

SOWK 770
INTRODUCTION TO QUALITATIVE AND MIXED RESEARCH METHODS

SPRING 2009

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Location: MRF 218
Day/Time: Tuesdays, 1:00 to 3:50pm

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

The objective of this course is to provide an overview of the use of qualitative and mixed methods in social, clinical and health services research. The course is divided into three components:

1. Reasons for using qualitative and mixed methods, criteria for their use in scientific research, and strategies for development of research questions and designs;
2. The pragmatics of collecting and analyzing five types of qualitative data: ethnographic participant observation, extended interviews, life histories and illness narratives, focus groups; and structured interviews; and
3. Case studies of the use of these methods in social, clinical and health services research.

II. COURSE OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of the course, students will be able:

1. To identify the rationale for using qualitative methods in social work research.
2. To identify the types of mixed method designs and the procedures for selecting a particular design to meet study aims and objectives.
3. To explain the procedures used to integrate quantitative and qualitative methods in a single study.
4. To describe and apply the standards for assessing the quality of qualitative methods.
5. To describe and apply principles of sampling and recruitment of study participants
6. To describe and apply principles of obtaining informed consent and adhering to ethical guidelines for data collection and management.
7. To engage in participant observation.
8. To conduct structured and semi-structured interviews with study participants.

9. To obtain illness narratives and life histories from study participants.
10. To conduct focus groups with study participants.
11. To manage qualitative data using computerized text analysis software programs.
12. To analyze qualitative data, using techniques such as grounded theory, hermeneutics, concept mapping, and cultural consensus modeling.
13. To understand and apply guidelines for presentation of qualitative data in manuscripts and presentations.

III. COURSE FORMAT

Three primary learning modalities will be used: 1) didactic presentation by the instructor, 2) case analysis and class discussion, and (3) in-class exercises and small group activities. There will be three hours of lecture and discussion per week for the first three weeks, followed by weeks of instructor lecture (2hr) and student presentations (1 hr), and class discussion of a particular topic.

IV. COURSE EVALUATION AND GRADING

All students are expected to regularly attend class and be on time. A student with more than two unexcused absences during the course of this class may receive a no credit. A student who is tardy three or more times to class may receive a grade of no credit. If a student receives a no credit grade in this seminar, they will be required to repeat this class.

Class grades will be based on the following:

3.85 – 4	A
3.60 – 3.84	A-
3.25 – 3.59	B+
2.90 – 3.24	B
2.60 – 2.87	B-
2.25 – 2.50	C+
1.90 – 2.24	C

Final Grade:

93 – 100	A
90 – 92	A-
87 – 89	B+
83 – 86	B
80 – 82	B-
77 – 79	C+
73 – 76	C
70 – 72	C-

Your grade will be based on the following:

1. **CLASS ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION (10%).** Attendance and active participation at all class meetings is critical for a successful seminar course. Each week, students are expected to have read and thoughtfully analyzed all assigned readings prior to class. Students will also be evaluated based on their participation in in-class activities data collection activities (e.g., participant observation, conducting an interview, moderating a focus group). You should come prepared to class with a list of questions, reactions, and discussion points on the assigned reading.
2. **STUDENT PRESENTATIONS (20%)** During weeks 5-9 and 11-14, students will be required to give a 20 minute presentation in class on one of the case studies of the use of qualitative methods in clinical and health services research. Each student will be responsible for selecting a week in which to present a summary of the case study assigned for that week. The goal of the presentation is to provide students with an in-depth exploration of a particular method through careful reading and peer interaction. Presentations should discuss and critically analyze the assumptions, methods, findings, and implications of research in the chosen case study. Topics for presentations are listed below. During Week 15, students will give a brief (15-20 minute) powerpoint presentation of their proposed research project.
3. **HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENTS (20%)** Students will be required to complete two homework assignments. The first will be to conduct a minimum of one hour of participant observation. This can be done during lunch in a public place (e.g., restaurant, campus quad) or a field placement setting. The second assignment will be to obtain an illness narrative from someone who is currently ill or recently experienced an illness of some sort. Students will give an in-class presentation summarizing the results of each activity.
4. **FINAL PAPER (50%).** Term papers should be doubled spaced and between 15 and 20 pages in length, not counting tables, figures and supplementary materials. The paper should take the form of a research proposal for using qualitative methods, either alone or in combination with a quantitative design, in investigating a topic of your own choosing. The proposal should include a specific hypothesis or question to be answered, your rationale for conducting the study, and a description of how the study would be conducted.

V. ATTENDANCE POLICY

Students are expected to attend every class and to remain in class for the duration of the session. Failure to attend class or arriving late may impact your ability to achieve course objectives which could affect your course grade. Students are expected to notify the instructor by telephone or email of any anticipated absence or reason for tardiness.

