

# QUALITATIVE METHODS IN APPLIED ETHICS & INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH

INDS 502U/SPPH 519 (3 credits)

**Session:** Winter term 2

**Schedule:** Mondays from 1 pm to 4 pm

**Location:** Neville Scarfe Building, Room 204A

**Prerequisites/Corequisites:** None

**Registration:** Permission of instructor required. Maximum Enrolment: 20

**Instructor:** Dr. Susan M. Cox, Associate Professor

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## Acknowledgement

UBC's Point Grey Campus is located on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the xwməθkwəy̓əm (Musqueam) people. The land it is situated on has always been a place of learning for the Musqueam people, who for millennia have passed on their culture, history, and traditions from one generation to the next on this site.

## Course Description

Qualitative methods are widely employed across the spectrum of interdisciplinary research and increasingly, in many areas of population health and applied ethics research. Training in qualitative research design and methods of analysis is, however, not always offered in conjunction with more traditional research methods in population health and/or applied ethics. Tailored to students embarking upon their first qualitative project or dissertation, this course surveys the range of theoretical, methodological, and practical issues that arise in designing and conducting qualitative research in a range of applied ethics, population health and/or interdisciplinary health research settings.

Though there will be strong emphasis placed on pragmatic aspects of qualitative research (such as identifying suitable approaches to coding or choosing software

for analysis) as well as presenting and defending qualitative findings to non-social science audiences, the course will also cover topics such as the epistemological commitments of various paradigms for qualitative research (including postpositivist, constructivist and postmodern), strengths and limitations of qualitative approaches, the ethics of doing fieldwork and interviews, techniques for establishing the rigour and validity of the findings (especially with skeptical audiences), and avenues for publication in relevant journals. Participants will assist in shaping course content by identifying specific topics of interest that will, where possible, be incorporated into the course material and selected readings.

### **Seminar Participants**

This course is intended for population and public health as well as interdisciplinary and applied ethics students, postdoctoral fellows and others who are: designing and/or preparing to conduct a qualitative study, currently engaged in conducting a qualitative study, or collaborating with others who are planning or conducting a qualitative study. The course will be especially useful for those who do not have a strong background in the social sciences or previous experience in qualitative analysis and write-up.

Participants in the course will identify a qualitative project to focus on during the course. This project may be at any stage of development from a new or emerging idea for a dissertation topic, to a fundable research proposal, partially collected or analyzed data set, or draft of a potentially publishable qualitative manuscript.

### **Learning Objectives**

The seminar has the following *goals and objectives*:

- to understand and assess the uses of qualitative research
- to think critically about when and why to adopt a qualitative approach
- to provide hands-on experience and guidance in building skills necessary for doing qualitative research
- to consider how qualitative research contributes to ethical analysis and/or other areas that do not traditionally employ strategies for empirical work
- to build capacity for individual and collaborative approaches to conducting qualitative and/or mixed methods research in applied ethics and other areas of interdisciplinary or health research.

### **Learning materials**

The following book is required for the course and is available through the UBC Bookstore.

Tracy, Sarah J. (2020). *Qualitative Research Methods: Collecting Evidence, Crafting Analysis, Communicating Impact (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition)*. New Jersey, Wiley Blackwell.

Readings selected by the instructor and course participants will be provided through Canvas in advance of each seminar. Some readings will be required

core readings and others will be recommended such that participants may choose to read only those that are of the greatest relevance.

There are a great many other relevant books that will be referred to throughout the course. A few core selections that you may want to review include:

Charmaz, K. (2014 2<sup>nd</sup> edition). *Constructing Grounded Theory; A Practical Guide Through Qualitative Analysis*. Thousand Oaks, Sage.

Coffey, A. and P. Atkinson` (1996). *Making Sense of Qualitative Data: Complementary Research Strategies*. Thousand Oaks, Sage.

Creswell, J. W. (2013 3<sup>rd</sup> edition). *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Traditions*. Thousand Oaks, Sage.

Kvale, S. (2009 2<sup>nd</sup> edition). *InterViews: An Introduction to Qualitative Research Interviewing*. Thousand Oaks, Sage.

