

University of Toronto – Sociology
SOC 302 H1S
QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS
Winter 2015

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor: Salina Abji
Email address: salina.abji@mail.utoronto.ca
Course web site: Blackboard access via Portal

Lecture/Seminar: Fridays from 1:10pm – 3pm in SS 2111
Office hours: Wednesdays from 1:10pm – 2pm or via appointment
Office hours location: Room 225C, Sociology Department (725 Spadina Avenue)

Teaching Assistants: Rachael Carson rachael.carson@mail.utoronto.ca
Kusang Burgess kusang.burgess@mail.utoronto.ca

Tutorials: Fridays (see course schedule for specific dates)
Tutorial Group 1: 12:10pm – 1pm
Tutorial Group 2: 3:10pm – 4pm
Location: FE41, Sociology Department (725 Spadina Ave)

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

In this methodology course, we will open up the ‘backstage’ of doing qualitative sociological analysis. We will begin with an introduction to qualitative research, which situates this field within broader debates in sociology about (i) the purpose of sociological research, (ii) what constitutes ‘good’ research, and (iii) how to conduct research in an ethical manner.

In the second part of the course, we will trace these debates through our review of major methods and methodologies used by qualitative researchers. We will read contemporary examples of qualitative studies that apply distinct methodological approaches such as grounded theory, extended case method, and institutional ethnography. We will also examine the range of methods used by qualitative researchers, such as interviews, participant observation, discourse analysis, and community-based research.

In the final part of the course, you will conduct independent qualitative research that draws from key debates, methodologies, and methods discussed in the course. Through a series of workshops you will learn how to design a small-scale study, prepare for the field, and analyze data using coding and memo-writing techniques. You will also have the opportunity to present your findings in a poster presentation at the conclusion of the course.

Prerequisites: SOC200H1 and one SOC course at the 200+ level.

Exclusion: SOC204H1; SOCC23H3; SOC387H5

Note: Students without these prerequisites will be removed from the course at any time discovered and without notice.

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Goals and Learning Objectives

The ultimate goal of this course is that you learn how to critically analyze qualitative sociological work and how to conduct a small-scale qualitative research project.

By the end of this course, learners will be able to:

- Explain key debates in sociology about the purpose of social research, what constitutes ‘good’ research, and how to conduct research in an ethical manner
- Distinguish between different methodological approaches including grounded theory, extended case method, and institutional ethnography
- Discuss the merits and limitations of various data collection methods including interviewing, participant observation, discourse analysis, and community-based research
- Write effective research questions that can be answered through qualitative approaches
- Conduct literature reviews and design research including ethical considerations
- Gather and analyze data using methods and techniques taught in class
- Answer a research question in a research paper using primary data

A general objective of the course is that you write well – coherently and lucidly – in all assignments.

II. STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES AND EXPECTATIONS

Students are expected to attend all classes and to participate actively by completing assigned readings before lecture; engaging in in-class discussions and small group exercises; and keeping up to date on course information posted on Blackboard.

In all activities, students are to be respectful of fellow classmates, guest speakers, and teaching/administrative staff.

Classroom Etiquette: These are some basic rules that will help everybody have the best learning experience possible:

- **Laptop use:** Laptops are only to be used for note-taking. Other uses (e.g., emailing, web surfing) will result in the student being required to turn off the laptop, and to not bring it to future sessions of the course.
- **Turn off Cell phones/ pagers:** Please turn off all cell phones, pagers, and other electronic devices while in class. If this is a problem, please let the professor know before class so we can discuss strategies that enable you to be reachable.
- **Recordings:** Videotaping and recording lectures is strictly forbidden without written permission from the instructor.

Tutorials:

Students are strongly encouraged to attend tutorials offered throughout the term (see course schedule below for specific dates). The tutorials are designed to enhance your comprehension of the lecture material and readings, and to develop key skills required for successful completion of course assignments and tests. Participation in tutorials and lectures will count toward your final grade and will be based on written exercises completed in-class (10%). Full details will be provided in class.

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Email Policy:

I will do my best to respond to your email within two business days (i.e. 48 hours, not including weekends and holidays).

