

New York University  
The Steinhardt School of Culture, Education, and Human Development  
Department of Humanities and Social Sciences

**RESCH-GE.2140.001 Approaches to Qualitative Inquiry**  
**Spring 2016 30 Hours, 3 credits**

**Instructor:** Elizabeth Norman PhD, Professor  
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**Time:** Tuesday 2:00 – 4:45  
**Location:** Waverly 669

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**Course Description:**

This course introduces students to the group of approaches to social science and humanistic research known as qualitative inquiry. These approaches include historical research, ethnography, phenomenology, case study, and narrative research, and employ methods of interviewing, discourse/content analysis, and participation observation. Emerging technology used includes digital analog recorders, videotape, voice recognition software, and software such as NVivo, and Atlasti for data ‘mining’ and coding. The course is designed as an introductory training course for students who plan to conduct qualitative research for theses or dissertations. Students will explicate studies that employ these approaches; discuss assumptions of qualitative inquiry; evaluate current technology; discuss standards of sampling, ethics, and validity, and design a qualitative research proposal.

This course is the first in the qualitative series offered at Steinhardt. It is geared toward first or second year doctoral students who have not yet begun their dissertation research but plan to use qualitative methods in their work. This course is the prerequisite to the more advanced and specialized qualitative methods courses offered in the school. It is not meant to constitute the entirety of students’ methods training. Rather, it provides an introductory treatment of the range of methods that students might employ if they are interested in researching a question that lends itself to a qualitative approach.

The course will be a combination of learning about and reading examples of the methods we study – drawing from anthropology, sociology, history, and cultural studies – and of “hands on” training in some of these methods (interviews and observation). In the settings and people students choose to study, students will apply these methods, for instance, online communities, classrooms and identity-focused clubs.

**Course Format**

The course design includes lectures, discussions, in-class workshops, out-of-class reading and writing assignments. Each week we will explicate readings to uncover the researcher’s argument, how it is supported throughout the text, and what types of data sources are used. We will spend a portion of each class discussing the progress of each student’s research experiences.

**Required Texts**

Creswell, John W. (2012). Qualitative Inquiry & Research Design (3rd edition). Thousand Oaks, California; Sage Publications.

Creswell, John W. (2016). 30 Essential Skills for the Qualitative Researcher. (1<sup>st</sup> edition) Thousand Oaks CA: Sage Publishers

Wolcott, H. (2009). Writing Up Qualitative Research. (3rd edition). Thousand Oaks CA: Sage Publishers

### **Suggested Texts:**

Booth, W., Colomb, G., & Williams, J. (2008). The Craft of Research. 3<sup>rd</sup> edition. Chicago, Illinois: University of Chicago Press.

Creswell, John (2014) Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches. 4<sup>th</sup> edition. Thousand Oaks CA: Sage Publishers.

Rubin, H.J. & Rubin, I. (2012). Qualitative Interviewing: The Art of Hearing Data. (3<sup>rd</sup> edition). Thousand Oaks CA: Sage Publishers.

Saldana J. (2015) The Coding Manual for Qualitative Researchers. 3<sup>rd</sup> edition. Thousand Oaks CA: Sage Publishers.

Yin, R (2014) Case Study Research. 5<sup>th</sup> edition. Thousand Oaks CA: Sage Publishers.

### **Suggested Websites:**

Please check the NYUClasses site for this course. There are links to qualitative software sites, and NYU Human Subjects information and tutorial. I've also included links I find particularly helpful for students on writing, research and grammar: OWL,UNCs dissertation advice and Rutgers Writing and Grammar sites.

### **Course Requirements and Grading**

*See assignment tab on NYUClasses for more information*

***All assignment deadlines are firm. I will not grant extensions.*** For each day that an assignment is late, your final grade will be lowered by one-third (e.g., an A- becomes a B+ if an assignment is one day late).

