

**Nova Southeastern University**  
**School of Humanities and Social Sciences (SHSS)**  
**Department of Multidisciplinary Studies**  
**Graduate Certificate in Qualitative Research**  
**Course Descriptions, Student Learning Outcomes, Books, and Major Assignments**  
**2010-2011**

**Required Courses**

**QRGP 6300 Foundations of Qualitative Research:** This course introduces students to the epistemological, theoretical, methodological, and procedural foundations of qualitative research. Students will learn common factors qualitative approaches to inquiry share as well as learning the specifics of the major qualitative research methodologies such as generic qualitative description, grounded theory, phenomenology, ethnography, narrative analysis, and discourse analysis. Students will also be introduced to the variety of professional settings in which qualitative research is utilized including academia, business and organizations, international development, and private consultation.

Students completing the course will be able to

- Articulate a qualitative research approach towards inquiry;
- Explain the major historical, epistemological and theoretical orientations for conducting qualitative research;
- Identify ethical challenges and solutions for ensuring the protection of research participants;
- Compare and contrast defining attributes of selected qualitative research methodologies;
- Describe methodology-specific techniques for sampling; data generation, collection, and preparation; data analysis; and interpretation and representation;
- Describe orientations to and techniques for managing quality control in qualitative research;
- Assess the quality of qualitative research proposals and articles; and
- Compare and contrast qualitative research practice as it is utilized in a variety of professional settings

**Book**

Creswell, J. (2006). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

**Major Assignments**

- **Personal Learning Goals Statement:** Students will compose a brief statement of their personal learning goals for the course.

- **Qualitative Research Article Reviews:** Students will read and review three qualitative research articles and compose brief reports detailing the articles' main methodological features. After completing the three individual reviews students will compare and contrast the quality of the three articles.
- **Qualitative Research Book Review:** Students will read a qualitative research book and write a 1,500 to 3,000 word review. Completed reviews will be published in *The Weekly Qualitative Report*.
- **Qualitative Research Methodology PowerPoint Presentation:** Students will develop a one-hour presentation by selecting one qualitative research methodology and sharing its definition, origin, typical applications, major variations, defining features, procedures and techniques, quality control means, required researcher skills, ethical concerns, key resources, and exemplary reports via PowerPoint slides and notes. Students may also utilize audio to present their material. Completed PowerPoint presentations will be published in *The Weekly Qualitative Report's* "Teaching and Learning Qualitative Research" section.

**QRGP 6301 Qualitative Data Collection:** This course provides students an opportunity to learn the basics of qualitative research design with a focus on qualitative data generation, collection, and preparation. Students will learn how to select appropriate research sites, gain access to data sources, design and manage sampling strategies, conduct individual and group interviews, carry out field observations, collect documents, transcribe, and compose fieldnotes. Students will also learn quality control measures such as maintaining research journals and diaries.

Students completing the course will be able to

- Articulate the basic orientation and components of naturalistic, discovery-oriented, open-ended qualitative research designs;
- Select and gain access to appropriate sites for qualitative data collection;
- Design, implement, and manage sampling strategies;
- Create a variety of qualitative interview questions; conduct face-to-face, telephone and Internet-based individual and group interviews; and transcribe interviews;
- Select appropriate technology to record and process interviews;
- Conduct participating-observer and observing-participant fieldwork by creating a research focus, taking fieldnotes, and completing fieldnotes;
- Identify, prepare, collect, and organize documents;
- Protect participant privacy and confidentiality;
- Anticipate, identify, and manage ethical and safety issues in the field; and
- Manage quality control throughout the data collection process.

