

WAYNE STATE  
UNIVERSITY  
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

**Course Syllabus**

*The course syllabus is a general plan for the course,  
deviations announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary.*

<b>Division</b>	Administration and Organizational Studies		
<b>Program Area</b>	Education: Evaluation and Research		
<b>Course #</b>	11327		
<b>Course Title</b>	EER 7900: Fundamentals of Qualitative Research		
<b>Section #</b>	002		
<b>Term/Year</b>	Fall 2009		
<b>Course Location</b>	357 Education		
<b>Day</b>	Tuesday	<b>Time</b>	4:30PM – 7:15PM

**Instructor** Michael Barbour  
365 Education Building  
Office: (313) 577-8349  
Home: (519) 979-6497  
mkbarbour@gmail.com  
MSN: mkb@uga.edu  
Skype: mkbarbour  
WWW: <http://www.michaelbarbour.com>

**Office Hours** Tuesdays – 1:00pm to 4:00pm  
Or by appointment

**Course Description**

Fundamentals of epistemological issues, educational perspectives of qualitative research and research design. Readings in qualitative research. Conducting the case study, personal history, and cognitive study. Overview of methods for analyzing talk, text, and interaction.

**Course Outcomes**

As a learner in this course you will investigate methodological possibilities and various ways of dealing with procedural, philosophical, analytical and ethical issues related to undertaking qualitative research projects. Specifically, you will:

1. Identify and explain the range of problems addressed by qualitative research. What is qualitative research? What are the different ways it is conceptualized? How does it define problems? What are its origins?

2. Reflect on your own presuppositions and subjectivities in regard to the educational research processes.
3. Specify the units of analysis examined in qualitative research and the nature of the explanations generated. What kinds of human phenomena does qualitative research examine? What goals does it attempt to achieve?
4. Identify the tasks and processes required to formulate appropriate research problems within educational settings, to design relevant qualitative research strategies for examining such problems, to select pertinent data sources, data collection methods, and data analysis methods, and to assess the results of such efforts.
5. Examine ethical dilemmas and issues related to the research process.
6. Recognize exemplars of qualitative research derived from varying approaches and traditions, identify the goals and presuppositions of these different exemplars, and critically assess the designs for their accomplishment of specified research goals.
7. Develop an understanding of the relationship of educational theorizing to the research process through an examination of a variety of theoretical orientations.
8. Formulate ways to compare and contrast different approaches to human inquiry: positivist, post-positivist, critical, feminist, postmodern, and others. You will be able to identify the origins and developments of these varying approaches, underlying values and assumptions, and their strengths and limitations.
9. Analyze the basic assumptions and implications of the identified research traditions and specify the interrelationships among them. What assumptions about reality, knowledge, and value does each tradition entail?

### **Required Text(s)**

Crotty, M. (1998). *The foundations of social research: Meaning and perspective in the research process*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Bogdan, R. C., & Biklen, S. K. (2007). *Qualitative research in education: An introduction to theory and methods* (5th ed.). Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

*One of the following:*

Martin, R. H. (2008). *Racing Odysseus: A college president becomes a freshman again*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Nathan, R. (2005). *My freshman year: What a professor learned by becoming a student*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Pollock, M. (2005). *Colormute: Race talk dilemmas in an American school*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Swidler, S. A. (2006). *Naturally small: Teaching and learning in the last one-room schools*.  
Charlotte, NC: Information Age Publishing.

*All books have been order through Marwil's Book Store (Cass & Warren).*

### Recommended Text

Patton, M. Q. (2002). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

### Course Assignments

#### Human Investigation Committee Application (10 points)

You will construct a research proposal for your research project using Wayne State University's Human Investigation Committee guidelines and forms. As part of your project, you will complete the online CITI training and submit a Human Investigation Committee application. You will need to look on the HIC webpage (<http://www.hic.wayne.edu/>) for details.

#### Theory Statements (10 points each / total of 20 points)

Over the course of the semester you will construct two essays that are a total of 4-5 pages double-spaced in length (or 2-2 ½ pages each) describing your understanding of two different theoretical/methodological perspectives of your choice (see shaded sections below).