Emails that do not follow these guidelines will not receive a response: Your use of an official U of T address is required. Please include the course code (e.g. SOC302) in the subject line and your full name and student number in your message. Please do not send a repeat email (e.g. “did you get my email?”).

In general, please treat emails as you would any other professional communication: you should be respectful in the way you address the instructor and the TA. Email is most suitable for questions that are clear, concise, and easily answerable; if you are confused about the course material or need to discuss a concept, I strongly encourage you to instead attend office hours or make an appointment. Please read the syllabus carefully before asking a general question about the course.

Office Hours:

I strongly encourage all students to take advantage of office hours. Unless otherwise noted, office hours will be held each **Wednesday from 1:10pm – 2pm in Room 225C** of the Sociology Department (725 Spadina) or by appointment.

III. EVALUATION COMPONENTS

| <u>Type</u> | <u>Date(s) Due</u> | <u>Weight</u> |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------|---------------|
| Independent Research Project: | | |
| ▪ Topic | Jan 23 | 5% |
| ▪ Reflection | Jan 30 | 10% |
| ▪ Proposal | Feb 13 | 15% |
| ▪ Data Analysis | March 13 | 5% Pass/Fail |
| ▪ Final Paper | March 27 | 30% |
| ▪ Poster Presentation | March 27 | 5% Pass/Fail |
| Final Exam | Exam Period | 20% |
| Participation | Multiple (See schedule) | 10% |

Grading Descriptions:

Written Assignments: The major assignment for this course is your independent research project. There are six (6) components of the project that you will hand in at different stages of the research process (see deadlines above). These assignments are cumulative, in that you are expected to read and incorporate feedback on your previous assignments into future assignments, as applicable.

Details for these assignments will be provided in class. Assignments must be completed and submitted via Blackboard *before* class on the due date (dates are specified above and in the course schedule). A printed copy must be submitted *at the beginning* of class on the due date. Note: for more details on accommodation/late policies, please see the Procedures and Rules section below.

Final Exam: There will be a final exam worth 20% of your final grade during the final exam period (date to be announced). For more details on make-up exams, please see the Procedures and Rules section below.

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Participation: Active participation in lectures and tutorials is a significant component and expectation of this course and is therefore worth 10% of your overall grade. Your participation grade will be based on assigned written exercises (each worth 1%) to be completed during allotted time in-class and submitted at the end of class (i.e. as your ‘ticket out the door’) on the due dates listed in the course schedule.

Students who do not attend lecture or tutorial will receive an automatic grade of zero for each exercise missed. There is no late policy available for this component of the course. For more details on accommodations, please see the Procedures and Rules section below.

Handing in Assignments: All assignments must be handed to the instructor in printed copy in class and electronically via Blackboard. The instructor and TA will NOT accept electronic copies of assignments via email. Do not put submissions under the office door of the instructor. The instructor is not responsible for student assignments submitted in this way. Students must always keep an extra hard copy of their assignment for their own records. For instructions on how to upload assignments to BlackBoard, please see the IT services web-site at: <http://www.portalinfo.utoronto.ca/content/information-students>

REQUIRED READINGS

The following required reading is available at the UofT bookstore or via library reserve at Robarts:

- Kristin G. Esterberg (2002). *Qualitative Methods in Social Research*, McGraw-Hill.

In addition, course readings marked with “**BB**” will be uploaded on Blackboard under the “Content” tab, in the folder called “Course Readings”.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Note: Every attempt will be made to follow this schedule, but it is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor.

PART I: INTRODUCTION TO QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

Jan 9 Lecture: Introduction to the Course

Jan 16 Lecture: Qualitative Research Paradigms

Required Readings:

- **Esterberg Chapter 1:** What is social research?
- **Esterberg Chapter 2:** Strategies for beginning research

PARTICIPATION: 1%

Jan 23 Lecture: Addressing Ethics

Required Readings:

- **Smith, Linda Tuhiwai. 1999.** “Introduction” in *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*. London: Zed Books Ltd., pp. 1-18. [BB]
- **Esterberg Chapter 3:** Ethical Issues

RESEARCH TOPIC DUE: 5%

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Jan 23 Tutorial 1: Preparing your reflection assignment

