



DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE
FACULTY OF ARTS

POLI 398 LEC 01
Qualitative Research Methods
Fall 2018

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Roberta Rice
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OFFICE HOURS: Tues. 11:00-11:50 a.m. and Wed. 3:00-3:50 p.m.
COURSE DAY/TIME: Tues/Thurs. 9:30 a.m.-10:45 a.m.
COURSE PRE-REQUISITES: 3 Units in Political Science
COURSE LOCATION: SH 288
COURSE WEBSITE: <http://d2l.ucalgary.ca>

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course provides an introduction to the methods and tools used for qualitative research on human activity, done for both academic and professional purposes. The course will provide students with an understanding of basic research skills and designs in Political Science in order to carry out a future research project. The course is directed towards a deeper understanding and application of qualitative methods. Course topics include the basics of qualitative research design, ethics in qualitative research, decolonizing methodologies, participant observation, conducting interviews and researching primary documents.

COURSE OBJECTIVES & LEARNING OUTCOMES:

The purpose of the course is to introduce students to the qualitative research method in Political Science. As a learning outcome, students will develop the ability to use selected tools of qualitative research by collecting and analyzing primary data. Students will also develop the capacity to write up qualitative research.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS:

Deborah K. Van Den Hoonaard. Qualitative Research in Action: A Canadian Primer, 2nd Edition (Oxford University Press, 2015). Available for purchase at the University Bookstore. A copy has also been placed on reserve at the TFDL.

Electronic journal articles and course reserve chapters are available on our D2L course page (<http://d2l.ucalgary.ca>).

COURSE COMPONENT WEIGHTS AND DUE DATES:

| COMPONENT | WEIGHTING | DUE DATES |
|-------------------------|-----------|----------------------------|
| Mid-Term Exam | 20 | October 18 |
| Participant Observation | 25 | November 8 |
| Interview Coding | 25 | December 4 |
| Final Examination | 30 | Scheduled by the Registrar |
| Total | 100% | |

COURSE SCHEDULE & TOPICS:

| DATE | TOPIC | READINGS |
|----------------|--|------------------------|
| Sept.11-Oct.18 | Part I: Research Design and Methods | See reading list below |
| Oct.23-Dec. 4 | Part II: Collecting and Analyzing Data | See reading list below |

COURSE FORMAT AND EXPECTATIONS

The class will be taught in a lecture-style format. Teaching methods will include lectures, guest speakers, and classroom discussions and activities. Students are expected to attend all class sessions and complete the assigned readings before they are discussed in class. Student participation in lecture discussions and activities is highly encouraged.

MID-TERM EXAM

The closed-book mid-term exam will be held during regular class hours on Thursday, October 18. It will include a mix of short answer and essay questions and will test your familiarity with the lecture and reading material as well as your ability to apply what you have learned. No exam aides allowed. A study guide will be made available in class. All medical or emergency-based make-up test requests will require official documentation.

PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION ASSIGNMENT

The purpose of this assignment is for you to apply your research tools in the field. To prepare, you must read Chapter 5 (“Observing Social Life through Field Research”) of the textbook. You will assume the role of a complete observer. Pick a public setting of interest to you and in which you can take notes relatively unobserved (e.g. public library, public park, public plaza). Approach the assignment as an observer engaged in preliminary exploratory analysis. Take field notes either by hand or using a lap top. DO NOT use video or audio recording equipment. Speculate on the “rules” that govern behaviour in that setting. Consider the ethical issues involved in observing in such a manner. What are the advantages and disadvantages of conducting research as a complete observer? You should spend at least one hour observing the setting. Write up the results of your participant observation exercise in a report of approximately 5-6 double-spaced pages and attach your type-written field notes as an appendix. Make sure to draw on our course material in your report. Your report should: a) describe the setting; b) highlight the social dynamics and interactions observed; c) reflect on the ethics of being a complete observer; and d) outline the advantages and disadvantages of the participant observation research method. The assignment will be discussed in detail in class.