***All assignments must be posted as Docx or Doc.***NO PDFs are not accepted.

***All individual assignments must include this honor code at the end of your paper:***

*I pledge that the attached work is my own and that I have received no assistance from anyone in any way executing it. In other words, this work was neither edited nor rewritten by another. The words are my own. If I have used someone else's ideas, those ideas have been given full and proper credit. All reference works actually exist and have been fully identified. I pledge that nothing here has been disguised so as to mislead the reader. I understand that it is my responsibility to make public immediately all violations of the code by anyone.*

### 1. Weekly Class Research Questions (5%)

Each week when we are discussing a particular qualitative approach –ethnography etc—you will write a research question from your area of interest, using the wording of that particular approach. We will begin those classes by reviewing what you posted on NYUClasses. Questions are due by 9 pm Monday evening. DO NOT post during class time.

### 2. Class Participation (20%)

All students are expected to prepare for every class, attend every classes and actively participate in classroom discussions, students groups, and as weekly student leaders.

### 3. Assignment #1 Analysis of qualitative software (10%)

#### *Post on NYUClasses Discussion*

A 250 word evaluation of: a bibliographic software program (Refworks, EndNote,Zotero), Voice recognition software (dragonfly), video analysis (transana), data analysis (NVivo, Atlasti,MAXQDA), organization/writing (DT search, Scrivener) and other software programs. You will work in teams of two to four students. I need to approve your choice of software in-class or via email. Answer the questions listed on page 210 in Creswell plus add the cost of the software. Reading: Creswell (30 Essential) Chapter 21 Using a Computer Software Program for Data Analysis. See External Links tab on NYUClasses for qualitative software sites. Mac users—make sure the software is compatible with your system.

DUE: Feb 16<sup>th</sup>

### 4. Assignment #2 Participant Observation (10%)

Students will conduct a two-hour observation in a public setting --with prior approval. Students will choose a setting that allows them to engage in some aspect of their research interests.

Prior to this observation you will *post on the NYUClasses Assignment Tab* an outline of: how you plan to organize your observation; define the population you will observe, and present a rationale for your choice of population.

Attachments to read are posted on the assignment page. Two completed examples of this assignment are also posted for your review.

DUE: March 8th

### 5. Assignment #3 Field notes: (10%)

After students conduct their two-hour observation they will *post field notes on NYUClasses Assignment Tab*. Researchers maintain a record or diary of details about the events of the observation, their reactions to these events, and changes in the event and your views over time. These notes become the foundation of developing (or refining) research questions, determining codes/themes, concepts, theories, and provide the basis for answering research questions. See the assignment tab for more information and for examples of how-to format this assignment

DUE: March 29th

### 6. Assignment #4 Interview (10%)

Students will conduct one interview with someone who represents a population of interest. You must inform the subject that information will only be used in this class, and you must give your subject anonymity. Who are you interviewing and why? Date? Place? The interview *must be a minimum of 45 minutes and audio recorded*. Post your questions on NYUClasses Assignment (#4). See Creswell page 165 for an example of interview questions.

DUE: April 5<sup>th</sup>

### **7. Assignment #5 Content analysis (10%)**

Students will post three *pages from their interviews as an attachment on NYUClasses Assignment* and using software (ATLAS.ti, NVivo etc) or hand coding present an analysis on their interview. You must include codes and themes in your analysis Please see the assignment tab for specific questions to be answered.

DUE: April 26th

### **8. Assignment #6 Final paper (25%)**

Using the semester assignments as a foundation, design a qualitative research study. Maximum length 10 pages. Points will be reduced if the paper exceeds this length. The paper length does not include references or appendices. Paper must be formatted in APA or Chicago—state the writing style you are using on the cover page. No formatting errors. No spelling errors. No grammar errors. See examples of papers on the assignment tab.

DUE: May 13<sup>th</sup>

### **9. Human Subjects Tutorial. (No grade )**

Federal law mandates that all researchers complete a short module on involving human subjects in research. NYU has just changed its requirement. If you are a student who will be conducting research (we will discuss in more detail in class), you will have to complete the CITI tutorial. I am not requiring students complete this tutorial but if you do complete it, I am anxious for your feedback and suggestions about incorporating into future classes. <https://www.citiprogram.org/>

You create an account t under “access requires registration as an affiliate of a subscribing CITI institution.” You’ll see NYU on the dropdown menu. DUE:?

