

**Nova Southeastern University
School of Humanities and Social Sciences
Graduate Certificate in Qualitative Research
Frequently Asked Questions
June 19, 2010**

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What is the Graduate Certificate in Qualitative Research?

The Graduate Certificate in Qualitative Research is an 18 credit hour program (6 courses) that is offered in an online learning format through Nova Southeastern University's (NSU) School of Humanities and Social Sciences (SHSS). The Certificate prepares academics, professional research consultants, program evaluators, and graduate students to understand a variety of qualitative research approaches and to conduct qualitative research studies. Enrollees in the program (a) gain insight into the philosophical and theoretical foundations of qualitative research; (b) distinguish and critique qualitative research approaches and products; and (c) apply best practices in qualitative research to design, propose, conduct, and compose qualitative research of their own. Graduates of the Certificate will be able to articulate the distinguishing aspects of the major qualitative research methods; design and conduct rigorous qualitative research studies; generate, collect, prepare, and analyze a variety of qualitative data; compose high-quality qualitative research reports; appraise qualitative research works; and create a professional portfolio of outstanding scholarly products.

The Certificate presents its students with an optimal configuration of learning opportunities within a reasonable duration of time to foster an effective learning experience. The experience

and knowledge gained from our SHSS’s twenty-one years of delivering quality qualitative research education along with producing *The Qualitative Report (TQR)*, a ground-breaking open-access online journal since 1990, enables us to offer a certificate program devoted to mentoring beginning, intermediate, and advanced qualitative researchers in a learning-focused, nurturing environment delivered online and featuring an active learning approach emphasizing a “knowing by doing” style.

What are the Certificate’s courses and learning objectives?

That information along with major assignments and readings for each course can be found online at <http://www.nova.edu/ssss/QR/courses.pdf>.

Is there a suggested sequence to taking the Certificate’s courses?

The suggested course sequence for a student starting with no transfer of credit would be as follows:

Full-Time Option			
	Fall Semester	Winter Semester	Summer Semester
Year 1	QRGP 6300 Foundations of Qualitative Research	QRGP 6301 Qualitative Data Collection	QRGP 6302 Qualitative Data Analysis I
	QRGP 6303 Qualitative Data Analysis II	Elective	QRGP 6305 Qualitative Research Design

A suggested half-time option would look as follows:

Part-Time Option			
	Fall Semester	Winter Semester	Summer Semester
Year 1	QRGP 6300 Foundations of Qualitative Research	QRGP 6301 Qualitative Data Collection	QRGP 6302 Qualitative Data Analysis I
Year 2	QRGP 6303 Qualitative Data Analysis II	Elective	QRGP 6305 Qualitative Research Design

What are the dual admissions options for SHSS doctoral students?

SHSS doctoral students can earn both the Certificate and their doctoral degree through the dual admissions options: PhD in Conflict Analysis and Resolution and PhD in Family Therapy students take only 3 of the 6 Certificate courses and the Doctorate in Marriage and Family Therapy students take only 4 of the 6 Certificate courses. SHSS doctoral students pursuing the Certificate dual admission options must utilize a qualitative or mixed-methods design in their dissertations or applied clinical projects in order to meet the learning outcomes of the Certificate.

Graduate Certificate in Qualitative Research Dual Admission Options			
Graduate Certificate in Qualitative Research	PhD in Family Therapy Option	PhD in Conflict Analysis & Resolution Option	Doctorate in Marriage and Family Therapy Option
QRGP 6300 Foundations of Qualitative Research	SFTD 6430: Qualitative Research I	CARD 7110: Qualitative Research I	SFTD 6430: Qualitative Research I
QRGP 6301 Qualitative Data Collection	SFTD 7350: Qualitative Research II	CARD 7120: Qualitative Research II	QRGP 6301 Qualitative Data Collection or SFTD 7350: Qualitative Research II
QRGP 6302 Qualitative Data Analysis I	QRGP 6302 Qualitative Data Analysis I	QRGP 6302 Qualitative Data Analysis I	QRGP 6302 Qualitative Data Analysis I
QRGP 6303 Qualitative Data Analysis II	QRGP 6303 Qualitative Data Analysis II	QRGP 6303 Qualitative Data Analysis II	QRGP 6303 Qualitative Data Analysis II
QRGP 6305 Qualitative Research Design	SFTD 6900: Dissertation	CARD 7900: Dissertation	DMFT 6950: Applied Clinical Project
Elective	Elective	Elective	Elective

What are the admissions requirements for the Certificate?

SHSS accepts applications to the Graduate Certificate in Qualitative Research from any person who possesses or is the process of completing a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited university. Graduate Certificate applicants should have a minimum GPA of 3.0 in their bachelor's program. Applicants must complete all bachelor's degree requirements before beginning graduate studies. Applicants who possess a graduate degree or degrees or who are in the process of completing a graduate degree from a regionally accredited university should have a minimum GPA of 3.0 for their graduate course work.

How to I apply for the Certificate?

