



HPH 564: QUALITATIVE METHODS

Fall 2014

Instructor: Amy Hammock, M.S.W., Ph.D.

Teaching Assistant: Natalie Crnosija, M.P.H.

Class Times: Mondays, 5:30-8:30 pm

Location: Large Preventive Medicine Conference Room

Office Hours: By appointment

Office Location: HSC, L3, Department of Preventive Medicine, Office #111

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Course Description

In this course, students learn about the logic, theory, and methods of qualitative research within population health and related fields (e.g., social welfare, nursing, medicine, sociology, and psychology). The course begins with an introduction to the epistemological and ontological underpinnings of qualitative inquiry, with special attention to how these factors affect the types of research questions often asked (and answered) by qualitative researchers. Students then learn the nuts-and-bolts of qualitative research design, data collection, and analysis through review of existing qualitative studies and hands-on application. Homework and in-class exercises over the course of the semester give students practice in (a) designing a feasible qualitative research study, (b) collecting three kinds of qualitative data (participant observation, in-depth interviews, and focus groups), and (c) qualitative data analysis (including coding, memo-ing, triangulation). Emphasized throughout the course are methodological issues germane to qualitative (and quantitative) research: reflexivity of the researcher, appropriate treatment of human subjects, obtaining quality data, and drawing valid conclusions.

Competency statement:

Develop knowledge and skills to engage in qualitative research in population health and related fields.

Learning Experiences

- a. Discuss the various ontological and epistemological underpinnings of qualitative methods.
- b. Practice three methods of qualitative data collection: observation, in-depth interviews, and focus groups.
- c. Identify which qualitative research approach and method(s) of data collection are best-suited to answering particular kinds of research questions.
- d. Develop a qualitative research question and a research proposal to answer that question.
- e. Learn and practice researcher reflexivity in data collection and analysis.
- f. Practice techniques for collaborative and ethical interaction with research participants.
- g. Describe basic methods of qualitative data analysis, such as open and focused coding, methodological, thematic, and integrative memoing, and triangulation.
- h. Learn and practice analysis using a Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis software program, such as Atlas.ti.

TEACHING APPROACH AND METHODS

I teach based on principles of adult learning. I consider the class itself to be an arena to learn, observe, practice, and observe and evaluate particular types of skills and tactics. Thus, attendance and participation in this course is crucial. This type of learning will occur in many different configurations: pairs, small groups, and large-group discussions. There will also be a number of different types of activities, including in-class and online discussions, in-class writing, and visual learning. I am committed to creating a learning environment that is both respectful and engaging; I will elicit students' feedback throughout the course to ensure that I am succeeding in this goal.

I also encourage you to speak to me (in office hours or via appointment), both about course content and with general comments on how the course is going. Often, students only visit office hours with questions about absences or their grades. I encourage you to come to office hours for other reasons as well: to engage in further discussion about a reading, to clarify a concept that doesn't quite make sense, to talk about research or community work relevant the topic of the class, or anything else related to course content.

EVALUATION CRITERIA AND PERCENTAGE FOR EACH COMPONENT

Class participation and in-class group work: 10%
In-depth Interview 1: 5%
In-depth Interview 2: 20%
Data Analysis Lab 1: 10%
Data Analysis Lab 2: 10%
Focus group moderation and note-taking: 20%
Presentation of Qualitative Research Proposal: 25%

****Please note, any assignment turned in late will lose 5 points for each day late.****

Class attendance, participation, and homework/in-class assignments (10%)

The best learning environment is one in which participants are actively engaged in critical thinking and discussion; this can only happen if everyone in group is prepared to contribute to the learning endeavor. Participation will be measured by active classroom engagement (talking and active listening) in discussion and other activities – such as coming prepared to class (with readings and any homework completed), writing in-class papers and working in small groups. *I will check to make sure that you have completed all assignments labeled “HWK due for work in class” and this will count toward part of your grade for this portion.* Please plan to arrive on time to class and stay for the whole class period; this will facilitate an optimal learning environment for all.

In-depth Interview 1 (5%)

As a class, we will come up with a topic about which to interview for Exercises 1 & 2. This will allow us to pool data for later analysis. You will be provided with an audio recorder to complete this activity, should you need one (some use their phones or other devices).

