

**Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey**  
**16:300:509:91**  
**Qualitative Research Methods in Education, Part 1**  
**Tuesdays 5:00pm-8:00pm**

Instructor: Sharon Ryan	Email: Sharon.ryan@gse.rutgers.edu
Office Hours: By appointment	Location: Room 239, GSE
Cell Number: 732-690-4131 Please reserve this for emergencies or when immediate communication is helpful (e.g. a text to say you will be late to class). Otherwise, email is the best mode of communication or schedule an appointment.	Mode of Instruction: <input type="checkbox"/> Lecture <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Seminar, Remote Synchronous Instruction* <input type="checkbox"/> Hybrid <input type="checkbox"/> Online <input type="checkbox"/> Other

\* In response to Covid-19 restrictions in New Jersey and at Rutgers University this face-to-face class is being taught using a **remote learning** format. Every effort will be made to maintain the same high-quality instruction including opportunities for virtual student-to-student interaction and teacher-to-student interaction. As such, our course will include weekly **synchronous instruction**. The remote learning design will help students meet the unique professional and personal demands that many of us face during this unprecedented pandemic. If you have any concerns about your ability to meet the requirements associated with this class, do not hesitate to contact the instructor.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

The purpose of this course is to introduce students to the theories and practices of qualitative inquiry. Qualitative researchers are interested in constructing in-depth descriptions of educational phenomena by spending time in the field and eliciting the meanings individuals give to different educational contexts, issues, and problems. From this course students will develop the skills to design their own research studies.

This course is structured to provide students with opportunities to understand the nature of qualitative inquiry, the kinds of questions addressed, and the various types of research designs used to answer them. During this semester, the aim is to provide students with a sense of the ideas and disciplinary contexts that have contributed to the development of this field of inquiry as well as what makes qualitative research a valid and reliable form of research. Students will be introduced to core qualitative data collection methods, including interviews, observations, and document analysis, and will have opportunities to practice these methods. The course will conclude with the development of a proposed research study, including the rationale for the study, some discussion of the conceptual framework and related research literature, and a section on the methodology (including data collection and analysis).

Students who do not plan to go on to Qual 2 can design a somewhat larger studies (that might more closely emulate a dissertation- in breadth of data collection sources and procedures—not the length of the paper). Students who go on to Qual 2 are designing a “pilot study.”

This course can be continued in Spring 2021 with Qualitative Research Methods II, which deepens and strengthens students' familiarity and comfort with doing qualitative research work. It is organized to provide students with more opportunities to refine their research design and data collection tools and to actually implement the research study proposed during Qualitative Research Methods I. Students will collect data in the field, analyze this data and construct a research report. They will also further develop their skills as informed consumers of qualitative studies.

Both classes are structured to develop students' abilities to advise and support their classmates in their research efforts. The emphasis on collegiality is intended to: facilitate students learning from one another, enhance their ability to critique each other's work in a constructive way and utilize critique in their own work, and develop a "research community" that can provide support as students continue in their doctoral programs.

### **COURSE OBJECTIVES: LEARNING GOALS**

Students will develop and demonstrate

1. an understanding of the philosophical foundations and theoretical underpinnings of qualitative research,
2. the knowledge and skills necessary to conduct qualitative research including procedures to conduct interviews, observations, focus groups, and data analysis,
3. the knowledge and skills necessary to articulate research questions, conceptualize and frame a study, and design a study.

### **REQUIRED READINGS**

Books can be purchased online. Be sure to get the editions listed here.

1. Maxwell, J. (2013). *Qualitative research design: An interactive approach* (3<sup>rd</sup>. Ed.). Sage.
2. Emerson, R., Fretz, R., & Shaw, L. (2011). *Writing ethnographic fieldnotes*. (2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.) University of Chicago Press.

Additional scholarly articles and book chapters will be provided on our course Canvas site.

### **COURSE ASSIGNMENTS**

The course assignments are meant to introduce you to qualitative methods of data collection and analysis. They are also meant to guide you in preliminary fieldwork and help you develop a proposal for your spring semester research study (for those progressing to Qual II).