Applicants must submit the following items:

- Online application form found at <http://shss.nova.edu/Downloads/PDF/application.pdf> or if you want to complete the form online you can go to <http://www.webstar.nova.edu/> and click on "Admissions".
- \$50 nonrefundable application fee.
- An admissions essay of two to four double spaced, single sided, word processed pages telling us why you are interested in the Certificate and how it helps further your professional goals, your assessment of your abilities to manage the challenges of the online graduate certificate program, and any other information you would like to provide.

- A sample of academic writing consisting of an academic paper, submitted journal writing, or a piece of professional writing. There is not a specific length requirement for this paper.
- A resume or curriculum vita
- Official transcripts from all colleges or universities mailed directly to Enrollment Processing Services (EPS), including agency evaluation of foreign degrees for determination of U.S. equivalence (including Canadian transcripts). International Students should visit <http://www.nova.edu/internationalstudents/> for further information.
- Three letters of recommendation, written in the past six months, accompanied by the Reference Form found at http://shss.nova.edu/Downloads/PDF/Reference_Form.pdf.
- International Student applicants should submit TOEFL scores, if applicable. International Students should visit <http://www.nova.edu/internationalstudents/prospective/i20.html> for further information.

Additional admissions information can be found at http://shss.nova.edu/apply_now.htm.

What if I earned my degree(s) outside the United States?

Applicants who have attended foreign universities or colleges are required to have their academic credentials evaluated for U.S. institutional equivalence. While there are several credential evaluators, the most widely used companies are listed below or visit www.naces.org.

World Education Services, Inc. P.O. Box 745 Old Chelsea Station New York, New York 10113-0745 (212) 966-6311 www.wes.org	Josef Silny & Associates 7101 SW 102nd Avenue Miami, Florida 33173 (305) 273-1616 www.jsilny.com	Educational Credential Evaluators, Inc. P.O. Box 514070 Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53203-3470 (414) 289-3400 www.ece.org
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International students are encouraged to contact the Office of International Student Services at (954) 262-7240 or 800-541-6682, ext. 27240, or by email at intl@nsu.nova.edu, or visit <http://www.nova.edu/internationalstudents>.

How do I apply if I am a currently enrolled as an NSU graduate student?

Applicants who are currently enrolled as students in good standing with NSU graduate programs need only to email a request to Ron Chenail, Certificate Director, at ron@nova.edu to be admitted to the Certificate.

How do I apply if I am an NSU alumnus who graduated within the last five years?

Applicants who successfully completed an NSU graduate or undergraduate program need only to email a request to Ron Chenail, Certificate Director, at ron@nova.edu to be admitted to the Certificate.

What is the cost per course?

Each course costs \$1,710 (US). In addition there is a \$25 (US) Registration Fee per semester and a Student Activity Fee of \$250 (US) per semester for students enrolled in 4 or more credits or \$125 (US) per semester for students enrolled in fewer than 4 credits.

Is student financial aid available?

Yes, eligible students can receive financial aid for the Certificate. More information on applying for student financial aid can be found at <http://www.nova.edu/cwis/finaid/>.

Can I transfer credit into the Certificate for courses I have previously taken?

Yes, applicants may request transfer of credit for a maximum 6 credit hours into the Certificate provided (a) these credit hours are from graduate courses successfully completed at regionally accredited colleges or universities and (b) these courses are substantially equivalent to courses taught in the Certificate. Requests for transfer of credit must be completed before the end of the student's first semester. No transfer of credits is accepted after a student's first term in the program. Each applicant's submissions will be reviewed on an individual basis.

To be considered for transfer of credit, students must submit an Application for Transfer of Credit, available online at <http://shss.nova.edu/Downloads/PDF/MFT/Masters%20Transfer%20of%20Credit%20Application.pdf>. The application must be supported with a catalog course description and the syllabi that document the content of the course(s). No more than two courses may be used to establish equivalence with a Certificate course. To be considered for transfer of credit, courses must have been completed less than seven years prior to the beginning of the student's first term. Also, course grades must be "B" or higher. Courses approved for transfer of credit are recorded on the student's NSU transcript.

How is the Certificate delivered and supported?

Courses are offered year-round via a tri-semester calendar. Certificate students can start their program in the Fall, Winter, or Summer semesters. Certificate courses are offered each semester depending on enrollment. These courses are all offered totally online. The majority of faculty-to-student and student-to-student interaction takes place via asynchronous discussions and emails managed through WebCT, an online classroom management system (see <http://www.nova.edu/cwis/technology.html> for more information). Each course features lectures delivered via the Tegrity system through which faculty deliver presentations synched to PowerPoint slides, PDF documents, Web Sites, or any other application visible via a computer desktop. These lectures are downloadable so students can listen to them while online, or on iPods and mobile devices.

