

Qualitative Research for Public Health

FMPH 191

Spring 2019, 4 units

Tuesday & Thursday 2:00 – 3:20, Warren Lecture Hall 2113

Instructor:

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Office hours: Wednesdays 10am – 11am or by appointment

CRSF #310

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course provides an overview of the role of qualitative research methods in public health. The course will focus on qualitative research as it relates to formative program design, community-based participatory approaches, and as a tool for amplifying voices and elucidating both complex social-ecological processes and internal individual experiences. Throughout the term students will work in teams to design, conduct, analyze, and report a full qualitative study on a public health topic of their choosing.

PREREQUISITE: FMPH40

TEXTBOOK: Hunter, Hennink, and Bailey, *Qualitative Research Methods*

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of the course, you should be able to:

1. Describe how qualitative methods and epistemologies fit within the broader universe of public health evidence.
2. Assess a qualitative study for rigor using the criteria of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability.
3. Develop a research question appropriate to a qualitative research design
4. Design a qualitative research project with methods appropriate to the question.
5. Conduct a basic thematic analysis of qualitative data
6. Prepare a written report for a finished qualitative research project

CLASS POLICIES

This course is designed to be interactive. Students are expected to actively contribute and engage with the materials online, during class meetings, and in the course of their assignments. The following course policies are designed to facilitate participation and help all students engage as deeply as possible with the material. We will discuss and augment these policies at the beginning of our first session.

Attendance: Slides and course materials will be posted online, however group discussion during our time together is an important part of the learning process. As such, attendance is expected at every class. If you do have to miss a class please meet with a classmate to discuss what was covered in class that day and get copies of relevant notes or handouts.

Laptops: Laptops should only be used for note taking and accessing course materials. If laptop use becomes a problem they will no longer be allowed in class.

Writing and Proofreading: Clear and efficient written communication is an important part of the public health profession so the quality of your writing will play a major role in the grading of all written assignments. Papers with four or more gross grammatical or spelling errors will be lowered by five percentage points. Automated spelling and grammar checks, while useful, will not catch all errors. (For example, Microsoft Word has been known to correct variations on “etcetera” to “excreta.”). Help with writing is available from the UCSD writing hub (<http://commons.ucsd.edu/students/writing/index.html>). I also highly recommend Strunk and White’s The Elements of Style, available as a free pdf online.

Do you have a favorite dinosaur? Send me a picture by midnight April 3rd for 1 point of extra credit.

Disability: No student is required to reveal a disability to the instructor or classmates, however it is the policy of UCSD to make reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. All students with special requests or needs for accommodations should make this request as soon as possible.

Children in Class: All exclusively breastfeeding babies are welcome in class as often as is necessary. I also understand that unforeseen disruptions in childcare happen – older children are welcome if this does happen occasionally. I ask that children who are actively contagious stay home (no pink eye!) and that you bring quiet toys, games, or books to keep your child busy. Finally, I understand that often the largest barrier to completing your coursework as a caregiver is the tiredness many parents feel in the evening once children have *finally* gone to sleep. The struggles of balancing school, childcare and often another job are exhausting! I hope that you will feel comfortable disclosing your student-parent status to me. This is the first step in my being able to accommodate any special needs that arise. While I maintain the same high expectations for all student in my classes regardless of parenting status, I am happy to problem solve with you in a way that makes you feel supported as you strive for school-parenting balance. Thank you for the diversity you bring to our classroom!

Much of this course relies on group work. UCSD has special workspaces available for caregivers with small children. I encourage parents to make use of these spaces, and for group members of parents to be accommodating in their choice of meeting places: <https://students.ucsd.edu/well-being/wellness-resources/student-parents/study-rooms.html>

GRADING

Ideally, grades should be a means of communication between an instructor and a student. Below are grade breakdowns and what the instructor is generally trying to communicate with each grade:

Grade	Percent	What we are trying to say
A	94-100	The assignment is exemplary, the ideas are expressed well, and the quality of writing is suitable for publication.
A-	90-93	The assignment is well done, but not among the very best in the class. The student clearly has read and understood the assigned readings for the class, and has made insightful connections between concepts presented in different modules. The student has demonstrated skill in integrating different concepts presented in the course and applying them in the assignment.
B+	86-89	All parts of the assignment have been completed, and each question has been fully answered. The student has read and understood the assigned readings for the class, but could work more on making connections between different concepts, and integrating them into their arguments.
B	80-85	All parts of the assignment have been completed, and each question has been fully answered. Understanding of some of the concepts is incomplete, and connections between concepts are not made, or not made convincingly. Quality of writing could be improved.
C	70-79	Sources are not cited correctly. Lack of understanding of one or more key concepts. Quality of writing needs substantial improvement.
D or F	Below 70	Little evidence of effort invested in completing the assignment.

