



The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Syllabus

Qualitative research Methods - 59535

Last update 30-09-2021

HU Credits: 2

Degree/Cycle: 2nd degree (Master)

Responsible Department: Glocal International Development

Academic year: 0

Semester: 1st Semester

Teaching Languages: English

Campus: Mt. Scopus

Course/Module Coordinator: Dr. Amelia Weinreb

Coordinator Email: Amy.Weinreb@huji.mail.ac.il

Coordinator Office Hours: Mondays

Teaching Staff:

Dr. Amelia Weinreb

Course/Module description:

Course Description

This intensive, 2-credit course explores qualitative social science research, characterized as inductive, non-statistical, interpretive, and exploratory.

Course/Module aims:

Qualitative research is considered valuable in that it can reveal unexpected and profound insights into individuals, cultures, societies, and the human condition at large. It can often uncover information that would otherwise be concealed. Yet, how can narratives, confessions, ethnographic observations, conversations, informal interviews, artifacts and archives--the "stuff" of qualitative research--constitute sources of valid, empirical data? In order to answer this question, the course walks students through the steps of academic research with a qualitative focus: How to identify a good research question, choose an appropriate data collection method and research design, address research bias, gain first-hand experience applying methods during a unique, off-campus fieldwork experience, and finally, transform field data into scholarly text through preliminary analysis. A particular emphasis throughout the course is anticipating and solving practical problems that may emerge conducting fieldwork research settings in developing communities and the global south.*

Learning outcomes - On successful completion of this module, students should be able to:

Course Objectives

Upon completion of this course, students will have developed the skills to:

- Transform a general topic of interest into a strong, specific research question*
- Gain first-hand experience implementing qualitative research methods through community-based research that focuses*
 - Learn directly from cultural groups other than one's own*
 - Develop an awareness of one's own positionality and worldview through actively reflecting on lived experience*
- Conceptualize the importance of the unexpected in qualitative research*
- Practice preliminary steps of data analysis and argumentation*
- Discuss individual experiences and preliminary research and findings and field questions for an audience*

Attendance requirements(%):

80%

Teaching arrangement and method of instruction: Course Format

This course is comprised of: a) 5 lively, interactive, workshop-style seminar sessions to prepare for qualitative research; b) a two-day team fieldwork experience with a community in Jerusalem; c) a time to individually write up, reflect and analyze the experience and the information with support

a) Seminar workshops to prepare for fieldwork: 5 intensive seminar sessions are designed to discuss methodology and prepare for the field practically, intellectually and ethically. Students are encouraged to participate actively through articulating and synthesizing ideas with clarity, accuracy and thoughtfulness, and defending their positions through evidence based on our common reading list. Prior to the fieldwork experience, each student will have developed a research question tailored to learn more from the community in question, will consider what methods they would use to begin to address the question, and will design a work plan for their day of team research on site. This focused, collective form of research, known as “rapid ethnographic assessment,” whose strengths and limitations we will discuss, is often used by anthropologists employed by international development projects.

Each seminar session includes:

- A brief, instructor-led discussion establishes the context and background for the readings and outlines their key arguments and ideas in the reading.*
- Student discussion co-leaders, designated in advance, raise questions, stimulate debate, and integrate ideas from the readings and course core concepts into our collective analysis.*
- A workshop enables students to engage interactively with core elements of the reading as applied to a project or activity.*

b) Two-day fieldwork experience in Jerusalem: The primary objective of this collective, on-site research is to gain first-hand experience with data collection, and the opportunity to apply and integrate knowledge on qualitative data collection gained from the course. See addendum on pp. 6-7 for further detail. An agenda with the daily schedule will be released two weeks prior to fieldwork

c) Write-up and reflect: A final writers’ workshop after fieldwork will enable students to begin organizing and drafting preliminary findings in a culturally sensitive and academically rigorous way (for more on the final assignment see pp. 7-8). You will also be asked to reflecting on the experience with students in a global virtual exchange with students at the University of Texas at Austin (an international partner institution) in thier course called “Multicultural Israel. ” In our discussions we will discuss your experience with interviewing, ethnographic representation, understanding positionality, and practice conveying information about one’s own community and/or the marginalized groups to new audiences, emphasizing intercultural competence.

Course/Module Content:

SESSION 1

December 6, Synchronous Zoom

Topic: Introduction to the course, preparing for Research

In-class workshop:

- Considering vulnerable populations in Jerusalem*
- Transforming topics in to qualitative research questions*

SESSION 2

December 13

Topic: Qualitative Research Design

In-class workshop: preliminary design fieldwork

- Project Scope*
- Designing for Validity*
- Project Pacing*

In preparation for class, read:

"Designing a Qualitative Study" Creswell, John W., and Cheryl N. Poth. 2016. Chapter 3: "Designing a Qualitative Study" in Qualitative inquiry and Research Design: Choosing among five approaches. Sage publications, pp. 41-59.

PDF Available on Moodle

Student leaders: 500-word papers due 23:00, Sunday

SESSION 3

December 20

Topic: Solidifying groups for fieldwork projects, Sampling in Qualitative Research

In-class workshop:

- Writing about sampling to convince the reader*
- Breakout groups: developing workplans with support and feedback*

In preparation for class, read:

"Sampling in Qualitative Research"

From: Guest, G., Namey, E. & Mitchell, M. (2013). Participant observation. In Guest, G., Namey, E., & Mitchell, M. Collecting qualitative data (pp. 41-71). 55 City Road, London: SAGE Publications

Student leaders: 500-word papers due 23:00, Sunday

SESSION 4

December 27

Note: This session is crucial for learning the practical skills to proceed with fieldwork. Make every effort to attend!