### **10. Weekly Student Leaders (No grade but required to complete the course)**

Using the information you’ve learned in this and previous classes, be prepared to critique the week’s qualitative study and lead the class in a 20-25 minutes discussion. There is an attachment on NYUClasses with suggestions on critiquing qualitative research, but it is a suggestion only. You can approach these articles however you want. Remember the basic rule of critique: What were the authors trying to “say,” Did they succeed? Why and why not?

11. If you are not familiar with the current Bobst data bases and how-to search, sign up for a free library class: <http://nyu.libcal.com/> You should look at: <http://guides.nyu.edu/friendly.php?s=tutorials> and <http://guides.nyu.edu/>

## **WEEKLY COURSE SCHEDULE**

### **1. January 26 Introduction**

#### **Readings:**

1. Creswell, Chapter One: Introduction.
2. Creswell (30 Essential) Chapter One. Thinking Like a Qualitative Researcher
2. Wolcott, Chapter One: On Your Mark
3. Suggested Reading: “Thoughts on Choosing a Research Mentor” NIH Office of Intramural training & Education. (On NYU Classes Weekly Reading)

## 2. February 2 Qualitative Approaches to Research

### Readings:

1. Creswell, Chapter Two: Philosophical Assumptions and Interpretive Frameworks.
2. Creswell Chapter Three: Designing a Qualitative Study.
3. Creswell Chapter Four: Five Qualitative Approaches to Inquiry
4. Creswell (30 Essential) Chapter 6 Using Philosophy and Theory in Qualitative Research.
5. Qualitative Study: McDermott (2010) "Professional judgments of risk and capacity in situations of self-neglect among older people." Aging and Society 30(6),1055. (PDF on NYUClasses Weekly Readings links")

Assignment: set up team to review software (assignment #1)

## 3. February 9. The Tools of Qualitative Research. Getting organized. Standards of Validation and Evaluation.

### Readings:

1. Creswell. Chapter Eight Data Analysis and Representation.
2. Creswell. Chapter Ten: Standards of Validation and Evaluation.
3. Wolcott, Chapter Two: Get Going.
4. Wolcott, Chapter Three: Keep Going
5. Creswell (30 Essential) Chapter 22 Implementing Validity Checks. Chapter 23 Conducting Intercoder Agreement.
6. Qualitative study. Creswell Appendix C: Cognitive representations.

## 4. February 16 . Overview of Select Qualitative software.

Student led groups will summarize and evaluate select software programs that can be used in qualitative research.

Assignment: To be posted on NYUClasses Discussion Forums before class —Assignment #1 evaluation of software. Post as a group. In narrative or outline form. Your group will also be presenting in class. You can use PowerPoint slides.

## 5. February 23. Qualitative Methods: Interviewing, content analysis (coding, themes) and participation observation.

### Readings:

1. Creswell, Chapter Seven: Data Collection.
2. Wolcott, Chapter Four: Linking Up.
3. Creswell (30 Essential) Chapter 18 Coding Text Data, Chapter 19 Coding Images and Pictures, Chapter 20 Developing Theme Passages.
4. How and What to Code on NYU Classes Weekly Reading
5. Qualitative study: Creswell, Appendix D Developing Long-Term Physical Activity.
6. Recommended: If you have the recommended books by Creswell, Yin and Saldana, read the pages on these topics.

## 6. March 1 Ethnography and Participant Observation

### Readings:

1. Creswell, "Ethnography", p. 90-96; 232-236; 262-263;274-276.
2. Wolcott Chapter Five: Tightening Up.

3. Creswell (30 Essential) Chapter 14 Conducting a good observation.
4. Cherry, E., Ellis, C. DeSourcey, M. (2010). "Food for Thought, Thought for Food: Consumption, Identity, and Ethnography." *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, 20(10), 1-28. On NYUClasses. Weekly reading List tab.
5. The Trials of Alice Goffman (2016, January 17). NYTimes Magazine. PDF on NYU Classes. Weekly reading list tab.
6. Review participant observation notes on Assignment tab.
7. Qualitative Study: Creswell Appendix E

