

**DEREE COLLEGE SYLLABUS FOR: SO 3516 QUALITATIVE RESEARCH METHODS IN SOCIOLOGY**

(Previously SO 3416 Qualitative Research Methods in Sociology)

**UK LEVEL: 5**

(Updated Spring 2022)

**UK CREDITS:15**

**US CREDITS: 3/0/3**

**PREREQUISITES:**

SO 1000 LE Introduction to Sociology OR  
 SO1001 LE Sociology of Modern Life  
 SO24XX The Craft of Sociology: Research Practice and Writing  
 SO2260 Introduction to Statistical Thinking

plus 2 additional courses in Sociology above the 1000– level

**CATALOG DESCRIPTION:**

Introduction to qualitative methods in social sciences. Designing strategies, data collection techniques, interpretation, analysis and ethical considerations in empirical research. Emphasis on ethnography, observation, in-depth interviewing, case studies, documentary analysis, etc.

**RATIONALE:**

The course aims to familiarize students with the theory and usage of qualitative research methods in the study of society and culture. As an alternative approach to quantitative research, qualitative methods allow researchers to uncover meaningful dimensions of individual and collective life and record the noematic construction of social reality through the use of “grounded theory” and other approaches. Students familiarize themselves with the underpinnings of qualitative methodology, become acquainted with various qualitative methods and with the debates surrounding their use, and practice data collection techniques (i.e., ethnography, observation, in-depth interviewing, analysis of documents) in researching a topic of their choice. In this sense, the course is inter-disciplinary in its epistemological-pedagogical objectives and instrumental to all social science students.

**LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

As a result of taking this course, student should be able to:

1. Assess the appropriateness of various research methods in the study of specific topics and demonstrate ability to craft qualitative research
2. Apply basic principles for carrying out ethnographic field work by practicing data collection techniques and interpretation.
3. Relate their work to existing theory and research.
4. Develop the ability to understand the ethical implications of qualitative research and reflect on the research process itself.
5. Develop written reports for social sciences

**METHOD OF TEACHING AND LEARNING:**

In congruence with the teaching and learning strategy of the college, the following tools are used:

- Classes consist of lectures, critical discussions on diverge theoretical and empirical questions and selected methodological issues, paradigmatic references to classic or recent research studies, specialized video presentations,

	<p>experiential learning through practical application of the various research strategies (exercises, group work) and actual fieldwork.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Office hours: students are encouraged to make full use of the office hours of their lecturer, where they can address issues pertinent to the course material, ask questions and seek guidance on their research paper.</li> <li>➤ Use of a blackboard site, where instructors post ppts, reading materials, useful links, s, assignment instructions, templates, examples of studies, and timely announcements.</li> </ul>								
<p><b>ASSESSMENT:</b></p>	<p><b>Summative:</b></p> <table border="1" data-bbox="646 562 1390 806"> <tr> <td data-bbox="646 562 1214 667"><b>First Assessment:</b> Literature Review Paper (1,500 words +/-10%)</td> <td data-bbox="1214 562 1390 667" style="text-align: center;"><b>20%</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="646 667 1214 806"><b>Final Assessment:</b> Research Portfolio [research paper (4,000 words +/-10%) and appendices with research material)</td> <td data-bbox="1214 667 1390 806" style="text-align: center;"><b>80</b></td> </tr> </table> <p><b>Formative:</b></p> <table border="1" data-bbox="646 873 1390 1050"> <tr> <td data-bbox="646 873 1214 1016">Take –home assignments (e.g., statement of purpose, interview guide, research blog, reflective diary), in-class group exercises and peer reviewing</td> <td data-bbox="1214 873 1390 1016" style="text-align: center;"><b>0</b></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="646 1016 1214 1050"></td> <td data-bbox="1214 1016 1390 1050"></td> </tr> </table> <p>The formative assignments which aim to train students to the different stages of the research process will test learning Outcomes 1,2,3,4,5</p> <p>The first assessment (Literature Review paper) tests Learning Outcomes, 3,5</p> <p>The final assessment (the research portfolio) tests Learning Outcomes 1,2 3,4,5</p> <p><i>The final grade for this module will be determined by averaging all summative assessment grades, based on the predetermined weights for each assessment. If students pass the comprehensive assessment that tests all Learning Outcomes for this module and the average grade for the module is 40 or higher, students are not required to resit any failed assessments.</i></p>	<b>First Assessment:</b> Literature Review Paper (1,500 words +/-10%)	<b>20%</b>	<b>Final Assessment:</b> Research Portfolio [research paper (4,000 words +/-10%) and appendices with research material)	<b>80</b>	Take –home assignments (e.g., statement of purpose, interview guide, research blog, reflective diary), in-class group exercises and peer reviewing	<b>0</b>		
<b>First Assessment:</b> Literature Review Paper (1,500 words +/-10%)	<b>20%</b>								
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Take –home assignments (e.g., statement of purpose, interview guide, research blog, reflective diary), in-class group exercises and peer reviewing	<b>0</b>								
<p><b>INDICATIVE READING:</b></p>	<p><b>REQUIRED READING:</b></p> <p>Bryman, A. (2016) <i>Social Research Methods</i>, Oxford: Oxford University Press (5<sup>th</sup> or latest edition)</p> <p><b>On Reserve Status in the JSB Library or available electronically (required):</b></p> <p>Additional book chapters and journal articles will be assigned by</p>								