INTERVIEW CODING ASSIGNMENT

Interview data provides a richer understanding of the structures, processes, and perspectives that drive or shape human behaviour. The task for this assignment is to perform a qualitative content analysis of the themes, meanings and motives of a real world interview. Rather than conducting your own interview, you will rely on an on-line series of podcast interviews (“Voices of Vision: Yukon Aboriginal Self-Government”) that is intended to deepen public understanding of the history of land claims and self-government implemented in the Yukon. You can access the podcast series through the Government of Canada’s Indigenous and Northern Affairs website: <http://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1314896211861/1314896328613>. To prepare for this assignment, you must first read the case study chapter by Roberta Rice, “Achieving First Nation Self-Government in Yukon, Canada” that is assigned during the week of October 30th as well as the procedural chapter by Sandra Halperin and Oliver Heath, “Textual Analysis,” assigned during the week of November 6th. Each podcast is accompanied by a transcribed interview. You may select any one of the ten podcast interviews to analyze in detail. Make sure to listen to the interview first for tone and meaning. Your content analysis may be performed on the transcribed interview data. The objective of the assignment is to develop new insights into the making of this historic comprehensive land claims agreement. Write up the results of your interview coding exercise in a final report of approximately 5-6 double-spaced pages and attach your coding protocol as an appendix. Make sure to draw on our course material in your report. Your report should: a) introduce the individual being interviewed and his or her role in the land claims process; b) present the major themes and insights from the interview; c) outline how the interview data advances the literature on this topic; and d) reflect on the merits and limits of working with interview data. The assignment will be discussed in detail in class.

FINAL EXAMINATION

The closed-book, two-hour final exam will take place during the fall examination period, December 10-20, 2018. The exam will include a mix of short answer and essay questions and will test your familiarity with the lecture material and reading assignments after the mid-term exam. It will also test your ability to apply what you have learned. No exam aides allowed. A study guide for the exam will be made available in class.

GRADE SCALE: The following grading scale will be used:

| | | | |
|-------------|------------|------------|------------|
| A+ (91-100) | B+ (77-79) | C+ (67-69) | D+ (55-59) |
| A (85-90) | B (73-76) | C (63-66) | D (50-54) |
| A- (80-84) | B- (70-72) | C- (60-62) | F (0-49) |

EVALUATION CRITERIA FOR WRITTEN WORK

- 1) *Level of Style and Organization:* Your work must be completely free of grammatical, spelling and typographical errors. References can be in any style but the same format must be used consistently and they must be accurate. The organization of the paper should assist the reader by providing a readily understandable presentation of background information, research findings, analysis and conclusions.

- 2) *Adequacy of the Research*: Your findings should be derived from thorough research. Your work should be free of major factual errors or unsupported and/or undocumented assertions. You should link your findings to those of other scholars and draw meaningful conclusions based on your evidence.
- 3) *Cogency of the Argument*: Your written work should have a clear focus and an argument that is logically constructed. Your analysis should display understanding of the topic and originality of thought.

WRITING STATEMENT:

Written assignments are often required in Political Science courses, including this one, and the quality of writing skills, including but not limited to such elements as grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, clarity, citation, and organization, will be taken into account in the determination of grades. Students are encouraged to make use of the services offered through Writing Support Services in the Student Success Centre (3rd floor of the Taylor Family Digital Library) or at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support>.

LATE PENALTIES

A penalty of 2% per working day will be applied to all late assignments up until a maximum of ten late days, after which late papers will not be accepted. Weekends count as one working day. Late assignments should be submitted to the Political Science office (SS 756) during business hours. After hours, papers may be submitted to the departmental drop-box outside of the main office on the 7th floor of Social Sciences. Any medical-based assignment extension requests will require official medical documentation and will require advance notice. E-mailed assignments will not be accepted.

INSTRUCTOR GUIDELINES

Students requiring assistance are encouraged to speak to the instructor during class or office hours. Email is a common form of communication but it is not always the most effective way of answering student questions.

Students are welcome to use laptops and other electronic note-taking devices in this course. Please be considerate of others and switch off all cell phones when you enter the classroom. Sending/receiving texts and browsing the Web is extremely disruptive to others and will not be tolerated.

IMPORTANT POLICIES AND INFORMATION:

Absence From a Mid-term Examination:

Students who are absent from a scheduled term test or quiz for legitimate reasons (e.g. illness with the appropriate documentation) are responsible for contacting the instructor via email within 48 hours of the missed test to discuss alternative arrangements. A copy of this email may be requested as proof of the attempt to contact the instructor. Any student who fails to do so forfeits the right to a makeup test.