#### **I. Participation**

**Participation in class discussions and activities is expected throughout the course. Students' participation will be graded for the following activities.**

**1) Annotated Readings.** We will use Perusall to asynchronously annotate five readings from class. Annotation involves making comments and posing questions directly on the reading. The purpose of this small-group work is to engage with the reading and your classmates in a process of active learning. You should aim to make 7-10 high-quality annotations to each reading and

ensure that your annotations are spread across the entire reading. You will find the annotation assignments under the "Assignments" tab of our Canvas website. Clicking on the assignment will take you to the Perusall link. Annotations will be graded pass/fail and are **DUE Monday before midnight**, the night before class.

2) **Proposal Presentations.** During SESSION 14 students will present their proposals in a way that mirrors, in miniature, a dissertation proposal defense presentation. All presentations should use the PowerPoint template provided by the instructor. You can personalize the slides but do not add any additional slides. You will have very limited time to present and it is strongly recommended that you practice to make sure you can finish within the allotted time period.

## II. Getting Ready to Conduct Qualitative Research

*Human subjects certification program (CITI training).* You must complete this training to engage in any kind of human research. You can access the training materials and exam online at <https://orra.rutgers.edu/citi>. Please submit a copy of your human subjects certificate to our Canvas site (under Assignments) once you have completed the training. **DUE Monday 9/20/21 by midnight**

## III. Field Activities and Analysis

*Interview.* This assignment has 3 parts:

- 1) *Develop an Interview Protocol.* Each student will conduct a 30-minute interview with one person who has some relation to the research interests you want to explore and should be an adult volunteer. Before conducting the interview bring a draft of the semi-structured interview protocol to class for review **SESSION 8**. You are to revise your interview protocol based on the readings and feedback you receive and upload to Canvas for grading. Include an opening statement. **DUE Monday 11/1/21 by midnight.**
- 2) *Conduct and Transcribe the Interview.* After you revise your interview protocol you will conduct the interview using a platform like Zoom or in person, if Covid-10 conditions allow. With permission, audiorecord the interview. You are then to personally transcribe the interview conversation verbatim. You are allowed to use Transcription tools available in Zoom or other on-line platforms. However, you must listen to the entire interview recording and edit and correct it to include, gestures, pauses and other contextual information. You will bring the typed transcript to **SESSION 10** as it will be used in class for discussion.
- 3) *Write an In-Process Memo on Interviewing and Researcher Positionality.* Memo writing is an important part of qualitative research, and allows for researchers to think reflectively and analytically while engaged in the research process. Write a 3-page in-process memo that addresses what you learned from the interview experience and what you might do differently next time. Consider your role as a researcher and choose one idea to explore about your positionality. This could be a theme you've identified, a tension or contradiction that you've noticed in relation to your interests, and the interview process. Draw connections to methodological literature. Upload your in-process memo/reflection to Canvas with the interview transcript and protocol as Appendices. **DUE Monday 11/22/21 by midnight**

## IV. Research Proposal

The final product for this class is a research proposal. The task of writing a proposal has been broken down into smaller chunks so that it can be completed with guidance and in a timely manner. Specific guidelines for the proposal will be discussed in class. For some students, this paper will grow into a proposal for a Qual 2 research study; for some, this paper will become a draft of their dissertation proposal; for others, it will remain a classroom exercise in developing a qualitative research proposal.

