

DEMS 5051 RESEARCH DESIGN AND QUALITATIVE METHODS

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Room 214, Atkinson
Office Hours: By appointment
Class Location:

Overview

This course provides students with an introduction to the philosophical bases of research including positivist, constructivist and critical approaches. Students will gain an understanding of the fundamentals of research design including consideration of the trade-offs among various strategies. A hands-on qualitative research project will provide students with an opportunity to learn various qualitative techniques (i.e. interviewing, conducting focus groups, observation, archival analysis), to manage and analyse qualitative data, and finally to write up their findings. Throughout the course students will develop their critical skills in evaluating the quality of qualitative research and appreciating the role of the reader in interpreting, translating and applying qualitative research.

Learning Objectives

- *To develop an appreciation of the various approaches to research and research design, including their objectives, strengths and limitations*
- *By the end of the course students will be able to design research, analyse and present the data and draw conclusions using qualitative methods*
- *Students will develop basic skills in interviewing and/or conducting focus groups*

Required Texts: *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Approaches* by John Creswell, 2nd or 3rd Edition, Sage

Reading List: Readings from scholarly journals are required for most classes and have been compiled from “eresources” available at York Libraries, (see full reference list on last page). You should access these yourself from the York Library web-site.

Supplemental Texts:

Basics of Qualitative Research: Techniques and Procedures for Developing Grounded Theory, Anselm Strauss and Juliet Corbin, 2nd Edition Sage, 1998
Qualitative Data Analysis, Matthew Miles and Michael Huberman, 2nd Edition, Sage, 1994.

Assignments and Evaluation:

Participation	15%
Research Question and Design	25%
Critique	20%
Group Project	<u>40%</u>
	100%

Research Question and Research Design

For this assignment, you will develop, individually, a research question and an associated research design. This assignment requires you to present a research question, and making explicit reference to the text and/or class discussions, develop a design and justify why this design will result in a “compelling” piece of research. You should explicitly articulate your ontological, epistemological and axiological assumptions about the phenomenon of interest and use this rationale to justify your decisions regarding the paradigm/framework, the selection of a qualitative approach and then to specify which approach (or combination) you would use. Note, you must present a research design that relies on qualitative methods. Finally, you should describe the research design including the types of data you will generate and which methods you will use to analyse this data. You should conclude by describing the knowledge claims you could make based on this design and note the limitations of your design. While there is likely to be a significant body of theory and research associated with your phenomenon of interest, you should not include any external sources in this paper; however you may make some explicit assumptions, e.g. that there is little research or that there is lots of previous research. This assignment must be submitted on moodle before 4pm (i.e. prior to the start of Class 6) and should be no longer than 5 pages, including references.

Critique

Working in groups, students will select an article for critique (from Weeks 6-9) and present their critique to the class. Specific articles are assigned for each class so the group will select a class and the related article. Students will critique the article drawing on the material from the text and class discussions (i.e. the research question, research design, analysis and conclusions). The group will submit their presentation materials (e.g. slides) and the text of their critique 24 hours before the class. The presentation should be approximately 15 minutes and the group should facilitate the discussion for at least another 15 minutes. The critique handed in should be no longer than 5 pages, including references.

Group Research Project

Each student in the class will participate in a group research project. This project is intended to provide a platform for students to experience the process of conducting research (e.g. possible MRP topic). Students will form groups of 4-5. The group will then construct a research question and associated **qualitative** research design and discuss these with the instructor in a meeting that will replace class #5. Using the feedback and suggestions from the instructor, the group will refine and finalize a focal research question and associated design.

Students will then proceed to gather data in accordance with the research design with each student actively engaged in the data gathering, analysis and presentation. Each group can expect to conduct either 4 interviews or the group may conduct 1 focus group. The group will transcribe the data from 2 of these interviews or the 1 focus group and analyse this data. A brief (individual) paper reflecting on the process of data collection and transcription (3-4 pages) will be submitted along with the transcripts of the interviews or focus groups. This reflection on the transcription will include strengths and weaknesses of the process of gathering the data as well as thoughts on the differences between the experience of conducting the interview or focus group in contrast with the transcripts generated. Students will write up and present the results of their research in a final paper that includes the data collected by all members of the group. In the last class the group will present preliminary findings. This presentation is not formally assessed and serves as an opportunity for students to discuss their findings and seek advice from colleagues. The final report should be approximately 15 pages including the research question, methods, results and conclusions. The group must submit all data collected (including audio and signed consent forms) with the final report.

1 st Milestone (Week 5)	Present Research Question/Design (Group)	5%
2 nd Milestone (Week 10):	Submit transcripts and reflection (half G/half Individual)	15%
3 rd Milestone (Week 13):	Submit Final Report (G)	20%

Participation

Your participation grade will be based on regular attendance and the quality of your contributions to class activities and discussion as well as your work on the group project. Your in class contributions will be assessed based on your presence in class, how well your contributions demonstrate your understanding of the material and how effectively they contribute to the group's discussion of the material. In class participation requires being prepared for each session by having read (and thought about) the assigned material. It is particularly important that you prepare and contribute to the presentations by your colleagues in the latter half of the term, therefore, half of your participation mark for those classes will be based on participation during these presentations. Students can demonstrate their preparation by asking questions whenever necessary and by integrating the vocabulary and concepts from the readings into their comments. Participation that is frequent, constructive and demonstrates a strong understanding of the material will be graded with As, participation that is significant, constructive and demonstrates a good understanding of some of the core

concepts will be graded with Bs, participation that demonstrates some understanding of the core ideas and contributes to discussion will be graded with Cs. If students are not prepared for class, their participation mark for that class will be lower than a C.

