

**New York University
International Education Program
Department of Applied Statistics, Social Science, and Humanities
Fall 2017**

**INTE.GE.2007: Qualitative Methods in Comparative Education
Tuesdays 4:55 – 6:35
Room: TISC LC9
Last updated August 17, 2017**

Professor: Amy Kapit

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Recitations: 6:45 – 7:45pm in SILV 510; 8 – 9pm in TISC LC3

Office: 246 Green Street, Basement

Office hours: By appointment via email

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course provides an introduction to qualitative methods used in comparative education and the social sciences. It is intended to provide an overview of particular techniques in research design, data collection, and data analysis most commonly associated with qualitative research. Upon completing this course, you should be able to:

- (1) understand and critique qualitative studies that you read,
- (2) supervise someone else's qualitative work (e.g., an independent consultant hired to conduct a qualitative study for an organization for which you work),
- (3) conduct your own qualitative inquiry, having acquired a particular skill set which should be highly valued in your future jobs (keep your reference books on hand!).

Part One includes an introduction to qualitative methods. We will begin with an overview of key perspectives on research, different types of studies, and the main differences between qualitative and quantitative traditions. In addition, understanding how to think, write, critique, and argue about social science research is an important piece of this section.

Part Two focuses on research design and data collection. We will read "how-to" methods books and you will employ these methods. We will also read examples from experienced researchers that illustrate how these researchers employ these methods and to what effect. We will debrief your experiences, discuss issues that arise, and answer questions you have about hands-on practice. Key methods include individual interviews, focus groups, observation, and document review.

Part Three provides the opportunity for you to share your own research experiences from the semester, draft reports, and completed studies.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND EVALUATION

This course requires the active participation of all class members through small and large-group activities, presentations, active listening, debate, and discussion. Other instructional methods employed in the course include lectures and guest presentations. You are expected to work with other students outside of class to prepare assignments. Please feel free to take advantage of my office hours to talk about questions concerning assignments and comments or questions you have about course readings and topics. **If you have logistical questions, please consult with a classmate first, then contact me with your question if your classmate cannot help you.**

Specific requirements are as follows:

- 1) *Class Attendance, Participation, and Groupwork (20%)*: Class attendance and regular participation is required for this course. This includes **active listening, comments on readings, and small group activities**. I expect your participation to demonstrate familiarity with the assigned reading. If you must miss a class for any reason, please let me know in advance. Your class participation grade will be calculated as follows:
 - a) All group members will complete peer evaluations that will factor into your participation grade (10pts).
 - b) On days when we have guest speakers, you are required to **post 1-2 questions for the speaker on NYU Classes by 11:59 p.m.** the night before (1pt per speaker; you may skip one week without penalty, but if you post questions for all speakers, you will get 2 bonus points).
 - c) Participation in class and recitations (4pts)

- 2) *Academic Integrity Wagner Oath (P/F)*: I take academic integrity very seriously. All assignments must adhere to standards of academic ethics. Your work must reflect your own writing and ideas. According to the Steinhardt School of Education Statement on Academic Integrity, you violate the principle of academic integrity by turning in work that does not reflect your own ideas or includes text that is not your own; when you submit the same work for two different courses without prior permission from the instructor; when you receive help on a take-home examination when you are expected to work independently; when you cheat on exams; and when you plagiarize material.

Any student who submits work that constitutes plagiarism will be subject to disciplinary sanctions, which range from failure of the course to dismissal from the school.

By **Monday, September 11th**, please complete the NYU Wagner Academic Oath form located at: <http://wagner.nyu.edu/students/academicOath>. Post the acknowledgement that the form has been completed on Classes under the "Assignments" tab. You will receive a "P" for this assignment if you complete the oath. If you do not complete this oath, you will fail the class.