## Books

- Angrosino, M. (2008). *Doing ethnographic and observational research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Barbour, R. (2008). *Doing focus groups*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Kvale, S. (2008). *Doing interviews*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Banks, M. (2008). *Using visual data in qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

### Major Assignments:

- **Personal Learning Goals Statement:** Students will compose a brief statement of their personal learning goals for the course.
- **The Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) Course in the Protection of Human Research Subjects:** Students will take the CITI Course, a web based training program in human research subject protection, and earn an aggregate score of 90% or higher across the quizzes for the required modules.
- **Institutional Review Board (IRB) Protocol:** Students will conceive a qualitative research study and construct an abbreviated NSU IRB protocol describing the Protocol Title; Purpose and Potential Benefits; Location of Study; Sample Size and Composition; Subject Selection, Recruitment, and Eligibility Requirements; Data Generation, Collection, and Preparation Procedures; Risks and Benefits to Subjects and Risk/Benefit Ratio; Consent Form, Cover Letter, and any Advertisements.
- **The Weekly Qualitative Report's Guide to Learning Qualitative Research:** Students will select one qualitative research design, data generation, or data collection method and compose a brief guide detailing how they learned the procedure. Completed guides will be published in *The Weekly Qualitative Report*.

**QRGP 6302 Qualitative Data Analysis I:** This course covers best practices in generic qualitative, ethnographic, and grounded theory analysis. Students will learn how to conduct within-case and across case analysis, coding and conceptualization, transforming data, and report writing. Students will also learn quality control measures such as constant comparison, member checking, peer debriefing, and conducting audit trails.

Students completing the course will be able to

- Articulate the outcomes of qualitative analysis;
- Distinguish between data generation, data collection, data management, data analysis, and interpretation concepts and practices;
- Define and apply generic and specialized procedural approaches to data coding and analysis;
- Distinguish the defining characteristics of the generic qualitative, ethnographic, and grounded theory analysis approaches to qualitative research;
- Differentiate and apply the unique procedural approaches of generic qualitative, ethnographic, and grounded theory analysis to data coding and analysis;
- Utilize a variety of strategies and approaches for re-presenting the results of qualitative data analysis; and
- Manage and articulate quality control measures and outcomes in the data analysis process.

## Books

- Gibbs, G. (2008). *Analyzing qualitative data*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Charmaz, K. (2006). *Constructing grounded theory: A practical guide through qualitative analysis*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Fetterman, D. (1997). *Ethnography: Step-by-step* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

## Major Assignments:

- **Personal Learning Goals Statement:** Students will compose a brief statement of their personal learning goals for the course.
- **Coding, Analysis, and Reporting:** For generic qualitative, ethnographic, and grounded theory analysis approaches to qualitative research, students will code, memo, analyze, and report their findings on selected data sets. Students will also share the contents of their research journals and audit trails. Students may utilize their own data sets in each assignment.

**QRGP 6303 Qualitative Data Analysis II:** This course covers best practices in phenomenology, narrative inquiry, and discursive analysis. Students will learn how to conduct thematic analyses, phenomenological reduction, creative synthesis, microanalysis, and report writing. Students will also learn quality control measures such as bracketing, epoché, and verisimilitude.

Students completing the course will be able to

- Distinguish the defining characteristics of the phenomenology, narrative inquiry, and discursive analysis approaches to qualitative research;
- Differentiate and apply the unique procedural approaches of phenomenology, narrative inquiry, and discursive analysis to data coding and analysis;
- Utilize a variety of strategies and approaches for re-presenting the results of qualitative data analysis; and
- Manage and articulate quality control measures and outcomes in the data analysis process.

## Books

- Rapley, T. (2008). *Doing conversation, discourse and document analysis*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Riessman, C. (2007). *Narrative methods for the human sciences*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Moustakas, C. (1994). *Phenomenological research methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

## Major Assignments:

- **Personal Learning Goals Statement:** Students will compose a brief statement of their personal learning goals for the course.
- **Coding, Analysis, and Reporting:** For phenomenology, narrative inquiry, and discursive analysis approaches to qualitative research, students will code, memo, analyze, and report their findings on selected data sets. Students will also share the contents of their research journals and audit trails. Students may utilize their own data sets in each assignment.