Choose a friend who is willing to be interviewed for this exercise and determine a time that he or she can be interviewed. Go through a process of obtaining consent from this friend to be interviewed and to be tape-recorded. Remind the friend that you will maintain the confidentiality of the interviewee when

writing up the interview. Explain to the friend that their interview data may be used for analysis by members of this and/or future classes.

- (a) Develop 3-4 questions that will help guide your interview with this friend.
- (b) Interview your friend, on tape, for ~20 minutes.
- (c) Transcribe the interview into a word processing program, taking care to write up any additional field notes that may be pertinent, such as emotion, body language, etc.
- (d) Write a “So What? memo” to accompany the interview transcription in which you reflect on the meaning of this interview.
- (e) Note any questions that came up for you while doing this exercise. Are there things you didn’t know ‘how’ to do and/or wanted advice about? What were they?

In-depth interview 2 (20%)

As a class, based on our decided-upon topic and our preliminary interviews, we will come up with research question(s) and interview questions to ask during this interview.

Choose a different friend who is willing to be interviewed for this exercise and determine a time that he or she can be interviewed. Go through a process of obtaining consent from this friend to be interviewed and to be tape-recorded. Remind the friend that you will maintain the confidentiality of the interviewee when writing up the interview. Explain to the friend that their interview data may be used for analysis by members of this and/or future classes.

- (a) Interview your friend on tape for ~20 minutes.
- (b) Transcribe the interview into a word processing program, taking care to write up any additional field notes that may be pertinent, such as emotion, body language, etc.
- (c) Write a “So What? memo” to accompany the interview transcription in which you reflect on the meaning of this interview.
- (d) Note any questions that came up for you while doing this exercise. Are there things you didn’t know ‘how’ to do and/or wanted advice about? What were they?

Data Analysis Lab 1 (10%)

In this lab using Atlas.ti, you will use methods of open-coding and focused-coding to categorize the data collected in three interviews conducted by classmates earlier in the semester. More details will be handed out about this assignment as we get closer to the date.

This and the following assignment requires the purchase of a student license of Atlas.ti. Go to <http://www.atlasti.com/students.html> to purchase your student license. If you have a MAC, Atlas.ti has not yet released a Mac version of Atlas.ti. However, they plan to do so on September 17th, so please wait until then to purchase, or create a PC-like operating system on your Mac to run Atlas.ti now. We will discuss more on the first day of class.

Data Analysis Lab 2 (10%)

In this lab using Atlas.ti, you will write two thematic memos and one integrative memo about categories that have emerged as salient through the data analysis process. More details will be handed out about this assignment as we get closer to the date.

Focus group moderation and note-taking (20%)

You will be put into groups for this exercise. Everyone in the group will get the same grade for this exercise. Your task as a group is to:

- (a) Develop a set of questions to be asked in a focus group about your topic;
- (b) Moderate a focus group (of your classmates & maybe other interested persons) about the topic, with one person being the moderator and the other person/people taking notes.
- (c) Write up a report detailing the major findings from the focus group
- (d) Include a methodological memo about the experience of moderating the focus group: what worked? What would you do differently next time?

Presentation of Qualitative Research Proposal (25%)

As a way to bring together the various components of this class, your final project will be the development and presentation of a research proposal for a qualitative study unique to your own interests. This proposal and presentation should be 10-12 minutes long and should consist of the following parts:

- (a) a statement of the problem you wish to address, with justification as to why qualitative methods are appropriate for addressing this issue;
- (b) a specific research question or questions that you will be pursuing in this project, and justification as to why these research questions are important (what is known, what are the gaps in knowledge);
- (c) a description of the qualitative method (or methods) you will be using to carry out the study, as well as your sampling strategy (please justify your choice of the method and sampling strategy);
- (d) the data collection protocol (or protocols) that you will be using (such as a semi-structured interview schedule, focus group guide, and/or observation guide);
- (e) a description of how you will protect human subjects in this study;
- (f) a description of your data analysis plan for this study.

For MPH students, your grade for this assignment will be based on your presentation of the information; you will not have to develop a written proposal. Doctoral students must turn in a written proposal and give a presentation.

Grading Policy:

As specified in the PPH student handbook, course grades will be determined on a 100 point scale as follows: A (93-100); A- (90-92); B+ (87-89); B (83-86); B- (80-82); C+ (77-79); C (73-76); C- (70-72); F (69 or lower).

OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Please let me know things that are relevant to your learning. This classroom should be a place where everyone feels supported in their learning. For this reason, it is helpful for me to know as much as possible as soon as possible about the different things impacting students in the classroom. If you have a physical or learning disability, any health issues, religious observances, or anything else that might affect your participation/learning in this course, please speak to me before/after class or during office hours. I look forward to working with you to ensure a supported learning experience.

Electronic communication. Please consult our blackboard site regularly. All emails, announcements and resources I provide to the class will be archived on the site, so you can sign into it in case you delete a

message or forget something. Email is a space for quick clarification that cannot be found on the syllabus, blackboard site or asked in class. It is not a space for me to explain a lengthy concept—that is the purpose of in-person meetings.

COURSE ATTENDANCE AND LATE ASSIGNMENTS POLICIES

As was implied in my teaching philosophy, you are strongly encouraged to attend class. Grade for in-class participation includes an attendance component, and discussion will play a large role in the course. I do not believe you will gain a proper understanding of the material without attending class; however, I acknowledge that you may have conflicts from time to time.

Students are expected to turn all assignments in on time, barring a medical excuse or emergency. Assignments turned in late will lose at least 5 points off of the possible grade.

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

If you have a physical, psychological, medical or learning disability that may impact your course work, please contact Disability Support Services, ECC (Educational Communications Center) Building, room128, (631) 632-6748. They will determine with you what accommodations are necessary and appropriate. All information and documentation is confidential.

Students who require assistance during emergency evacuation are encouraged to discuss their needs with their professors and Disability Support Services. For procedures and information, go to the following web site: <http://www.ehs.sunysb.edu> and search Fire Safety and Evacuation/Physical Disabilities

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Each student must pursue his or her academic goals honestly and be personally accountable for all submitted work. Representing another person's work as your own is always wrong. Faculty are required to report and suspected instances of academic dishonesty to the Academic Judiciary. For more comprehensive information on academic integrity, including categories of academic dishonesty, please refer to the academic judiciary website at <http://www.stonybrook.edu/uaa/academicjudiciary/>

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

Intellectual honesty is the cornerstone of all academic and scholarly work. Therefore, the Graduate Program in Public Health views any form of academic dishonesty as a serious matter. Any academic misconduct will be punished to the fullest extent of the University academic code. Penalties for misconduct may vary according to the circumstances of each particular case. Penalties may range in severity from verbal warning to expulsion from the University with the reason recorded on the student's permanent transcript.

Any act of plagiarism will be taken very seriously in this class. Plagiarism is a form of academic dishonesty. Plagiarism occurs when a writer uses another person's words and/or ideas in a paper without giving credit to the original author. Plagiarism takes many forms: The form you might be most familiar with is direct copying of another's words without using quotation marks and/or without citing the source of those words. If you do quote verbatim from another source, always (a) use quotation marks around the words that are not yours and (b) properly cite the source at the end of the quoted material.

Other forms of plagiarism are equally problematic and wrong. One such form is rewording parts of an author's point (but not others) and not citing that source. Any portion, be it ever so small, of another author's argument must be cited. If you 'borrow' phrases from an author, these phrases must be put in quotation marks and properly cited. A third form of plagiarism is when you reword an authors' words entirely but you keep the authors' original sentence structure and paragraph structure without proper citation. Whenever you rely on other people's work (which we all do), just make sure cite their ideas. See the following sties for help understanding plagiarism:

[http://publichealth.stonybrookmedicine.edu/phpubfiles/Academic%20Dishonesty%20Policy%20\(Updated%2008.01.11\)_KG.pdf](http://publichealth.stonybrookmedicine.edu/phpubfiles/Academic%20Dishonesty%20Policy%20(Updated%2008.01.11)_KG.pdf)

<http://www.indiana.edu/~wts/pamphlets/plagiarism.pdf>;

<http://www.princeton.edu/pr/pub/integrity/pages/academic-integrity-2011b.pdf>

CRITICAL INCIDENT MANAGEMENT

Stony Brook University expects students to respect the rights, privileges, and property of other people. Faculty are required to report to the Office of Judicial Affairs any disruptive behavior that interrupts their ability to teach, compromises the safety of the learning environment, or inhibits students' ability to learn.