- 3) *Protection of Human Subjects tutorial and approval (P/F)*: All students must take and pass the University Committee on Activities Involving Human Subjects on-line Training Program by **Monday, September 18nd** to receive a "P" for this assignment. Please go to www.citiprogram.org, on the upper right hand corner of the screen, click on "Register." The registration process will walk you through 7 steps. Select **Social and Behavioral Research Investigators** under Human Subjects Research, and complete the **basic course** which consists of 16 learning modules. To save an electronic copy of the completion certificate, click on "Print Report." The report will open up as a PDF document which then can be saved (or printed for your records). *Students must post a copy of their score on Classes under the "Assignments" tab by the start of class on the due date.
- 4) *Group Problem Statement with Research Question (20%)*: Working in groups of 3 or 4 please develop a **problem statement with potential research question(s)** (two-three pages, maximum) related to a topic of your own choosing. The problem statement should summarize the intellectual puzzle, or the gap in knowledge, that requires your investigation. The research question should be focused enough to be answerable and feasible in the course of the semester and should clearly require qualitative - not quantitative - methods. Please also list methods you anticipate using as well as your anticipated data sources (sample). These may include observational, interview, focus group, or document review techniques. You may also use another method of your choice. This assignment should include five-six academic references that relate to your question and support/defend your problem statement. Submit your problem statement, which includes your research questions and data collection methods and sources, together with references in a Word file in NYU Classes under the "Assignments" tab by **Monday, October 2th, 4 p.m. Bring a hard copy with you to class**. We will continue to workshop the research questions in class.
- 5) *Data Collection Protocols (10%)*: In your groups, create protocols to use in collecting the types of data appropriate to your research question(s). (Each group must develop at least two protocols.) More specific guidance in developing data collection protocols will be provided in class. You must receive feedback from the TA and me as well as a grade on the protocols **prior to** collecting any data in the field. The protocols are due on **Monday, October 16th, 11:59 p.m. and should be posted in Classes under the "Assignments" tab. Please bring hard and soft copies (on a memory stick) to class on October 17th**.
- 6) *Transcripts/Field Notes and Researcher Memo (10%)*: Each student is required to prepare and submit at least one of the following four types of transcript/field notes (i.e., raw data) in addition to a Researcher Memo. The transcript/field notes and Researcher Memo are due on **Monday, November 13th, 11:55 p.m. and should be posted in Classes under the "Assignments" tab**. Please bring hard copies of your transcripts/field notes to class on **Tuesday, November 14th**. Although researchers do not usually share field notes with others, we will

share and discuss these notes in class. *NB*: Transcripts and field notes are critical ingredients for qualitative work. To yield the most accurate results, it is best to transcribe and record your notes *as soon as possible* after you have completed the field work.

- a) **Observation field notes**: These field notes should reflect at least one 1.5-hour observation of a public or private setting of your choosing using the observation protocol you developed. Choose a setting that allows you to engage with some aspect of the research question you have chosen. Remember, private settings require verbal permission from the people you will be observing. Observations must conform to NYU's guidelines regarding research involving human subjects. Please use common sense, as well, in conducting this work and do not put yourself or your "subjects" at undue risk.
- b) **Individual interview transcript**: This transcript should reflect the (1-hour, minimum total; can include 20 minutes each from 3 separate interviews) individual interview you will have conducted using the interview protocol you developed. Choose an individual who will allow you to engage with some aspect of the research question you have chosen. Interviews must conform to NYU's guidelines regarding research involving human subjects. Please use common sense, as well, in conducting this work and do not put yourself or your "subjects" at undue risk.
- c) **Focus group discussion**: This transcript should reflect a focus group discussion you will have conducted (1-1.5-hour, minimum) using the focus group discussion protocol you developed. Group members may conduct the focus group session together (in pairs), however if you submit the transcript for this assignment you must have been the focus group facilitator.
- d) **Document review**: These document review notes should reflect your analysis of at least one document (comprising at least 5 pages) or other material (non-human) data source.
- e) **Researcher memo**: You will complete one 2-3-page (double-spaced) Researcher Memo in which you reflect on two aspects of qualitative research: 1) reflexivity/subjectivity (i.e., your role as researcher in the process of collecting data), and 2) preliminary "insights," "a-ha moments, etc. from the data you have collected to date.

