

George Mason University  
College of Education and Human Development  
Graduate School of Education

**EDRS 822 - ADVANCED APPLICATIONS OF QUALITATIVE METHODS**  
**3 credits, Spring 2014**  
**Tuesdays, 4:30-7:10 pm, Thompson Hall 1010**

**PROFESSOR**

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**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

- A. Prerequisite(s):** EDRS 810 and 812 or equivalent coursework.
- B. University catalog course description:** Advanced seminar devoted to study of current topics in qualitative research. Deals with cutting-edge information on selected advanced topics in qualitative research, and provides opportunities to apply new skills and knowledge to projects related to students' interests.
- C. Expanded course description:**

*Geometric patterns are seen as a cornerstone of Islamic decoration, mainly due to their non-representational quality and associations with balance and order. Circles, squares, stars and multisided polygons are duplicated, interlaced, and arranged in intricate combinations to form highly complex patterns... All Islamic pattern is based on the idea that what we see is always and only a part of a whole that extends to infinity.*

Museum of Islamic Art, Doha, Qatar

What does this quote on Islamic Art have to do with Advanced Qualitative Research Methods? One could ask what does not? Culture, patterns, analysis, reflexivity and interpretation are common to both and increasingly research methods seek to better understand the complexities that are inherent to the context, culture, and question.

What are the theoretical and practical implications that undergird approaches to qualitative methodology? What are the innate meanings, hidden challenges, and critical juxtapositions that inform the ways in which we “do” research? This course is an advanced seminar that will try to answer these questions and focus on current and emerging issues in qualitative research. In this course, student will explore the philosophical underpinnings of design and application, as well as various analytical techniques. This course consists of three modules, each on a particular aspect of qualitative research including design and theories of qualitative research, methods and analysis and finally quality issues and ethics in conducting qualitative research.

This advanced course offers students flexibility to pursue methodological interests as they build towards their dissertation and the instructor will expect students to work closely with their major advisor in developing the questions and research focus that they will subsequently build on during this course.

### **OBJECTIVES:**

This course is designed to enable students to:

- Develop an awareness of alternative philosophies and methods of qualitative research in relation to general perspectives of inquiry.
- Develop alternative research designs for various forms of qualitative research.
- Develop and critique various methods of data collection and analysis, depending on emerging and changing research design.
- Critique data collection and analysis techniques in relation to relevant literature on qualitative research methods.
- Critique your research project and suggest areas for improvement.
- Critique empirical qualitative research according to standards for quality research.

### **NATURE OF COURSE DELIVERY**

This course includes a variety of learning activities: discussions in seminar format, text-based/multi-media presentation of course materials, experiential learning activities including interactive assignments, cooperative learning group activities, online discussions and activities, and lecture.

### **REQUIRED TEXTS**

Luttrell, W. (Ed.). (2010). *Qualitative educational research: Readings in reflexive methodology and transformative practice*. New York: Routledge.

Pascale, C. (2011). *Cartographies of knowledge: Exploring qualitative epistemologies*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Patton, M. Q. (2002). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). Newbury Park: Sage.

Other readings as assigned. (Articles available on Blackboard in the Readings Folder.)

### **PROPOSED CLASS SCHEDULE<sup>1</sup>**

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<sup>1</sup> Readings marked with an \* indicates further reading for those more interested in this particular topic.