PARTICIPATION: 1%

PART II: METHODS & METHODOLOGIES

Jan 30 Lecture: Grounded Theory (methodology) and Discourse Analysis (method)

Required Readings:

- **Charmaz, Kathy. 2004.** "Grounded Theory" in *Approaches to Qualitative Research: A Reader on Theory and Practice*, edited by Sharlene Nagy Hesse-Biber and Patricia Leavy. New York: Oxford University Press, pp. 496-521 [BB]
- **Phillips, N. and C. Hardy. 2002.** "What Is Discourse Analysis?" in N. Phillips, & C. Hardy (eds.), *Discourse Analysis*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc. pp. 2-18. [Link]
- **Dworkin, Shari L., and Faye Linda Wachs. 2004.** "'Getting Your Body Back' Postindustrial Fit Motherhood in Shape Fit Pregnancy Magazine." *Gender & Society* 18.5: 610-624. [BB]

REFLECTION PAPER DUE: 10%

Jan 30 Tutorial 2: Preparing your Research Proposal

PARTICIPATION: 1%

Feb 6 Lecture: Extended case method (methodology) and Interviews (method)

Required Readings:

- **Burawoy, Michael. 1998.** "The Extended Case Method" *Sociological Theory*, 16(1), pp. 4-33. [Link]
- **Haney, Lynne. 1996.** "Homeboys, babies, men in suits: The state and the reproduction of male dominance". *American Sociological Review*, 61(5), p. 759-778 [Link]
- **Esterberg Chapter 5:** Interviews

PARTICIPATION: 1%

Feb 6 Tutorial 3: Preparing your Research Proposal

PARTICIPATION: 1%

Feb 13 Lecture: Institutional Ethnography (methodology) and Observation (method)

Required Readings:

- **DeVault, Marjorie and Liza McCoy. 2004.** "Institutional Ethnography: Using Interviews to Investigate Ruling Relations" in *Critical Strategies for Social Research*. William K. Carroll (ed). Canadian Scholars' Press: pp. 191-205. [BB]
- **Ahmed, Sara. 2012.** *On being included: Racism and diversity in institutional life*. Duke University Press. Read selected excerpts announced in class [Link]

RESEARCH PROPOSAL DUE: 15%

Feb 20 Reading Week: no lectures or tutorials

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PART III: DOING QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

Feb 27 Lecture: Community-based Research (method) and Preparing for the field (workshop)

Required Readings:

- **Access Alliance Multicultural Health and Community Services. 2011.** *Community-Based Research Toolkit: Resource for Doing Research with Community for Social Change*. Toronto: Access Alliance Multicultural Health and Community Services [BB]
- **Sample projects** posted on BB

PARTICIPATION: 1%

Feb 27 Tutorial 4: Fieldwork demonstration and practice

PARTICIPATION: 1%

Mar 6 Lecture: Making sense of your data

Required Readings:

- **Esterberg Chapter 8**: Making sense of data
- **Williams, Christine L. 1992.** “The Glass Escalator: Hidden Advantages for Men in the ‘Female’ Professions” *Social Problems*. 39(3), pp. 253-267. [[Link](#)]
- **Wingfield, Adia. 2009.** “Racializing the Glass Escalator: Reconsidering Men’s Experiences in Women’s Work”. *Gender & Society*, 23(1), pp. 5-26. [[Link](#)]

PARTICIPATION: 1%

Mar 6 Tutorial 5: Preparing your data for analysis

PARTICIPATION: 1%

Mar 13 Lecture: Data analysis (workshop)

DATA ANALYSIS DUE: 5% (complete in-class)

Mar 20 Lecture: Review for final exam

No required readings

Mar 20 Tutorial 6: Creating your poster presentation

PARTICIPATION: 1% (Bonus)

Mar 27 Lecture: Conclusion & Presentations

FINAL RESEARCH PAPER DUE: 30%

POSTER PRESENTATION DUE: 5%

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IV. PROCEDURES AND RULES

1. Missed tests and assignments

Accommodation provision: In general, for missed tests or assignments we follow University policy about accommodation for the following three reasons:

- Illness, or
- Religious observances (i.e., holy days), or <http://www.viceprovoststudents.utoronto.ca/publicationsandpolicies/guidelines/religiousobservances.htm>
- Other unplanned circumstances entirely beyond the student’s control (e.g., a court subpoena for which you have no option except to show up, a funeral).