*Topics: Participant observation, Field Notes and Data Base Management
Politics of Entering the field
Skills of a participant observer
Rapid assessment, rapid ethnographic assessment
(Dec. 27, cont'd)*

In-class workshop:

-Building memory

-note-taking strategies: Jottings, descriptive notes, and analytic notes

-practicing participant observation

In preparation for class, read:

"Participant observation" Guest, G., Namey, E. & Mitchell, M. (2013).. In Guest, G., Namey, E., & Mitchell, M. Collecting qualitative data (pp. 75-112). 55 City Road, London: SAGE Publications, Ltd doi: 10.4135/9781506374680

https://www.sagepub.com/sites/default/files/upm-binaries/48454_ch_3.pdf

*R.M. Emerson, R.I Fretz & L.L. Shaw, Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995. *UP TO PAGE 18* <http://www.paas.org.pl/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/OPTIONAL-Emerson-Writing-Ethnographic-Fieldnotes.pdf>*

Helpful Summary

http://www.gpgrieve.org/PDF/How_to_write_Field_Notes.pdf

A suggested Fieldnote Template

<https://anthropod.net/2013/08/14/a-template-for-writing-fieldnotes/>

SESSION 5

January 3

Topics: Ethical dimensions of Fieldwork practice, In-depth interviews

What are ethics in the field?

Interviewing: Unstructured and Semi-Structured

Types of probes

Presentation of the self

Recording

Life histories

In-class workshop:

-Solving ethical dilemmas in the field

-Testing out types of probes

In preparation for class, read:

"Ethical Dimensions of Fieldwork Practice"

From: Guest, G., Namey, E. & Mitchell, M. (2013) In Guest, G., Namey, E., & Mitchell, M. *Collecting qualitative data* (pp. 317-350). 55 City Road, London: SAGE Publications

"In-Depth Interviews"

From: Guest, G., Namey, E. & Mitchell, M. (2013). *Participant observation*. In Guest, G., Namey, E., & Mitchell, M. *Collecting qualitative data* (pp.113-171). 55 City Road, London: SAGE Publications

PDF available on Moodle

Student leaders: 500-word papers due 23:00, Sunday

Thursday January 6- Friday January 7

Fieldwork in Jerusalem

Complete agenda will be provided 2 weeks in advance, but reserve 8:00am-Thu. to 13:00 Friday

SESSION 6

January 10

Topic: Writing and Wrapping up

-Writers' workshop on outlining, feedback, preliminary analysis

In preparation for class, read:

<http://www.pimatisiwin.com/uploads/1289566991.pdf>

R.M. Emerson, R.I Fretz & L.L. Shaw, *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995. *(pages 18-32)

<http://www.paas.org.pl/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/OPTIONAL-Emerson-Writing-Ethnographic-Fieldnotes.pdf>

Student leaders: 500-word papers due 23:00, Sunday

Required Reading:

Course Readings:

A curated selection of reading related central to qualitative research methods will be made available on Moodle for each seminar session, either as an attachment or as a link.

Additional Reading Material:

Course/Module evaluation:

End of year written/oral examination 0 %

Presentation 0 %

Participation in Tutorials 30 %

Project work 0 %

Assignments 15 %

Reports 0 %

Research project 55 %

Quizzes 0 %

Other 0 %

Additional information:

Course Requirements and Grading

30%: Participation, engagement with readings, discussion leadership and attendance

This is a highly interpersonal and interactive seminar. Attendance is not only the key to individual student success as a student in this course, but also for the quality of the course as a dynamic whole. Arriving late and leaving early to each section of the sessions disrupts class flow, so make every effort to arrive to class on time with your materials prepared, phones and off, prepared to listen and engage. The fieldwork participation is the beating heart of this course, and cooperation and communication with your research team members is essential as well.

15% Discussion leadership: Each seminar meeting there are designated student leaders, designated in advance (see Moodle to sign up). Leadership on the day of class is informal. You do not need to prepare a presentation or coordinate with others who are leading. Your primary role is be especially prepared to share any thoughts, ideas, concerns or questions during discussion. In preparation

The leadership paper: In preparation for your leadership day, each individual will write a 500 word, double-spaced paper that poses a question, and then answers that question, based on the reading you have been assigned. The 500-word typed responses are due to me as an email attachment at 23:00 the night before your student group leads discussion.

a) State your question clearly in bold font. These questions should be designed to be engaging, thought-provoking and informative, stimulate discussion and debate, and will help you navigate the course.

b) Includes an answer. The answer can be creative, and include reflections, reactions, critical commentaries or overviews. However, the short papers will be graded on their writing quality, attention to facts, examples and details that appear in the assigned reading for the day reading as well your thoughtfulness.

55%: Final Paper

Although fieldwork itself is conducted in teams, and teams remain a source of

intellectual support and shared experience, each student will submit an individual 7-10 page final paper. The final paper includes a preliminary analysis of data, based on his or own research question, built upon overarching themes emerging data, using the data as evidence to support the argument, and in relation to existing literature on the topic. I have provided a rubric for constructing the paper below on pp. 7-8.

Course Readings:

A curated selection of reading related central to qualitative research methods will be made available on Moodle for each seminar session, either as an attachment or as a link