

University of Toronto—Sociology
Summer 2017
SOC204H1F

Introduction to Qualitative Methods in Sociology

Tues and Thurs 10:00am - 1:00pm
Location: SS 562

Instructor Information:

Instructor: Maiolino, Elise

Office Location: Department of Sociology, 725 Spadina Ave. Room: 391

Email Address: elise.maiolino@mail.utoronto.ca

Office Hours: Tuesday 1-3pm or by appointment

Blackboard/Course website: Access via U of T Portal: <http://portal.utoronto.ca>

Teaching Assistant: Cinthya Guzman

Office Hours: Monday, May 22nd, Monday, May 29th and Monday June 5th – 10:00 – 11:00

Department of Sociology, 725 Spadina Avenue, Room 225E

Course Description:

This course provides an introduction to the methods and issues of qualitative research in sociology. It explores theoretical debates and methods for data collection and analysis, and the personal and ethical dilemmas related to qualitative research.

In this course, we will discuss the craft of qualitative research and investigate the value of qualitative research for sociologists. We will probe the meaning of *good* qualitative research and raise questions about conducting research in an ethical manner. Students will read and analyze examples of qualitative studies, considering the possibilities and limits of common methods such as interviews, ethnography, content and discourse analysis, and focus groups.

This course prioritizes *learning by doing*. Students will gain hands-on experience conducting qualitative research. Through in-class exercises students will learn how to develop an interview guide, how to fill out an ethics protocol, the basics of coding and memo writing, how to prepare for the field, and how to use qualitative analysis software. Through the larger assignments, students will have the opportunity to do their own research, to see what it feels like to conduct an interview and to be interviewed, and to go out and collect their own ethnographic data. Finally, students will engage in sociological sensemaking about the data they collect.

Prerequisite: 1.0 SOC FCE at the 100+ level.

The Department of Sociology does not waive prerequisites. Students without this will be removed at any time discovered and without notice.

Exclusion: SOC302H1; SOCC23H3; SOC387H5

Goals and Learning Outcomes:

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

- Critically read, analyze, and write about qualitative sociological work
- Identify key debates in sociology about research and qualitative methods/methodologies
- Explain the benefits and limitations of approaches to data collection and analysis in qualitative research
- Formulate a qualitative research question
- Think innovatively and creatively about the places data is found
- Collect and analyze data using the qualitative methods taught in class
- Engage in sensemaking by writing about the themes and patterns within data

Course Materials:

All course reading material can be found on Blackboard. Students are expected to read the readings prior to class and be prepared to engage in class discussions about the week's reading.

Evaluation Components and Grading Policies:

1. In-Class Exercises (Due dates outlined below)	(30%)
2. Interview Practicum Assignment (Due: June 6)	(25%)
3. Fieldnotes Assignment (Due: June 15)	(25%)
4. Final Paper (Due: June 22)	(20%)
Total: 100%	

Detailed guidelines for the writing assignments briefly described below will be posted on Blackboard. Students are expected to check Blackboard for announcements, readings, grades, and assignment guidelines on a regular basis. **Assignments must be completed and submitted via Blackboard before class on the due date.**

In-Class Exercises (30%):

Throughout the term, there will be five in-class writing exercises. These exercises will correspond to the topic covered in the course readings and lecture for that day. Following the lecture portion of the class, students will be given an assignment and asked to complete the task in class. This will often involve some level of group work, followed by independent critical reflection and analysis. With the exception of one assignment, students will be asked to submit their completed work at the end of the class. Therefore, class attendance is imperative. For the Ethics Assignment, students will begin the work in class and will then be given one week to submit the assignment online.

Assignment:	Class Date:	Due Date:
Reflexivity Assignment (5%)	May 18, 2017	Due: May 18, 2017
Ethics Assignment (10%)	May 23, 2017	Due: May 30, 2017
Discourse Analysis Assignment (5%)	June 13, 2017	Due: June 13, 2017

Focus Group Assignment (5%)	June 15, 2017	Due: June 15, 2017
Qualitative Analysis Software Assignment (5%)	June 20, 2017	Due: June 20, 2017

Interview Practicum Assignment (25%)

What is it like to conduct an interview? How does it feel to be interviewed? On May 30, 2017 you will participate in an interview practicum. Each student will be matched with another student in the class and will take on the role of interviewer and then of interviewee. Students will engage in conversations about how they came to be university students. Interviews will last 25-30 minutes. Students will develop an interview guide in class on May 25. Students will then conduct interviews during the practicum class. During the interviews, students will record and take notes. Following the interview practicum, students will transcribe the interview in which they were the interviewer. Finally, students will write an interview reflection paper (2 pages, double-spaced, 12point font) that also incorporates course material (2 readings). Students will submit both the final interview transcript and the reflection on blackboard (Due: June 6).