****Interview transcript requirement (P/F)**: Each student is required to submit a transcript from a 1-hour minimum interview. This may be submitted either as part of your individual transcript/fieldnote assignment, or as part of your appendix in your final paper**

- 7) **Group Data Analysis and Final Research paper (40%)**: After you have completed the data collection for the research question you are studying, you will write it up in a paper (15-20 pages maximum (not including References or Appendices), double-spaced, 12 pt. font). The paper should contain the following sections:
 - a) **Introduction (1-2 pages)**: This contains your problem statement, research question(s), and the significance of the investigation. Here you should also provide a "road map" of the rest of the paper—i.e., a paragraph containing a sentence summarizing each of the following sections.
 - b) **Literature review (3-5 pages)**: This section describes the key academic literature on the topic under study. Be sure to discuss only the literature that is relevant to your research. Do not quote sources extensively—it is almost always better to paraphrase and cite than to quote.
 - c) **Methods and Sample (3-5 pages)**: Here you will describe how you selected your informants, how you chose the sites for observation, how you conducted your data collection, which difficulties you ran into in the process, and how you attempted to address these difficulties, and limitations. (*NB*: for this paper this section should be longer and more detailed than it would be for a typical article or organization report.)
 - d) **Findings and Discussion (6-8 pages)**: Here you categorize and describe your key findings, along with explanation (interpretation) as to what your findings mean. Provide support for your argument, and be sure to clearly distinguish your opinions from those of your participants.
 - e) **Conclusion (1-2 pages)**: Briefly recap what you have told your reader up to this point, and summarize your main arguments/conclusions in answer to your research question(s), and note areas/questions meriting future research. If appropriate, provide recommendations for policy or practice.
 - f) **Appendix**: Includes all research protocols, transcriptions, document reviews, and field notes. Researcher memos do not need to be included.

All first drafts are due (P/F) on **Tuesday, November 28 at 4 p.m.** to be posted under the “Assignments” tab in Classes as well as brought to class as a hard copy, and you will present your research project to the class on **December 5th**. During these sessions, you will receive feedback from your classmates and me. **The final class session on December 12th will be devoted to “workshopping” your papers.** You will be able to incorporate this feedback into your final paper. **Final papers are due by midnight on Tuesday, December 19th and should be posted under the “Assignments” tab in Classes.**

- 8) *DEADLINES and Policy on late assignments:* Papers are due on the dates and at the times listed. In other words, if a paper is due at 4:55 p.m., that means 4:55 p.m., not 4:56 p.m. In fact, Classes will not let you post an assignment past the time at which it is due. Barring serious illness or family emergency (both require documentation), **late papers will be reduced by 1/3 of a grade for each 24-hour period** for which they are turned in after the deadline. For example, a paper turned in one day late with a grade of B would be marked down to a B-. Exceptions are granted only in extreme circumstances and require written documentation. Examples of exceptional circumstances include a learning disability (documented by NYU in the form of a written letter from the Center for Students with Disabilities) or hospitalization. Changing topics, regions, countries of study for an assignment, poor time management, and procrastination *do not count as exceptional circumstances*.
- 9) *Criteria for grading written work:* Preparation and accuracy of data, strength and clarity of written arguments and quality and logic of analysis.
- 10) *Special Accommodations:* Any student attending NYU who needs an accommodation due to a chronic, psychological, visual, mobility and/or learning disability, or is Deaf or Hard of Hearing should register with the Moses Center for Students with Disabilities at (212) 998-4980, 240 Greene Street, www.nyu.edu/csd.

STRONG RECOMMENDATIONS

The **NYU library** offers guided tours. I strongly recommend that you make an appointment with the library staff for a tour. They will describe which search engines and other kinds of tools are available and will explain how to conduct on-line searches for academic literature, among other key research activities. They have an excellent reputation. This type of tutorial can save you tremendous time in preparing your research study. They also offer tutorials in data analysis software such as Nvivo and Atlas.ti.

Review resources on NYU Classes regularly. There are many useful resources for your assignments that you may forget about if you only see them at the outset of the semester. For example, there is a link to *Express Scribe*, which is a software that helps transcribe interviews

Meet with me about your: I would like to meet with each of you in your groups in the first half of the semester, i.e. **before Oct 24**. Please email me to schedule a time.