Leavey, P.(2015 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition) *Method Meets Art: Arts-Based Research Practice*. USA, Guildford Publicatons.

Schwandt, T. A. (2007 3<sup>rd</sup> edition). *Dictionary of Qualitative Inquiry*. Thousand Oaks, Sage.

### **Assessments of Learning**

Participation in seminar (including attendance, active engagement with readings, evidence of completion of lab exercises)	25%
Facilitation of in–class discussion on an assigned reading	15%
Preparation of proposal for course project/paper*	15%
Presentation of work in progress for course project/paper	15%
Final write up of course project/paper	30%

\* Topic, format, and scope of project to be jointly determined by instructor and individual student

### **Learning Activities**

Participants will attend regular seminar sessions and actively engage with the instructor, other participants and (occasional) guest speakers in all discussions and activities. Seminars will include interactive exploration of a problem or approach to qualitative research, discussion of readings and presentations of student work in progress as well as hands on lab exercises that facilitate building and strengthening necessary skills in qualitative research.

## SCHEDULE OF TOPICS AND REQUIRED READINGS

Session	Topic	Tracy Text
Jan 6	INTRODUCTION TO COURSE THE NATURE OF QUALITATIVE RESEARCH	Ch.1
Jan 13	RESEARCH TRADITIONS	Ch.2
Jan 20	RESEARCH PARADIGMS	Ch.3
Jan 27	QUALITATIVE RESEARCH DESIGN	Ch.4
Feb 3	NEGOTIATING ACCESS & GETTING STARTED	Ch.5
Feb 10	FIELDWORK, RESEARCH ROLES AND RELATIONSHIPS	Ch.6
Feb 17	<b>FAMILY DAY HOLIDAY/READING BREAK</b>	
Feb 24	GENERATING QUALITATIVE DATA I	Ch.7
Mar 2	GENERATING QUALITATIVE DATA II	Ch.8
Mar 9	ANALYZING QUALITATIVE DATA I	Ch.9
Mar 16	ANALYZING QUALITATIVE DATA II	Ch.10
Mar 23	ASSESSING THE QUALITY OF QUALITATIVE RESEARCH	Ch.11
Mar 30	THEORIZING AND WRITING	Ch.12
Apr 6	(RE)PRESENTING, TRANSLATING & APPLYING QUALITATIVE FINDINGS	Ch.13 & 14

## KEY ELECTRONIC RESOURCES

### 1) Theses Canada Portal

<http://www.collectionscanada.ca/thesescanada/index-e.html>

This is your central access point for Canadian theses and information about the Theses Canada program. From here you will be able to search AMICUS, Canada's national online catalogue, for bibliographic records of all theses in Library and Archives Canada's theses collection; access and search the full text electronic versions of numerous Canadian theses and dissertations; and find out everything you need to know about Theses Canada, including how to find a thesis, how our program works, information on copyright and much more.

### 2) SAGE Publications

<http://www.sagepub.com/>

SAGE Publications has an extensive selection of books on all aspects of research methods and evaluation. They also publish many journals on research methods, evaluation and qualitative research.

### 3) The Qualitative Report Listing of Qualitative Research Journals

<http://www.nova.edu/ssss/QR/calls.html>

The hyperlinked list consists of journals that regularly publish qualitative research papers or journals which are putting out special issues or sections on qualitative research. See especially the link to *The Qualitative Report*

<http://www.nova.edu/ssss/QR/index.html> a free on-line journal that has, since 1990, been a leading source of information on the latest developments in qualitative inquiry.

### 4) Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Networking Project

<http://caqdas.soc.surrey.ac.uk/>

CAQDAS provides practical support, training and information in the use of a range of software programs designed to assist qualitative data analysis. The project also provides various platforms for debate concerning the methodological and epistemological issues arising from the use of such software packages. CAQDAS has no commercial links to any software developer or supplier. The project is funded by the UK Economic and Social Research Council.