Assignment:	Class Date:	Due Date:
Interview Guide	May 25, 2017	Due: May 25, 2017
Interview Transcript	May 30, 2017	Due: June 6, 2017
Interview Reflection	May 30, 2017	Due: June 6, 2017

Fieldnotes Assignment (25%)

In this assignment, you will put on your ethnographic hat. You will engage in participant observation, note taking, and analysis in a public space of your choosing. You will be asked to conduct 2 hours of observation (data collection). It is recommended that you conduct your observation prior to June 8. You will then write a set of ethnographic fieldnotes based on your observations and jottings. Fieldnotes will then be coded and you will be asked to write 2 memos on the data. Coded fieldnotes and memos should be submitted as one document on blackboard (Due June 15).

Assignment:	Due Date:
Data Collection (5%)	Due: June 8, 2017
Fieldnotes (10%)	Due: June 15, 2017
Coding (5%)	Due: June 15, 2017

Memo (5%)	Due: June 15, 2017
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Final Paper (20%) (Due: June 22)

In this paper, you will give sociological sensemaking a try! You will build off of the work completed in your fieldnotes assignment. You will write a paper (5 pages, double spaced, 12 point font) based on the data you collected in the field. This paper will: introduce a research question; provide examples of two academic sources that have explored your question; identify and present two themes (and/or maybe concepts); integrate fieldnotes examples; and conclude with a reflection on the research and what you might want to do next, if you were given the opportunity to conduct further research.

Class Format:

Each class will consist of a lecture component in which the readings are discussed in a larger framework. In addition, there will be small group exercises and in-class discussions and assignments on the course material.

Accessibility:

Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. In particular, if you have a disability/health consideration that may require accommodations, please feel free to approach me and/or Accessibility Services at (416) 978 8060; accessibility.utoronto.ca as soon as possible. You may also visit <http://studentlife.utoronto.ca/accessibility> as soon as possible. Please let me know if I can make the course more accessible for you.

Attendance and Participation:

Full attendance for this course is crucial. Each week involves some form of in-class assignment that can only be completed in class. In extenuating circumstances, listed in the procedure and rule section of the syllabus, an alternative assignment may be possible. Your enthusiastic participation is encouraged.

Classroom Etiquette:

- Students are expected to arrive on time, return from breaks on time, and stay for the entirety of the class.
- Laptops should be used for notes only. Other uses (e.g., emailing, web surfing) will result in the student being required to turn off the laptop. That same student will not be allowed to bring their laptop to future classes.
- **Videotaping, photographing, and recording lectures is strictly forbidden without written permission from the instructor.**
- Please turn off cell phones and other electronic devices while in class. If this is not possible, please discuss with the instructor.
- Lecture slides will be posted on Blackboard following the class.

Course Schedule:

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

Day 1: May 16**Introduction**

Berger, Peter. 1963. *Invitation to Sociology: A Humanistic Perspective*. New York: Anchor Books. Chapter 1: "Sociology as an individual pastime".

Berg, Bruce. 2009. *Qualitative Research Methods for the Social Sciences*. MA: Pearson Education. Excerpts from Chapter 1: "Introduction".

Day 2: May 18***In-class Reflexivity Assignment (5%)*****The Craft of Qualitative Research**

Hesse-Biber, Sharlene and Patricia Leavy. 2006. *The Practice of Qualitative Research*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications. Chapter 1: "The craft of qualitative research: A holistic approach".

Day 3: May 23***In-class Ethics Assignment*****Access and Ethics**

Thorne, Barrie. 1980. "You still takin' notes?" Fieldwork and problems of informed consent." *Social Problems* 27: 284-297.

Hesse-Biber, Sharlene and Patricia Leavy. 2006. *The Practice of Qualitative Research*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications. Chapter 3: "The Ethics of Social Research".

Day 4: May 25***In-class Interview Guide (5%)*****Interviews**

Twine, France Winddance. 2004. "A White Side of Black Britain: The Concept of Racial Literacy." *Ethnic and Racial Studies*. 27(6):878-907.