University of Southern California policy permits students to be excused from class, without penalty, for the observance of religious holy days. This policy also covers scheduled final examinations which conflict with students' observance of a holy day. Students must make

arrangements *in advance* to complete class work which will be missed, or to reschedule an examination, due to holy days observance.

VI. COURSE EXPECTATIONS AND GUIDELINES

Students are expected to attend class sessions, complete all reading assignments, participate in class discussions and activities, submit work on the date and time specified by the instructor, and contribute to an atmosphere of mutual respect and civil discourse.

VII. REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS

Cresswell, John W., Plano Clark, Vicki L. (2007). *Designing and conducting mixed methods research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Padgett, Deborah K. (2008) *Qualitative methods in social work research, 2nd ed.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Morgan, David L. (1997). *Focus groups as qualitative research*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage, 1997.

Weller, Susan C, Romney A.K. (1988). *Systematic data collection*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

VIII. ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS

Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. *Please be sure the letter is delivered to the instructor as early in the semester as possible.* DSP is located in STU 301 and is open from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. The phone number for DSP is (213) 740-0776.

IX. EMERGENCY RESPONSE INFORMATION

To receive information, call main number (213)740-2711, press #2. “For recorded announcements, events, emergency communications or critical incident information.”

To leave a message, call (213) 740-8311

For additional university information, please call (213) 740-9233

Or visit university website; <http://emergency.usc.edu>

If it becomes necessary to evacuate the building, please go to the following locations carefully and using stairwells only. Never use elevators in an emergency evacuation.

University Park Campus

City Center

MRF – Lot B
SWC – Lot B
WPH – McCarthy Quad
VKC – McCarthy Quad

Front of the building (12th & Olive)

Orange County Campus
Faculty Parking Lot

Skirball Campus
Front of building

Do not re-enter the building until given the “all clear” by emergency personnel.

X. COURSE OUTLINE AND ASSIGNMENTS

Week 1 (Jan 13): Introduction: What are qualitative methods and why do we use them

Topics:

- The “art” and “science” of qualitative methods
- Rationale for using qualitative designs and methods
- Examples of when and qualitative methods are used in social, clinical and health services research

Readings:

Padgett Chaps 1-2 (T)

Hill, L.G., Maucione, K., & Hood, B. (2007). A focused approach to assessing program fidelity. *Prevention Science* 8, 25-34. (B)

Aarons, G.A., & Palinkas, L.A. (2007). Implementation of evidence-based practice in child welfare: Service provider perspectives. *Administration and Policy in Mental Health and Mental Health Services Research*, 34(4), 411-419. (B)

Week 2 (Jan 20): What are mixed methods and why use them?

Topics:

- Rationale for using mixed designs and methods
- Logistics of mixed method designs
- Examples of when mixed methods are used in social, clinical and health services research

Readings:

Padgett, Chap 10 (T)

Cresswell & Plano Clark, Chaps 1-3 (T)

Bauer, M.C., & Wright, A.L. (1996). Integrating qualitative and quantitative methods to model infant feeding behavior among Navaho mothers. *Human Organization*, 55, 183-192. (H)

Freidenberg, J., Mulvihill, M., & Caraballo, L.R. (1993). From ethnography to survey: Some methodological issues in research on health seeking in East Harlem. *Human Organization*, 52, 151-161. (H)

Week 3 (Jan 27): Qualitative and Mixed Method Research Questions and Study Designs

Topics:

- Linking Methods to Aims
- Types of Research Questions
- Triangulation of data
- Design and Methods Decisions [**In-class activity and Homework assignment – develop outline of paper or proposal indicating specific aims, rationale, study participants, and study design**]

Readings:

Padgett, Chap 3 (pp. 45-54), Appendix (pp. 239-252) (T)

Cresswell & Plano Clark, Chaps 4-5 (T)

Morgan DL (1998). Practical strategies for combining quantitative and qualitative methods: applications to health research. *Qualitative Health Research*, 8, 362-376. (B)

Office of Behavioral and Social Sciences Research, **Qualitative Methods in Health Research: Opportunities and Considerations in Application and Review**. National Institutes of Health. Bethesda, MD. December 2001, NIH Publication No. 02-5046. (B)

* Nakkash, R., Afifi Soweid, R.A., Nehlawi, M.T., Shediak-Rizkallah, M.C., Hajjar, T.A., & Khogali, M. (2003). The development of a feasible community-specific cardiovascular disease prevention program: triangulation of methods and sources. *Health Education and Behavior*, 30, 723-739. (B)

* Palinkas, L.A., Criado, V., Fuentes, D., Shepherd, S., Milian, H., Folsom, D., & Jeste, D.V. (2007). Unmet needs for services for older adults with mental illness: Comparison of views of different stakeholder groups. *American Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry*, 15, 530-540. (B)

Week 4 (Feb 3): Sampling, Recruiting and Protecting Research Participants

Topics:

- Sampling of informants and other participants
- Recruiting
- Managing relationships with informants
- Ethics

Readings:

Padgett, Chap 3 (pp. 53-62), Chap 4 (T)

Cresswell & Plano Clark, Chap 6 (T)

* Kalafat, J., & Illbck, R.J. (1998). A qualitative evaluation of school-based family resource and youth service centers. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 26, 573-604. (B)

* Klein, W.C., & Parks, C.A. (2007). Listening to seniors: Successful approaches to data collection and program development. *Journal of Gerontological Social Work*, 48, 457-473. (B)

Recommended: Spradley J. (1979). *The Ethnographic Interview*. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.