- A. *Proposal Paper Part 1: Research focus statement (problem/purpose statement) draft.* To begin your preliminary fieldwork, you will need to figure out what you are interested in studying. Towards that end, you will write a paper in which you identify a topic that will be the focus of your spring semester research study. The primary task will be to situate this topic in context, clearly describe a problem associated with this topic, explain the significance of the problem and what is at stake, describe the purpose of your study, and posit a set of research questions that will guide your investigation. Also, include a list of 8-10 articles, books and book chapters on this topic that you have read or plan to read in preparation for proposal paper 2 (the literature review). Three pages *maximum* excluding cover page and resource list. **DUE Monday 10/4/2021 by midnight.**
- B. *Proposal Paper Part 2: Literature Review/Theoretical Framework draft.* For this assignment, locate, read, and/or review 10-15 texts (empirical studies and conceptual pieces as appropriate) that are relevant to your topic. (\*\*This is not meant to be an exhaustive review, but an initial review of the literature.) Based on your reading, develop a mini-literature review in which you discuss issues such as how your topic has been investigated in prior research, what others have learned about your topic, and what questions about your topic still remain. As you review the literature, integrate the ideas from different sources to help you figure out what you will study, the kinds of questions you might ask, and the kinds of data sources you might collect. (5 pages maximum). Include a sub-heading entitled theoretical/conceptual framework. Briefly outline the theoretical concepts that will inform your study. **DUE Monday 11/8/2021**
- C. *Final Proposal Paper: Parts 1, 2 and Methods.* For this assignment, revise and edit Proposal Papers 1 and 2 incorporating instructor and peer feedback and add your methods section to create a coherent research proposal paper. You will have an opportunity for feedback on your methods section during **SESSION 12**. Your methods section should include the following: (1) a description of your site; (2) a discussion of your role as a researcher; (3) a description of your study participants and how they will be selected; (4) a detailed description of your proposed strategies for collecting data sources (e.g., What will you observe at your site? Why? When? Whom will you interview? Why? When? What will you ask them?); (5) a discussion of strategies for data analysis; (6) a section addressing questions of validity. **DUE Monday 12/13/21 by midnight**

The final paper needs to include the following sections with headings (20-pages *maximum*):

- Introduction: purpose and significance of the project (2-3 pages);
- Literature Review & Theoretical Framework (4-5 pages);
- Research Methods (3-5 pages).

Important: your final paper should be 10-13 pages of text and up to 20 pages total. The non-text pages should include the cover, references and any appendices.

- V. *IRB Submission:* Students who are continuing on to Qualitative Research Methods 2 are required to submit an Institutional Review Board (IRB) application, including a draft research plan. Some

class time will be provided to offer IRB submission guidance. A screenshot of your submission is **DUE Sunday 12/19/21** by midnight

## **GRADES AND EVALUATION OF WRITTEN WORK**

Late work is not accepted without prior arrangement and permission.

### **Graded Assignments:**

CITI Certification	0%
Participation	
Annotated Readings	10%
Proposal Presentation	5%
Interview	
Protocol	10%
Memo and Transcript	20%
Research Proposal	
Purpose Statement	10%
Lit Review/Theoretical Framework	15%
Revised parts 1 & 2 + Methods	30%
IRB Submission	0%

The following qualities are valued in your work:

- responsiveness to the task—make sure that you fulfill *all* requirements of the assignment;
- clarity and organization of writing;
- conciseness—write in an organized and non-repetitious way;
- completeness and depth—present enough detail to support your points; write as though your audience is not an expert on your topic and in a way that demonstrates depth of your analysis;
- independent judgment—go beyond repeating information presented by others; be critical; identify both strengths and weaknesses and support your opinions by stating your own reasons;
- relevance—connections between your work and the content of this class should be clear;
- attention to professional style—papers must strictly follow APA7 format;
- timeliness—all work is due on the due date; if you need an extension of time on an assignment, please contact one of us in advance of the due date to discuss a possible extension; and
- all assignments are to be submitted in the assignments section of the Canvas site.

### **Rutgers Graduate Grading Scale:**

93 - 100%	A
88 - 92%	B+
83 - 87%	B
78 - 82%	C+
73 - 77%	C
68 - 72%	D+
60 - 67%	D
Below 60%	

## **Program and Professor Policies**

Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. To receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentations:

<https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines>. If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus's disability services office will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations. Share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early in your courses as possible. To begin this process, please complete the Registration form on the ODS website: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-form>.

