



**EDCI 687.41E Sociocultural Inquiry  
M (4:30-10:00) at MPLX; ECollege for online materials  
Fall 2014**

**Instructor:** Sherri R. Colby PhD

**Office Location:** Ed Sowers South 232

**Office Hours:** Rotating office schedule of Mondays (4:00-9:00 p.m.) in Rockwall; Wednesdays (4:00-9:00 p.m.) in MPLX, Rockwall, or Adobe Connect; Thursday (daytime hours) in Commerce. Please check ECollege weekly for posted hours.

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<b>COURSE INFORMATION</b>
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**Materials – Textbooks, Readings, Supplementary Readings:**

*Textbook(s) Required:*

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

Flick, W. (2014). *An introduction to qualitative research*. (5<sup>th</sup> ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Note: For the Flick book, the fourth edition is acceptable; however, I do recommend using the latest version if possible.

Additional readings from journals will be provided by the instructor. Students shall also be responsible to implement the APA (American Psychological Association) style guide (6<sup>th</sup> edition). Additional information about the style guide can be found at <http://www.apastyle.org/>.

**Supplemental Textbooks:**

Coffey, A., & Atkinson, P. (1996). *Making sense of qualitative data: Complementary research strategies*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Hatch, A. (2002). *Doing qualitative research in education settings*. Albany: State of New York University Press.

Janesick, V. J. (2011). *“Stretching” exercises for qualitative researchers* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed). Los Angeles, CA: Sage Publications.

Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Rubin, H. J, & Rubin, I. S. (2005). *Qualitative interviewing: The art of hearing the data*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

### **Course Description:**

The course content centers on qualitative research in the sociocultural environments of public schools. The methodology (research design, data collection, analysis) associated with this form of inquiry shall be delineated. The course focuses on the philosophical and methodological differences between varying approaches (narrative, phenomenology, case studies, grounded theory, and ethnography) to research. Academic writing and critical reading of qualitative research shall also be addressed.

### **Student Learning Outcomes:**

Students shall engage in the following:

distinguishing and understanding the philosophy and designs of qualitative research, including the varying approaches of narrative, phenomenology, case studies, grounded theory, and ethnography;

designing and applying qualitative research methodology to in field projects;

interpreting and evaluating qualitative research studies;

formulating burgeoning researcher identities through critical reading and writing.

<b>COURSE REQUIREMENTS</b>
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The students will complete the following assignments, and the final grade shall be calculated using the percentages listed below.

Letters/ Journals – 15%;

Data Collection and Analysis Papers (Observation – 20%; Interview - 20%;

Political Text – 20%);

Five Approaches Project – 15%;

Qualitative Art Display – 10%.

## **Total: 100%**

A shortened description of the assignments follows. Additional details about the assignments are found in ECollege.

1. *Letters/ Qualitative Journals* –Write letters/ journals about your journey as a doctoral student, about qualitative research, and about the assigned reading. For the letters, consider your educational biography and how you are progressing throughout your journey. Questions such as the following would be appropriate. How does your positionality influence your practices relative to qualitative research? What is your developing researcher identity?

For the journals, you may consider reflecting on your dissertation research questions or to practice qualitative skills. Alternative texts (poetry, narrative, auto ethnography) are encouraged. As part of this assignment, a reading reflection will be required. More detailed instructions to these assignments shall be found on ECollege.

2. *Collecting and Analyzing Qualitative Texts*: For these assignments, you shall practice the skills of a qualitative researcher: reflecting, observing, writing, interviewing, and creating. Three different texts shall be analyzed: observation, interview, and political/historical text. For these activities, I recommend collecting data from naturalistic settings in schools or other community centers. Guides to these assignments are found on ECollege in the doc. sharing section.
3. *Five Approaches Discussion Team* – Prepare to lead a class discussion on one of the five approaches (narrative, case study, ethnography, phenomenology, grounded theory). Your group may elect to provide a short presentation on philosophy and/or methodology, a collection of discussion questions, and/ or an activity for the class to participate in. The purpose of the assignment is to foster in-depth understandings relative to the philosophy, aims, methodology, and implementation of the chosen approach to qualitative research. As part of this assignment, the each team member shall critically evaluate 2 articles in education using the chosen approach. Each team member shall write a review of 2 education articles using the chosen approach.
4. *Qualitative Art Display*: For this assignment, prepare an art display depicting your growth as a qualitative researcher, student, and educator. The art display may include multimedia, photography, music, artisan crafts, food, scrapbooks, or other modalities. As part of the display, include a written description or reflection.