WRITING CENTER

The Stony Brook University Writing Center, located in Humanities room 2009, supports writing at Stony Brook University. Trained undergraduate and graduate writing tutors help writers through one-on-one tutoring sessions that focus on each individual writer's needs. Writers of all skill-levels at any stage of the writing process are invited to make appointments at the Writing Center. Writers can bring in anything they're working on, be it a creative piece, a personal statement, or a paper for class. Tutors will help writers brainstorm, organize, focus, and develop their written works. To make an appointment on-line, go to <http://stonybrook.edu/writrhet/wcabout.shtml>.

REQUIRED TEXTS (for purchase at HSC bookstore)

Merriam, S. B. (2009). Qualitative Research: A Guide to Design and Implementation. Jossey-Bass.

REQUIRED SOFTWARE PURCHASE: Atlas.ti student license

Purchase a student license of Atlas.ti7. Go to <http://www.atlasti.com/students.html> to purchase your student license. If you have a MAC, Atlas.ti has not yet released a Mac version of Atlas.ti. However, they plan to do so on September 17th, so please wait until then to purchase, or create a PC-like operating system on your Mac to run Atlas.ti now. We will discuss more on the first day of class.**

RECOMMENDED TEXTS

Morgan, D. L. (1997). Focus Groups as Qualitative Research (2nd Ed.). Sage Publications.

Readings are a combination of chapters from the textbook and published articles from the academic literature. All articles will be posted on Blackboard under "Documents" and the day that they are due. See the next page for a summary of topics, readings, and assignments.

On the first day, we will be reading the following article in class. It is longish, so if you would like to pace yourself and get the most out of it, you can read it ahead of time:

Holmes SM (2006) An Ethnographic Study of the Social Context of Migrant Health in the United States. *PLoS Med* 3(10): e448. doi:10.1371/journal.pmed.0030448

Download at :

<http://www.plosmedicine.org/article/info%3Adoi%2F10.1371%2Fjournal.pmed.0030448>

COURSE OUTLINE SUMMARY

Date	Topic	Readings	Assignments
Aug. 25	Introduction to each other and to the course What are qualitative methods? Epistemology & Ontology Writing and Plagiarism Introduction to observation Field notes	Holmes* *see note, above about how to access article	HWK: If you haven't already completed the CITI Group 1 SBS course in human subjects protection, do so. IC: Information sheet IC: Purchasing/Accessing Atlas.ti IC: Reading and discussion of Holmes article
Sept. 1	LABOR DAY NO CLASS LABOR DAY NO CLASS LABOR DAY NO CLASS		
Sept. 8	Epistemology & ontology, cont. Ethics: protection of human subjects Introduction to observation Field notes Developing a problem statement Developing research questions	Merriam Chapters 1, 2, 4 and 6	<u>HWK due for use in class:</u> Participant observation exercise (to be handed out) IC: Participant Observation Exercise Debrief IC: Discussion of term proposal ideas: making sure it's a research question that can be answered with qualitative methods IC: Sign up for final presentation day

Sept. 15	<p>Observation, cont.</p> <p>Problem statement and research questions, cont.</p> <p>Intro to in-depth interviewing</p>	<p>McGibbon et al.</p> <p>Merriam, Chapter 5</p>	<p><u>HWK due for use in class:</u> Complete Problem Statement worksheet (p. 65 of Merriam) based on the background/lit review of McGibbon et al. article</p> <p>IC: Problem Statement worksheet based on your qualitative proposal topic</p> <p>IC: Prepare for Exercise 1 --Decide on a topic and on a person to interview --Ensuring ethical conduct during the interview --preparing interview guide</p>
Sept. 22	<p>In-depth interviewing</p> <p>Introduction to data analysis --inductive vs. deductive analysis --open coding, focused coding --memoing</p>	<p>Merriam, Chapter 8</p>	<p><u>HWK due on Blackboard :</u> --In-depth interview 1</p> <p><u>HWK due for use in class:</u> -- 2 hard copies of your interview</p> <p>IC: Debrief interview 1</p> <p>IC: Begin data analysis --Coding Exercise</p>
Sept. 29	<p>Sampling</p> <p>In-depth interviewing, cont.</p> <p>Data analysis, cont.</p>	<p>Kuzel</p> <p>Goldman</p>	<p><u>HWK due for work in class:</u> Methods and Sampling Reading Guide worksheet for Goldman article</p> <p>IC: Discussion of methods and sampling for qualitative proposal</p> <p>IC: Narrowing down research questions, interview questions for in-depth interview 2</p> <p>IC: Introduction to coding in Atlas.ti; hand out Data Analysis Lab 1</p>