Week 5 (Feb 10): The Ethnographic Study and Participant Observation

Topics:

- Objectivity and subjectivity in participation and observation
- Getting into the field
- Collecting and recording data [**Homework Assignment – Participant observation at lunch**]
- Rapid Assessment Procedures

Readings:

Padgett, Chap 5 (T)

* Ware, N.C., Tugenberg, T., Dickey, B., & McHorney, C.A. (1999). An ethnographic study of the meaning of continuity of care in mental health services. *Psychiatric Services*, 50, 395-400.

(B)

* Dobbs, D., Eckert, J. K., Rubinstein, B., Keimig, L., Clark, L., Frankowski, A.C., & Zimmerman, S. (2008). An ethnographic study of stigma and ageism in residential care or assisted living. *Gerontologist*, 48, 517-526. **(B)**

Recommended: Rhodes, L.A. (1991). *Emptying beds: the work of an emergency psychiatric unit*. Berkeley, University of California Press.

Week 6 (Feb 17): The Extended Interview

Topics:

- Types of extended interviews
- Techniques for informant-based data collection [**In-class activity**]

Readings:

Padgett Chap 6 **(T)**

* Arcia, E., Fernandez, M.C., Jaquez, M., Castillo, H., & Ruiz, M. (2004). Modes of entry into services for young children with disruptive behaviors. *Qualitative Health Research*, 14, 1211-1126. **(B)**

* Grauwiler, P. (2008). Voices of women: perspectives on decision-making and the management of partner violence. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 30, 311-322.

Recommended: Sullivan HS. *The psychiatric interview*. New York: W.W. Norton, 1954

Week 7 (Feb 24): The Life History and Illness Narrative

Topics:

- Medical histories and life histories
- Patient stories about being ill [**Homework assignment due – describe illness narrative of informant with a chronic physical or mental health problem**]
- Eliciting context from experience

Readings:

Garro, L. (1992). Chronic illness and the construction of narratives. In Good, M.J., Brodwin, P.E., Good, B.J., & Kleinman, A. (eds.), *Pain as human experience: An anthropological perspective*. (pp. 100-137). Berkeley, University of California Press. **(H)**

* Ware, N. (1999). Toward a model of social course in chronic illness: the example of chronic fatigue syndrome. *Culture, Medicine and Psychiatry*, 23, 303-331. **(B)**

* Rich, M., Lamola, S., Gordon, J., Chalfen, R. (2000). Video intervention/prevention assessment: a patient-centered methodology for understanding the adolescent illness experience. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 27, 155-165. **(B)**

Recommended:

Kleinman, A. (1980). *The illness narratives: suffering, healing and the human condition*. New York: Basic Books.

Langness, L.L., & Frank, G. (1981). *Lives: an anthropological approach to biography*. Novato, CA, Chandler & Sharp.

Week 8 (Mar 3): The Structured Interview and Formal Ethnographic Methods

Topics:

- Pile Sorts, Freelisting, Triads [**In-class activity**]

Readings:

Weller SC, Romney AK. (1988). *Systematic Data Collection*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage. (T)

* Curry, M.D., Matthews, H.F., Daniel, H.J., Johnson, J.C., & Mansfield, C.J. (2002). Beliefs about and responses to childhood ear infections: a study of parents in Eastern North Carolina. *Social Science and Medicine*, 54:1153-1165. (B)

* Weller, S.C., Baer, R.D., Pachter, L.M., Trotter, R.T., Glazer, M., Garcia de Alba Garcia, J.E., & Klein, R.E. (1999). Latino beliefs about diabetes. *Diabetes Care*, 22, 722-728. (B)

Week 9 (Mar 10): The Focus Group

Topics:

- Types of focus groups
- Recruitment of focus group participants
- Developing the agenda
- Running the focus group [**In-class activity**]

Readings:

Morgan, D.L. (1988). *Focus groups as qualitative research*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage. (T)

* Beaulaurier, R.L., Seff, L.R., & Newman, F.L. (2008). Barriers to help-seeking for older women who experience intimate partner violence: a descriptive model. *Journal of Women & Aging*, 20, 231-248.