**Assignment Submission Policy:** The instructor reserves the right to change course assignments, projects, and examinations throughout the semester. Each assignment/project must be completed and turned in by the due date given. All assignments are due by 11:59 midnight on the date indicated on the calendar. All assignments are submitted electronically on Ecollege. Students may elect to turn in a hard copy, but the assignment must be hand delivered to the instructor before the deadline.

The instructor maintains a strict late work policy. The instructor shall send students missing an assignment an email within 48 of the assignment submission. Late assignments shall be subject to letter grade reductions (usually a 70 or half credit) or non-acceptance

at the instructor's discretion. Students electing to withdraw from the course must contact the registrar by the university's official deadline for withdrawal.

In the case of unexpected emergencies, students must provide written documentation regarding their missed assignments. The instructor reserves the right to deny make-up opportunities, especially in cases of negligence. It is expected that all course assignments/projects (inside and outside of class and including examinations) will be completed at mastery level (as designated by the instructor). If (in the professional opinion of the instructor) an assignment/project is not satisfactorily completed, it may be returned to the student, and the student may be required to re-do the work until it is at mastery level. The instructor reserves the right to limit the number of times an assignment/project may be re-submitted and to establish a reasonable time frame for resubmissions. If any course assignment/project is not completed at a mastery level by the final resubmission deadline, the instructor reserves the right to assign the student a grade of "I" or "F" for the assignment and/or course--at the instructor's discretion.

**Attendance Policy:** As per University Policy A 13.02 effective September 1, 1996: Students are responsible for learning about and complying with the attendance policy stated in the catalog, Student's Guidebook, and/or faculty syllabus. The expectations for students enrolled in this course are that they will attend all class sessions, by actively participating in discussions and activities.

## TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

Due the nature of the course, students are required to have continuous on-line access. All students must have access to email and adequately functioning computer equipment. To use the university's online resources, students need a computer and an Internet service provider (ISP). Students also need an Internet browser, an email program, and a word processing program. A working familiarity with hardware and software is advantageous before entering the program.

### Hardware

Both Macintosh and Windows systems are acceptable. Students do not need to purchase a new system to begin online learning at the university.

### Windows

98/NT/2000/ME/XP  
Pentium (2 GHz or greater)  
128 megabytes (MB) random access memory (RAM)  
2 GB or greater hard drive

### Macintosh

OS 9.1 to OS X; G3, G4, or higher  
128 megabytes (MB) random access memory (RAM)  
2 GB or greater hard drive

### Software

#### Word Processor

Microsoft Word is preferred. Microsoft Works, WordPerfect, and AppleWorks are acceptable.

### Connectivity

Reliable Internet access through an established Internet service provider (ISP) is key to the online learning experience. Students should choose a DSL or cable-modem service where high-speed internet is available. If you have dial-up, you may experience problems.

### Web Browser

Internet Explorer (version 6.0 or greater) or Netscape (version 7.0 or greater) is required. These browsers are available for free in the download areas at [www.microsoft.com](http://www.microsoft.com) and [www.netscape.com](http://www.netscape.com), respectively.

Note: Browsers that are part of the MSN and AOL software are not acceptable, because they include proprietary modifications that may not work correctly with resources. Students may continue to use AOL or MSN as their Internet service provider, but once connected to the Internet, they should minimize the AOL or MSN window and launch Internet Explorer or Netscape.

### Adobe Acrobat Reader

Available at [www.adobe.com](http://www.adobe.com), this free program (Adobe Reader 8) allows you to view and print many forms and some full-text documents from online library databases.

Adobe Flash Player 9.0 Available at [www.adobe.com](http://www.adobe.com). This allows you to view any content delivered in Flash.

Video Players/Plugins: It is available for free download Quicktime, [www.apple.com/quicktime](http://www.apple.com/quicktime).

RealPlayer, available at [www.real.com](http://www.real.com), and Windows MediaPlayer 11.0, available at [www.microsoft.com/windows/windowsmedia/download](http://www.microsoft.com/windows/windowsmedia/download).

### Real Player

Lecture files will be viewed using Real Player. A free copy can be downloaded from [www.real.com](http://www.real.com).

### Java Applet

Since the online classroom is interactive and dynamic, it is important that students' Internet browser be Java-enabled. The Java Virtual Machine can be downloaded for free at <http://java.com/en/index.jsp>.