### *Academic Integrity*

Rutgers prohibits conduct that is contrary to accepted principles of academic integrity. Violations of the Rutgers Academic Integrity Policy include but are not limited to plagiarism, cheating, and fabrication. Evidence of any such violations can result in a failing grade for the assignment, the course, or sanctions imposed by the university. For information on the academic integrity policy, please go to: <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu>; a multimedia presentation on plagiarism can be found at: <http://www.rci.rutgers.edu/~polcomp/integrity/realifeexamples.html>

### *Written Assignments*

All assignments are due according to the course schedule. An assignment is considered late after midnight on the due date and late penalties will be applied. If you need an extension for any of these projects you must negotiate with the professor personally, prior to the due date. Assignments will be judged on the basis of responsiveness to the task or question, completeness, evidence of graduate level skills (clarity, depth, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation) being applied, and overall quality. Specific evaluation criteria and descriptions are available for each project.

All graded papers need to be written and cited in APA7 format as summarized in the style guide that can be found on the Canvas class site. Additional information can be obtained from the APA website at [www.apastyle.org](http://www.apastyle.org).

Your written assignments must be prepared as follows:

- 1 Use Microsoft Word and Times New Roman, 12 point font, 1" margins.
- 2 Save your work as a .doc or docx file.
- 3 Submit your assignment to the appropriate place in the Assignments section of our course
- 4 Review our Canvas site regularly. Look for feedback in this space.
- 5 Name your deliverables as follows: your last name, the name of the assignment, and the date (e.g., Patel.Paper1.100421).

### *In-Class Expectations*

- Be respectful of people and their ideas.

- Be open to new learning and perspectives.
- Be accountable for raising and resolving issues that occur, with classmates, with your professors, with the course content, with assignments.
- Be prepared to participate in class discussions, activities, and group assignments.
- Be responsible by being on time with your assignments, insightful about your comments, and active with your course readings.

*Problems.*

See the instructor immediately if personal or work problems interfere with your ability to complete or continue this course. We can work together to identify possible solutions.

*Absences & Lateness.*

Please alert the instructor in advance if you have an unavoidable absence. You will be responsible for all course content covered on days you are absent. After two absences, 1% will be deducted from the final grade for each successive absence.

**Note:** Although the course syllabus and calendar have been carefully constructed, it is not always possible to foresee the path that our learning will take or circumstances that may shape the experience. Therefore, you should interpret the syllabus and calendar as guides, rather than fixed and unchanging documents. Assignments or course sessions may be added, deleted, or altered.

## COURSE CALENDAR

THE SEMESTER STARTS WEDNESDAY SEPT 1, 2021. OUR COURSE MEETS TUESDAYS.

