



GEOGRAPHY FINAL COURSE OUTLINE: FALL 2014
Geography 340
H(3-0)

Qualitative Methods in Human-Environmental Research

Section	Days	Time	Location
LEC 01	TuTh	09:30 - 10:45	*ES 443
Instructor: Joe Arvai		Office: ES 448	
Tel: 220 7846		Email: arvai@ucalgary.ca	
TAs: Sara Goto		TA Office: TBD	
TA Email: skgoto@ucalgary.ca			
Twitter: @DecisionLab, #GEOG340			

*NB: The primary emergency evacuation assembly point for all classes taught in Earth Sciences is the ICT Food Court. The secondary emergency evacuation assembly point is the Social Science Food Court

Course Description

This course provides an introduction to qualitative research methods and research design in human and environmental geography. The course covers the basic principles of qualitative methods, how they compare with and differ from quantitative methods and how these methods can be combined. Among the subjects covered are theoretical frameworks, methodological design, forms of data collection, ethical considerations, fieldwork issues, data analysis, interpretation, and scientific writing. By using theoretical and applied examples throughout the course, it offers basic skills for the complex analysis of human-environment relationships through multiple-source qualitative information that can encompass, for example, first-person accounts, semi-structured and open-ended interviews, focus groups, and content analysis.

The course will be organized around a single, thematic research question, which will guide your work throughout the term. The emphasis of the class will be on *self-directed, inquiry-based learning*. This means, I will keep straight “lectures” to a minimum. Instead, I will use short lectures to introduce key concepts. Then, using our thematic research question as a guide, you will be asked to apply what you have learned in the field. As a result, the course will be “hands-on” and interactive. Moreover, the workload in this class will be high. Effective group work and a commitment to keeping on top of your assignments will be essential; if you have a history of free-riding in a group-work setting, or if you intend to start one, please drop the course now.

Four basic methods in qualitative research, and one quantitative approach will be introduced; they are:

- (i) In-Person Methods – Interviews
- (ii) In-Person Methods – Focus Groups
- (iii) In-Person Methods – Ethnography
- (iv) Non-Participant Observation
- (v) Quantitative Surveys (to illustrate mixed-methods research)

Prerequisites

One of Geography 205, 251, 253 or Urban Studies 253, or consent of the Department.

Readings

The textbook for this class, which is optional, is:

Hennink, M., I. Hutter, and A. Bailey. 2011. *Qualitative Research Methods*. SAGE Publications. London, UK.

Additional readings may be assigned, and posted on D2L, throughout the term.

Grading/Weighting

Practicum 1: Non-Participant Observation	15%	Due:	October 7
Practicum 2: Interviews	15%	Due:	October 21
Practicum 3: Focus Groups	15%	Due:	November 4
Practicum 4: Ethnography	15%	Due:	November 25
Practicum 5: Survey	15%	Due:	December 8 (10:45 am)
Final Scientific Paper	25%	Due:	December 12 (noon)
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*TOTAL	100%		

NB: The content of and requirements for assignments—including additional assignments, and the distribution of grades—is subject to change at the sole discretion of the course instructor.

Grading

96 – 100	A+	77 – 80	B	59 – 61	C-
90 – 95	A	71 – 76	B-	55 – 58	D+
86 – 89	A-	65 – 70	C+	50 – 54	D
81 – 85	B+	62 – 64	C	0 – 49	F

Writing across the Curriculum

Writing skills are not exclusive to English courses and, in fact, should cross all disciplines. The University supports the belief that throughout their University careers, students should be taught how to write well so that when they graduate their writing abilities will be far above the minimal standards required at entrance. Consistent with this belief, students are expected to do a substantial amount of writing in their University courses and, where appropriate, members of faculty can and should use writing and the grading thereof as a factor in the evaluation of student work. The services provided by the Writing Centre in the Effective Writing Office are available to any undergraduate or graduate student who requires further assistance.

Principles of Conduct

The University of Calgary Calendar includes a statement on the Principles of conduct expected of all members of the University community (including students, faculty, administrators, any category of staff, practicum supervisors and volunteers) whether on or off the University's property. This statement applies in all situations where the members of the University community are acting in their University capacities. All Members of the University Community have a responsibility to familiarize themselves with this statement, which is available at: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/j-2.html>

Plagiarism

Academic dishonesty is not an acceptable activity at the University of Calgary and students are **strongly advised** to read the Student Misconduct section in the University Calendar. Quite often,

students are unaware of what constitutes academic dishonesty or plagiarism. The most common are 1) presenting another student's work as your own; 2) presenting an author's work or ideas as your own without proper referencing; and 3) using work completed for another course. This activity will not be tolerated in this course and students conducting themselves in this manner will be dealt with according to the procedures outlined in the calendar.

