



## **EdAd 698: Qualitative Research Methods**

Texas A&M University-Commerce

College of Education and Human Services/Department of Educational Leadership

Course Syllabus

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**Office Hours:** Virtual office hours (see eCollege)

I will make every effort to be available within 24 hours. The best way to reach me is by texting/calling my cell phone or by email.

### **COURSE INFORMATION**

#### **Course Description**

This is a research tools course. Using the foundation of critical ethnography, phenomenology, case studies, grounded theory, and defining cultural themes and patterns as a basis of description, this course moves into the sociological/anthropological roots of qualitative research. It assists students in understanding how the problem statement must be related to the methodology and the outcome of the research, assists students in selecting proper qualitative methods, and allows students to pursue those methods within the general framework of the class. Students are encouraged to develop solid conceptual frameworks from the social sciences and to formulate reasonable research questions based on those frameworks. The development of doctoral proposals within the qualitative methodology is of major concern as is the development of qualitative methodology as a practical method of knowing and administering an educational organization.

#### **Student Learning Outcomes**

The purpose of the doctoral program is to produce a graduate who has developed breadth of vision, a capacity for interpretation, and the ability to carry out critical investigations. The doctoral student is expected to gain many new concepts, a zeal for adding to the sum of human knowledge, and develop the ability to conduct original research and to think clearly and independently.

The doctoral student must also develop the professional competencies necessary for applying knowledge in the essential areas of human and public interest. Guidance toward extended reading and research is an integral part of graduate study. To assist students in achieving the purposes of the doctoral program, the following goals/objectives have been developed for this course. Upon successful completion of this course, students will:

- Develop an understanding of and uses for qualitative data collection methods.
- Analyze how qualitative research procedures compare to quantitative procedures.
- Be able to select appropriate data collection and analysis methods.
- Design and conduct a qualitative study.
- Examine ethical research issues.
- Evaluate and critique qualitative research and discuss the human phenomena that qualitative research examines.
- Demonstrate how to move from research idea, to research implementation, to the analysis and reporting of data.

### Textbooks

American Psychological Association. (2010). *Publishing manual of the American Psychological Association* (6<sup>th</sup> ed.). Washington, DC: Author.

Bogdan, R. C., & Biklen, S. K. (2007). *Qualitative research for education: An introduction to theories and methods* (5<sup>th</sup> ed.). Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Creswell, J. W. (2007). *Qualitative inquiry & research design: Choosing among five approaches* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Lawrence-Lightfoot, S., & Davis, J. H. (2002). *The art and science of portraiture*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass

<b>COURSE REQUIREMENTS</b>
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### Performance Expectations

This is a doctoral standing only course; therefore, performance evaluations need to fit with the purpose of the doctoral program and the expectations stated earlier. The following student expectations for this course have been generated:

#### **Qualitative Study** (100 points; 40% of grade)

Each student will locate a *peer-reviewed* journal that accepts submissions of the topic/genre of your qualitative study and submit for approval the publication/submission guidelines of the journal by the end of the first week of class. Complete and submit IRB paperwork including informed consent documents and interview questions. Prepare and submit your study proposal. Conduct a qualitative study. Interview at least five people in person and tape record the sessions; the sessions should each last at least one hour. Prepare an article-length paper (20-25 pages with abstract, not including title page, references, or appendices) that adheres to the publication guidelines of the approved journal. The article will include the following sections: introduction, review of literature, methods, data collection, data analysis, conclusions, findings, recommendations for further research, summary, and references. Occasionally, journals will ask for submissions of less than the length required for class. In that instance, follow class page length guidelines. Use Times New Roman font, 12-point type, APA format, and one-inch margins. Do not include excessive, long quotes. All interview questions and transcribed interview responses with names and identifiers removed will be included as appendices. Be prepared to discuss your progress in class.

*Student Learning Outcome:* Students will design and conduct a qualitative study and be able to select appropriate data collection and analysis methods.

*Assessment Method:* Your study will be graded using a Qualitative Study Rubric provided by the instructor that addresses the following areas.

#### **Choice Assignment** (100 points; 15% of grade)

Complete one of the following two activities (tradition/approach presentation or qualitative reflection).

#### **Tradition/Approach Presentation**

Class members will be divided into small groups. Small groups will be assigned a qualitative tradition/approach to study and present to the class. Presentations should be approximately 15 minutes in length and should provide information about the specific tradition/approach including 1) its history, 2)

examples of use, 3) implementation techniques, 4) coding procedures, and 5) write-up procedures. The presentation should be designed to teach and reinforce the content in your selected topic in an effective and interactive manner and involve a presentation and an item for colleagues' toolboxes. All members of the group will be involved in the planning process and audio-recorded group presentation. Upload your presentation to eCollege.

