



DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE
FACULTY OF ARTS

POLI 398 LEC 01
Qualitative Research Methods
Winter 2020

*****Remote Learning Course Outline*****

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Roberta Rice

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OFFICE HOURS: By e-mail

COURSE DAY/TIME: Tues./Thurs. 9:30 a.m.-10:45 a.m.

COURSE PRE-REQUISITES: 3 Units in Political Science

COURSE LOCATION: EDC 057

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, 3rd Edition (Oxford University Press, 2018). Available for purchase at the University Bookstore. A copy has also been placed on reserve at the TFDL.

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

COURSE COMPONENT WEIGHTS AND DUE DATES:

COMPONENT	WEIGHTING	DUE DATES
TCPS2 CORE Tutorial	10	February 11
Mid-Term Exam	25	February 27
Participant Observation	25	March 31
Take-home Final Examination	40	April 20
Total	100%	

COURSE SCHEDULE & TOPICS:

DATE	TOPIC	READINGS
Jan.21-Feb.27	Part I: Research Design and Methods	See reading list below
Mar.3-Apr.9	Part II: Collecting and Analyzing Data	See reading list below

ASSIGNMENTS:

COURSE FORMAT AND EXPECTATIONS

The class will be taught in an on-line lecture-style format. Teaching methods will include weekly Power Point lecture slides, on-line research methods tutorials available through TFDL, and discussion forum activities. Students are expected to complete the assigned readings before weekly lecture slides are posted. Student participation in the on-line discussion forum is highly encouraged.

MID-TERM EXAM

The closed-book mid-term exam will be held during regular class hours on Thursday, February 27th. 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 supporting documentation.

TCPS2 COURSE ON RESEARCH ETHICS (CORE) TUTORIAL ASSIGNMENT

The objective of this assignment is to provide you with training in research ethics before you conduct primary research. The University of Calgary is committed to ensuring our research community operates from a strong, ethical foundation. With the release of the updated Tri-Council Policy Statement 2 (TCPS2), a training tool was launched: the Course on Research Ethics (CORE) Tutorial. This three-hour, online tutorial provides TCPS2 guidance applicable to research across all disciplines and methodologies. Once the tutorial is complete, you are issued a certificate. You must print out the certificate and submit it to the course instructor to receive credit for this assignment. Students must self-register (please use your University of Calgary email address) to take the tutorial. To access the tutorial, search the University of Calgary's website for: "tcps2 CORE tutorial" or use the following link:

<https://www.ucalgary.ca/research/researchers/ethics-compliance/tcps2-core-tutorial>. The assignment will be discussed in detail in class.

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. mall, public park, public plaza). Alternately, you may conduct on-line observational research by joining a chat room and analyzing its dynamics by “lurking” (e.g. not participating in the conversations). 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.

TAKE-HOME FINAL EXAMINATION

The take-home final exam will take place during the winter examination period, April 18-29, 2020. The exam will consist of four 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. The take-home exam with instructions will be posted on our course page on the last day of our class (April 14, 2020) and will be due in Dropbox on our D2L page by 9:30 a.m. on April 20th.

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 supporting documentation. E-mailed assignments will not be accepted.

INSTRUCTOR GUIDELINES

Students requiring assistance are encouraged to speak to the instructor during class or their office hours. Should you wish to meet outside of office hours, please telephone or email to make an appointment. It is to the student's advantage to keep such appointments.

Email is a common form of communication but it is not always the most effective way of answering student questions. If you cannot make office hours, please request a one on one meeting outside of these hours.

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

Supporting Documentation and the Use of a Statutory Declaration

As stated in the University Calendar:

Students may be asked to provide supporting documentation for an exemption/special request. This may include, but is not limited to, a prolonged absence from a course where participation is required, a missed course assessment, a deferred examination, or an appeal. Students are encouraged to submit documentation that will support their situation. Supporting documentation may be dependent on the reason noted in their personal statement/explanation provided to explain their situation. This could be medical certificate/documentation,

references, police reports, invitation letter, third party letter of support or a statutory declaration etc. The decision to provide supporting documentation that best suits the situation is at the discretion of the student. Students cannot be required to provide specific supporting documentation, such as a medical note.

Students can make a Statutory Declaration as their supporting documentation (available at [ucalgary.ca/registrar](https://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar)). This requires students to make a declaration in the presence of a Commissioner for Oaths. It demonstrates the importance of honest and accurate information provided and is a legally binding declaration. Several registered Commissioners for Oaths are available to students at no charge, on campus. For a list of locations to access a Commissioners for Oaths, visit [ucalgary.ca/registrar](https://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar)).

Falsification of any supporting documentation will be taken very seriously and may result in disciplinary action through the Academic Discipline regulations or the Student Non-Academic Misconduct policy.

This statement is accessible at: <https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/m-1.html>

Please note that while the form of supporting documentation provided is at the discretion of the student, the instructor has the discretion not to accept the supporting documentation if it does not corroborate the reason(s) given for the exemption/special request.

Absence From a Mid-term Examination:

Students who are absent from a scheduled term test or quiz for legitimate reasons 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 proceed 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.html>. Such offences will be taken seriously and reported immediately, as required by Faculty of Arts policy.

Copyright Legislation:

As stated in the University of Calgary Calendar, Academic Regulations, “students are required to read the University of Calgary policy on Acceptable Use of Material Protected by Copyright and requirements of the copyright act to ensure they are aware of the consequences of unauthorised sharing of course materials (including instructor notes, electronic versions of textbooks etc.). Students who use material protected by copyright in violation of this policy may be disciplined under the Non-Academic Misconduct Policy.”

<https://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/acceptable-use-of-material-protected-by-copyright.pdf> and <https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-42/index.html>

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: askgsa@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

Jan. 14/16: Introduction and Course Overview: The Qualitative Research Tradition

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

Part I: Research Design and Methods

Jan. 21/23: The Basics of Research Design

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

Jan. 28/30: Consulting the Literature

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

Feb. 4/6: Ethics in Qualitative Research

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

Feb. 11/13: 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.

Note: Certificate of completion of the TCPS2 CORE Tutorial due in hardcopy at the start of class on February 11th

Feb. 18/20: Reading Week (No Classes)

Feb. 25/27: Mid-Term Review and In-Class Exam

Note: Mid-Term Exam will be held in class on Thursday, February 27th

Part II: Collecting and Analyzing Data

Mar. 3/5: Participant Observation

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

Mar. 10/12: Conducting Interviews

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

Mar. 17/19: Focus Groups

Textbook Reading: Van Den Hoonaard, Chapter 7 (“Focus Groups”)

Mar. 24/26: Researching Primary Documents

Textbook Reading: Van Den Hoonaard, Chapter 8 (“Unobtrusive Research”)

Mr.31/Apr.2: Analyzing Qualitative Data

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

Note: Participant Observation Assignment due in designated Dropbox folder by 9:30 a.m. on March 31st

Apr. 7/9: Writing Up Qualitative Research

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

Apr. 14: Concluding Remarks and Exam Review

Note: Take-home Final Exam due in designated Dropbox folder by 9:30 a.m. on April 20th