

**GEOG 727: Qualitative Methods**  
**Spring 2013: Tu 3:00-5:40 pm**

---

Professor Anne Bonds	<i>Email:</i>	bondsa@uwm.edu
Department of Geography	<i>Office:</i>	NWQ 6515
University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee	<i>Phone:</i>	229-4872

***Office Hours:*** Monday & Thursday 2:30 – 3:30, and by appointment

---

This course aims to deepen your understanding of qualitative research methodology and methods. To this end, in this class we will 1) explore a range of qualitative methods, including interviews, archival research, participant observation, and discourse analysis; 2) gain practice in developing and utilizing particular qualitative research techniques; 3) examine key issues in qualitative research, such as power relations, positionality, representation, and research ethics; and 4) consider the interconnections between theory, epistemology, and research methods.

The course will be conducted as a seminar focusing on your active engagement with the readings. Additionally, the class will operate as a “workshop” – where you will engage with various research questions as a means of considering theoretical, methodological and ethical concerns associated with the conduct of research. There are three primary objectives for the course. First, we will develop an expanded understanding of key qualitative research techniques and modes of analysis. Second, we will learn more about the relationship between theory and methodology and some of the central philosophical debates surrounding qualitative research methods. Finally, the class will provide the opportunity for you to gain practice in utilizing qualitative methods relevant to your research.

**Course Readings:**

- Readings are drawn from a variety of books and journals and are available as PDFs on the **course’s D2L site**.
- You *must* have the readings with you when you come to class.

**Course Requirements and Evaluation:**

	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Date Due</b>
Participation (regular participation, facilitation, peer assessment)	30%	All semester
Reflection and Reaction Exercises:		
Exercise #1: Research Evaluation	10%	Feb 5
Exercise #2: Epistemological Stances	10%	Feb 26
Exercise #3: Strategies/Methodologies	10%	April 16
Research Project:		
Proposal	5%	Mar 26
Presentation	10%	May 7
Write - up	25%	May 14

Participation: Active participation in this class is essential. This necessitates coming to class prepared and ready to discuss the course material. Missed classes, late arrival, and failure to talk and engage with class discussions about the readings will all negatively impact your grade. Please note that class attendance does not equal class participation.

Facilitation: To help move our discussions along, students will sign-up to facilitate a class meeting. The task of the facilitators will be to provide us with relevant background information, a thorough overview of the readings for the week, and to produce a series of specific discussion questions for us to think about and, well, discuss. NOTE: It is not the job of the facilitator to completely understand and explain every aspect of each reading for the rest of the class. Rather, the facilitators are responsible for getting things going and stimulating our thoughts and ideas. **Discussion facilitation can be creative!** I've had students introduce a week's topic with music (songs that reflect the themes), film clips, group activities, etc. I encourage you to discuss any ideas, questions, discussion strategies, etc. with me prior to your class discussion.

Peer assessment: Learning to provide – and to receive - constructive feedback is an important part of academic professionalization. You will give feedback to each of your peers based upon their research presentations.

#### Reflection and Reaction Exercises:

Exercise #1: Evaluation of research questions/methods. Select an example of research (ideally a journal article or book chapter) employing qualitative research methods that you find to be particularly compelling. It may be, for example, research that is empirically similar to your interests or perhaps an investigation that you'd like to model your own research after. Write up an analysis of the research, responding to the following items (2-3 pages, 12 pt font): What are the research questions? Methods used? How do the questions and methods relate? How are the methods connected to the theoretical framing? How are findings relayed? Why is the project compelling? Be prepared to present and discuss your evaluation with your classmates.

Exercise #2: Epistemological Stances Reaction. (*choose readings from weeks 3, 4, 5 or 6 to reflect upon*). Reaction papers should address a theme (i.e. ethics, politics, positionality, and representation) from the readings and integrate a discussion of at least two of the papers assigned for that theme. Reaction paper length – 2-3 pages.

Exercise #3 – Strategies/Methodologies Reaction. (*choose readings from weeks 7, 8,10,11, 12, or 13*). Be sure to incorporate themes considered in part II of the course (epistemological stances) as they relate to the method(s) you consider in your reaction. Reaction paper length – 2-3 pages.