Deferral of a Final Examination:

Deferral of a final examination can be granted for reasons of illness, domestic affliction, and

unforeseen circumstances, as well as to those with three (3) final exams scheduled within a 24-hour period. Deferred final exams will not be granted to those who sit the exam, who have made travel arrangements that conflict with their exam, or who have misread the examination timetable. The decision to allow a deferred final exam rests not with the instructor but with Enrolment Services. Instructors should, however, be notified if you will be absent during the examination. The Application for Deferred Final Exam, deadlines, requirements and submission instructions can be found on the Enrolment Services website at <https://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/exams/deferred-exams>.

Appeals:

If a student has a concern about the course or a grade they have been assigned, they must first discuss their concerns with the instructor. If this does not resolve the matter, the student then proceeds with an academic appeal. The first step in an academic appeal is to set up a meeting with the Department Head. Appeals must be requested within 15 days of receipt of the graded assignment.

University Regulations:

Students are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the University policies found in the Academic Regulations sections of the Calendar at www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/academic-regs.html.

Student Accommodations:

Students seeking an accommodation based on disability or medical concerns should contact Student Accessibility Services; SAS will process the request and issue letters of accommodation to instructors. For additional information on support services and accommodations for students with disabilities, visit www.ucalgary.ca/access/.

Students who require an accommodation in relation to their coursework based on a protected ground other than disability should communicate this need in writing to their Instructor.

The full policy on Student Accommodations is available at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy.pdf>.

Plagiarism And Other Forms Of Academic Misconduct:

Academic misconduct in any form (e.g. cheating, plagiarism) is a serious academic offence that can lead to disciplinary probation, suspension or expulsion from the University. Students are expected to be familiar with the standards surrounding academic honesty; these can be found in the University of Calgary calendar at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k-5.html>. Such offences will be taken seriously and reported immediately, as required by Faculty of Arts policy.

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP):

FOIP legislation requires that instructors maintain the confidentiality of student information. In practice, this means that student assignment and tests cannot be left for collection in any public place without the consent of the student. It also means that grades cannot be distributed via email. Final exams are kept by instructors but can be viewed by contacting them or the main

office in the Department of Political Science. Any uncollected assignments and tests meant to be returned will be destroyed after six months from the end of term; final examinations are destroyed after one year.

Evacuation Assembly Points:

In the event of an emergency evacuation from class, students are required to gather in designated assembly points. Please check the list found at www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints and note the assembly point nearest to your classroom.

Faculty of Arts Program Advising and Student Information Resources:

For program planning and advice, visit the Arts Students' Centre in Social Sciences 102, call 403-220-3580 or email artsads@ucalgary.ca. You can also visit arts.ucalgary.ca/advising for program assistance.

For registration (add/drop/swap), paying fees and assistance with your Student Centre, contact Enrolment Services at (403) 210-ROCK [7625] or visit their office in the MacKimmie Library Block.

Important Contact Information:

Campus Security and Safewalk (24 hours a day/7 days a week/365 days a year)
Phone: 403-220-5333

Faculty of Arts Undergraduate Students' Union Representatives

Phone: 403-220-6551

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

Students' Union URL: www.su.ucalgary.ca

Graduate Students' Association

Phone: 403-220-5997

Email: ask@gsa.ucalgary.ca

URL: www.ucalgary.ca/gsa

Student Ombudsman

Phone: 403-220-6420

Email: ombuds@ucalgary.ca

Campus Mental Health Resources:

SU Wellness Centre: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/>

Campus Mental Health Strategy: <https://www.ucalgary.ca/mentalhealth/>

COURSE SCHEDULE AND READING ASSIGNMENTS

**Sept. 6: Introduction and Course Overview:
The Qualitative Research Tradition**

Part I: Research Design and Methods

Sept. 11/13: The Basics of Research Design

Textbook Reading: Van Den Hoonaard, Chapter 1 (“Introduction”)

Textbook Reading: Van Den Hoonaard, Chapter 2 (“Asking Questions and Identifying Goals”)

Sept. 18/20: Consulting the Literature

Textbook Reading: Van Den Hoonaard, Chapter 3 (“Strategies for Designing Research”)

Course Reserve Reading: John W. Creswell, 4th edition, Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches (“Ch. 2: Review the Literature”), Sage, 2014, pp. 25-50.