Research for...	Theoretical perspective	Methodology
Prediction		
Understanding	Symbolic Interactionism Ethnomethodology  Phenomenology	↑ ↑ ↑ Ethnography Grounded Theory Membership Categorization Analysis Conversation Analysis ↑ ↑ ↑ Autoethnography Narrative Inquiry Historical Research Oral history ↓ ↓ ↓ Teacher-research
Emancipation	Critical Theory Feminism Critical Race Theory	Participatory action research Critical ethnography
Deconstructive approaches	Postmodernism Poststructuralism	↓ ↓ ↓ Deconstruction Foucauldian discourse analysis • Archeology • Genealogy

Bring a draft of your essay to class on the evening assigned for discussing the readings related to this theoretical framework. This will provide a basis for small group discussion, and you may

revise it to submit on the assigned date. Use class readings in your essay to discuss the key concepts within each framework. You will also read examples to exemplify the kinds of work possible in each theoretical perspective.

- What will this framework allow a researcher to do?
- What questions will it enable a researcher to pursue?

### Preliminary Research Report (15 points)

You will begin to construct a research problem and purpose statement. This is a 4 to 5 page (double spaced) essay that sets out a problem that could possibly be researched using qualitative methods. This is a “brain-storming” paper to start thinking about the following components which are necessary to outline in order to write a research proposal.

- Statement of the Problem (2-3 pages)
  - What is a problem in your field that you could study?
  - How has this topic been addressed in the literature? (locate 3-5 articles)
  - What is the gap in the literature? (i.e., what has not been studied about this topic from your reading to this point?)
- Purpose of the Study (½-1 page)
  - What do you want to learn about?
  - What is the purpose of your study?
  - What kinds of research questions could be asked?
- Subjectivities Statement (1 page)
  - Who are you in relation to this possible research project?

Describe your experiences, disciplinary training, theoretical perspectives that shape your relationship to this topic.

### Article Review (10 points each / total of 20 points)

You will review two published qualitative research article. Write a 750-1000 word review of each article. Examples of published reviews will be provided to inform your writing. Your review should be clearly written, well organized and should address the following elements:

Research Purpose/Questions  
Theoretical (Conceptual) Framework  
Data Collection Methods and Sampling Procedures  
Data Analysis Methods  
Findings/Conclusions  
Personal Reactions/Critique

### Book Review (20 points)

You will review one of the books listed at the beginning of the syllabus. Write a 1500-2000 word review of the book. Examples of published reviews will be provided to inform your writing. Your review should be clearly written, well organized and should address the following elements:

Research Purpose/Questions  
Theoretical (Conceptual) Framework  
Data Collection Methods and Sampling Procedures  
Data Analysis Methods  
Findings/Conclusions  
Personal Reactions/Critique

## Final Research Outline (15 points)

You will design an outline for a research project that could be used in your graduate process (additional qualitative courses, a research study for a publishable article, a pilot study for a dissertation topic). This proposal should be no more than 5-6 pages double spaced (excluding references), and should include the following sections:

- Problem abstract: State the rationale for the project (2-3 pages).
  - Why is this study important and what do you expect to learn?
  - What scholarly literature informs the study? (5-6 references)
  - What do we already know from research about this problem?
  - What are the gaps in the literature?
  - How will your study contribute to this literature?
- Statement of the Problem and Research Questions (½ page)
- Research design: Identify your research design (~1 page). Include specific information related to:
  - Site of Research: Describe the site where you will be working.
    - Why this site and not another?
    - What is your rationale for selecting this site?
  - Data generation:
    - What are the specific methods you will use to generate the data you need to answer your research questions?
  - Sample and sample selection:
    - Who are your participants?
    - What is your rationale for selecting these participants?
    - What are your selection criteria?
  - Data analysis. Describe preliminary steps to analyze your data.
- Procedures: State in chronological order what the researcher will do and what the participant is expected to do (~1 page).
- Materials: List of your initial ideas for potential interview or survey questions you would use. Attach a copy of any instruments that you intend to use (not included in page count).
- Subjectivities Statement (1 page)
  - Who are you in relation to your research project?