**QRGP 6305 Qualitative Research Design:** This course covers knowledge and skills needed to design a qualitative research study and compose a qualitative research proposal. Students will learn how to construct and justify a qualitative research study, synthesize the relevant research literature, generate discovery-oriented research questions, select sites and samples, create a manageable method including a quality control system, address ethical issues, and discuss potential implications and limitations. Students will compose their own qualitative research proposals and Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects (IRB) protocols and consent forms.

Students completing the course will be able to

- Develop a research focus by reflecting on personal experience, reviewing relevant literature, addressing personal challenges, and leveraging an opportunity;
- Establish research project goals;
- Develop qualitative research questions;
- Select an appropriate qualitative research methodology;
- Select fitting qualitative research methods for establishing a research site and sample access plan; creating a management plan for data generation, collection, preparation, and analysis; and creating a quality control plan for managing ethical and safety concerns and self-of-the-researcher;
- Prepare and submit an Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects Research (IRB) Proposal including submission form, research protocol, and consent form; and
- Compose a qualitative research proposal.

## Books

Flick, U. (2008). *Designing qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.  
 Munhall, P., & Chenail, R. (2008). *Qualitative research proposals and reports: A guide*. Boston: Jones & Bartlett.

## Major Assignments:

- **Personal Learning Goals Statement:** Students will compose a brief statement of their personal learning goals for the course.
- **Qualitative Research Proposal:** Students will conceive a qualitative research project and compose a 12 to 15 page qualitative research proposal containing a

Title Page, Abstract, Introduction, Methodology, Expected Contributions, and References.

- **IRB Submission and Approval:** Students will prepare and submit the required NSU IRB documents including an IRB submission form and research protocol, and work with NSU's IRB until approval is secured. The completed IRB materials may include Informed consent forms, Completed informed consent form checklists, Evidence of approval by cooperative IRBs at other sites, Data collection instruments, Certification of translation for consents or instruments to be used with non-English speaking subjects, and Brochure/recruitment materials.

### Electives

**QRGP 6304 Appraising Qualitative Research:** This course covers the appraisal and review of products emanating from qualitative research including papers, articles, posters, grant proposals, books, book prospectus, dissertations, theses, and systematic reviews. Students will learn how to assess the quality of qualitative research products, construct and use criterion-based rubrics, and compose reviews. Students will also serve as ad hoc reviewers for *The Qualitative Report (TQR)*.

Students completing the course will be able to

- Appraise the quality of a variety of qualitative research products utilizing criterion-based rubrics and assessment tools;
- Understand and follow a scholarly qualitative journal's mission, policies and procedures;
- Analyze contemporary literature about good reviewing practices and the role of reviews in making editorial decisions;
- Draw distinctions about types of reviews such as peer review, blind review, gate-keeping, mentoring;
- Evaluate reviews of qualitative research products for application of best practices for composing reviews;
- Evaluate scholarly manuscripts and reviews critically by applying the scholarly journal editorial policies and procedures and APA manual guidelines in evaluating manuscripts and reviewing reviews;
- Compose quality reviews of journal manuscripts;
- Synthesize materials from initial submission reviews and authors' resubmissions to compose reviews of revised manuscripts;
- Create learning resources for authors and reviewers; and
- Distinguish and apply ethical standards for reviewing and managing editorial processes.

### Book

Flick, U. (2008). *Managing quality in qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

### Major Assignments:

- **Personal Learning Goals Statement:** Students will compose a brief statement of their personal learning goals for the course.
- **Appraising the Quality of Qualitative Research Articles:** Students will select three qualitative research papers presenting results from qualitative research studies; analyze the papers using the use the Critical Appraisal Skills Programme's (CASP) *Making Sense of Evidence Tool: 10 Questions to Help You Make Sense of Qualitative Research*; discuss the papers' within-case and across case quality based upon the results of the CASP tool analysis in a 15 page paper.
- **The Qualitative Report (TQR) Ad Hoc Editor Training Program:** Students will work with a TQR editor in providing editorial mentoring for an author who has submitted a paper for review with the journal. Students will read one submitted paper, compose a review, address any author questions, review the revised manuscript, and assist the author in the revising process. Students successfully demonstrating the required editorial competencies will be asked to join TQR's editorial board as Assistant Editors.