Sept. 25/27: Ethics in Qualitative Research

Textbook Reading: Van Den Hoonaard, Chapter 4 (“Ethics on the Ground: A Moral Compass”)

E-Journal Reading: Marilys Guillemin and Lynn Gillam, “Ethics, Reflexivity, and ‘Ethically Important Moments’ in Research,” in Qualitative Inquiry, Vol. 10, No. 2, 2004, pp. 261-280.

Oct. 2/4: Decolonizing Methodologies

E-Book Reading: Margaret Kovach, Indigenous Methodologies: Characteristics, Conversations, and Contexts (“Chapter 1: Indigenous and Qualitative Inquiry: A Round Dance?”), University of Toronto Press, 2010, pp. 23-38.

E-Journal Reading: Yvonna S. Lincoln and Elsa M. González y González, “The Search for Emerging Decolonizing Methodologies in Qualitative Research,” in Qualitative Inquiry, Vol. 14, No. 5, 2008, pp. 784-805.

Oct. 9/11: New Directions in Qualitative Research

Textbook Reading: Van Den Hoonaard, Chapter 8 (“New Directions in Qualitative Research”)

Course Reserve Reading: Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln, eds., The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Research, 5th edition, (“Chapter 6: Feminist Qualitative Research in the Millennium’s First Decade,” by Virginia Olesen), Sage, 2018, pp. 151-175.

Oct. 16/18: Mid-Term Review and In-Class Exam

Note: Mid-Term Exam will be held in class on Thursday, Oct. 18th

Part II: Collecting and Analyzing Data

Oct. 23/25: Participant Observation and Focus Groups

Textbook Reading: Van Den Hoonaard, Chapter 5 (“Observing Social Life through Field Research”)

E-Book Reading: David L. Morgan, 2nd edition, Focus Groups as Qualitative Research, (“Chapter 2: Focus Groups as a Qualitative Method”), Sage, 1997, pp. 8-17.

Oct30/Nov1: Conducting Interviews

Textbook Reading: Van Den Hoonaard, Chapter 6 (“In-Depth Interviewing”)

Course Reserve Reading: Bettina Von Lieres and Laurence Piper, eds., Mediated Citizenship: The Informal Politics of Speaking for Citizens in the Global South, (“Chapter 12: Achieving First Nation Self-Government in Yukon, Canada: The Mediating Role of the Council for Yukon Indians (CYI), 1975-1995,” by Roberta Rice), Palgrave Macmillan, 2014, pp. 203-218.

Nov. 6/8: Researching Primary Documents

Textbook Reading: Van Den Hoonaard, Chapter 7 (“Unobtrusive Research”)

Course Reserve Reading: Sandra Halperin and Oliver Heath, 2nd edition, Political Research: Methods and Practical Skills, (“Chapter 14: Textual Analysis”), Oxford University Press, 2017, pp. 335-361.

Note: Participant Observation Assignment due in hardcopy at the start of class on November 8th

Nov. 13/15: Fall Term Break (No Classes)

Nov. 20/22: Analyzing Qualitative Data

Textbook Reading: Van Den Hoonaard, Chapter 9 (“Trust the Process: Analyzing Qualitative Data”)

Course Reserve Reading: Alan Bryman, 5th edition, Social Research Methods, (“Chapter 25: Computer-Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis—Using NVivo”), Oxford University Press, 2016, pp. 601-617).

Nov. 27/29: Writing Up Qualitative Research

Textbook Reading: Van Den Hoonaard, Chapter 10 (“Writing Up Qualitative Research”)

Dec. 4: Concluding Remarks and Exam Review

Note: Interview Coding Assignment Due in hardcopy at the start of class on December 4th

Note: No class on December 6th as Instructor will be participating in the Beyond Numbers: Comparing Mechanisms for Substantive Representation of Ethnic Minorities and Indigenous Groups workshop at McMaster University. Instructor will be available through e-mail, D2L and extended office hours.