

Qualitative Research Methods in Language and Literacy

Instructor Fredrik deBoer

Phone 860-555-1234

Office 123 University Hall

E-mail fdeboer@university.edu

Office Hours By request

Course LING 5xx

Text:

Designing Qualitative Research, 4th Edition, Catherine Marshall and Gretchen B. Rossman, Sage Publications.

The Colonization of Literacy Education: A Story of Reading in One Elementary School, J.L. Pennington, Peter Lang Publishing.

Description:

This graduate-level course concerns qualitative research methods in the language arts and sciences, from a practitioner's standpoint. That is, this course acts as a practical guide for developing researchers, and seeks to provide them with the skills necessary to undertake their own qualitative research. Additionally, this course will provide students with greater ability to read qualitative research critically and for meaning.

Goals:

To develop a strong base of knowledge in the history, theory, and politics of qualitative research;

To acquire a working understanding of popular techniques, methods, and analysis styles within qualitative research;

To gain comfort in using these methods in research in the pursuit of answers to specific research questions;

To practice the development of a research plan utilizing qualitative methods;

To write and workshop a research proposal for later use.

Assignments:

- *Article Presentation*. Each student will give a ~30 minute presentation of one of our research articles. This presentation will focus on methodology, providing a sympathetic take on what methodological choices the researcher made and suggesting possible revisions or expansions that future researchers might incorporate.
- *Midterm exam*. Near the halfway point of the semester, students will receive a take-home exam concerning the theory and research we have read so far in the semester. This exam will feature several short answer questions and a longer essay question. Essay answers will require citations and a references list. Students are expected to work on the midterm exam alone.
- *Research proposal*. As the purpose of this class is to prepare students to undertake qualitative research, the final project requires the production of a formal research proposal utilizing qualitative methods. This research proposal will define the problem the research is meant to address, locate that problem in a theoretical context, review the relevant literature concerning that problem, and detail data collection and analysis methods that will be employed

Grade Breakdown:

Class Participation: 20%

Article Presentation: 20%

Midterm Exam: 25%

Research Proposal: 35%

Readings:

- Cohler, B.J. (2008). Two lives, two times: Life-writing after Shoah. *Narrative Inquiry*, 18, 1-28.
- Darbyshire, P., MacDougall, C., & Schiller, W. (2005). Multiple methods in qualitative research with children: More insight or just more? *Qualitative Research*, 5 (4), 417-436.
- Freshwater, Helen. (2003). The allure of the archive. *Poetics Today*, 24 (4), 729-58.
- Guinier, Lani, Fine, Michelle, and Balin, Jane (1994). Becoming gentlemen: Women's experiences at one ivy league law school. *University of Pennsylvania Law Review*, 143 (1), 1-111
- Haswell, R. H. (2005). NCTE/CCCC's recent war on scholarship. *Written Communication*, 22(2), 198-223.
- Herndl, Carl G., and Nahrwold, Cynthia A. (2000). Research as social practice: A case study of research on technical and professional communication. *Written Communication*, 17 (2), 258-296.
- Hilgers, T. L., Hussey, E. L., & Stitt-Bergh, M. (1999). "As You're Writing, You Have these Epiphanies" What College Students Say about Writing and Learning in their Majors. *Written Communication*, 16(3), 317-353.
- Hurdley, R. (2007). Focal points: Framing material culture and visual data. *Qualitative Research*, 7(3), 355-374.
- Pruitt, L. P. (2004). The achievement (k)not: Whiteness and "black underachievement". *Off white: Readings on power, privilege, and resistance*, 235-244.
- Seymour, W. S. (2001). In the flesh or online? Exploring qualitative research. *Qualitative Research*, 1 (2), 147-168.
- Tjora, A. H. (2006). Writing small discoveries: An exploration of fresh observers' observations. *Qualitative Research*, 6(4), 429-451.

Week	Topic	Required Reading
One	Introductions, definitions, limitations	Syllabus
Two	Paradigms, paradigms, paradigms	<i>Designing</i> , pg *-*; Haswell
Three	Case studies	<i>Designing</i> , pg *-*; Herndl
Four	Interviews & Focus Groups	Pennington Intro, Chapter 1, Appendix I
Five	Ethnography	Pennington Chapter 2, 3, 4; Tjora
Six	Narrative Inquiry	<i>Designing</i> , pg *-*; Cohler
Seven	Race, Class, Gender	Guinier; Pruitt
Eight	*Midterm Exam*	Midterm
Nine	Critical and Feminist Approaches	<i>Designing</i> , pg *-*;
Ten	Data Collection, Online & Off	Freshwater; Seymour; Hurdley
Eleven	Rigor, Quality, and Value	<i>Designing</i> , pg *-*; Darbyshire;
Twelve	Ethics	<i>Designing</i> , pg *-*; University IRB Guidelines
Thirteen	Looking forward	Proposal presentations