Week	Topic/Readings/Due Dates
Session 1 <b>TUESDAY</b> 9/7/2021	<p><b>Introduction: <i>What is qualitative research?</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The nature of qualitative inquiry in education</li> <li>● Foundations of qualitative research</li> <li>● Identifying sources</li> <li>● Developing an inquiry</li> <li>● Course overview</li> </ul>
Session 2 9/14/2021	<p><b>Theoretical underpinnings and characteristics of qualitative research</b>  <i>What are the understandings of reality embedded in qualitative approaches?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Different approaches to qualitative inquiry</li> <li>● What can best be understood through qualitative study</li> </ul> <p><i>Readings:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Maxwell Chapter 1</li> <li>2. Lather, P. (1992). Critical Frames in Educational Research: Feminist and Poststructural Perspectives, <i>Theory into Practice</i>, 31(2), 87-99.</li> </ol> <p><b>(1) Annotate</b> Lather (1992) using Perusall on our Canvas site under “Assignments.”</p>
Session 3 9/21/2021	<p><b>Conceptualizing and framing a qualitative study</b>  <i>What types of questions can be answered through qualitative study? How do you situate your study conceptually and in relation to existing research?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Finding a researchable problem</li> <li>● Articulating research questions</li> <li>● Clarifying the purpose</li> <li>● Figuring out which conversations I want to enter</li> </ul> <p><i>Reading:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Maxwell, Chapters 2 and 4</li> <li>2. Creswell, J. W. (2007). <i>Qualitative inquiry &amp; research design: Choosing among 5 approaches</i> (2<sup>nd</sup>. Ed.). Sage.</li> </ol> <p>DUE: CITI training (ungraded)</p>
Session 4 9/28/2021	<p><b>Research design and overview of observation as strategy</b>  <i>How do you design a study that will answer your questions?</i>  <i>Why and how do we effectively observe our phenomena?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Building the Study</li> <li>● Sample and Setting</li> <li>● Techniques of collecting data</li> <li>● Participant observation</li> <li>● Fieldnotes</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Using audiovisual data</li> </ul> <p><i>Readings</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Maxwell Chapters 3 &amp; 5</li> <li>● Emerson, Fretz, &amp; Shaw (2011). Chapter 2, “In the field,” (p. 21-44), from <i>Writing ethnographic fieldnotes</i>, University of Chicago Press.</li> </ul>
<p>Session 5 10/5/2021</p>	<p><b>Observing as a data collection strategy/fieldnotes workshop (2)</b> <i>What makes for rigorous and reliable fieldnotes?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Writing descriptive fieldnotes</li> <li>● Low and high inference language</li> <li>● Observer comments</li> </ul> <p><i>Readings</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Emerson, Fretz &amp; Shaw (2011), Chapters 3 and 4</li> </ol> <p>DUE: Proposal Paper Part 1 Monday 10/4/21 by midnight</p>
<p>Session 6 10/12/2021</p>	<p><b>Ethics: Positionality and reflexivity as a qualitative researcher</b> <i>What makes qualitative research trustworthy, ethical, and rigorous? What does it mean to thoughtfully consider researcher positionality?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Subjective, contextual and relational considerations</li> <li>● Equity and ethics</li> <li>● Bias and assumptions</li> <li>● Power and authority</li> <li>● Trustworthiness</li> <li>● Researcher Role</li> <li>● Positionality</li> </ul> <p><i>Readings</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Maxwell, Chapter 6</li> <li>2. Shenton, A. (2004). Strategies for ensuring trustworthiness in qualitative research projects. <i>Education for Information</i> 22, pp. 63-75.</li> <li>3. Sultana, F. (2007). Reflexivity, positionality and participatory ethics: Negotiating fieldwork dilemmas in international research. <i>ACME: An international E-journal for Critical Geographies</i>, 6(3), 374-385.</li> </ol> <p>Supplemental Reading:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. LeCompte, M. &amp; Goetz, J. (1982). “Problems of reliability and validity in ethnographic research.” <i>Review of Educational Research</i> 52(1), 31 - 60.</li> </ol> <p><b>(2) Annotate</b> Shenton (2004) using Perusall on our Canvas site under “Assignments.”</p>

