



**DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE
FACULTY OF ARTS**

**POLI 398 Lecture 01
Qualitative Research Methods
Winter 2021**

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Roberta Rice
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OFFICE HOURS: By appointment via telephone or Zoom
DELIVERY METHOD: Web-Based
COURSE PRE-REQUISITES: 3 Units in Political Science
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 TEXTBOOK(S)

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.

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

REQUIRED TECHNOLOGY

Students will require a computer device with Internet connection to access the course material and submit assignments.

COURSE COMPONENT WEIGHTS AND DUE DATES

| COMPONENT | WEIGHTING | DUE DATES |
|---------------------------------|-----------|------------|
| Reading Response Papers (10) | 20 | Weekly |
| TCPS2 CORE Tutorial Certificate | 10 | February 4 |
| Primary Document Analysis | 30 | March 19 |
| Take-Home Final Exam | 40 | April 15 |
| Total | 100% | |

If a student misses a required course component, please get in touch the instructor as soon as possible.

COURSE SCHEDULE & TOPICS

| DATE | TOPIC | READINGS |
|-------------------|--|---|
| Jan. 18 - Feb. 12 | Part I: Research Design and Methods | See Course Schedule and Assigned Readings Below |
| Feb. 22 – Apr. 15 | Part II: Collecting and Analyzing Data | See Course Schedule and Assigned Readings Below |

Please note that the above schedule is tentative and may change as the need arises.

FORMAT AND ASSIGNMENTS

This course will be taught in an asynchronous, lecture-style format. Teaching methods will include weekly Zoom lectures with Power Point slides, on-line research methods tutorials available through TFDL, and Discussion Forum activities. The Zoom lectures will be recorded and posted to our course page on Mondays, along with any accompanying Power Point slides. Students are expected to complete the weekly readings and review the lecture material before posting their weekly reading responses to the Discussion Forum on our course page. Optional synchronous Zoom question and answer sessions with the instructor will be held at various times during the course (the Zoom link meeting will be provided on our course page). Assignments are due to our course Dropbox, unless otherwise indicated. Students must complete all assignments to receive a passing grade in the course. Please note, there is no Registrar scheduled final exam in this course.

WEEKLY READING RESPONSE PAPERS

Students are expected to submit a weekly reading response for each of our regularly scheduled sessions. Reading responses must be posted by 12:00 p.m. on Fridays to our Discussion Forum titled, “Weekly Reading Responses,” for your submission to count. You can post a response by selecting the “start a new thread” function. You may attach your response or type it directly into the text box. Your response should be approximately 1 page double-spaced (250 words). Rather than summarize the reading, you should engage with the themes and debates in the reading or respond to the questions posed in the lecture material for that week. You can access your weekly reading response grade in the Grades section of our course page.

TCPS2 COURSE ON RESEARCH ETHICS (CORE) TUTORIAL CERTIFICATE

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 save this certificate and upload it to the Dropbox assignment folder on our D2L course page by 5:00 p.m. on February 4th. 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 our lecture slides.

PRIMARY DOCUMENT CONTENT ANALYSIS

Primary document analysis is an unobtrusive research method that allows us to uncover the meanings, motives and purposes embedded within a text. The objective of this assignment is to apply your research skills in an analysis of an official document—in this case, a government report. Two of the most important government reports that have been released in Canada in recent years have been the Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (2015) and the Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (2019). Your task is to conduct a qualitative content analysis on a selected section of one of the Final Reports to reveal the key concepts and themes embedded within the text. You may choose to analyze either the *Executive Summary of the Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Honouring the Truth, Reconciling the Future* ("Introduction," pp. 1-22 only; available for download at:

http://www.trc.ca/assets/pdf/Honouring_the_Truth_Reconciling_for_the_Future_July_23_2015.pdf)

or the *Executive Summary of the Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls: Reclaiming Power and Place* ("Introduction" and "Section I: Establishing a New Framework," pp. 1-19 only; available for download at:

https://www.mmiwg-ffada.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Executive_Summary.pdf). The goal of the assignment is to develop new insights into the findings of these critically important national inquiries. Write up the results of your primary document analysis exercise in a report of approximately 6-8 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 topic of the national inquiry; b) present the major themes and insights from the portion of the text you examined; c) outline how the document data advances the literature on this topic; and d) reflect on the merits and limits of working with primary documents. The assignment will be discussed in detail in our lecture slides.

TAKE-HOME FINAL EXAMINATION

The take-home final exam will consist of a series of essay questions and will test your familiarity with the course lecture material and reading assignments. 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 in our

Course Assignments folder. The final exam is due to Dropbox on our D2L page by 5:00 p.m. on Thursday, April 15th (the last day of classes).

WRITING STATEMENT

Written assignments are often required in Political Science courses, 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 by contacting them at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support>.