Academic Accommodation Policy

If you are a student with a documented disability who may require academic accommodation and have not registered with the Disability Resource Centre, please contact their office at 220-8237. Students who have not registered with the Disability Resource Centre are not eligible for formal academic accommodation. You are also required to discuss your needs with your instructor no later than fourteen (14) days after the start of this course.

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy

FOIP: The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) legislation disallows the practice of having students retrieve assignments from a public place, e.g., outside instructor's office, the department office, etc. Term assignments will be returned to students individually, during class or during the instructor's office hours; if students are unable to pick up their assignments from the instructor, they provide the instructor with a stamped, self-addressed envelope to be used for the return of the assignment

Posting of Grades and Pick up of Assignments

- Each assignment must be printed, stapled, and submitted at the start of class on its due date. Electronic copies of assignments will **not** be accepted.
- Final grades will be available to each student on D2L by password access. Grades will **not** be available at Geography's main office.

Contact Information for Student and Faculty Representation

- SU VP Academic Phone: 220-3911 and e-mail: suypaca@ucalgary.ca
- SU Faculty Rep. Phone: 220-3913 and e-mail: arts1@ucalgary.ca
- The students ombudsman office information can be found at: <http://www.su.ucalgary.ca/page/affordability-accessibility/su-structure/contact-info>

Campus Safewalk

Campus Security, in partnership with the Students' Union, provides the Safewalk service, 24 hours a day, to any location on Campus including the LRT, parking lots, bus zones and University residences. Contact Campus Security at 220-5333 or use a help phone, and Safewalkers or a Campus Security officer will accompany you to your Campus destination.

Faculty of Arts Program Advising and Student Information Resources

- Have a question, but not sure where to start? The new Faculty of Arts Program Information Centre (PIC) is your information resource for everything in Arts! Drop in at SS110, call us at 403-220-3580 or email us at artsads@ucalgary.ca. You can also visit the Faculty of Arts website at <http://arts.ucalgary.ca/undergraduate> which has detailed information on common academic concerns.
 - For program planning and advice, contact the Student Success Centre (formerly the Undergraduate programs Office) at (403) 220-5881 or visit them in their new space on the 3rd Floor of the Taylor Family Digital Library.
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- For registration (add/drop/swap), paying fees and assistance with your Student Centre, contact Enrolment Services at (403) 210-ROCK [7625] or visit them at the MacKimmie Library Block.

Contact for Students Union Representatives for the Faculty of Arts:

arts1@su.ucalgary.ca, arts2@su.ucalgary.ca, arts3@su.ucalgary.ca, arts4@su.ucalgary.ca

WEEK	TOPIC*		
	<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>Thursday</i>	
1	Sept. 9, 11	Course Introduction	Introduction to Qualitative Research: Part 1 – The Basics
2	Sept. 16, 18	Introduction to Qualitative Research: Part 2 – Ethics & Design	Introduction to Qualitative Research: Part 3 – Ethnographic Cycle
3	Sept. 23, 25	Introduction to Non-Participant Observation	Practicum: Non-Participant Observation
4	Sept. 30, Oct. 2	Practicum: Non-Participant Observation	Reality Check: Non-Participant Observation
5	Oct. 7, 9	Introduction to In-Person Interviews	Practicum: In-Person Interviews
6	Oct. 14, 16	Practicum: In-Person Interviews	Reality Check: In-Person Interviews
7	Oct. 21, 23	Introduction to Focus Groups	Practicum: Focus Groups
8	Oct. 28, 30	Practicum: Focus Groups	Reality Check: Focus Groups
9	Nov. 4, 6	Writing for Science	Introduction to Embedded Ethnography
10	Nov. 11, 13	Reading Break: No Class Scheduled	Practicum: Embedded Ethnography
11	Nov. 18, 20	Practicum: Embedded Ethnography	Reality Check: Embedded Ethnography
12	Nov. 25, 27	Introduction to Survey Design	Practicum: Survey Design
13	Dec. 2, 4	Practicum: Survey Design	Reality Check: Survey Design
-	Dec. 12	Final Papers Due (at noon)	

*Course content (including topics *and* dates) is subject to change without notice, and at the sole discretion of the course instructor.