ASSIGNMENTS SUMMARY TABLE:

Description:	Percentage of grade:	Date due:
1. Attendance and participation	20%	All classes
2. Academic integrity	P/F	All classes/assignments & Sept. 11 (Form)
3. Human subjects	P/F	All assignments/activities & Sept. 18 (Tutorial)
4. Problem statement/RQ(s)	20%	October 2
5. Data collection protocols	10%	October 16
6. Transcripts/field notes & Researcher memo	10%	November 13
7. Final research paper (draft)	P/F	November 27
8. Final research paper	40%	December 15

REQUIRED READINGS

The required readings are available in the NYU bookstore and on line via the NYU Classes webpage. The required readings that are not available either in the bookstore or on NYU Classes are available through the NYU library’s ejournals. **Additionally, please check the NYU Bobst catalogue for electronic versions of Burde and Booth; and NYU Bobst catalogue for E-Z Borrow options for Maxwell and Rubin books.** If you have difficulties locating readings, please ask the NYU library staff or a classmate to assist you.

NYU Bookstore:

1. Burde, Dana. (2014). *Schools for Conflict or for Peace in Afghanistan*. Columbia University Press.
2. Maxwell, J. (2013). *Qualitative research design: An interactive approach*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
3. Rubin, H. & Rubin, I. (2012). *Qualitative interviewing: The art of hearing data*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

RECOMMENDED READINGS

1. Booth, W., Colomb, G. & Williams, J. (2008). *The Craft of Research*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
2. Creswell, J. (2012). *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing among Five Approaches* [3rd Ed]
3. Emerson, R. M., Fretz, R. I. & Shaw, L. L. (1995). *Writing ethnographic fieldnotes*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
4. King, Elisabeth. (2013). *From Classrooms to Conflict in Rwanda*. Cambridge University Press.
5. Murphy-Graham, Erin (2012). *Opening Minds, Improving Lives: Education and Women's Empowerment in Honduras*. Vanderbilt University Press.
6. Ragin, C. (1994). *Constructing social research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge Press.
7. Schensul, S., Schensul, J. & LeCompte, M. (1999). *Essential ethnographic methods*. AltaMira Press.
8. Wolcott, H. (2001). *Writing up qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
9. Yin, R. (1994). *Case study research: Design and methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Course Schedule and Required Readings¹

¹ Please note: this schedule and the assigned readings are subject to change (with advanced notice to you).

* Readings with one star are available on NYU Classes. The rest are in your required books or online via the NYU library databases.

Part I: Introduction to qualitative methodology

(1) September 5: Course introduction; syllabus review

Introduction to Social Science Research & the Qualitative Paradigm

- Rubin, H. & Rubin, I. Chapter 2.
- Ragin, C. Ch. 1: What is Social Research?; Ch. 2: The Goals of Social Research *
- Klees, S. (2008). Reflections on theory, method, and practice in comparative and international education. *Comparative Education Review* 52(3), 301-328.*

(2) September 12: Logic, Argument, and Theory in Social Science Research: Developing your question

Student Panel: Former qualitative methods students present on their class projects

- Maxwell, J.: Chapters 2 and 3.
- Booth, W., Colomb, G. & Williams, J.: Section III: Making a Claim and Supporting It
- Kristin Luker. 2008. *Salsa Dancing into the Social Sciences: Research in an Age of Info-Glut*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press: Chapter 4 (What is This a Case of, Anyway?)*
- LeCompte & Schensul: Chapter 5. Read section on designing question* (pp. 99-109)
- Human Subjects Tutorial: <https://www.citiprogram.org/>. Please refer to the NYU Classes page under *Assignments – Protection of Human Subjects Tutorial* for additional details.