**This should not be a fully formed research proposal, as that is an assignment in future courses in the qualitative sequence. This document should read more like an initial draft of a potential research proposal, where you have begun to think through the kind of qualitative study you would conduct, what methods support that methodology, and how you would need to analyze the data to be consistent with that tradition.**

### *Assignment Notes*

1. Late assignments require instructor authorization. Authorization must be requested prior to the posted due date and will only be given if the inability to meet the due date is directly related to an emergency situation.
2. You are encouraged to align your course work with your work situation. Consider using real work situations and applications that are relevant to the grade/subject you teach as the basis for all your activities and assignments. This will make the coursework more relevant, useful and practical and promote transfer of the skills taught in the course to the workplace. You must note; however, that all work must be original!
3. The assignment information provided below is intended to provide an overview of the graded assignments. Detailed instructions on how to complete and submit each assignment will be provided.

### *Late Work*

Late work is not accepted, period. Since all assignments are to be turned in electronically, there should be no reason why you can't submit something when it is due.

### *Make-ups, Re-dos, and Extra Credit*

My policy regarding instruction is that I will try my very best to explain exactly what you need to know in order to do well in the course. My e-mail address and office phone number are on the syllabus. I check email several times each day. Please don't hesitate to e-mail, instant message, call, or come by my office if you need assistance at the draft stage of your work. I will be glad to help you with any questions you may have. Please don't ask for make-ups, re-dos, or extra credit assignments. They are not a part of my approach to teaching.

### **Grading System**

Human Investigation Committee Application	10 points
Theory Statements (2 @10 points each)	20 points
Preliminary Research Idea & Subjectivities Statement	15 points
Article Reviews (2 @10 points each)	20 points
Book Review	20 points
Final Research Outline	15 points

### *Graduate Grades:*

A	93-100	B+	87-89	C+	76-79	F	Below 70
A-	90-92	B	83-86	C	70-75		
		B-	80-82				

### **Class Policy**

1. All written work must be original and demonstrate appropriate communication skills (e.g. correct spelling, punctuation, grammar, organizational skills, etc.).
2. All written work must meet scholarly standards as stated in the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (5th edition).
3. This course uses the Wayne State University Blackboard System. Course information, documents, presentations, readings and assignments will be distributed via the course web site at <http://blackboard.wayne.edu/>

### *Class Attendance*

If a class must be missed the instructor **MUST** be contacted in advance.

This class is based on the contributions of every class member. Thus, your punctual attendance is required at each class meeting, as is responsible class participation. Participating in class should be a pleasant experience, especially if you are well prepared. You are allowed to miss one class without penalty. However, if you miss a second class you will be penalized 10 points from your final grade (e.g., 85% becomes a 75%). If you miss a third class you will be penalized another 10 points. If you miss a four class you will be assigned a grade of F. Extenuating circumstances will be taken into consideration but it is best to keep the instructor informed of what is going on.

### *Technology Use Requirements*

It is expected that all students will possess the skills needed to use a computer (including email, a web browser, and word-processing), as some of the readings and course activities will be located in *Blackboard*. Students are expected to check their e-mail regularly and reply to any message requiring a response within forty-eight (48) hours.

### *Plagiarism*

Plagiarism includes copying material (any more than 5 consecutive words) from outside texts or presenting outside information as if it were your own by not crediting authors through citations. It can be deliberate or unintended. If you're in doubt about the use of a source, cite it. Students caught plagiarizing information from other sources will receive a failing grade in the course. University policy states that students can be subject to multiple sanctions, from reprimand to expulsion as a consequence of academic dishonesty. To enforce this policy, all outside references must be submitted with assignments.

### *Withdrawal Policy*

Students who withdraw from a course after the end of the 4th week of class will receive a grade of WP, WF, or WN.

- WP will be awarded if the student is passing the course (based on work due to date) at the time the withdrawal is requested
- WF will be awarded if the student is failing the course (based on work due to date) at the time the withdrawal is requested
- WN will be awarded if no materials have been submitted, and so there is no basis for a grade

Students must submit their withdrawal request on-line through Pipeline. The faculty member must approve the withdrawal request before it becomes final, and students should continue to attend class until they receive notification via email that the withdrawal has been approved. Withdrawals can be requested at any point from the fifth week of class through the study day.

