - Datnow, A. & Yonezawa, S. (2004). Observing school restructuring in multilingual, multicultural classrooms: Balancing ethnographic and evaluative approaches. In H. C. Waxman, R. G. Tharp, & R. S. Hilberg (eds.), *Observational research in U.S. classrooms: New approaches for understanding cultural and linguistic diversity* (pp. 174-205 and pp. 170-171). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
  - Additional Reading TBD

## Week 8 (2/27): Observing: Fieldnotes, Part II

- Readings:
  - Emerson et al. (2011). Chapter 3 & Selections.
  - Lofland & Lofland (1995). Chapter 5: Logging Data. In *Analyzing social settings: A guide to qualitative observation and analysis* (pp. 66-98). Belmont: Wadsworth Publishing Company.
- Recommended Reading:
  - Miles, M. B. and Huberman, A. M. (1994). Excerpts from Chapter 4: Early Steps in Analysis. In *Qualitative data analysis: An expanded sourcebook*. Second edition. Thousand Oaks: Sage. Read pp. 50-55 and 72-76.
- **Assignment Due:**
  - ***Fourth Memo:*** Draft of fieldnotes and/or observation protocol + justification (**due in class and online**)

## Week 9 (3/6): Special topics in observations: Video

- Readings:
  - Derry, S. J., Pea, R. D., Barron, B., Engle, R. A., Erickson, F., Goldman, R., . . . Sherin, M. G. (2010). Conducting video research in the learning sciences: Guidance on selection, analysis, technology, and ethics. *The Journal of the Learning Sciences*, 19(1), 3-53.
  - Taylor, K. H., & Hall, R. (2013). Counter-mapping the neighborhood on bicycles: Mobilizing youth to reimagine the city. *Technology, Knowledge and Learning*, 18(1-2), 65-93.
- **Assignments Due:**
  - Final project draft
  - Project peer review
- **Final Course Assignments Due 3/9:**
  - ***Fifth Memo:*** Course Reflection (due in my box and online)
  - **Final Project Due: 3/9, 4pm sharp: uploaded and hard copy in my box:** 122 Miller Hall.