Oct. 6	In-depth interviews, cont. Data analysis, cont.	Miles & Huberman, Chapter 10, begin Luke	<u>HWK due in class:</u> --Data Analysis Lab 1 IC: AH & NC give feedback from Interview 1 IC: Discussion of Luke article IC: Finalize interview guide for Interview 2
Oct. 13	Protocols: consent forms, interview guides, etc. Data Analysis --triangulation --validity & reliability --telling the story	Merriam, Chapter 9 Miles & Huberman, Chapter 10, cont.	IC: Examine sample consent forms; discuss your own consent process IC: Draft data collection protocol for your qualitative project IC: Discussion and practice of various techniques described by Miles & Huberman
Oct. 20	Intro to Focus Groups	Recommended: Morgan, Chapters 1-4	<u>HWK due on Blackboard</u> -- In-depth interview 2 IC: Debrief Interview 2 IC: Discussion of differences/similarities between in-depth interviews and focus groups. IC: Divide into groups for focus groups --Decide on topic --Preliminary questions
Oct. 27	Focus Groups, cont. Data Analysis, cont.	Cristancho et al. Recommended: Morgan, Chapters 5-7	IC: AH & NC give feedback from Exercise 2 IC: Hand out Data Analysis Lab 2 IC: Ongoing in-class preparation for focus groups

Nov. 3	Focus Groups, cont. Data Analysis, cont.		<u>HWK due in class:</u> --Data Analysis Lab 2 IC: In groups, finalize protocols for focus groups
Nov. 10	Focus Groups, cont.		IC: Exercise 3 – focus groups
Nov. 17	Drawing conclusions and preparing qualitative reports	Merriam, Chapter 10 Bruce, Harper, Fernandez, & ATN	<u>HWK due for work in class:</u> --After reading Bruce, Harper, Fernandez & ATN, fill out results and discussion worksheet IC: Workshop qualitative proposals
Nov. 24	Putting it all together for an effective qualitative research project Atlas.ti	Review of qualitative research proposal	<u>HWK due on Blackboard:</u> -- Focus Group Write Up IC: In-class Atlas.ti demo and practice IC: Workshop qualitative proposals
Dec. 1	Review of key concepts Atlas.ti		IC: More Atlas.ti demo and practice IC: Workshop qualitative proposals
Dec. 8	Final presentations of proposed research		<u>HWK due in class:</u> Presentation of independent research proposals
Dec. 15	Final presentations of proposed research		<u>HWK due in class:</u> Presentation of independent research proposals

REQUIRED AND RECOMMENDED READINGS (most available on our Blackboard site)

Cristancho, S., Garces, D. M., Peters, K. E., & Mueller, B. C. (2008). Listening to rural Hispanics in the Midwest: A community-based participatory assessment of major barriers to health care access and use. *Qualitative Health Research, 18*(5), 633-646.

Goldman, R. E., Diaz, J. A., & Kim, I. (2009). Perspectives of colorectal cancer risk and screening among Dominicans and Puerto Ricans: Stigma and misperceptions. *Qualitative Health Research, 19*(1), 1559-1568.

Holmes, S. M. (2006). An ethnographic study of the social context of migrant health in the United States. *PLoS Med 3*(10): e448. doi: 10.1371/journal.pmed.0030448

Luke, K. P. (2009). Sexual violence prevention and technologies of gender among heavy-drinking college women. *Social Service Review, 83*(1), 79-109.

Kuzel, A.J. (1999). Sampling in qualitative inquiry. In B. F. Crabtree and W. Miller (Eds.), *Doing Qualitative Research, 2nd Edition* (pp. 33-45). Thousand Oaks, CA, Sage Publications, Inc.

McGibbon, E., Peter, E., & Gallop, R. (2010). An institutional ethnography of nurses' stress. *Qualitative Health Research, 20*(10), 1353-1378.

Martin, K. (2003). Giving birth like a girl. *Gender and Society, 17*(1), 54-72.

Miles, M. B. & Huberman, A. M. (1994). Making good sense: Drawing and verifying conclusions (Chapter 10). *Qualitative Data Analysis, 2nd Edition* (pp. 245-287). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.