Requests for Grade Changes

All requests for grade changes must be made in writing within three days (72 hours) of receiving a grade. Requests must be well written, cogent arguments of 1 page or less explaining why the student does not feel the assigned grade is appropriate, what grade they do feel they earned, and why the preferred grade is more appropriate to the level of work that was submitted. The course instructor has final authority on all grade change requests and may require that the student redo a portion of the assignment to better reflect the grade the student feels they have earned.

ASSIGNMENTS

Qualitative research is best learned by doing. The whole class will choose a study topic together and we will set up peer review groups in week 1. While nearly all assignments will be individual, you will work with your peer review group for support and feedback throughout the term.

Self-reflection 1 (5%)

One page reflection about your previous exposure and conceptions of qualitative research, what you would like to personally contribute to the class, and what you hope to get from taking the class.

Self-reflection 2 (5%)

What you have learned so far in the class, how you think the concepts intersect with your own interests in public health, and what you would like to focus on moving forward.

Research question (5%)

You will work with your peer review group to choose and refine a research question, and justify why it is appropriate to qualitative methods. **Products:** 1) Draft research question and justification, 2) Peer review of your group members' research questions, 3) Final research question, justification, and reflection.

Ethics protocol (5%) A description of the methods you intend to use to answer your research question, the number of people you anticipate recruiting, plus potential ethical concerns and how you plan to address them.

In-depth Interview (10%)

You will work with your peer review group to design and refine an in-depth interview guide and conduct an in-depth interview for the class study. **Products:** 1) Draft field guide, 2) Peer review of your group members' field guides, 3) Interview transcript, expanded field notes, and self reflection

Second method (5%)

Individual or pair: A second in-depth interview, focus group discussion, or other method discussed in class.

Method Infographic (20%)

A visually appealing, shareable infographic that would help a researcher choose among several different standard qualitative methods to best meet their research question

Codebook (10%)

Group: A basic codebook (no more than 10 codes) developed from interviews, focus group, and any other method used.

In class presentation (10%)

Group: Present your study's research question, methods, and findings to the class. Class members will then have an opportunity to ask questions. This is a chance to celebrate and show off the hard work of the term and to get feedback before writing the final paper.

Final paper (20%)

A final written report in the style of a research manuscript. Examples will be shared in class three weeks prior to the due date.

Reading (5%)

A meme reaction to each day's reading denoting one of the following: (1) Something that surprised you, (2) A question you have for the class, (3) A new word or phrase you found interesting, (4) A question or conundrum that the reading raises related to the ongoing class study. Your reaction to the day's reading must be posted on knit by 10am the day of class.

SCHEDULE readings to be updated throughout the term

Week	Date	Topic	Reading	Due
1	April 2	Introduction to the course and one another		
	April 4	Overview of qualitative research	An introduction to qualitative research, Chapter 1: https://www.sagepub.com/sites/default/files/upm-binaries/34087_Chapter1.pdf	Self-reflection 1
2	April 9	Choosing a research question	<i>Qualitative research design: An interactive approach</i> , Chapter 2: Purposes: Why are you doing this study	
	April 11	Recruitment and sampling	Qualitative Research Methods, p. 83 – 91	Research question (10am)
3	April 16	In-depth interviews 1: Developing a field guide	Qualitative Research Methods, p.109 - 120	Field guide draft (10am)
	April 18	In-depth interviews 2: Conducting an interview	Qualitative Research Methods, p. 120-133	Ethics protocol (midnight)
4	April 23	Focus groups	Qualitative Research Methods, Chapter 7	
	April 25	Participatory methods	This American Life: Gossip	
5	April 30	Observation	Who stands where in a crowded elevator and why? Krulwich	In-depth interview (midnight)
	May 2	Article Critique 1	RATS checklist COREQ checklist Lincoln and Guba's evaluative criteria Allison Tong, Peter Sainsbury, Jonathan Craig, Consolidated criteria for reporting qualitative research (COREQ): a 32-item checklist for interviews and focus groups, International Journal for Quality in Health Care, Volume 19, Issue 6, December 2007, Pages 349–357,	
6	May 7	Reflexivity	Qualitative Research Methods, p. 19-23	Self-reflection 2 (midnight)
	May 9	Mixed Methods	TBD	Second method (midnight May 12)
7	May 14	Analysis	Analyzing Qualitative Data, Systematic Approaches. Chapter 4	
	May 16	Analysis	TBD	
8	May 21	Writing		Methods Infographic (midnight)

	May 23	Article critique 2		
9	May 28	Formative research	Winch, P. J., Doumbia, S., Kanté, M., Malé, A. D., Swedberg, E., Gilroy, K. E., & Sidibé, B. (2008). Differential community response to introduction of zinc for childhood diarrhea and combination therapy for malaria in southern Mali. <i>The Journal of nutrition</i> , 138(3), 642-645.	Codebook (midnight)
	May 30	Research ethics	https://thenewinquiry.com/black-life-annotated/ http://titsandsass.com/why-you-shouldnt-study-sex-work/	
10	June 4	Student choice		
	June 6	In-class presentations		
Final	June 11			Final paper (midnight)