### *Attention Students with Disabilities*

If you have a documented disability that requires accommodations, you will need to register with Student Disability Services for coordination of your academic accommodations. The Student Disability Services (SDS) office is located at 1600 David Adamany Undergraduate Library in the Student Academic Success Services department. SDS telephone number is 313-577-1851 or 313-577-3365 (TTY: telecommunication device for the deaf; phone for hearing impaired students only). Once you have your accommodations in place, SDS staff will be glad to meet with you privately during office hours to discuss your special needs. Student Disability Services' mission is to assist the university in creating an accessible community where students with disabilities have an equal opportunity to fully participate in their educational experience at Wayne State University.

### *Religious Observance Policy*

Because of the extraordinary variety of religious affiliations represented in the University student

body and staff, the Wayne State University calendar makes no provision for religious holidays. It is University policy, however, to respect the faith and religious obligations of the individual. Students who find that their classes or examinations involve conflicts with their religious observances are expected to notify their instructors well in advance so that alternative arrangements as suitable as possible may be worked out.

### *Free and Open Exchange of Ideas: Classroom Climate*

As a graduate student at Wayne State University, the free discourse of ideas should be expected. I believe the open exchange of ideas is necessary for learning. You may find that some of the class readings and discussions challenge your views and theoretical frameworks. I expect openness to difference and a willingness to interpret issues from frameworks that may not be quite so comfortable for you.

I have opinions, and will express those. You are free to express either agreement or disagreement without fear of consequences. This does not mean of course, that I may not challenge your views or disagree with them. But it does mean that you will experience no consequences for disagreeing with me. If you feel that I am violating this commitment, please arrange an appointment to discuss the issue.

Please be sensitive in your class participation by not unfairly dominating discussions. My goal is to create a psychologically safe space in which everyone feels that they can participate in the discussion. This does not mean people cannot disagree. This does not mean people cannot have emotions connected to their words. What it does mean is that we all need to be sensitive, appreciative, and respectful, no matter how strongly we might disagree.

### **Class Schedule**

#### *Classes Start 03 September*

#### *1. Qualitative research: An introduction (08 September)*

- Crotty – chapter 1
- Bogdan & Biklen – chapter 1

#### *2. Making sense of epistemology and theory (15 September)*

- Crotty – chapter 2 & 3

#### *3. Interpretivism, ethics, subjectivity (22 September)*

- Crotty – chapter 4 & 5

#### HIC Form due

#### *4. Critical inquiry and theoretical/conceptual frameworks (29 September) ONLINE (Blackboard)*

- Crotty – chapter 6 & 7

#### *5. Feminism, postmodernism, and research questions (06 October)*

- Crotty – chapter 8 & 9

#### First Theory Statement due

6. *Designing a qualitative study and methodology (13 October)*

- Bogdan & Biklen – chapter 2

Second Theory Statement due

7. *Qualitative methods (20 October)*

- Bogdan & Biklen – chapter 3

ONLINE (Blackboard)

8. *More qualitative methods (27 October)*

- Patton – chapter 7

ONLINE (Blackboard)

Preliminary Research Report due

9. *Collecting qualitative data: Interviews and focus groups (03 November)*

- Bogdan & Biklen – chapter 4

First Article Review due

10. *Collecting qualitative data: Observation (10 November)*

- Bogdan & Biklen – chapter 5

Second Article Review due

11. *Transcribing and representing qualitative data (17 November)*

- Bogdan & Biklen – chapter 6

ONLINE (Blackboard)

12. *Analyzing qualitative data (24 November)*

- Bogdan & Biklen – chapter 7

Book Review due

13. *Design-based research and writing up qualitative research (01 December)*

- McKenney, S., & van den Akker, J. (2005). Computer-based support for curriculum designers: A case of developmental research. *Educational Technology: Research and Development*, 53(2), 41-66.
- Reeves, T. C., Herrington, J., & Oliver, R. (2005). Design research: A socially responsible approach to instructional technology research in higher education. *Journal of Computing in Higher Education*, 16(2), 97-116.

14. *Socially responsible research (08 December)*

- Reeves, T. C. (1995). *Questioning the questions of instructional technology research*. A paper presented at the National Convention of the Association for Educational Communications and Technology, Anaheim, CA.
- Reeves, T. C. (2000). Socially responsible educational technology research. *Educational Technology*, 40(6), 19-28.
- Tierney, W. G., & Holley, K. A. (2008) Inside Pasteur's quadrant: Knowledge production in a profession. *Educational Studies*, 34(4), 289-297.

Final Research Outline due