Lives and Legacies Website: <http://www.utsc.utoronto.ca/~pchsiung/LAL/>

Day 5: May 30***Ethics Assignment Due (5%)*****Interview Practicum**

Poland, Blake, and Ann Pederson. 1998. "Reading between the lines: Interpreting silences in qualitative research." *Qualitative inquiry* 4(2):293-312.

Day 6: June 1**Ethnographic Research I**

Emerson, Robert M., Rachel I. Fretz and Linda L. Shaw. 1995. *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Chapter 1: "Fieldnotes in Ethnographic Research." Chapter 2: "In the Field: Participating, Observing, and Jotting Notes."

Whyte, William Foote. 1993 [1943]. *Street Corner Society: The Social Structure of an Italian Slum*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Excerpts from Introduction and Chapter 1.

Day 7: June 6***Interview Practicum Assignment Due (20%)*****Ethnographic Research II**

Emerson, Robert M., Rachel I. Fretz and Linda L. Shaw. 1995. *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Chapter 3: "Writing Up Fieldnotes 1: From Field to Desk".

Rivers-Moore, Megan. 2016. *Gringo Gulch: Sex, Tourism, and Social Mobility in Costa Rica*. University of Chicago Press. Chapter 4: "Motherhood, Consumption and the Purchase of Respectability."

Day 8: June 8**Coding and Sensemaking**

Hesse-Biber, Sharlene and Patricia Leavy. 2006. *The Practice of Qualitative Research*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications. Chapter 10: "Analysis and Interpretation of Qualitative Data."

Corbin, Juliet M., and Anselm Strauss. 1990. "Grounded theory research: Procedures, canons, and evaluative criteria." *Qualitative sociology* 13(1): 3-21."

Lives and Legacies Website: <http://www.utsct.utoronto.ca/~pchsiung/LAL/>

Day 9: June 13***In-Class Discourse Analysis Assignment (5%)*****Content Analysis and Discourse Analysis**

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.

Maiolino, Elise. 2015. "Political Pugilists: Recuperative Gender Strategies in Canadian Electoral Politics." *Canadian Review of Sociology* 52(2):115-133.

Day 10: June 15

Fieldnotes Assignment Due (25%)

In-Class Focus Group Assignment (5%)

Focus Groups

Taylor, Judith, Josée Johnston and Krista Whitehead. 2016. "A Corporation in Feminist Clothing? Young Women Discuss the Dove "Real Beauty" Campaign." *Critical Sociology* 42(1):123-144.

Smithson, Janet. 2000. "Using and analysing focus groups: Limitations and possibilities." *International Journal of Social Research Methodology* 3(2):103-119.

Day 11: June 20

In-Class Qualitative Analysis Software Assignment (5%)

Qualitative Analysis Software

Hesse-Biber, S. and Croft C. 2008. User-centered Perspectives on Qualitative Data Analysis Software: Emergent technologies and Future Trends. In Hesse-Biber, S. and Leavy P. (Eds) *Handbook of Emergent Methods* (p. 655-673).

Berg, Bruce. 2009. *Qualitative Research Methods for the Social Sciences*. MA: Pearson Education. Excerpts from Chapter 11: "Computers and Qualitative Analysis"

Day 12: June 22

Final Paper Due (20%)

Data Everywhere

Carney, Nikita. 2016. "All Lives Matter, but so Does Race: Black Lives Matter and the Evolving Role of Social Media." *Humanity & Society* 40(2):180-199.

Jerolmack, Colin. 2013. *The Global Pigeon*. University of Chicago Press. Chapter 1: Experiencing the City through the Quintessential Urban Bird.

Procedures and Rules:

Missed Assignments:

Accommodation provision: In general, for missed tests or assignments, the Sociology

Department follows University of Toronto 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).

Timing: Requests for accommodation must be made within 3 days of the missed assignment.

Documentation from your Physician or College Registrar:

If you miss an assignment deadline, do not contact the instructor or a TA unless you have followed the steps described here. Telling the professor or TA why you missed a deadline will not be considered.

In case of illness, you must supply a duly completed Verification of Student Illness or Injury form (available at www.illnessverification.utoronto.ca). A doctor's note is not acceptable. The form must be placed in a sealed envelope, addressed to the instructor, and submitted with your work at class or to your instructor during their office hours.

If a personal or family crisis prevents you from meeting a deadline, you must get a letter from your college registrar (it is a good idea anyway to advise your college registrar if a crisis is interfering with your studies). The letter must be placed in a sealed envelope, addressed to the instructor, and submitted with your work at class or to your TA during their office hours.