Recommended:

- LeCompte & Schensul: Chapter 10 Human subjects' protection*
- Maxwell, J.: Chapter 4 (Research Questions: What Do You Want to Understand?)
- Booth, W., Colomb, G. & Williams, J.: Section II: Asking Questions Finding Answers

DUE by posting to Classes by 11:55p.m. September 11: Wagner Academic Code Form (Test Results)

(3) September 19: Reviewing the Literature and Constructing a Problem Statement

- Kristin Luker. 2008. *Salsa Dancing into the Social Sciences: Research in an Age of Info-Glut*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press: Chapter 5 (Reviewing the Literature)*

- Kapit, A. 2015. Introduction in *Protecting Education from Attack: Humanitarian Agencies and the Implementation of a New Global Norm in the Case of Palestine*. (Doctoral dissertation, New York University).
- <http://guides.library.harvard.edu/literaturereview>

Additional resource for literature reviews:

- Creswell, J.: *Educational research: Planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research*. Chapter 4: Reviewing the literature.
- UC Santa Cruz. "Write a Literature Review." Available at: <http://guides.library.ucsc.edu/c.php?g=119714&p=780881>

DUE by posting to Classes by 11:55 p.m. September 18: Human Subjects Exam Results

BOTH RECITATIONS on September 19th will be held in Library Lab 619 (Bobst, 6th floor) from **6:45-7:45pm** for a special library tutorial with Melissa Beuoy, NYU's Librarian for Education

(4) September 26: Qualitative Research Design: Ethnography, Case Study, Mixed-Methods Research

- LeCompte & Schensul: Chapter 4 (only excerpts posted).
- Maxwell, J.: Chapter 1.
- Yin, R. (1994). *Case study research: Design and methods*. (Chapter 1 and Chapter 2). *
- Rubin, H. & Rubin, I.: Chapter 3 (Qualitative Data-Gathering Methods and Style)
- Burde, D. (2012). Assessing impact and bridging methodological divides: Randomized trials in countries affected by conflict. *Comparative Education Review* 56(3), 448-473.

Part II: Qualitative Data Collection

(5) October 3: Key Methodological Techniques: Case Selection, Sample Selection, and Respondent Recruitment

- Small, M. (2009). 'How many cases do I need?': On science and the logic of case selection in field-based research. *Ethnography* 10(1), 5-38.*
- LeCompte & Schensul: Chapter 5. Read sections on constructing population/case* (pp. 109-126)
- Maxwell, J.: Chapter 5 (Methods: What Will You Actually Do?)

DUE by posting to Classes by 11:55 p.m. October 2: Problem Statement (including research questions)

(6) October 10: Key Methodological Techniques: Protocol Design for Semi-Structured and Unstructured Individual Interviews

Guest Speak via Skype: Rachel Wahl

- Rubin, H. & Rubin, I.: Chapters 5-9.
- Wahl, R. (2016). Learning world culture or changing it? Human rights education and the police in India. *Comparative education review*, 60(2), 293-310.
- Burde, D. Chapters 4, and 5

Recommended

- Moland, N. A. 2014. Can Multiculturalism Be Exported? Dilemmas of Diversity on Nigeria's Sesame Square. *Comparative Education Review*, 59(1), 1-23.

(7) October 17: Key Methodological Techniques: Observations and Document Review

Guest Speaker via Skype: Naomi Moland

- Burde, D. Chapter 3.
- Bowen, Glenn A., 2009, Document Analysis as a Qualitative Research Method', *Qualitative Research Journal*, vol. 9, no. 2, pp. 27-40. DOI 10.3316/QRJ0902027
- Magno, C. & Kirk, J. (2008). Imaging girls: Visual methodologies and messages for girls' education. *Compare* 38(3), 349-362 *
- Mundy, K. & F. Menashy. (2014). The World Bank and private provision of schooling: A look through the lens of sociological theories of organizational hypocrisy. *Comparative Education Review*. 58(3), 401-427. Go straight to library databases, or link from NYU Libraries after you have signed in: <http://web.b.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?sid=2fe58c87-b8bb-4abf-8c40-1d133e746e21%40sessionmgr104&vid=1&hid=107>

Recommended:

- Wragg, E.C.: *An introduction to classroom observation* (Chapters 1 and 5) *

DUE by posting to Classes by 11:55 p.m. October 16: Data Collection Protocols

(8) October 24: Key Methodological Techniques: Focus Group Interviews

Guest Speaker: TBD

- Schensul, S., Schensul, J. & LeCompte, M. (2013) *Ethnographer's Toolkit, Volume 3: Essential Ethnographic Methods: A Mixed Methods Approach* (2nd Edition), (Chapter 8)
- Focus Groups: Ryan, K. E., Gandha, T., Culbertson, M. J., & Carlson, C. (2014). Focus Group Evidence Implications for Design and Analysis. *American Journal of Evaluation*, 35(3), 328-345.
- Adams-Bass, V. N., Bentley-Edwards, K. L., & Stevenson, H. C. (2014). That's Not Me I See on TV...: African American Youth Interpret Media Images of Black Females. *Women, Gender, and Families of Color*, 2(1), 79-100.

(9) October 31: Stuck in the Field: Problem-Solving and Overcoming Obstacles

Guest Speaker: TBD

- TBD
- Sampson, H. (2004). Navigating the waves: the usefulness of a pilot in qualitative research. *Qualitative Research*, 4(3), 383-402.
- Plesset, S. 2006. *Sheltering Women: Negotiating Gender and Violence in Northern Italy*. Stanford: Stanford University Press. Chapter 1: Engaging in the Field. (Pay particular attention to pages 38-41 which discuss methodology).

(10) November 7: Key Methodological Aspects: Reflexivity/Subjectivity, credibility; Researcher Memos

Guest Speaker via Skype: Karen Ross

- Lareau, A. (2003). *Unequal childhoods: Class, race, and family life*. Berkeley: University of California Press. Methodology in Appendix.
- Peshkin, A. (1988). In search of subjectivity—one's own. *Educational researcher*, 17(7), 17-21.
- Lew, J. (2010). Insider and outsider: Reflexivity and intersubjectivity in ethnography. In K.A. Scott and W.J. Blanchette (Eds.), *Research in urban educational settings: Lessons learned and implications for future practice* (pp. 163-176). Charlotte, NC: Information Age. *
- Razon, N. A., & Ross, K. (2012). Negotiating fluid identities: Alliance-building in qualitative interviews. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 18(6), 494-503.

Recommended:

- Way, N. (2005). Striving for Engagement: Reflections from a Qualitative Researcher. *Journal of Adolescent Research*, 20 (5), 531-537. DOI: 10.1177/0743558405278369

(11) November 14: Data Coding and Analysis; Writing the results

- LeCompte, M. & Schensul, J.: *Analyzing & interpreting ethnographic data* (Chapters 4-7). *
- Rubin & Rubin: Chapters 11-12.
- Johnny Saldaña. 2013. *The Coding Manual for Qualitative Researchers*. 2nd ed. Los Angeles: SAGE, Chapter 2: Writing Analytic Memos about Narrative and Visual Data.

DUE by posting to Classes from each individual student by 11:55 p.m. November 13

Any one of the following: Observation Field Notes, Individual Interview Transcript, Focus Group Interview Transcript, Document Review Analysis **AND** Researcher Memo

Part III: Research Process and Results

(12) November 21: Continued Analysis and Putting it All Together

Guest Speaker: TBD

Note: Clarify expectation for final assignment

- Maya Rosenfeld (2002) "Power structure, agency, and family in a Palestinian refugee camp" *
- Rolon-Dow, Rosalie. 2004. "Seduced by Images: Identity and Schooling in the Lives of Puerto Rican Girls"
- Sato, T. and Hodge, S.R. 2015. "Japanese Exchange Students Academic and Social Struggles at an American University." *Journal of International Students*. 5 (3), pp. 208-227. *
- Murphy-Graham, E. (2015). Child Marriage, Agency, and Schooling in Rural Honduras. *Comparative Education Review*. 59 (1), pp. 24-49. *

(13) November 28: Reading and critiquing qualitative studies in comparative and international education
Guest Speakers: NYU International Education Doctoral Student Panel

***DUE* by posting to Classes by 11:55 p.m. November 27:** First Draft of Research Project

(14) December 5: “Do’s and Don’t’s” of qualitative research: Lessons learned

- Presentation of *draft* research papers

This will be a double class, continued with a potluck dinner. Location TBD.

***DUE* by posting to Classes by 11:55 p.m., December 15:** Final Research Papers