### 5) The International Institute for Qualitative Methodology

<http://www.iiqm.ualberta.ca>

IIQM is an interdisciplinary institute, under the auspices of the Faculty of Nursing, at the University of Alberta, in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. The institute was founded in 1998, with the primary goal of facilitating the development of qualitative research methods across a wide variety of academic disciplines. The institute hosts 2 international conferences per year: the Qualitative Health Research series and the Advances in Qualitative Methods series, alternating between the Canadian and international sites. They also offer an extensive list of workshops and training in qualitative methods.

## 6) Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans

<http://www.pre.ethics.gc.ca/eng/home.html>

The *Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans* 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition (TCPS2) describes the policies of the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC), and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC). The site includes an on-line tutorial. The tutorial helps to educate the research community about the TCPS2. It also facilitates the use, interpretation and implementation of the TCPS2.

N.B. All research involving human subjects (whether funded or not) must comply with these guidelines and all UBC graduate students must complete the tutorial if doing research with human subjects.

## 7) UBC Office of Research Services: Human Ethical Review

<https://ethics.research.ubc.ca/> (UBC Research Ethics: A Division of ORS)

See also the link to training and resources available to UBC researchers.

## University Policies

UBC provides resources to support student learning and to maintain healthy lifestyles but recognizes that sometimes crises arise and so there are additional resources to access including those for survivors of sexual violence. UBC values respect for the person and ideas of all members of the academic community. Harassment and discrimination are not tolerated nor is suppression of academic freedom. UBC provides appropriate accommodation for students with disabilities and for religious observances. UBC values academic honesty and students are expected to acknowledge the ideas generated by others and to uphold the highest academic standards in all of their actions. Details of the policies and how to access support are available at: <https://senate.ubc.ca/policies-resources-support-student-success>

## Other Course Policies and Advice

- Please see the course instructor or TA right away if you encounter any difficulties related to the classroom environment, the style of presentation, the materials and/or assignments. We will be pleased to review or elaborate on particular topics in lectures and/or provide individual students with additional assistance.
- Please ensure that your assignments are handed in on time and that you are prepared to conduct class presentations as scheduled. We have designed the course in order to be able to provide you with written feedback and evaluation early on. If you are to benefit from this we will, however, need your

cooperation since we have allowed only a small window of time in which to grade and return your work.

- All assignments are due during class or before midnight on the dates noted in the course outline. In the absence of a pre-arranged extension to the due date or documented medical circumstances, students handing in a late assignment will incur a penalty of 10% of the allotted assignment grade for each day after the due date. Also, late assignments may mean delays in marking.
- As a general precaution, it is also a good idea to keep all of your notes as well as an extra copy of your paper or other work. If something goes missing or there are problems related to marking and final grades or authorship and acknowledgment this may be of significant assistance.

### **Academic Integrity**

The academic enterprise is founded on honesty, civility, and integrity. As members of this enterprise, all students are expected to know, understand, and follow the codes of conduct regarding academic integrity. At the most basic level, this means submitting only original work done by you, and acknowledging all sources of information or ideas and attributing them to others as required. This also means you should not cheat, copy, or mislead others about what is your work. Violations of academic integrity (i.e., misconduct) lead to the breakdown of the academic enterprise, and therefore serious consequences arise and harsh sanctions are imposed. For example, incidences of plagiarism or cheating may result in a mark of zero on the assignment or exam and more serious consequences may apply if the matter is referred to the President's Advisory Committee on Student Discipline. Careful records are kept in order to monitor and prevent recurrences.

### **Grading**

Percent	Letter Grade	Percent	Letter Grade
90-100	A+	64-67	C+
85-89	A	60-63	C
80-84	A-	55-59	C-
76-79	B+	50-54	D
72-75	B	0-49	F
68-71	B-		

### **Copyright**

All materials related to this course (course handouts, lecture slides, assessments, course readings, etc.) are the intellectual property of the Course Instructor. Redistribution of these materials by any means without permission of the copyright holder(s) constitutes a breach of copyright and may lead to academic discipline. Recording of class material may be allowed with specific permission of Course Instructor.