Research Project: As noted in the course objectives, this class is designed to not only to help you gain a better understanding of qualitative methods and methodologies, but to also provide you with the opportunity to practice utilizing qualitative methods for your own research. Given this, **you are required to complete a portion of your research in this class**. How this looks will depend upon where you are in your academic studies. You may be in the early stages of developing a research project, and thus, the assignment will include you producing some portion of preliminary research in anticipation of launching a larger project. You may have an already developed topic and be interested in developing a portion

or a complete research proposal. You may also be in the midst of collecting data and may wish to complete two or more interviews and transcription or a textual or narrative analysis related to your larger project. You may use any method or combination of techniques we study in the course, including participant observation, document analysis, discourse analysis, or interviews. Your agenda for this project must be approved by me (via your proposal) and you will also be required to present your project to the class on the last day of classes. Your proposal should be a 1 -2 page write-up explaining 1) what you plan to complete for the final research project, 2) what method(s) you will use; 3) how it relates to your larger project or body of interests. Presentations will be 10 minutes long with Q and A.

### **Course Policies:**

**Participation:** I expect you to be respectful, prepared, and involved in the course and you can expect the same from me. An atmosphere of respect and a shared consideration for the wide variety of backgrounds and experiences brought to the classroom are our best resources for exploring the many issues raised by the readings and in our discussions. We all have a responsibility to ensure that an open and welcoming classroom environment is maintained. *Repeated absences and failure to participate in discussions will be noticed and will impact your grade.*

**Grading:** The percentage necessary to receive certain grades will be no higher than the following: 93% (A), 90% (A-), 85% (B), 80% (B-), 75% (C), 70% (C-), 65% (D), 60% (D-)

Except in the case of a verifiable medical or family emergency precluding timely submission, **late work will NOT be accepted.** Please come and talk to me in the event of a life or health emergency. Grade appeals must be submitted in writing.

**Accommodations:** To request academic accommodations due to a specific health issue, please contact the UWM Student Accessibility Center and inform me as soon as possible about special accommodations so that I can best meet your needs. Student Accessibility Center, Mitchell Hall Room 112, (414) 229-6287, <http://www4.uwm.edu/sac/>

**Academic Integrity:** Plagiarism, cheating, and other misconduct are serious violations of your contract as a student and I will consider them as such. You are expected to know and follow the University's guidelines: <http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/OSL/DOS/conduct.html>. You are guilty of cheating whenever you present as your own work something that you did not do. You are also guilty of cheating if you help someone else to cheat. Buying, copying, or quoting work without proper citation will result in serious consequences.

### **Course Readings and Schedule:**

NOTE: The outline may be subject to change (with advance warning) so please assume responsibility for keeping up with classroom announcements.

## **1. Introduction**

Week 1: 1/22 – Introductions: You, Me, the course

Week 2: 1/29 – Qualitative Method and Methodology in Human Geography

- H.P.M. Winchester. 2005. Qualitative Research and its Place in Human Geography. in Iain Hay ed., *Qualitative Research Methods in Human Geography*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. pp. 1-18.
- G. Pratt. 2009. qualitative methods and quantitative methods in D. Gregory, R. Johnston, G. Pratt, M.J. Watts and S. Whatmore, Eds. *The Dictionary of Human Geography*, 5<sup>th</sup> edition. West Sussex: Wiley-Blackwell, pp. 603-611.
- M. Crang. 2002. Qualitative methods: the new orthodoxy?, *Progress in Human Geography* 26(5): 647-655.
- M. Crang. 2003. Qualitative methods: touchy, feely, look-see?, *Progress in Human Geography* 27(4): 495-504.

Week 3: 2/5 -- Politics, Ethics, and Research Design

- S. Smith, 2001. “Doing qualitative research: from interpretation to action,” in Limb & Dwyer, eds. *Qualitative Methodologies for Geographers*. London: Arnold. pp. 23-40.
- G. Valentine, 2001. “At the drawing board: developing a research design,” Limb & Dwyer, eds. *Qualitative Methodologies for Geographers*. London: Arnold. pp. 41-54.
- D.G. Martin and J. Inwood. 2012. Subjectivity, Power, and the IRB. *The Professional Geographer* 64 (1), pp. 7-15
- M. Water. 1999. Notes on Methodology. *Black Identities: West Indian Immigrant Dreams and American Realities*. New York: Russell Sage, 347-371.