Reasons such as “too much work”, technology failure, weddings, or not adding the class in time, are not compelling reasons. For assignments, you are expected to plan ahead.

Documentation: In all cases, appropriate supporting documentation is required (e.g., University of Toronto Verification of Illness or Injury form available at:

<http://www.illnessverification.utoronto.ca/>, a letter from the college registrar in cases of personal or family crisis, a note from a religious official concerning a holy day, a death certificate, or an accident report). The documentation must be placed in a sealed envelope, addressed to the instructor, and submitted with your work.

1a. Missed exams

Students who miss the exam will be assigned a mark of zero for that exam unless they satisfy the following conditions:

- Only students who miss an exam for reasons beyond their control (e.g. illness or an accident – see above) may request special consideration.
- **Within three days** of the missed exam, students who wish to write the make-up exam must email the instructor a written request for special consideration. A request should be accompanied by contact information (the student’s telephone number and email address) so the date, time and place of the make-up exam can be communicated to the student.
- At the make-up exam a student must submit **proper documentation from a physician or college registrar** (see above). The documentation **must be placed in a sealed envelope, addressed to the instructor.**
- In the extraordinary and unlikely event that a student misses both the exam and the make-up exam, for a reason beyond their control, there will not be a third opportunity to write the exam. Instead, the student’s final grade will be re-weighted based on other assignments in the course.

1b. Late assignments

- You are expected to complete all assignments on time.
- An assignment is considered late if it is not submitted by the due date on the syllabus.
- In order NOT to be considered late, be sure to submit a printed copy of the assignment at the beginning of class. In addition, all assignments should be uploaded on Blackboard before coming to the class.
- You are expected to keep a back-up, hard copy of your assignment in case it is lost.

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Penalty for late assignments:

- Late assignments will be penalized 5 points on a 100 point scale for each 24 hour period the assignment is late (assignments handed in after class has started will be considered 1 day late). **Under no circumstances will assignments be accepted that are more than five days late.**
- The penalty will run from the moment class starts on the due date to the day it is submitted electronically via Blackboard.
- The penalty period includes weekends and holidays.
- You are still required to submit a hard copy (note that the electronic copy must be identical to any hard copy submitted). Use the dropbox in Room 225 at 725 Spadina Avenue (open 9am-5:00 pm Mon-Fri only), put a date/time stamp on the top page of your paper, put it into the drop box for 300-level courses, then **notify your TA that your paper is there.**

If a student anticipates missing an assignment deadline due to uncontrollable circumstances, he or she should contact the instructor at least 7 days in advance, explain the situation, and request accommodation. A student may be required to submit supporting documentation at the discretion of the instructor. Please note that accommodation will be provided only for those students with compelling reasons. Reasons such as “too much work”, losing a computer file, and technology failure are not compelling reasons. You are expected to plan ahead and leave some extra time in case of problems.

Students who cannot turn in the assignment on time, due to a reason *beyond their control* (e.g. illness) may request special consideration by presenting the documentation to the Instructor.

2. Grade Appeals

The instructor and TA take the marking of assignments very seriously, and will work diligently to be fair, consistent, and accurate. Nonetheless, mistakes and oversights occasionally happen. If you believe that to be the case, you must adhere to the following procedures:

If it is a mathematical error (e.g., grades on individual components not tallied up correctly) the remedy is easy and can be taken care of expeditiously. Simply alert the professor to the error.

In the case of more substantive appeals, you must:

1. Wait at least 24 hours after receiving your mark.
2. Carefully re-read your assignment, all assignment guidelines and marking schemes, all of the grader’s comments, and so forth.
3. Please note that academic scholarship is *merit-based*, *not need-based*. The fact that you feel you want or need a higher grade is not sufficient. You must have good reason to believe you in fact *earned* a higher grade than you were awarded. **All appeals must be received within 30 days of receiving your mark.**

If you wish to appeal, you should submit a written explanation of why you think your mark should be altered to the professor. Please note statements such as “I need a higher grade to apply to X” are not compelling. Also, please note that upon re-grade your mark may stay the same or go up (I will not mark down). Attach your written explanation to your original assignment, including all of the original comments. Submit a hardcopy of the package to the instructor right after class or during office hours.