Late Assignments:

No extensions will be provided. You are expected to complete assignments on time. Late papers will be docked **5% each day** beyond the due date. No late assignments are accepted 7 days after the due date.

In order not to be considered late, assignments must be submitted electronically by the due date on Blackboard (prior to the beginning of class). In-class assignments must be submitted in class. You are expected to keep a back-up, hard copy of your assignment in case it is lost. Students who cannot turn in the assignment on time due to a reason beyond their control (e.g. illness, death, accident) may request special consideration by presenting the appropriate documentation to the instructor.

The penalty will run from the day the assignment was due until the day it is submitted electronically via Blackboard. The penalty period does include weekends and holidays. Late assignments should only be submitted on Blackboard. Hard copies should NOT be submitted to the instructor, the department office staff, or other instructors and NOT by email.

Grade Appeals:

The instructor and teaching assistant 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 rules: If it is a mathematical error simply alert the instructor of 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 and the grader's comments.
3. You have 7 days after receiving a mark to appeal it.

If you wish to appeal:

- A. You must submit to the instructor a written explanation of why you think your mark should be altered. 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 go down, stay the same, or go up.
- B. Attach to your written explanation your original assignment, including all of the original comments. Submit a hardcopy of the package to the instructor during office hours or in class.

Electronic Communication:

Email communication is rapid, convenient, and efficient—you are encouraged to use it to enhance your learning and experience in the course. With that said, it is essential that you follow a few rules:

- Assignments will not be accepted via email. See above for how to submit them.
- All course communication should be conducted through Blackboard or your utoronto account.
- All emails must include the course code (e.g., SOC 204) in the subject line.
- All emails should be signed with the student's full name and student number.
- Emails from students will generally be answered within 48 hours of receipt.
- Treat emails as you would any other professional communication.
- Emails that ask questions that are answered in the course syllabus or website (e.g., “how much is assignment X worth”) will not receive a response.
- All general questions about the course that are NOT addressed on the syllabus and course website should be emailed to the instructor. The TA will not respond to emails.

Emails that do not follow these guidelines will not receive a response.

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism:

Copying, plagiarizing, falsifying medical certificates, or other forms of academic misconduct will not be tolerated. Any student caught engaging in such activities will be referred to the Dean's office for adjudication and punishment. Any student abetting or otherwise assisting in such misconduct will also be subject to academic penalties.

By enrolling in this course, students agree to abide by the university's rules regarding academic

conduct, as outlined in the Calendar.

You are 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>). You are expected to be familiar with the “Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters” (www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm) and Code of Student Conduct (<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/studentc.htm>) which spell out your rights, your duties and provide all the details on grading regulations and academic offences at the University of Toronto.

Cheating and misrepresentation will not be tolerated. Students who commit an academic offence face serious penalties. Avoid plagiarism by citing properly: practices acceptable in high school may prove unacceptable in university. Know where you stand by reading the “Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters” in the Calendar of the Faculty of Arts and Science.

Potential offences include, but are not limited to:

In papers and assignments:

- Using someone else’s ideas or words without appropriate acknowledgement.
- Copying material word-for-word from a source (including lecture and study group notes) and not placing the words within quotation marks.
- Submitting your own work in more than one course without the permission of the instructor.
- Making up sources or facts.
- Including references to sources that you did not use.
- Obtaining or providing unauthorized assistance on any assignment including:
 - working in groups on assignments that are supposed to be individual work;
 - having someone rewrite or add material to your work while “editing”.
 - Lending your work to a classmate who submits it as his/her own without your permission.

Misrepresentation:

- Falsifying or altering any documentation required by the University, including doctor’s notes.
- Falsifying institutional documents or grades.

To remind you of these expectations, and help you avoid accidental offences, I will ask you to include a signed Academic Integrity Checklist with your first assignment. If you do not include the statement, your work will not be graded. The check-list will be posted on blackboard.

The University of Toronto treats cases of academic misconduct very seriously. All suspected cases of academic dishonesty will be investigated following the procedures outlined in the Code. The consequences for academic misconduct can be severe, including a failure in the course and a notation on your transcript. If you have any questions about what is or is not permitted in this course, please do not hesitate to contact me. If you have questions about appropriate research and citation methods, seek out additional information from me, or from other available campus

resources like the U of T Writing Website. If you are experiencing personal challenges that are having an impact on your academic work, please speak to me or seek the advice of your college registrar.