Date	Topic/Learning Experiences	Readings and Assignments
<b>MODULE ONE: Philosophy and Theory of Qualitative Research</b>		
WEEK 1 January 21	<b>Course Introduction</b>	BLACKBOARD MEETING – No Physical Class this week.  On the Discussion Board section of Blackboard (BB), please provide a statement on BB introducing yourself and your research interests.
WEEK 2 January 28	<b>Overview of QR Paradigms and Conceptual Frameworks</b> Course overview and syllabus requirements Course Expectations and interests	Patton, chpts. 1 Luttrell, chpt. 1 Pascale 1 *Labaree, D. F. (1998). Educational researchers: Living with a lesser form of knowledge. <i>Educational Researcher</i> , 27(8), 4-12.
WEEK 3 February 4	<b>The Ongoing Debate: The Value of Qualitative Research Questioned</b>	Patton, chpt. 2-3 Pascale 2 Luttrell, chpt. 4 Hammersley, M. (2000). The relevance of qualitative research. <i>Oxford Review of Education</i> , 26(3-4), 393-405. Demerath, P. (2006)The science of context: modes of response for qualitative researchers in education. <i>International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education</i> , 19 (1), 97-113.
WEEK 4 February 11	<b>Framing Design to Orientation</b>	Patton, chpt. 4 Luttrell (preview section two) *Koro-Ljungberg, M. Yendol-Hoppey, D., Smith, J. J., & Hayes, S. B. (2009). (E)pistemological awareness, instantiation of methods, and uninformed methodological ambiguity in qualitative research projects. <i>Educational Researcher</i> , 38(9), 687-699.
WEEK 5 February 18	<b>Dialogue: Visual Reflection DUE</b> Discussion topics are decided by class focus. This can be a comprehensive review and/or assessment of the material covered thus far or an additional topic that would be helpful for the class. Time will also be provided to discuss your first visual reflection.	

MODULE TWO: Design and Methods of Qualitative Research		
WEEK 6 February 25	<b>Selection: A Critique of Convenience</b>	Patton, chpt. 5 Freeman, M. (2000). Knocking on doors: On constructing culture. <i>Qualitative Inquiry</i> , 6(3), 359-369. Reybold, L. E., Lammert, J., & Stribling, S. M. (in press). <i>Thinking forward: Consciousness and the selection process</i> . Qualitative Research. *Miranda, pp. 1-48 (strongly recommended)  <b>MODULE PAPER ONE DUE</b>
WEEK 7 March 4	<b>Evaluating Qualitative Methods of Data Collection</b>	Patton, chpts. 6-7 *Brown, L., & Durrheim, K. (2009). Different kinds of knowing: Generating qualitative data through mobile interviewing. <i>Qualitative Inquiry</i> , 15(5), 911-930. *Gubrium, E., & Koro-Ljungberg, M. (2005). Contending with border making in the social constructionist interview. <i>Qualitative Inquiry</i> , 11(5), 689-715. *Kvale, S. (2006). Dominance through interviews and dialogues. <i>Qualitative Inquiry</i> , 12(3), 480-500.
March 10-15	<b>SPRING BREAK</b>	<b>NO CLASS</b>
Week 8 March 18	<b>Beyond Coding: Interpreting and Generating Meaning</b>	Patton, chpt. 8 Pascale 3/4/5 Luttrell, chpts. 12, 26-27 Kvale, S. (1996). The 1,000 page question. <i>Qualitative Inquiry</i> . 2(3), 275-284. *Maxwell, J. (2004). Causal explanation, qualitative research, and scientific inquiry in education. <i>Educational Researcher</i> 33(2), 3-11.
WEEK 9 March 25	<b>Narrative, Critical Theory and Discourse Techniques</b>	Enosh, G., & Buchbinder, E. (2005). The interactive construction of narrative styles in sensitive interviews: The case of domestic violence research. <i>Qualitative Inquiry</i> , 11(4), 588-617. Wolgemuth, J. R. (2006). Toward an inquiry of discomfort: Guiding transformation in "emancipatory" narrative research. <i>Qualitative Inquiry</i> , 12(5), 1022-1039.

