

ERMA 7220: Applied Qualitative Research¹
Auburn University - College of Education
Department of Educational Foundations, Leadership, & Technology
Summer Mini-mester 2016

1. **Class Time:** Tuesdays and Thursdays, 4:00-7:50pm
Location: Haley Center, Room 1454
Instructor: Hannah Carson Baggett
Contact information: 334.844.3024 hcb0017@auburn.edu
Office Hours: Thursdays 3:00-3:45, and by appointment; virtual office hours
Wednesdays 12:00-1:00
Credit Hours: 3 semester hours
2. **Date Syllabus Prepared:** May 2016
3. **Special Accommodations:** Students who need accommodations are asked to electronically submit their approved accommodations through AU Access and to arrange a meeting during office hours the first week of classes, or as soon as possible if accommodations are needed immediately. If you have a conflict with my office hours, an alternate time can be arranged. If you have not established accommodations through the Office of Accessibility, but need accommodations, make an appointment with the Office of Accessibility, 1228 Haley Center, 844-2096 (V/TT).
4. **Course Description:** This course is based on the assumption that qualitative researchers learn their trade through both scholarship (i.e., deskwork) and firsthand experience (i.e., fieldwork). We take away lessons from doing our own research and from the research experiences of others. For this reason, the course has two aims. The first aim is to help you become familiar with the field's methodological literature, leading advocates, and ongoing debates. The second aim is to hone your skills conducting fieldwork, analyzing qualitative data, writing research reports, and reflecting meaningfully on these processes, including their theoretical, methodological, and ethical dimensions. Course readings will serve as the basis for class discussions and requirements, so you are expected to complete the readings before the dates for which they are assigned.
5. **Student Learning Outcomes:** By the completion of this course, you will be able to: 1) conduct guided observations and interviews; 2) engage in data reduction and preliminary analysis of both field notes and interview transcripts; 3) write up these data, experimenting with various narrative strategies in this process, including tables, graphs, and charts; and, 4) identify and position yourself with regard to various issues in contemporary procedures and theories of interpretation.
6. **Required Texts:** Yin, R. K. (2016). *Qualitative research from start to finish*. Guilford Press: NY.
7. **Required Materials:**
 - Time management skills. (This course is time-intensive. I encourage you to consider your schedule before deciding to commit to this class.).
 - Web access. You must have access to a web browser, and you must check your email accounts (Tiger Mail and Canvas) several times a week. Speaking of technology:

¹ This syllabus is based on syllabi by Drs. Patti Lather, Daniel Henry, Antoinette Errante, and Aaron Kuntz, Carey Andrzejewski, Julia Storberg-Walker, and Bonnie Fusarelli.