the lecturer in order to complement the textbook

Becker, H. (1967) 'Whose Side are we on?' *Social Problems*, 14 (3): 239–247, <https://doi.org/10.2307/799147>

Berg, B. L. (2008) *Qualitative Research Methods for the Social Sciences* (International edition), Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Boeije, H. (2010) *Analysis in Qualitative Research*, London: Sage.

Boellstroff, T, Nardi, B. Pierce, C, Taylor, T.L (2012) *Ethnography and Virtual Worlds: A Handbook of Method*, Princeton & Oxford: Princeton University Press.

Brinkmann, S. (2015) *Qualitative Interviewing* (e-book)

Burles, M. & Bally, J.M.G. (2018) "Ethical, Practical, and Methodological Considerations for Unobtrusive Qualitative Research About Personal Narratives Shared on the Internet", *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, vol. 17, 1,

Cresswell, J.W. (2007) *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing among Five Approaches*, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Denzin, N. and Lincoln, Y (2017) *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research*, London: Sage.

Fielding, N.G, Lee, R.M & Blank, G. (2016) *The SAGE Handbook of Online Research Methods*, 2nd ed, London: Sage.

Gubrium, J.F. James Holstein, J.A Marvasti A.B, McKinney K.D (2012) *The SAGE Handbook of Interview Research: The Complexity of the Craft*, 2nd ed. Thousand Oaks, Calif : SAGE.

King, N., Horrocks, C. and Brooks, J., (2019). *Interviews in Qualitative Research*. 2nd ed. London: Sage.

Kvale, S. and Brinkmann, S. (2009) *Interviews: Learning the Craft of Qualitative Research Interviewing*, London: Sage.

Lofland, J., Snow, D.A., Anderson, L. and Lofland, L. H. (2006) 4<sup>th</sup> ed. *Analyzing Social Settings: A Guide to Qualitative Observation and Analysis*, Belmont, CA: Wadsworth/Thomson Learning.

Seale, C. ed. (2004) *Social Research Methods: A Reader*, London: Routledge.

Seidman, I. (2006) *Interviewing as Qualitative Research: A Guide for Researchers in Education and the Social Sciences*, New York: Teachers College, Columbia University

Trainor, A. A.& Graue, E. (2012) *Reviewing Qualitative Research in the Social Sciences: A Guide for Researchers and Reviewers*, Taylor

& Francis.

Travers. M (2001) *Qualitative Research Through Case Studies*, Sage

Weiss, R.A (1994) *Learning from Strangers: The Art and Method of Qualitative Interview Studies*, NY: Free Press.

**RECOMMENDED READINGS:**

Andrews, R. (2003) *Research Questions*, London: Continuum.

Becker, H. (2007) *Writing for Social Scientists: How to Start and Finish Your Thesis, Book, or Article* 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Chicago: University of Chicago

Becker, H. (1998) *Tricks of the Trade: How to Think about your Research while You 're Doing it*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Caliandro A. (2018) "Digital Methods for Ethnography: Analytical Concepts for Ethnographers Exploring Social Media Environments", *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, 47(5):551-578.

Charmez, K. (2006) *Constructing Grounded Theory: A Practical Guide through Qualitative Analysis*, London: Sage.

Cole, A. and G. J. Knowles eds (2001) *Lives in Context*, Walnut Creek, CA: Alta Mira Press

Denscombe, M. (2010) *The Good Research Guide for Small Scale Social Research Projects* (5<sup>th</sup> ed) Maidenhead: Open University – McGraw Hill.

Emerson, R. M. Fretz, R.I. Shaw, L.L. eds (1995) *Writing Ethnographic Field notes* (Chicago Guides to Writing,) Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Glaser, B. G. and Strauss, A. L. (1967) *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research*, NY: Barney G. Glaser and Anselm L. Strauss Books.

Hammersley, M. and Atkinson, P. (1983) *Ethnography: Principles in Practice*, London: Tavistock.

Marshall, C and Rossman, G.B. (2011) *Designing Qualitative Research*, Los Angeles: Sage

Mitchell, K. M. and Clark, A. M. (2018) 'Five Steps to Writing More Engaging Qualitative Research', *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*. doi: 10.1177/1609406918757613.