Additional recommended reading:

- T.S. Johnson. 2008. Qualitative Research in Question: A Narrative of Disciplinary Power With/in the IRB. *Qualitative Inquiry* 14 (2), pp. 212-232

\*\*\* Exercise #1 Due today!\*\*\*

## II. Epistemological Stances

Week 4: 2/12 -- Situating Qualitative Research

- Hill M. (1981) Positivism: A “hidden” philosophy in geography. In M. Harvey and B. Hollis, eds. *Themes in Geographic Thought*. London: Croom Helm, pp. 38-60.
- Schwandt T. (2000) Three epistemological stances for qualitative inquiry: interpretivism, hermeneutics, and constructionism. In N. Denzin and Y. Lincoln, eds. *Handbook of Qualitative Research*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, pp. 189-213.
- Geertz G. (1973) Thick description: toward an interpretive theory of culture, Chapter One in *Interpretation of Cultures*. New York: Basic Books, pp. 3-30.
- Charmaz K. (2000) Grounded theory: Objectivist and Constructivist methods. In N. Denzin and Y. Lincoln, eds. *Handbook of Qualitative Research*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, pp. 509- 536.

Week 5: 2/19 – Poststructural Theory & (Re)presentation

- Foucault, M (1970) *Las Meninas*, Chapter One, *The Order of Things*. NY: Random House, pp. 1-16. (Reading includes Foreword and Preface as well).
- Barnes T. and J. Duncan and Duncan J. and Barnes T. (1992) Introduction: writing worlds, and Afterword. In T. Barnes and J. Duncan, eds. *Writing Worlds: Discourse, Text, and*

- Metaphor in the Representation of Landscape. London and NY: Routledge, pp. 1-12, 248-253.
- Dittmer, J. 2010. Textual and Discourse Analysis. in DeLyser, D., S. Herbert, S. Aitken, M, Crang, and L. McDowell, eds. *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Geography*. London: Sage, pp. 274-286.

Additional Recommended Reading:

- Dewberry, J.D. 2010. Performative, Non-representational, and Affect-based Research: Seven Injunctions. in DeLyser, D., S. Herbert, S. Aitken, M, Crang, and L. McDowell, eds. *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Geography*. London: Sage. pp. 321-334

Week 6: 2/26 – Feminist Interventions: Power and Postitionality

- S. Harding. Introduction: Is there a feminist method? & Conclusion: epistemological questions. In S. Harding, ed., *Feminism and Methodology*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, p. 1-13; 181-190.
- Rose, G. 1997. Situating Knowledges: Positionality, reflexivities, and other tactics. *Progress in Human Geography*. 21 (3), pp 305 – 320.
- Mohanty, C. T. 1991. Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourses. In *Third World Women and the Politics of Feminism*, ed. Mohanty, C. T., A. Russo, and L. Torres. Indianapolis: Indiana University Press
- Kobayashi, A. 1994. Colouring the Field: Gender, ‘race’, and the politics of fieldwork. 46 (1), pp. 73-80.

**\*\*\*Exercise #2 Due in Class\*\*\***

**III. Strategies/Methodologies**

Week 7: 3/5 -- Interviews

- K. Dunn. 2010. Interviewing. In I. Hay, Ed. *Qualitative Research Methods in Human Geography*, Third Edition, Oxford, Oxford Univ. Press, pp. 101-138
- Elwood, S. & D. Martin (2000) “Placing” interviews: location and scales of power in qualitative research. *Professional Geographer* 52(4): 649-657.
- Duncan J. and Duncan N (2001) Theory in the field. *The Geographical Review* 91 (1-2): 399-406.
- Herod, A. (1993) Gender issues in the use of interviewing as a research method. *Professional Geographer* 45: 305-317.

Week 8: 3/12 -- Ethnography

- R. Kearns. 2010. Seeing with clarity: Undertaking Observational Research. In I. Hay, Ed. *Qualitative Research Methods in Human Geography*, Second Edition, Oxford, Oxford Univ. Press, pp. 241 -257.
- Burroway, M. (1991) The Extended Case Method, Chapter Thirteen in *Ethnography Unbound: Power and Resistance in the Modern Metropolis*. Berkeley: University of California Press, pp. 1-7; 271-287.
- S. Herbert 2000. For ethnography. *Progress in Human Geography*. 24:4:595-613.
- Katz, C. (1994) Playing the field: Questions of fieldwork in geography. *Professional Geographer* 46(1): 67-72.

Week 9: NO CLASS – SPRING BREAK

Week 10: 3/26 -- Focus groups

- J. Cameron. 2010. Focusing on the focus group. In I. Hay, Ed. *Qualitative Research Methods in Human Geography*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 152-72.
- P.E. Hopkins. 2007. Thinking critically and creatively about focus groups. *Area* 39:4:528-535.
- S. Starkweather. 2012. Telling family stories: collaborative storytelling, taking precedence and giving precedence in family group interviews with Americans in Singapore, *Area* 44(3), 289-295.