- All assignments for this course are submitted electronically to Canvas. Courses with electronically submitted assignments require students to take responsibility for saving/backing up work and for re-doing assignments if they fail to back up their work. (It's a good idea to create assignments in Word, Pages, or other word processing software in case Canvas times you out or you lose your connection.)
8. **Course Format:** Scholars have long theorized that educational pedagogy and practice is rooted in a “banking” approach to teaching and learning (Freire, 1970; Giroux, 1997). In this banking model, students were (and in many cases still are) viewed as empty vessels to be filled by the teacher, who “deposits” knowledge and expertise. In this way, students are positioned as passive and powerless, and teaching is a purely teacher-directed act. Due to this positioning, students are often unfamiliar with being responsible for active participation in their own learning. Since all education is political (Freire, 1970) and teachers generally develop courses around their convictions, I try to be very transparent about my teaching philosophy: I approach teaching from a critical stance, which counters passive transference of knowledge. Instead of assuming the role of ‘director’ of learning and ‘keeper’ of authority in a classroom of adults, I participate in teaching as a guide, wherein students emerge as co-directors of the curriculum. This model of teaching expects that students will contribute their own experiences, knowledge, and expertise, and empowers students to be actively involved in their own development. This empowerment is particularly critical in working with adult students who each add a valuable and unique perspective that is essential to quality graduate level learning. Furthermore, an important aspect of this course will be ongoing collaborative interactions with your classmates. You will be working in a collaborative group for many of the class activities and projects. I hope you will learn a great deal from each other. I view myself as both a learner and a teacher in the class, and I expect each of you to also participate in both of these roles. This course utilizes a workshop format. Our course will include small group discussions and activities, whole-class discussions and activities, reflection, conferencing, fieldwork, and student-led discussions and presentations. It is important that students keep current with the assigned readings, attend class meetings, and participate in the discussions as informed members. Your participation will ensure that our time together will be productive and worthwhile.
9. **Course Requirements:** See class calendar for due dates.
- A. **CITI Training (Completion).** The university requires online ethics in research training before you begin conducting research with human or animal subjects. Please upload a copy of your completion certificate to Canvas.
 - B. **Participation and Preparedness (5 points):** Preparing for and engaging in class are essential not only to your success in class but also to the success of your classmates. As I aspire to a workshop format in this class, it is critical that you come to class having done the reading and common assignments and prepared to contribute to class discussion. To this end, one question is due in class each week based on the assigned readings. The questions should be genuine; that is, *questions for which you do not have an answer, ideas that go beyond or synthesize the reading, or comments that warrant class discussion*. They should also be as focused as possible and specific to concepts from the readings. These questions will form the skeleton for much of our class discussion. As the course builds from week to week, you may begin to compare and contrast/synthesize across multiple readings as you formulate your questions. Although not graded per se (only as part of the participation grade), questions from the readings each week are a course requirement and they will be marked in one of three ways: incomplete (0 points), complete (.5 point), or complete and substantive (1 points).

- C. Qualitative Research Methods Portfolio in Three Parts (75 points total): This class offers an opportunity to do fieldwork on a relatively small scale. Ideally, this will be a pilot or prior study for your dissertation, but at the least, the course should allow you to ‘practice’ the major qualitative methods for generating, analyzing, and writing up data. You may choose to work in a group around the same research questions (and pool your data for analysis), but your work for this portfolio will be individually completed and submitted.

Part I: Data Generation (25)

- a. Research Purpose (5 points) —A statement regarding your research interest(s) or question(s), including a synthesis of relevant literature, and a frame for your study.
- b. Structured or Guided Observation (7.5 points)—Notes from at least one hour of observation structured or guided by a theoretical perspective where you attempt to go beyond description. You may visit the site(s) more than once to have a total of 60 minutes of observation time. The relevance to your research purpose should be based both on location and the particulars to which you attend.
- c. Interview (7.5 points)—A minimum of one, at least 30-minute, interview evidenced by verbatim transcription. Your transcript(s) should be typed and formatted consistently.
- d. Reflective Journal (2.5 points) – Reflective journaling totaling at least three typed pages that documents your experiences and learning collecting data (see Appendix for guidelines and advice).
- e. Data Collection Audit Trail (2.5 points) – the who, what, when, where, of the data collection process etc. (see Appendix for guidelines and advice)

II. Part II: Data Analysis (25)

- a. Coded Data (10 points)—Individual initial coding of data corpus (yours or yours + your group’s), applying both inductive and deductive analysis (looking for emergent themes and patterns and applying a priori codes from a theoretical or conceptual framework, or from prior literature). Submit a “meaty” section of coded data. Choose a segment that is representative of the work you have done to analyze your data. Be sure the segment you choose is also representative of your codes. That is, make sure it’s aligned with your codebook.
- b. Codebook (10 points)—Submit a complete codebook; a codebook is a list of codes, identifications of kind of code (e.g., a priori or emergent) and source (e.g., data or citation from the literature), operational definitions or inclusion/exclusion criteria, and data exemplar (e.g., a quote or observation to which you would uniquely attach that code).
- c. Reflective Journal (2.5 points) – Reflective journaling totaling at least three typed pages that documents your experiences and learning analyzing data (see Appendix for guidelines and advice).
- d. Data Analysis Audit Trail (2.5 points) - the who, what, when, where, of the data analysis process etc. (see Appendix for guidelines and advice)