### Virus Protection

Viruses can be transmitted to computers as email attachments. Once a virus is resident on a computer, it can hinder performance, crash the computer, or damage files and hard drives—permanently. To protect their systems, students should purchase up-to-date antivirus software from a local computer store and regularly check their computers for viruses.

Note: Students should keep their antivirus software current by downloading updates from the software company's Web site. Antivirus software is usually licensed for one year, with free updates. Most antivirus software can be configured to download virus definitions (or updates) automatically when the computer connects to the Internet. Students should download virus updates weekly or more frequently. Commercially available programs such as Norton Antivirus or McAfee can be configured to update virus definitions automatically at least once a week.

## ACCESS AND NAVIGATION

The course requires the use of ECollege accessible through students' My Leo accounts. To login, students will need their valid student ID number and password.

eCollege Technical Concerns: Please contact the eCollege HelpDesk, available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, by sending an email directly to [helpdesk@online.tamuc.org](mailto:helpdesk@online.tamuc.org). You may also reach the HelpDesk by calling (toll-free) 1-866-656-5511. If you have a dial-up connect, you may experience problems uploading and downloading. If you feel your connection is not adequate, please use the lab at your site to upload documents.

## COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

### Email

Access to a reliable email service through an established Internet service provider (ISP) is critical to the online learning experience.

Course Concerns: If you have questions pertaining to the content of this course (e.g., questions about an exam, about course due dates, etc.), please contact via email.

Other Questions/Concerns: Contact the appropriate TAMU-C department relating to your questions/concern. If you are unable to reach the appropriate department with questions regarding your course enrollment, billing, advising, or financial aid, please call 903-886-5511 between the hours of 8:00a.m.-5:00p.m. Monday through Friday.

## COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

### Instructor Policies:

The instructor reserves the right to change course assignments, projects, examinations, and due dates throughout the semester. Each assignment/project must be turned in by the due date given. Late assignments/projects will be subject to a point deduction or non-acceptance at the instructor's discretion. Class participation and attendance will be considered in assigning the final course grade.

### Cheating and Plagiarism Policy:

The Student GuideBook provides penalties for misconduct by students, including academic dishonesty. Academic dishonesty includes cheating and plagiarism. The term "cheating" includes, but is not limited to, (1) use of any unauthorized assistance in taking quizzes, tests, or examinations; (2) dependence upon the aid of sources beyond those authorized by the instructor in writing papers, preparing reports, solving problems, or carrying out other assignments; and (3) the acquisition, without permission, of tests or academic material belonging to a faculty or staff member of the university. The term "plagiarism" includes, but is not limited to, the use of the published or unpublished work of another person, by paraphrase or direct quotation, without full and clear acknowledgement. It also includes the unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials. If a student engages in academic dishonesty related to this class, the student will receive a failing grade on the test or assignment and a failing grade in the course. In addition, the case will be referred to the Dean of Students for appropriate disciplinary action.

### Code of Ethics:

The Curriculum and Instruction Department expects that its students will abide by the Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas Educators (Chapter 247 of the Texas Administrative Code [www.sbec.state.tx.us](http://www.sbec.state.tx.us)) and as outlined in Domain IV: Fulfilling Professional Roles and Responsibilities of the Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities (PPR) Texas Examination of Educator Standards (TExES); and as also addressed in codes of ethics adopted by professionals in the education field such as the National Education Association (NEA) and the American Federation of Teachers (AFT).

### 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@tamuc.edu](mailto:StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.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*).

<b>COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR</b>
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<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Reading</u>	<u>Deadlines</u>
Aug. 25	What is qualitative research?		<b>TBA</b>
Sept. 8	Designing Qualitative Research.  Developing habits of observation and writing.	Flick, Part I Creswell, Chs. 1-3	
Sept. 22	Philosophical frameworks.  Developing habits of observation and writing.  Educational connoisseurship.	Creswell, Chs. 4-5 Flick, Part II	
Oct. 6	Collecting qualitative data. Developing habits of interviewing, observation, and writing.	Flick, Part III-IV Creswell, Ch. 6 Creswell, Chs. 6-7.	

Oct. 20	Analyzing qualitative data.  Developing habits of interviewing, analysis, and writing.	Flick, Part V  Creswell, Chs. 7-8
Nov. 3	Developing habits of interviewing, analysis, and writing.  Writing qualitative research.	Flick, Part VI  Creswell Ch. 9.
Nov. 17	Appreciating classical and primary texts.  Writing qualitative research.  Developing habits of writing and creativity.	Flick, Part VII Creswell, Chs. 10, 11
Dec. 1	Art-based qualitative inquiry.	