<p>Session 7 10/19/2021</p>	<p><b>Interviewing Part 1: Interview questions and techniques</b>  <i>How can we engage and understand the opinions, worldviews, and experiences of participants?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Purposes and types of interviews</li> <li>• Interviewing techniques</li> </ul> <p><i>Readings</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Patton, Chapter 7.</li> <li>2. Fontana, A., &amp; Frey, J. H. (2003). The Interview: From structured questions to negotiated text. In N. K. Denzin and Y. S. Lincoln (Eds), <i>Collecting and Interpreting Qualitative Materials</i>. London: Sage Publications, Inc., pp. 61–100.</li> <li>3. Seidman, M (1991). Chapter 6, In <i>Interviewing as qualitative research: A guide for researchers in education and the social sciences</i>. NY: Teachers College Press.</li> </ol> <p><b>(3) Annotate</b> Fontana &amp; Frey (1994) using Perusall on our Canvas site under.</p>
<p>Session 8 10/26/2021</p>	<p><b>Interviewing Part 2</b>  <i>How can we become “conversational partners” with participants?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preparation and practice for interviewing</li> <li>• Ethical considerations for interviewing individuals in educational settings</li> </ul> <p><i>Readings</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Weiss, R. (1994). Chapters 3 &amp; 4 (pgs 39-59, 61-119). In <i>Learning from Strangers</i>, NY: The Free Press.</li> <li>2. Madriz, E. I. (1998). Using focus groups with lower socioeconomic status Latina women. <i>Qualitative inquiry</i>, 4(1), 114-128.</li> </ol> <p><b>(4) Annotate</b> Weiss (1994) using Perusall on our Canvas site under “Assignments.”</p> <p>Bring interview protocol draft to class.</p>
<p>Session 9 11/2/2021</p>	<p><b>Multimodal, document analysis, and other forms of data collection</b></p> <p><i>Readings</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Luttrell, W. (2010). ‘A camera is a big responsibility’: A lens for analysing children's visual voices. <i>Visual studies</i>, 25(3), 224-237.</li> <li>2. Wargo, J. M. (2018). # SoundingOutMySilence: Reading a LGBTQ Youth's Sonic Cartography as Multimodal (Counter) Storytelling. <i>Journal of Adolescent &amp; Adult Literacy</i>, 62(1), 13-23.</li> </ol> <p><b>(5) Annotate</b> Luttrell (2010) using Perusall on our Canvas site under “Assignments.”</p> <p>DUE: interview protocol final <b>Monday, 11/1/21 by midnight</b></p>
<p>Session 10 11/9/2021</p>	<p><b>Reviewing our interviews together</b></p> <p><i>Readings</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Bird, C. M. (2005). How I stopped dreading and learned to love transcription. <i>Qualitative Inquiry</i>, 11(2), 226-248.</li> </ol> <p>DUE: Proposal Part 2 Lit Review Monday <b>11/8/2021 by midnight</b></p>

<p>Session 11 11/16/2021</p>	<p><b>Data Analysis</b> <i>How do we “make sense” of our data?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Relationships between research questions, approaches, and methods</li> <li>● Triangulation</li> <li>● Memos</li> <li>● Vignettes</li> <li>● Organizing and managing data</li> </ul> <p><i>Readings</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Emerson, Fretz, &amp; Shaw’s chapter 6 on analysis</li> <li>2. Miles, M. B., &amp; Huberman, A. M. (1984). Drawing valid meaning from qualitative data: Toward a shared craft. <i>Educational researcher</i>, 13(5), 20-30.</li> </ol> <p>Bring typed interview transcript to class.</p>
<p>Session 12 11/23/2021</p>	<p><b>Data Analysis 2</b></p> <p><i>Readings</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Saldana, J. (2016). The coding manual for qualitative researchers (3<sup>rd</sup> Ed). Chapter 1. Sage.</li> </ol> <p>DUE: Interview In-process Memo with transcript and protocol attached: <b>Monday 11/22/21 by midnight</b></p>
<p>Session 13 11/30/2021</p>	<p><b>Writing About Qualitative Methods</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Peer feedback and critique</li> </ul> <p><i>Readings</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Archibald, M. M., Ambagtsheer, R. C., Casey, M. G., &amp; Lawless, M. (2019). Using Zoom videoconferencing for qualitative data collection: Perceptions and experiences of researchers and participants. <i>International Journal of Qualitative Methods</i>, 18, 1-18.</li> <li>2. Kim, Y. (2010). The pilot study in qualitative inquiry: Identifying issues and learning lessons for culturally competent research. <i>Qualitative Social Work</i>, 10(2), 190-206.</li> </ol> <p>Bring methods section draft for peer review (ungraded)</p>
<p>Session 14 12/7/2021</p>	<p><b>Proposal Presentations</b></p>
<p>Session 15 12/14/2021</p>	<p><b>IRB Workshop</b></p> <p>DUE: Final Research Proposal Papers, <b>Monday 12/13/2021, midnight</b></p>