GRADING 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) |

LATE PENALTIES

Please make every effort to submit assignments on-time. Assignments are due to Dropbox on D2L, unless otherwise indicated. It is your responsibility to keep a copy of all assignments in case of loss by any cause. 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. If life circumstances or illness intervene, please contact the course instructor as soon as possible. Please refer also to the policies on deferring term work on this outline and in D2L. However, keep in mind that in order to pass this course, you must complete all assignments, and plan accordingly.

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. All meetings will be held virtually.

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, to be held virtually.

COURSE SCHEDULE AND READING ASSIGNMENTS

Jan. 11-15: Introduction and Course Overview: The Qualitative Research Tradition

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

Note: No Reading Response due this week; Optional Zoom question and answer session on course requirements on Thursday, Jan. 14th from 10:00 a.m. -10:45 a.m.

Part I: Research Design and Methods

Jan. 18-22: The Basics of Research Design

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

Note: Reading Response #1 due to D2L by 12:00 p.m. on Friday, Jan. 22nd

Jan. 25-29: Consulting the Literature

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

Note: Reading Response #2 due to D2L by 12:00 p.m. on Friday, Jan. 29th

Feb. 1-5 Ethics in Qualitative Research

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

Note: Certificate of completion of the TCPS2 CORE Tutorial due to Dropbox by 5:00 p.m. on Thursday, Feb. 4th; Reading Response #3 due to D2L by 12:00 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 5th

Feb. 8-12: 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: Reading Response #4 due to D2L by 12:00 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 12th

Feb. 15-19: Reading Week (No Classes)

Part II: Collecting and Analyzing Data

Feb. 22-26: Researching Primary Documents

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

Note: Reading Response #5 due to D2L by 12:00 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 26th

Mar. 1-5: Workshop on the TRC and the National Inquiry into MMIWG

E-Report Reading: Executive Summary of the Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Honouring the Truth, Reconciling the Future (“Introduction,” pp. 1-22 only) available for download at:
http://www.trc.ca/assets/pdf/Honouring_the_Truth_Reconciling_for_the_Future_July_23_2015.pdf

E-Report Reading: Executive Summary of the Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls: Reclaiming Power and Place (“Introduction” and “Section I: Establishing a New Framework,” pp. 1-19 only) available for download at:
https://www.mmiwg-ffada.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Executive_Summary.pdf

Note: No Reading Response due this week: Optional Zoom question and answer session on upcoming assignment on Thursday, Mar. 4th from 10:00 a.m. -10:45 a.m.

Mar. 8-12: Participant Observation

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

Note: Reading Response #6 due to D2L by 12:00 p.m. on Friday, Mar. 12th

Mar. 15-19: Conducting Interviews

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

Note: Primary Document Analysis Report due to Dropbox by 5:00 p.m. on Thursday, March 18th; Reading Response #7 due to D2L by 12:00 p.m. on Friday, Mar. 19th

Mar. 22-26: Focus Groups

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

Note: Reading Response #8 due to D2L by 12:00 p.m. on Friday, Mar. 26th

Mar.28-Apr.2: Analyzing Qualitative Data

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

Note: Reading Response #9 due to D2L by 12:00 p.m. on Friday, Apr. 2nd

Apr. 5-9: Writing Up Qualitative Research

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

Note: Reading Response #10 due to D2L by 12:00 p.m. on Friday, Apr. 9th

Apr. 12-15: Concluding Remarks and Exam Review

Note: Optional Zoom question and answer session on take-home final exam on Tuesday, April 13th from 10:00 a.m. -10:45 a.m.; Note: Take-Home Final Exam Due to Dropbox by 5:00 p.m. on Thursday, April 15th

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). 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).

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>

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.

Required Access to Technology

Please see the University's resource page at https://ucalgary.service-now.com/it?id=kb_article&sys_id=86e7438013753ac06f3afbb2e144b031

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-electronic-resources-and-information-policy.pdf> and <https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-42/index.html>

Instructor Intellectual Property

Course materials created by instructors (including presentations and posted notes, labs, case studies, assignments and exams) remain the intellectual property of the instructor. These materials may NOT be reproduced, redistributed or copied without the explicit consent of the instructor. The posting of course materials to third party websites such as note-sharing sites without permission is prohibited. Sharing of extracts of these course materials with other students enrolled in the course at the same time may be allowed under fair dealing.

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.

Faculty of Arts Program Advising and Student Information Resources

For program planning and advice, please consult with the Arts Students' Centre by calling 403-220-3580 or by email at 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].

Important Contact Information

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

The University of Calgary recognizes the pivotal role that student mental health plays in physical health, social connectedness and academic success, and aspires to create a caring and supportive campus community where individuals can freely talk about mental health and receive supports when needed. We encourage you to explore the excellent mental health resources available throughout the university community, such as counselling, self-help resources, peer support or skills-building available through the following resources:

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

Student Wellness Services:

<https://www.ucalgary.ca/wellness-services/services/mental-health-services>

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