* Bradley, E.H., McGraw, S.A., Curry, L., Buckser, A., King, K.L., Kasl, S.V., & Andersen R. (2003). Expanding the Andersen Model: the role of psychosocial factors in long-term care. *Health Services Research*, 37, 1221-1142. (B)

Week 10 Mar 17): Spring Break

No class

Week 11 (Mar 24): Management of Qualitative Data

Topics:

- Organizing data
- Coding data [**In-class activity**]
- Computer assisted qualitative data management and analysis

Readings:

Padgett, Chap 7 (pp. 131-138) (T)

Drisko, J.W. (2000). Qualitative data analysis software: A user's appraisal (B)

Willms, D., Best, J.A., Taylor, D.W., Gilbert, J.R., Wilson, D.M.C., Lindsay, E.A., & Singer, J. (1990). A systematic approach for using qualitative methods in primary prevention research. *Medical Anthropology Quarterly*, 4, 391-409. (B)

Week 12 (Mar 31): Analysis of Qualitative Data I

Topics:

- Thick Descriptions
- Case Studies [**Homework assignment – present case study of client engagement**]

Readings:

Padgett, Chap 7 (pp. 139-150) (T)

Geertz, C. (1973). Thick description: Toward an interpretative theory of culture. In Geertz, C. *The interpretation of cultures*. (pp. 3-30). New York: Basic Books. (R)

* MacDonald, K., & Greggans, A. (2008) Dealing with chaos and complexity: the reality of interviewing children and families in their own homes. *Journal of Clinical Nursing*, 17, 2123-2130. (B)

* Feifer, C., Nemeth, L., Nietert, P.J., Wessell, A.M., Jenkins, R.G., Roylance, L., & Ornstein, S.M. (2007). Different paths to high-quality care: three archetypes of top-performing practice sites. *Annals of Family Medicine*, 5, 233-241.

Week 13 (Apr 7): Analysis of Qualitative Data II

Topics:

- Patterns, Themes and Content Analysis [**In-class activity**]
- Theory-based analysis approaches

Readings:

Padgett, Chap 7 (pp. 151-178) (T)

* Palinkas, L.A. Schoenwald SK, Hoagwood K, Landsverk J, Chorpita BF, Weisz JR, and the Research Network on Youth Mental Health. (2008). An ethnographic study of implementation of evidence-based treatment in child mental health: First steps. *Psychiatric Services*, 59, 738-746.

* Tuchman, L.K., Slap, G.B., & Britto, M.T. (2008). Transition to adult care: experiences and expectations of adolescents with a chronic illness. *Child: Care, Health and Development*, 34, 557-563.

Week 14 (Apr 14): Analysis of Qualitative Data III

Topics:

- Mixed Methods
- Multidimensional scaling
- Consensus analysis
- Concept mapping

Readings:

Cresswell & Plano Clark, Chap 7 (T)

* Burke, J.G., O'Campo, P., Peak, G.L., Gielen, A.C., McDonnell, K.A., & Trochim, W.M. (2005). An introduction to concept mapping as a participatory public health research method. *Qualitative Health Research*, 15, 1392-1410. **(B)**

* Trotter, R.T. 2nd, Weller, S.C., Baer, R.D., Pachter, L.M., Glazer, M., Garcia de Alba Garcia, J.E., & Klein, R.E. (1999). Consensus theory model of AIDS/SIDA beliefs in four Latino populations. *AIDS Education and Prevention*, 11(5), 414-426. **(B)**

Recommended:

Romney, A.K., Weller, S.C., & Batchekler, W.H. (1986). Culture as consensus: a theory of culture as information accuracy. *American Anthropologist*, 88, 313-338. **(B)**

Week 15 (Apr 21): Evaluating the Quality of Qualitative and Mixed Methods

Topics:

- Positivist and postmodernist criteria
- Aims and Outcomes
- Impact of qualitative and mixed method studies

Readings:

Padgett, Chap 8 **(T)**

* Mercier, C., Piat, M., Peladeau, N., & Dagenais, C. (2000). An application of theory-driven evaluation to a drop-in youth center. *Evaluation Review*, 24, 73-91. **(B)**

* Shuval, K., Shachalk, A., Linn, S., Breziz, M., Feder-Bubis, P., & Reis, S. (2007). The impact of an evidence-based medicine educational intervention on primary care physicians: a qualitative study. *Journal of General Internal Medicine* 22, 327-331. **(B)**

Week 16 (Apr 28): Presentation of Qualitative and Mixed Method Data

Topics:

- Preparation of manuscripts
- Oral Presentations
- Posters

Readings:

Padgett, Chap 9 **(T)**

Cresswell & Plano Clark, Chap 8 **(T)**

Legend of readings

T = Text

B = Available on Blackboard

H = Handout

R = Available on Reserve