## 7. March 8 Ethnography and field notes

### Readings:

1. Creswell, p. 166-172; 197-199; 262-263.
2. Wolfinger, N. (2002) "On Writing Field notes" *Qualitative Research*, 2(1), 85-95. (Available on NYUClasses weekly reading links tab.)
3. Qualitative study—Hirsch, J. et.al (2007). The Inevitability of Infidelity: Sexual Reputation, Social Geographies, and Martial HIV Risk in Rural Mexico. (available on NYUClasses under weekly reading links tab)

**Assignments:** To be posted on NYUClasses Discussion Forums: An ethnographic research question and  
Assignment #2 Your Participant Observation Guide. On the assignment tab

## 8. March 15th Spring Break No Class

## 9. March 22nd. Case Study and interviewing

### Readings:

1. Creswell, 97-102; 199-200; 264-265
2. Qualitative study Creswell Appendix F Campus response

## 10. March 29. Case study and interviewing

### Readings:

1. Review interviewing notes on NYUClasses assignment tab
2. Creswell p. 163-166; 172-173.
3. Creswell (30 Essential) Chapter 15 Designing an interview protocol.
4. Qualitative Study: Struges and Hanrahan (2004). "Comparing telephone and face-to-face qualitative interviewing: a research note." (Available on NYUClasses under weekly reading links tab)

**Assignment:** To be posted on NYUClasses Discussion Forums: A case study research question and  
To be posted on NYUClasses Assignments —Assignment #3 Field notes

## 11. April 5th. Historical research and content analysis.

### Readings:

- 1 Andrews T., Burke, J (2007). What Does It Mean to Think Historically. (PDF on Weekly reading list )
2. Zhang, Yan, Wildemurth B., Qualitative Analysis of Content (Link on Weekly Reading List)
- 3 Cassie-To Amuse and Weinstein-To Amuse. (Link on Weekly reading list)
4. Review: How and What to Code on NYU Classes Weekly Reading-Week 5
5. Suggested reading: Boothe, “Engaging sources actively.” p. 87-100.
6. Qualitative study. Weiner, Mark. (2002) “Consumer Culture and Participatory Democracy: The Story of Coca Cola During World War II”. Food in the USA: A Reader. Ed. Carole Counihan. Rutledge: New York 123- 141. (Link on Weekly Reading list)

**Assignments:** To be posted on NYUClasses Discussion Forums before class – An historical research question.

To be posted on NYUClasses Assignments —Assignment #4 interview questions

## 12. April 12th. Phenomenology

### **Readings:**

1. Creswell 76-83; 225-229; 259-260.
- 2 Qualitative study: McCormack R et al (2014) "Voices of Homeless Alcoholics Who Frequent Bellevue Hospital: A Qualitative Study" (On NYUClasses Weekly Readings tab)

**Assignment:** To be posted on NYUClasses Discussion Forums before class – A phenomenological research question.

## 13. April 19<sup>th</sup> University Committee Activities Involving Human Subjects (UCAIHS)—ethical issues with qualitative research.

### **Readings:**

1. Creswell 56-60;174-175.
2. Creswell (30 Essential) Chapter 16 Collecting Data with Marginalized Populations, Chapter 17 Being Culturally Aware in Global Qualitative Research.

## 14 . April 26<sup>th</sup> 8. Narrative research and writing

### **Readings:**

1. Creswell, 70-76; 189-193;258-259
2. Wolcott, p. 45-63.
3. Qualitative Study: Creswell Appendix B, “Living in the Space Between Participant and Researcher.”
4. Suggested Reading: Creswell (30 Essential) Chapter 25 Writing a Qualitative Way, Chapter 26 Writing reflexively

**Assignment:** To be posted on NYUClasses Discussion Forums before class:

A narrative research question

2. To be posted on NYUClasses Assignments-- Assignment #5 content analysis of interviews

## 15. May 3<sup>rd</sup> Mixed methods. Challenges for qualitative scholars

### **Reading:**

1. The Nature and Design of Mixed Methods Research. (On NYU Classes Weekly Reading link)

Suggested reading: Creswell, John (2014) Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approach es. 4<sup>th</sup> edition. Thousand Oaks CA: Sage Publishers.

**Assignment:** To be posted on NYUClasses Discussion Forums before class:  
A mixed method question

**May 13. Assignment: Final paper due on NYUClasses.**

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