**\*\*\*\* Research Project Proposal Due in Class\*\*\*\***

Week 11: 4/2 -- Participatory Action Research

- Dowler, L. Fieldwork in the trenches: participant observation in a conflict area. In Limb & Dwyer, eds. (2001) *Qualitative Methodologies for Geographers*. London: Arnold. pp. 153-164.
- Kitchin, R and P. Hubbard (1999) Research, action and “critical” geographies. *Area* 31(3): 195-198.
- R. Pain. 2004. Social geography: participatory research. *Progress in Human Geography*. 28:5:652-663.
- C. Cahill. 2007. The personal is political: developing new subjectivities through participatory action research. *Gender, Place and Culture* 14:3:267-292.

Week 12: 4/9 -- Document Analysis and Archival Research

- Harris C. (2001) Archival fieldwork. *The Geographical Review* 91 (1-2): 328-334.
- Raitz K. (2001) Field observation, archives and explanation. *The Geographical Review* 91 (1-2): 121-131.
- M. Roche. 2010. “Historical Research and Archival Sources,” in pp. 133-146. In I. Hay, Ed. *Qualitative Research Methods in Human Geography*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 173-190.
- Roy, P. (2010) Analyzing empowerment: an ongoing process of building state-civil society relations – the case of Walnut Way in Milwaukee. *Geoforum* 41, pp. 337-348.
- Hodder I. (2000) The interpretation of documents and material culture. In N. Denzin and Y. Lincoln, eds. *Handbook of Qualitative Research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, p. 703-715.

Week 13: 4/16 -- Discourse Analysis

- Waitt, G. 2010. Doing Foucauldian Discourse Analysis—Revealing Social Realities. In I. Hay, Ed. *Qualitative Research Methods in Human Geography*. Third Edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 217-240.
- N. Fairclough. 1991. A Social Theory of Discourse. *Discourse and Social Change*. Cambridge, MA: Polity Press.
- Ferguson, J. 1994. Conceptual apparatus: the constitution of the object of “development”—Lesotho as “less developed country, in *The Anti-Politics Machine: “Development,” Depoliticization, and Bureaucratic Power in Lesotho*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, pp. 25-73.

**\*\*\*Exercise #3 Due in Class\*\*\***

#### **IV. Analysis**

Week 14: 4/23 -- Stages of Analysis

- Clifford, J (1990) Notes on fieldnotes, in R. Sanjek, ed. *Fieldnotes, The Making of Anthropology*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, pp. 47-70.
- Jackson, P. Making sense of qualitative data. In Limb & Dwyer, eds. (2001) *Qualitative Methodologies for Geographers*. London: Arnold. pp.199-214.
- Crang, M. Field work: making sense of group interviews. In Limb & Dwyer, eds. (2001) *Qualitative Methodologies for Geographers*. London: Arnold. pp. 215-233.
- M. Cope, 2010 Coding Qualitative Data, In I. Hay, Ed. *Qualitative Research Methods in Human Geography*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 281-294.
- Silverman D. 2000 Analyzing talk and text. In N. Denzin and Y. Lincoln, eds. *Handbook of Qualitative Research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, pp. 821-834.
- Richardson L. 2000. Writing: A method of inquiry. In N. Denzin and Y. Lincoln, eds. *Handbook of Qualitative Research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, pp. 923-948.

#### Week 15: 4/30 -- Evaluating Qualitative Research

- Rist, R. (2000) Influencing the policy process with qualitative research. In N. Denzin and Y. Lincoln, eds. *Handbook of Qualitative Research*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publication, pp.1001-1017.
- Baxter, J and J Eyles (1997) Evaluating qualitative research in social geography: establishing “rigour” in interview analysis. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers NS* 22:505-525.
- Bailey, C, C. White and R. Pain (1999) Evaluating qualitative research: dealing with the tension between “science” and “creativity”. *Area* 31(2): 169-178.
- Baxter, J and J Eyles (1999) Prescription for research practice? Grounded theory in qualitative evaluation. *Area* 31(2): 179-81.
- Bailey, C, C. White and R. Pain (1999) *Response*: 182-183.
- D. DeLyser & E. Pawson, 2010 From Personal to Public: Communicating Qualitative Research for Public Consumption, *Qualitative Research Methods in Human Geography*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. pp. 356-367.

#### Week 16: 5/7 -- Class presentations

**\*\*\*Final paper due in my mailbox by 4:30 pm on Tuesday, May 14\*\*\***

**Have a great summer!**