WEEK 10 April 1	<b>Dialogue: Visual Reflection DUE</b> Discussion topics are decided by class focus. This can be a comprehensive review and/or assessment of the material covered thus far or an additional topic that would be helpful for the class. Time will also be provided to discuss your second visual reflection.	
<b>MODULE THREE: Quality Issues in Qualitative Research</b>		
WEEK 11 April 8	<b>Quality and privilege in QR</b>	Patton, chpt. 9 Luttrell, chpts. 11, 17, 22, 27 *Polkinghorne, D. E. (2007). Validity issues in narrative research. <i>Qualitative Inquiry</i> , 13(4), 471-486. <b>Module Paper Two due</b>
WEEK 12 April 15	<b>Quality and privilege in QR (cont.)</b>	Hermes, M. (1998). "Research Methods as a Situated Response: Towards a First Nations' Methodology." <i>Qualitative Studies in Education</i> 11:155-168.  * Cho, J., & Trent, A. (2006). Validity in qualitative research revisited. <i>Qualitative Research</i> , 6(3), 319-340.
WEEK 13 April 22	<b>Ethics in Qualitative Research Representing the "other" in qualitative research. Part 1</b>	Luttrell, chpts. 7-8 Pascale 6 Denzin, N. K. (2007). Sacagawea's nickname, or the Sacagawea problem. <i>Qualitative Research</i> , 7(1), 103-133. Baily, S. (2011). Speaking Up: Contextualizing women's voices and gatekeepers' reactions in promoting women's empowerment in rural India. <i>Research in Comparative and International Education</i> , 6(1), 107-118.
Week 14 April 29	<b>Ethics in Qualitative Research Part 2</b>	Reybold, L. E. (2008). The social and political structuring of faculty ethicality in education. <i>Innovative Higher Education</i> , 32, 279-295. * Anfara, Jr., V. A., Brown, K. M., & Mangione, T. L. (2002). Qualitative analysis on stage: Making the research process more public. <i>Educational Researcher</i> , 31(7), 28-38. *Howe, K. R. (2009). Isolating science from the humanities: The third dogma of educational research. <i>Qualitative Inquiry</i> , 15, pp. 766-784. Doi: 10.1177/1077800408318302
WEEK 15 May 6	<b>Dialogue: Module Paper Three</b> Discussion topics are decided by class focus. This can be a comprehensive review and/or	

assessment of the material covered thus far or an additional topic that would be helpful for the class – no new reading will be assigned however.

**Module Paper Three due [Turn in ALL previous original papers with my comments.]**

## COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

This course demands active and engaged participation, thorough reading of assigned texts and articles, as well the willingness to be critical readers of research. While each student will have significantly different research interests, I expect students to be critical friends to each other and create safe spaces for dialogue, conversation and yes, even critique.

### ***Attendance and Participation (15 points)***

Class participation is important not only for each individual student's learning, but for the learning and success of our class as a whole. Class participation is a factor in grading; instructors may use absences, tardiness, or early departure in both on-line and campus class sessions as de facto evidence of non-participation and as a result lower a student's grade (Mason Catalog 2011-12).

Please note the following attendance and participation policies:

1. Two tardies are equal to one absence, and missing 30% or more of class sessions will result in automatic course failure. For each unexcused absence (a determination made by the instructor) one point will be deducted from your attendance and class participation points up to a total of 15 points.
2. Participants are expected to read the assigned materials, complete on-line activities including pre-session Blackboard assignments, arrive promptly, attend all class meetings for the entire session, and participate in on-line and face-to-face class discussions.
3. If, due to an emergency, you will not be able to participate during a given week of class, please contact the professor as soon as possible. Students are responsible for obtaining information given during class discussions/sessions despite attendance from a classmate.

## Readings

As you can tell from the schedule, there are both expected and suggested readings. As you read ask yourself what your questions and concerns are about this issue and that you list them. After finishing a reading ask yourself how it related to your questions or concerns. Did it answer your questions? Did it raise new issues? Do you agree or disagree with the author? Then, outline the author's main points. If an example of a qualitative article is also assigned, analyze it in terms of the methodological readings: How do the ideas apply? How do they not apply? What are their implications for this study? We will often be reading articles or book chapters presenting different perspectives on the same topic. Think about each author's approach to qualitative research as you read his/her section for a particular module, and how this fits into the different approaches we have discussed. We will be discussing many of these ideas in class so it would help to have these ideas documented in a notebook for reference.