The best contributions:

- help others feel safe about participating;
- show curiosity and willingness to experiment;
- make or raise issues that are relevant to the current focus of the class;
- apply relevant personal knowledge or experience to the conceptual material;
- take into consideration the ideas already offered by others.

In addition, your participation mark will include the assessment of your co-workers on the Group Assignment. At the end of the assignment all members of the group will be asked to assess every group member (including themselves) using a peer feedback tool that will be posted on the web-site in the first weeks of the course.

Written Assignments

- All assignments must be typewritten, double spaced, and no less than 12 font.
- Page length limitations should be respected: while an extra paragraph or two may be acceptable (if absolutely unavoidable), anything in excess of this will not be read.
- Please ensure that footnotes and bibliography follow accepted standards. I strongly advise you to complete the on-line tutorial on Academic Honesty at http://www.yorku.ca/tutorial/academic_integrity/
- It is important that all assignments are handed in on time as assignments build on each other. If students do not complete their assignments on the due dates they may not be able to complete subsequent assignments. The due dates for the assignments have been selected carefully to match the material covered in the course and to even out the work through the course therefore, due dates are non-negotiable and late assignments will be penalized by 1 grade point *per day* (i.e., an assignment that would have received a A will be reduced to to B+, a C+ assignment will be reduced to a C, etc. for each day beyond the due date). Assignments **must** be handed in before class begins on the due date therefore, as assignment not handed in prior to the start of class will be counted as late and, 1 grade point will be deducted.

Below is a week by week description of the material to be covered each week as well as the activities that students can expect in class. It is important that students come to class having prepared both the readings and/or for the exercises that will be covered in that class. Your ability to understand, learn and contribute to the course will be significantly impaired if you do not prepare the material before each class.

Course Week by Week

Date	Topic	Class Activities
January 10	1. Introduction Chapter 1 & 2, Text	Introduction to the Group Project
January 17	2. Philosophical Foundations of Research Chapter 1 & 2, Text <i>Starmer et al. 2013</i> <i>Turner et al. 2014</i>	Form Groups
January 24	3. Research Design Chapter 3 & 4, Text <i>Barbour and Manly, 2016</i>	
January 31	4. Research Design Chapter 5 & 6 Text <i>Busby, & Iszatt-White 2016</i>	Bring Draft Research Question for Group Project
February 7	5. No Class/Meeting with Course Director Draft Research Question and Design & Ethics form (Group Project) submitted prior to meeting.	Bring hard copies to meeting-5%
February 14	6. Qualitative. Methods (interviews/focus groups) Chapter 7, Text Article Critique: <i>King et al 2010</i>	Research Question and Design Due-Individual (25%)
February 21	Reading Week	
February 28	7. Qualitative Methods (archival, observation) Article Critique: <i>Cornelissen et al (2014)</i>	Group Project: Bring Any Questions re: data collection or transcription process
March 7	8. Analysing and Presenting Data Chapter 8, 9 Text Article Critique: <i>Elmes & Frame (2008)</i>	
March 14	9. Analysing and Presenting Data Chapter 8, 9 Text Article Critique: <i>Whittle & Mueller (2012)</i>	Group Project: bring transcripts and think about approach for analysis; decide on analytic and presentation strategy (tables/figures etc.)
March 21	10. Synthesizing and Drawing Conclusions from the Data	Transcription Reflection due Group Project: Draft of figures/tables for presenting findings/implications for academics/practitioners
March 28	11. Evaluating Quality Chapters 10, 11 Text	
April 4	12. Presentations and Synthesis	Group Presentation Research Project
April 11	NO CLASS	Projects Due

Required Reading List (access on York Libraries web-site)

Class #2

Starmer, A. J., Sectish, T. C., Simon, D. W., Keohane, C., McSweeney, M. E., Chung, E. Y., ... & Landrigan, C. P. (2013). Rates of medical errors and preventable adverse events among hospitalized children following implementation of a resident handoff bundle. *JAMA*, *310*(21), 2262-2270.

Turner, S., Higginson, J., Osborne, C. A., Thomas, R. E., Ramsay, A. I., & Fulop, N. J. (2014). Codifying knowledge to improve patient safety: a qualitative study of practice-based interventions. *Social science & medicine*, *113*, 169-176.

Class #3

Barbour, J. B., & Manly, J. N. (2016). Redefining Disaster Preparedness Institutional Contradictions and Praxis in Volunteer Responder Organizing. *Management Communication Quarterly*, 0893318916629101.

Class #4

Busby, J. S., & Iszatt-White, M. (2016). Rationalizing Violation: Ordered Accounts of Intentionality in the Breaking of Safety Rules. *Organization Studies*, *37*(1), 35-53.

Class #6

King, R. V., North, C. S., Larkin, G. L., Downs, D. L., Klein, K. R., Fowler, R. L., ... & Pepe, P. E. (2010). Attributes of effective disaster responders: focus group discussions with key emergency response leaders. *Disaster medicine and public health preparedness*, *4*(04), 332-338.

Class #7

Cornelissen, J. P., Mantere, S., & Vaara, E. (2014). The contraction of meaning: the combined effect of communication, emotions, and materiality on sensemaking in the Stockwell shooting. *Journal of Management Studies*, *51*(5), 699-736.

Class #8

Elmes, M., & Frame, B. (2008). Into hot air: A critical perspective on Everest. *Human Relations*, *61*(2), 213-241.

Class #9

Whittle, A., & Mueller, F. (2012). Bankers in the dock: Moral storytelling in action. *Human Relations*, *65*(1), 111-139.