**QRGP 6306 Conducting Qualitative Research I:** This course covers the activities involved in the initiation of a qualitative research study. Students will start the study they proposed in QRGP 6305 Qualitative Research Design.

Students completing the course will be able to conduct a qualitative research study by

- Securing access to a site and participants;
- Preparing themselves to research by practicing required skills; reflecting on self-participation in the study; and learning required technologies;
- Generating, collecting, processing, and analyzing data;
- Conducting quality control measures; and
- Composing a qualitative research paper by
  - Succinctly titling and summarizing a research paper in an abstract;
  - Describing the focus of a research study;
  - Justifying why the study merited exploration over time in a sustained and systematic manner;
  - Articulating research goals;
  - Synthesizing relevant literature to provide a meaningful context for a research study and to build a convincing argument for its conduct (e.g., define gap in the research literature);
  - Presenting research questions;
  - Constructing arguments for the exploration of the research questions;
  - Clearly justifying and describing the methodology;
  - Describing the methodological choices in the areas of sampling, data generation, data collection, data preparation, data analysis, and quality control;
  - Identifying ethical issues and strategies used to address these concerns;
  - Reflecting on the self-of-the-researcher in the context of a research study;
  - Presenting findings;

- Discussing contributions of a research study;
- Identifying limitations of the research study;
- Suggesting implications of a research study; and
- Composing all elements of a research paper in compliance with the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA, 2001) and the APA Style Guide to Electronic Resources (APA, 2007).

## Books

Flick, U. (2008). *Designing qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Munhall, P., & Chenail, R. (2008). *Qualitative research proposals and reports: A guide*. Boston: Jones & Bartlett.

## Major Assignments:

- **Personal Learning Goals Statement:** Students will compose a brief statement of their personal learning goals for the course.
- **Qualitative Research Study:** Students will carry out their proposed research study and compose a final report. Students may submit their completed papers to *The Qualitative Report* for publication consideration.

**QRGP 6307 Conducting Qualitative Research II:** This course covers the activities involved in the culmination of a qualitative research study. Students will complete the study they proposed in QRGP 6305 Qualitative Research Design and started in QRGP 6306 Conducting Qualitative Research I.

Students completing the course will be able to conduct a qualitative research study by

- Securing access to a site and participants;
- Preparing themselves to research by practicing required skills;
- Reflecting on self-participation in the study; and learning required technologies;
- Generating, collecting, processing, and analyzing data;
- Conducting quality control measures; and
- Composing a qualitative research paper by
  - Succinctly titling and summarizing a research paper in an abstract;
  - Describing the focus of a research study;
  - Justifying why the study merited exploration over time in a sustained and systematic manner;
  - Articulating research goals;
  - Synthesizing relevant literature to provide a meaningful context for a research study and to build a convincing argument for its conduct (e.g., define gap in the research literature);
  - Presenting research questions;
  - Constructing arguments for the exploration of the research questions;
  - Clearly justifying and describing the methodology;

- Describing the methodological choices in the areas of sampling, data generation, data collection, data preparation, data analysis, and quality control;
- Identifying ethical issues and strategies used to address these concerns;
- Reflecting on the self-of-the-researcher in the context of a research study;
- Presenting findings;
- Discussing contributions of a research study;
- Identifying limitations of the research study;
- Suggesting implications of a research study; and
- Composing all elements of a research paper in compliance with the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (APA, 2001) and the *APA Style Guide to Electronic Resources* (APA, 2007).

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