In addition to these tools and applications, Certificate students will have total access to NSU's

extensive library system that is designed, developed, and implemented with an up-to-date collection to support the research needs for students in graduate-level programs. In total, all four of the NSU Libraries had over 1.5 million items as of January 2008. The collection of the Alvin Sherman Library, Research, and Information Technology Center as of January 2008 has 846,815 physical volumes, over 1,500 print journal subscriptions, over 575 print standing order subscriptions, over 54,000 electronic books, over 24,000 unduplicated full-text journals and over 29,000 audiovisual items. For example, students have online access 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year to full-text qualitative research resources such as *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design*, *Qualitative Data Analysis*, *The Practice of Qualitative Research*, and *Qualitative Research Methods* in print to a number of e-books including *Planning Your Qualitative Research Project*.

Do I have to be enrolled as a full-time student in the Certificate?

No, Certificate students can enroll either full- or half-time. Students must take two courses per semester to be considered full-time.

Is there a time limit to complete the Certificate?

Yes, Certificate students must complete their requirements within five calendar years. If after five years a student who has not yet graduated will need to retake all courses for which transfer of credit was received. Each term thereafter the student will be responsible for the Certificate courses taken more than five years before that point in time. A one-year extension may be granted under extenuating circumstances. Leaves of absence taken during the course of the program do not automatically extend the five year deadline.

Can I be enrolled in the Certificate program while I pursue a graduate degree at NSU or at another institution?

Yes, the Certificate was designed to accommodate students earning master's and doctoral degrees. The Certificate's curriculum can serve as an effective complement by providing value-added skills and knowledge to help students improve their qualitative research competencies. Students can also bring their on-going research activities into their Certificate classes for feedback and mentoring from the Certificate faculty. This feature of the Certificate should also appeal to consultants and program evaluators looking to enhance their abilities to better meet their customers' needs for superior qualitative design and analysis. The asynchronistic delivery system means Certificate students can participate in course activities and complete assignments in a flexible, student-friendly manner.

What are the Certificate Graduation requirements?

Within five years from their initial enrollment in the program, Certificate students must successfully complete all 18 credit hours of the Certificate with a minimum 3.0 GPA at the time of completion. In addition, Certificate students must not be in financial arrears with any office at NSU.

Who is the director of the Certificate?

Dr. Ronald Chenail, SHSS Professor of Family Therapy, serves as the director of the Graduate Certificate in Qualitative Research Program. Dr. Chenail has taught graduate courses in qualitative research in the School since 1988 and has also served as a chair and committee member on a number of dissertation committees in the school. He is also an Applied Dissertation Adviser and Reader for the Fischler School of Education and Human Services and an adjunct professor in the College of Allied Health and Nursing's Department of Nursing.

One of his chief interests is the development and application of qualitative research approaches. In 1990 he founded *The Qualitative Report*, an electronic journal which focuses on qualitative research and critical inquiry. He was also named to the founding editorial board of Sage's new journal, *Qualitative Inquiry*, in 1994, and in 1999 was named as a member of the *Journal of Systemic Therapies'* inaugural board of qualitative research reviewers. He was also appointed to the inaugural board of *Qualitative Research in Psychology* in 2002 and *Counseling, Psychotherapy, and Health* in 2004 and in 2007 was selected to serve on the editorial board of *Qualitative Social Work*. In 2008, Dr. Chenail launched *The Weekly Qualitative Report*.

In January 2005, Chenail became Editor of the *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy* (JMFT), the flagship journal of the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy. From July 1, 2004 through December 31, 2004, he served as Editor-Elect of the journal. He has been a member of the Editorial Board of the JMFT since 2001. In April 2008 he was named Associate Editor with the *Family Business Review*.

His papers have been published in *American Family Therapy Academy Newsletter*, *Family Business Review*, *Connessioni*, *Contemporary Family Therapy: An International Journal*, *Counseling and Values*, *Family Therapy Magazine*, *The Fourth R*, *Health Communication*, *Internet and Higher Education*, *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy*, *Journal of Systemic Therapies*, *Marriage and Family Review*, *Psychotherapy in Private Practice*, *The Qualitative Report*, *Sistemas Familiares*, and *Zeitschrift fur Systemische Therapie*. In addition he has made over 100 scholarly presentations at local, state, national and international conferences and meetings.

He has also produced a number of books and book chapters in which he has explored clinical communication from a qualitative research perspective. Chenail's first tome, *Medical Discourse and Systemic Frames of Comprehension* (Ablex), was published in 1991. *Practicing Therapy: Exercises for Growing Therapist* (Norton, 1993), his second book, was written with Anne Rambo, Ph.D., and Anthony Heath, Ph.D. It was a featured selection of the Behavioral Sciences Book Club. Book three, *The Talk of the Clinic: Explorations in the Analysis of Medical and Therapeutic Discourse* (Lawrence Erlbaum), a volume he edited with G. H. Morris, Ph.D. of Texas Tech University, was released in 1995. In 2007, Jones and Bartlett published *Qualitative Research Proposals and Reports: A Guide* (3rd ed.), a book Dr. Chenail co-authored with Dr. Patricia Munhall.