## Assessments

**Visual reflections (10 points -5 points each)**

At two points in the semester, you will review your notes from your readings and prepare a visual representation of the big ideas from your readings on a 8x11” piece of paper. These reflections will go back to the big ideas underlined in the previous section. Think of your notes as data. What insights emerge on reviewing your analysis of your readings. What additional thoughts emerged from the notes based on classroom conversations. These visual reflections should be brought to class and will be shared in small groups, leading to a larger conversation on meta-themes that are beginning to emerge as a result of the analysis and sharing.

**Module Papers (3)**

You will write a scholarly essay for each of the three modules in this course: philosophy, design and methods, quality. We will discuss these topics and paper parameters in class. Each paper should address the following areas:

1. Topic development. What topic or issue did you choose for your paper? Why did you choose this—what were your goals in exploring this topic? Is this a personal or professional exploration? Provide rationale for selecting this topic.
2. Topic coverage. What aspects of this topic are covered in our readings? In other literature? What are you exploring beyond class material? Is your focus broad (breadth of topic) or narrow (depth of topic)? What theories, beliefs, or expectations did you have about this topic? Where did these questions and expectations come from? How did they change as a result of this assignment (if they did)?
3. Discussion and critique. Have you developed each of your major points and connected them to the course material? Have you reflected on the material and considered alternative viewpoints? Does your essay critique both the content covered and assumptions about that content?
4. Application to personal research. How might this topic impact your dissertation or other research projects? Why? What ‘makes sense’ to you and why? What is not useful to you and why?
5. Technical. This is a scholarly assignment in an advanced doctoral methods course. APA guidelines for writing and referencing are expected.

Each paper should be no longer than 10 typed pages, double-spaced, 12pt font – standard APA guidelines. Appendices may be added and not included in page count, but all materials should be addressed sufficiently in text. These papers will allow you to interact personally with the material based on your own research interests and dissertation development. I suggest you communicate directly with your major professor/dissertation advisor about these assignments, as they may be used in either your proposal or dissertation. I would be happy to discuss this with you and your advisor via e-mail.

## Course Assessment

<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Points</b>
Participation	15
Visual reflections	10
Module One Paper	25
Module Two Paper	25
Module Three Paper	25
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>

Grades on assignments turned in late will be reduced 10%, and assignments more than one week late will not be accepted. Attendance is very important to class participation; one point will be deducted per class-hour absence.

## GMU Policies and Resources for students

- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code [See <http://oai.gmu.edu/honor-code/>].
- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing [See <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/>].
- Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their George Mason University email account and are required to activate their account and check it regularly. All communication from the university, college, school, and program will be sent to students solely through their Mason email account.
- The George Mason University Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) staff consists of professional counseling and clinical psychologists, social workers, and counselors who offer a wide range of services (e.g., individual and group counseling, workshops and outreach programs) to enhance students' personal experience and academic performance [See <http://caps.gmu.edu/>].
- Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the George Mason University Office of Disability Services (ODS) and inform their instructor, in writing, at the beginning of the semester [See <http://ods.gmu.edu/>].
- Students must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be turned off during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.
- The George Mason University Writing Center staff provides a variety of resources and services (e.g., tutoring, workshops, writing guides, handbooks) intended to support students as they work to construct and share knowledge through writing [See <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/>].

## Professional Dispositions

Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times.

## Core Values Commitment

The College of Education & Human Development is committed to collaboration, ethical leadership,

innovation, research-based practice, and social justice. Students are expected to adhere to these principles. <http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/>

For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, Graduate School of Education, please visit our website [See <http://gse.gmu.edu/>]