III. Part III: Writing Up Data (25)

- a. Two warranted assertions (10 points each) —After coding and categorizing your own data, you will warrant an assertion (2-4 pages each assertion, including tables and figures). This entails constructing evidentiary warrants for a claim you want to make (i.e., asserting a pattern or theme and warranting it with examples from your data). More precisely, you should code and categorize your data and identify a recurring pattern. State the pattern and illustrate it with 3-5 quotes from your data, using exact quotes from your observation notes or interview transcript. Do not paraphrase or

“clean up” the data. If tone of voice or pacing is important, try to show this by the way you display the quote. Follow the warrants with at least two paragraphs of interpretive commentary. Explain to the reader what you think the data mean, and add whatever contextual information you need to from your field notes or reflective journal that adds meaning to the data or clarifies their significance. These paragraphs should make the relationship between your assertion and your warrants absolutely clear. Include at least one instance of disconfirming data—data that contradicts or does not perfectly align with your assertion. I will be looking for evidence that you made a good faith effort to look for disconfirming evidence. If you find it, share what it is and provide an explanatory paragraph. If you looked for it and didn’t find it, say so and describe how you conducted the search.

- b. Synthesizing Reflective Journal (2.5 points) – Reflective journaling totaling at least three typed pages that documents your experiences and learning writing up your data, and at least one typed page that synthesizes across your pilot study experiences for the semester (see Appendix for guidelines and advice).
- c. Writing Up Data Audit Trail (2.5 points) - the who, what, when, where, of the data representation process etc. (see Appendix for guidelines and advice)

D. Presentation of Pilot Findings (20 points): This task will help you to practice talking about your research, which is often one of the hardest things for novice and experienced researchers to do. During our last class meeting, you will have the opportunity to present your pilot study and findings to the class and receive feedback about your preliminary warranted assertions. You can then incorporate this feedback into your final write-ups of warranted assertions, due after the last class session.

10. Grading Scale for the Final Grade:

90 to 100 points	A
80 to 89.99 points	B
70 to 79.99 points	C
60 to 69.99 points	D
Below 60 points	F

11. Course Policies:

- A. Professionals show up on time and prepared every day for work. This class is on a tight schedule.
- B. Professionals complete assignments on time. Assignments are due in Canvas as indicated in the syllabus and the course calendar. Assignments handed in after this time will be considered late. Late assignments will be penalized by 10% per day.
- C. Professionals use appropriate means for discussing disagreements. If you don’t understand something, ask during class. If you still don’t understand, email, phone, or catch me in the building. Please respect our class time together by planning to discuss grades or other points of contention during office hours.
- D. Professionals take responsibility for their own learning. That said, my purpose is to help class members become the very best they can possibly become at this point in their professional development. Please allow me to assist in any way possible including, but certainly not limited to: listening, providing feedback, answering questions, sharing and addressing concerns, brainstorming, clarifying course content or expectations, and mediating or facilitating work with collaborating peers. Always feel free to contact me by phone or by email. While I do check my e-mail regularly, **I do not check e-mail after 9 pm (to protect my sanity). Please allow me 24**

hours to respond to email, even though I'll probably get back to you sooner.