LeCompte, M. D. and Schensul, J.J (1999) *Ethnographer's Toolkit* (vols 5) Walnut Creek: Altamira

Plummer, K. (2001) *Documents of Life 2: An Invitation to a Critical Humanism*, London: Sage.

	<p>Seale, C, ed (2004) <i>Researching Society and Culture</i>, London: Sage.</p> <p>Seidman, I. (2006) <i>Interviewing as Qualitative Research: A Guide for Researchers in Education and the Social Sciences</i>, New York: Teachers College, Columbia University.</p> <p>Silverman, D. (1993) <i>Interpreting Qualitative Data: Methods for Analyzing Talk, Text and Interaction</i>, London: Sage.</p> <p>Strauss, A. (1984) <i>Qualitative Analysis for Social Scientists</i>, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.</p> <p>Willis, P. (2000) <i>The Ethnographic Imagination</i>, Cambridge: Polity.</p>
<p><b>INDICATIVE MATERIAL:</b> (e.g. audiovisual, digital material, etc.)</p>	<p><b>REQUIRED MATERIAL:</b> Ppts, specific videos, samples of studies, posted on BB each time</p> <p><b>RECOMMENDED MATERIAL:</b> videos, examples of qualitative studies, samples of written work, samples of interview schedules, coursework etc. posted on BB each time</p>
<p><b>COMMUNICATION REQUIREMENTS:</b></p>	<p>Verbal skills using academic / professional English.</p>
<p><b>SOFTWARE REQUIREMENTS:</b></p>	<p>Word, ppt, NVivo</p>
<p><b>WWW RESOURCES:</b></p>	<p><a href="http://sosig.ac.uk/roads/subject-listing/World-cat/gualmeth.html">http:// sosig.ac.uk/roads/subject-listing/World-cat/gualmeth.html</a>  <a href="http://www.qualitative-research.net">http://www.qualitative-research.net</a>  <a href="http://www.qualisresearch.com/">http://www.qualisresearch.com/</a>  <a href="http://www.groundedtheoryonline.com/">http://www.groundedtheoryonline.com/</a>  <a href="http://nsuworks.nova.edu/tqr/">http://nsuworks.nova.edu/tqr/</a>  <a href="http://www.nova.edu/ssss/QR">http:// www.nova.edu/ssss/QR</a>  <a href="http://www.publicethnography.net/home">http://www.publicethnography.net/home</a>  <a href="http://www.qualres.org/HomeGuid-3868.html">http://www.qualres.org/HomeGuid-3868.html</a>  <a href="http://www.qualitative-research.net/index.php/fqs/issue/view/52">http://www.qualitative-research.net/index.php/fqs/issue/view/52</a>  <a href="http://www.phenomenologyonline.com/inquiry/">http://www.phenomenologyonline.com/inquiry/</a></p> <p>Useful specialized journals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ <a href="#">International Journal of Qualitative Research Methods</a></li> <li>✓ <a href="#">Journal of Contemporary Ethnography</a> (with some open access articles)</li> <li>✓ <a href="#">Qualitative Sociology</a></li> <li>✓ <a href="#">Qualitative Research (QRJ)</a></li> <li>✓ <a href="#">Qualitative Research Journal</a></li> <li>✓ <a href="#">Qualitative Inquiry</a></li> <li>✓ <a href="#">Sociological Research Online</a></li> <li>✓ <a href="#">American Anthropologist</a></li> </ul>

**INDICATIVE CONTENT:**

- *Why use qualitative methods*
- *Social Research*
  - ✓ The nature and process of social research
  - ✓ Epistemological and ontological considerations
  - ✓ Key elements of the research process
  - ✓ Social Research and reflexivity
- *Qualitative vs. Quantitative Research*
- *The Quality of Qualitative Research*
- *Qualitative Research Methods (approaches to inquiry)*
- *Ethnographic field strategies*
- *Combining (and mixing) research methods*
  - ✓ Unobtrusive Measures: Documents and archival research
  - ✓ Historical research and oral traditions
  - ✓ Online research -visual and online data
  - ✓ Introduction to content analysis, semiotics and discourse analysis
- *Designing Qualitative research*
  - ✓ Research plan
  - ✓ Formulating research questions
  - ✓ *The Literature Review*: Reviewing the literature; writing a literature review
- *The Ethics of Research*
- *The Politics of Research*
- *Special Issues in Ethnographic Research:*
  - ✓ Evaluating data sites- preparation for entry
  - ✓ Participant Observation (examples of studies)
  - ✓ Feminist ethnography
  - ✓ Observation and researcher's roles
  - ✓ Online ethnography (examples of online research)
- *Sampling* (sampling techniques, and types of purposive sampling)
- *Qualitative Interviews and Interviewing* (types of interviews; the interview guide, the dynamics of interviewing)
- *Transcription and Coding*
- *Interpreting and Analyzing Data*
- *Writing the Research Paper*