You will receive a response in person about your re-grade within three weeks of handing in your appeal. **Please note all decisions are final.**

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V. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Academic integrity is essential to the pursuit of learning and scholarship in a university, and to ensuring that a degree from the University of Toronto is a strong signal of each student's individual academic achievement. As a result, the University treats cases of cheating and plagiarism very seriously. The University of Toronto's Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters (www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm) outlines the behaviours that constitute academic dishonesty and the processes for addressing academic offences. Potential offences include, but are not limited to:

In papers and assignments:

- Using someone else's ideas or words without appropriate acknowledgement.
- Submitting your own work in more than one course without the permission of the instructor.
- Making up sources or facts.
- Obtaining or providing unauthorized assistance on any assignment.

On tests and exams:

- Using or possessing unauthorized aids.
- Looking at someone else's answers during an exam or test.
- Misrepresenting your identity.

In academic work:

- Falsifying institutional documents or grades.
- Falsifying or altering any documentation required by the University, including (but not limited to) doctor's notes.

All suspected cases of academic dishonesty will be investigated following procedures outlined in the Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters. If you have questions or concerns about what constitutes appropriate academic behaviour or appropriate research and citation methods, you are expected to seek out additional information on academic integrity from your instructor or from other institutional resources (see www.utoronto.ca/academicintegrity/resourcesforstudents.html).

You are also expected to have read and understood the on-line document "How Not to Plagiarize" (<http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice/using-sources/how-not-to-plagiarize>)

VI. RESOURCES FOR STUDENT LEARNING

Accessibility services: The University provides academic accommodations for students with disabilities in accordance with the terms of the Ontario Human Rights Code. This occurs through a collaborative process that acknowledges a collective obligation to develop an accessible learning environment that both meets the needs of students and preserves the essential academic requirements of the University's courses and programs.

If you require accommodations or have any accessibility concerns, please visit <http://studentlife.utoronto.ca/accessibility> as soon as possible.

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Academic Success Centre (asc.utoronto.ca): Can't figure out how to organize your time, or meet deadlines, or stay motivated? Stress and overload hitting you at mid-term, or exam time, or all the time? Then the counselling and support at the **ASC** are what you need. This service provides a mix of group and individual instruction, and also a drop-in centre for personal help when you need it.

U of T Library system (www.library.utoronto.ca/home): Besides a world of journal articles, millions of books, and excellent computer labs and study space, the amazing U of T Libraries offer classes and individual help on finding the research sources you need. Librarians will show you how to find and use online material efficiently, and can help you decide which sources are suitable for specific projects. Don't be shy about asking! Get to know your college libraries as well as the central ones.

Writing Resources

- **Writing Centres (www.writing.utoronto.ca/writing-centres/centres/arts-and-science).** Each college has a writing centre, where specialized instructors are available to work with you individually as you plan, draft, and revise your writing in any subject area. Make appointments early if you can, using the online booking system (<https://awc2.wdw.utoronto.ca/awc-login/>); there's a wait list function too.
- **Writing Plus** group sessions (www.writing.utoronto.ca/news/writing-plus) demonstrate university expectations for written work in many genres and offer sensible advice to get you past common pitfalls. Choose the sessions and times that suit you and enjoy lively talks by experts. No registration is needed.
- **Online Advice Files (www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice)** on U of T's popular Writing website give university-level answers to questions like how to read critically, how to give references to your research sources, and how to organize a paper without relying on unsuitable high-school formulas. The site also covers practical topics like vocabulary building and note-taking, and it recommends relevant handbooks and other online resources.
- **English Language Learning (www.artsci.utoronto.ca/current/undergraduate/ell)** offers guided practice to all Arts and Science students on the kinds of reading, writing and speaking you need to do in your undergraduate courses. All activities are free of charge.