- E. Professionals give credit where credit is due. Even though I will encourage you to work in groups and learn from each other, each individual is held responsible for his/her own behavior and learning. I expect students to submit their own work for all assignments. The University Academic Honesty Code and the Tiger Cub Rules and Regulations pertaining to Cheating will apply to this class. See also Student Policy eHandbook (www.auburn.edu/studentpolicies) for rules on academic honesty. If and when resources are found (even those online!), proper citation must be used. Details regarding APA formatting and citations will be available on Canvas. Specifically, written assignments that include material that is similar to that from course reading materials or other sources should include a citation including source, author, and page number. Quotation marks should be used if the material is copied directly from the readings and text citations should be used (Author, year, page). If the material is paraphrased, (Author, year) should appear immediately following the paraphrased material. Failing to do so constitutes violation of the Auburn University Academic Honesty Code. In addition, written assignments that are similar or identical to those of other students in the class (past or present) is also a violation of the Code. Violations of the Auburn University Academic Honesty Code will be treated according to university policy. Rewriting and resubmission is not an option. **Finally, you may not submit the work of someone else or work that you have submitted for another class to satisfy a requirement of ERMA 7220, nor can you use work from ERMA 7220 as part of your formal dissertation study.**
- F. Professionals understand that teaching and learning are ongoing processes for everyone. To cycle back to my previously articulated teaching philosophy, understand that I am learning along with you, and that my teaching practice is also a work in progress. Please help me take a collaborative approach to solving any problems that may arise.
- G. Professionals make others aware of what they need to be successful. Please inform me within the first week of class if you require adaptations/modifications to any assignment because of special needs (disabilities, religious observances, and so on).

Class	Readings	Assignments Bold indicates hard deadlines; <i>italics</i> indicates work-in-progress that should be brought to class.
1 (Thursday, 5/19) Introduction – What is Qualitative research?, revisited; Paradigms and Philosophical Underpinnings	Yin, Chapters 1 and 2	CITI completion certificate posted by Sunday at midnight; <i>Bring to class: possible research topics</i>
2 (Tuesday, 5/24) Identifying an area of interest, Subjectivity, Reflexivity, and ‘doing’ Qual	<i>Ortlipp (2008)</i> Yin, Chapters 3 and 4 <i>Work in class: selecting/refining research questions; list of potential participants and observation sites; Participant recruitment script</i>	<i>Bring to class: (tentative) Research Question(s)</i> <i>Start participant recruitment</i>
3 (Thursday, 5/26) Doing Fieldwork	Yin, Chapter 5 <i>Work in class: refining interview guides; developing structured observation guid</i>	<i>Bring to class: draft of interview guide</i> <i>Start observation and interview data collection</i>
4 (Tuesday, 5/31) Data generation	Yin, Chapters 6 and 7	<i>Data collection ~ ongoing</i>
5 (Thursday, 6/2) Data generation and analysis	<i>Work in class: transcription</i>	<i>Bring to class: audio recording of interview for in-class transcription</i> <i>Data collection ~ ongoing</i> Portfolio Part I due Saturday at midnight
6 (Tuesday, 6/7) Coding, Categorizing, and Writing Memos	Yin, Chapters 8 and 9 <i>Work in class: Coding data and emergent codebook</i>	<i>Bring to class: all observation field notes and interview transcripts (hard copies)</i>
7 (Thursday, 6/9) Analysis, cont.	<i>Work in class: Coding data and emergent codebook</i>	<i>Bring to class: coded data and emergent codebook</i> Portfolio Part II due Saturday at midnight
8 (Tuesday, 6/14) Representation	Yin, Chapters 10 and 11	<i>Bring to class: drafts of your assertions and warrants</i>
9 (Thursday, 6/16)		<i>Bring to class: drafts of your assertions and warrants</i>
10 (Tuesday, 6/21)	Final presentations in class	
		Portfolio Part III due Saturday at midnight

Appendix A: Hallmarks of High Quality Reflective Journals

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Reflective Journal: This summer, you will be asked to keep a reflective journal. The reflective journal will be a place for you to document your emerging subjectivity (i.e., those particular things about you that help and/or hinder your research), methodological learning (i.e., what you have come to understand about research practice and yourself as a researcher), and your experiences conducting fieldwork. You are required to make reflective notes here about your experiences before, during, and after each phase of the research process. You should integrate responses to class sessions and readings as seems appropriate. Your final journal entry should synthesize and summarize your growth as a researcher over the course of the summer mini-mester. Feel free to use a personal tone; after all, this is about you.