*Student Learning Outcome:* Students will develop an understanding of and uses for qualitative data collection methods.

*Assessment Method:* Your project will be graded using a Group Presentation Rubric provided by the instructor.

### **Qualitative Reflection**

Reflect on the topic provided by the professor. Your reflection will be in the form of a writing project which may or may not lead to publication. This assignment will involve composing a narrative reflection of an experience; you will be describing a lived experience.

*Student Learning Outcome:* Students will examine the human phenomena that qualitative research examines.

*Assessment Method:* Your reflection will be graded using a Reflection Rubric provided by the instructor.

### **Article Critique** (100 points; 10% of grade)

Each student will critique the qualitative methods described in a *peer-reviewed* research article. The critique should be 2-3 pages in length (not including title page and references). Each student should *critique* (not summarize) the article. Include information about the research question(s) being posed, the conceptual background to the question and theoretical orientation, and the author's description of each of the following areas. If the information appears inadequate, discuss what the author could have included (pertaining to site selection, sampling criteria unit(s) of analysis, reliability/validity issues, and observer effects). Address the data collection methods employed (appropriateness and adequacy), findings (counted as evidence, or what specific data supported the author(s) conclusions) and conclusions (whether you agree with the author's overall conclusions and why or why not). Use Times New Roman font, 12-point type, one-inch margins, and APA style.

*Student Learning Outcome:* Students will evaluate and critique qualitative research and discuss the human phenomena that qualitative research examines.

*Assessment Method:* Your article critique will be graded using an Article Critique Rubric provided by the instructor.

### **Discussion Board Participation** (100 points; 20% of grade)

Discussion boards will be used to reflect on two different observations. To conduct each observation you will, for at least one hour, spend time at a place where you have never been, nor thought of previously going. These assignments are designed to offer you an experience in constructing a narrative about the view of an insider. You will have the opportunity to observe others in a new setting, and tell a story from an insider's perspective.

Record your experience in field notes and any other documents that help you tell the story. You will identify *themes* from your gathered data and reflect on your experiences in the assigned discussion boards. Be prepared to *tell your story* in the discussion boards.

*Student Learning Outcome:* Students will utilize field notes to collect qualitative data. Students will reflect in discussion boards.

*Assessment Method:* Discussion boards will be graded using a Discussion Board Rubric provided by the instructor.

**Final Exam/Poster Presentation** (100 points; 15% of grade)

The final exam will consist of a poster session and will occur during the last week of class. Each student will create a presentation consistent with AERA guidelines in every area except for poster specifications. Presentations must be edited and look professional. Students should upload an approximately 10 minute verbal presentation of research. Upload your presentation to eCollege.

*Student Learning Outcome:* Students will demonstrate how to move from research idea, to research implementation, to the analysis and reporting of data.

*Assessment Method:* Your presentation will be graded using a Poster Presentation Rubric provided by the instructor.

**Grading**

While the final course grade is the sole judgment of the professor, the following scale will be used as a guide.

Qualitative Study	40%
Choice Assignment	15%
Article Critiques	10%
Discussion Board Participation	20%
Final Exam/Poster Presentation	15%

There are no provisions for late work.

A	90-100
B	80-89
C	70-79
D	60-69
F	0-59

**ACCESS AND NAVIGATION**

**eCollege**

This course will be facilitated using eCollege, the Learning Management System used by Texas A&M University-Commerce. To get started with the course, go to <https://leo.tamu-commerce.edu/login.aspx>. You will need your CWID and password to log in to the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact Technology Services at 903.468.6000 or [helpdesk@tamu-commerce.edu](mailto:helpdesk@tamu-commerce.edu).

**Course Organization**

This course is organized by units based on qualitative research traditions. The course is organized for a semester session. Some topics occur across multiple weeks. Unit opening and closing dates are posted in eCollege. All assignments must be submitted by the posted due date.

**What to Do First**

Download syllabus. Post autobiographical information in the Student Lounge in eCollege.

**How to Proceed with Class Activities Each Week**

1. Read the assigned readings, links, and other resources provided in the syllabus and in the eCollege units. Listen to and participate in class discussion sessions. Links to documents are provided in the course units or in class.
2. Respond to posted discussion board questions, as assigned, using the eCollege discussion tool. Links to the discussion boards are found under each unit of the course on the left navigation bar of eCollege.
3. Complete the course assignments according to the instructions provided in this syllabus and the professor.

**eCollege Technical Concerns**

**Chat Support:** Click on *Live Support* on the tool bar within your course to chat with an eCollege Representative.

**Phone:** 1-866-656-5511 (Toll Free) to speak with an eCollege technical support representative.

**Email:** [helpdesk@online.tamuc.org](mailto:helpdesk@online.tamuc.org) to initiate a support request with an eCollege technical support representative.

**TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS**

Online courses and courses with online sessions require some technological resources, including: 1) access to a computer with Internet access (high-speed preferred), 2) headset/microphone, 3) computer speakers, and 4) Word processing software (Microsoft Word preferred)

Our campus is optimized to work in a Microsoft Windows environment. This means that our course works best if you are using a Windows operating system (XP or newer) and a recent version of Microsoft Internet Explorer (6.0, 7.0 or 8.0). Your online courses will also work with Macintosh OS X along with a recent version of Safari 2.0 or better. Along with Internet Explorer and Safari, eCollege also supports the Firefox browser (3.0) on both Windows and Mac operating systems.

It is strongly recommended that you perform a browser Test prior to the start of your course. To launch a browser test, login in to eCollege, click on the “myCourses” tab and then select the browser test link under Support Services.

As a student enrolled at Texas A&M University-Commerce, you have access to an email account via MyLeo; all class emails from your instructors will be sent from eCollege (and all other university emails) will go to this account, so please be sure to check it regularly. Conversely, you are to email us via the eCollege email system or your MyLeo email as our spam filters will catch yahoo, hotmail, etc. and we will not check for your email in spam.

**COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT****Quality of Course Communication**

We will be sharing personal experiences and individual reflections as we discuss course concepts. You are encouraged to share your personal and professional experiences. However, in order to assure that we can have a free and open discussion, we expect each person to respect the confidentiality of classmates.

At the same time, you are asked to exercise good judgment in what you choose to share, avoiding non-public or competitively sensitive information.

### **Interaction with Instructor**

Email is the best way to reach the instructor during weekdays. During the work week, a reply will be sent within 24 hours depending upon the time your message was received. If you do not receive a response, please assume your message was not received and contact the instructor via telephone.

We will have access to and begin using eCollege the first day of class. If you are not familiar with the use of eCollege or the Library Online Services, please avail yourself of the online tutorials easily accessible through your MyLeo web page. It will be especially critical for you to check your MyLeo email everyday.

<b>COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES</b>
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### **Writing Style**

All papers must be written according to the 6<sup>th</sup> edition of the APA Writing Style Manual. Papers must include references formatted using the APA style manual. All citations and references must be made using the APA style manual (6<sup>th</sup> edition). Please use the following format for all your documents: New Times Roman, double-spaced, one-inch margins, and 12-point type.

### **Dropping a Course**

A student may drop a course by logging into their myLEO account and clicking on the hyperlink labeled "Drop a class" from among the choices found under the myLEO section of the Web page.

### **Administrative Withdrawal**

This is a doctoral level course. Missing more than 2 times (online for face-to-face, depending on the format of the course) will result in further grade reduction and/or requesting that the registrar drop the student's name from the course roll.

### **Incomplete Grades**

Per university policy, you must visit with the instructor, develop, and sign "Plan for Completing the Grade of X" before you may receive an incomplete for the course. The reason for such requests is limited to "circumstances beyond student's control which prevented student from attending classes during Finals Week or the preceding three weeks" (Policy A 122.07, 1998). You are notified that the deadline date for all plans is not to exceed one semester. Failure to fulfill plan requirements within the specified time will result in a course grade of F.

### **Academic Honesty**

Texas A&M University-Commerce does not tolerate plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty. Conduct that violates generally accepted standards of academic honesty is defined as academic dishonesty. "Academic dishonesty" includes, but is not limited to, plagiarism (the appropriation or stealing of the ideas or words of another and passing them off as one's own), cheating on exams or other course assignments, collusion (the unauthorized collaboration with others in preparing course assignments), and abuse (destruction, defacing, or removal) of resource material.

Please see the *TAMU-C Graduate Catalog* (2001-02, pp. 17-18) and the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* for the discussion of academic honesty. Academic honesty is especially important when it comes to citing/quoting sources in research papers and assignments. Students are responsible for reading this material and becoming familiar with the conventions for acknowledging sources of information.

Recommended websites to review include:

<http://www.plagiarism.org/>

<http://www.unc.edu/depts/wcweb/handouts/plagiarism.html> or

<http://www.indiana.edu/~wts/pamphlets/plagiarism.shtml>

### **Common Decency**

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment (See Student's Guide Handbook, Policies and Procedures, Conduct).

### **ADA Statement**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services  
Texas A&M University-Commerce  
Gee Library 132  
Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835  
Fax (903) 468-8148  
StudentDisabilityServices@tamu-commerce.edu  
Student Disability Resources & Services

### **Student Conduct**

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. (See *Code of Student Conduct from Student Guide Handbook*).