Entries in your reflective journal should document your substantive thinking about one or more of the following questions:

- What have I learned about qualitative methodology?
- Who am I becoming as a researcher? Who do I want to be as a researcher?
- What is the nature of “my particular pair of spectacles”? How do I see the world in unique ways? How do my views, my lenses, my biases, and my assumptions shape what I can, and cannot, see in my data? How do they shape the data I collect, the analyses I conduct, the conclusions I reach, and the ways I disseminate my work?
- What sense am I making of the class readings? ... the field experiences? ... the class experiences?
- How are my readings, fieldwork, and class experiences related?
- In what ways am I building skills as a qualitative researcher? What has gone well? What mistakes have I made in my fieldwork? What will I do differently next time? Why?
- How is my sense of my class project evolving? How are my ideas for my dissertation evolving? How are my ideas for my professional program of research evolving?
- How am I working to align my research topic, research questions, research design (data collection and analysis plans), and writing for my class project? ... for my dissertation? ... for my professional program of research?

There are also five criteria that can be used to assess the degree to which reflective practice is productive. I will assess your journals based on the degree to which your writing meets these criteria. They are:

1. **Specificity and Clarity:** Does the reflective writing draw on specific language and terminology rather than broad, vague terms? Does it clearly communicate a message, epiphany, discovery, concern, or question?
2. **Accuracy:** Does the reflective writing refer to concepts in qualitative research in ways that demonstrate accurate, or evolving, understanding? Does the reflective writing include appropriate, formal citations where the thoughts, ideas, and words of others have been used? That is, this document will be most useful for you if you use it as a place to record ideas that you may cite in future work (conference presentations, journal articles, chapter 3 of a dissertation, etc.).
3. **Synthesis:** Does the reflective writing provide evidence that you have drawn on more than one source of information (reading, field experience, class experience, etc.) to reveal deep thinking about qualitative methodology? It will be particularly important to incorporate ideas from the readings. Including citational support for your ideas is a good scholarly habit.
4. **Self-Focus:** Does the reflective writing include substantive statements about your learning and experiences? After all, reflection is ultimately about *you*.

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- Davis, E. A. (2006). Characterizing productive reflection among preservice elementary teachers: Seeing what matters. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 22(3), 281-301.
 - Based on guidelines developed by Drs. Carey Andrzejewski and Heather A. Davis

5. **Future-Focus:** Does the reflective writing include specific statements about your future practice as a (qualitative) researcher?

Audit Trail: Your audit trail, on the other hand, will be less personal as it is a place to document what you have done—the specifics of what you did, from/with whom, when, where, how long did it take, etc? Be as detailed as you can so that the information you document can easily become a methods section or chapter. This is also a place to keep track of how your research design is evolving. Use an organizational convention that works for you and that you think you can maintain (calendar, bulleted list, paragraphs, tweets, wiki, blog, etc.). Integrate citations for methodological literature where appropriate.

Appendix B: Rubric for final presentation

Criteria	0	0.5	1	1.5	2
Introduction and Description of Methods for the Pilot Study					
Clear research question(s) that indicate the use of qualitative research methods—assumptions and rationale					
Clear and detailed explanation of data generation methods					
Appropriateness of participants and observation sites					
Clear and detailed explanation of data analysis methods					
Results of the Pilot Study					
Two assertions presented					
Assertions warranted with substantive data (exemplary quotes, excerpts from field notes, etc.)					
Apparent search for disconfirming evidence					
Sharing Methodological Learning ²					
Evidence of reflexivity (i.e., It's clear the student has thought about their role as a researcher.)					
Inclusion of lessons learned or lingering questions based on the pilot study					
Preparation					
Coherent presentation; attractive materials that are properly edited; evidence of rehearsal (i.e., within the allotted time)					
General Comments:					
Total:					
/20					