



Department of Psychology

Psychology 415 (L01) – Nonexperimental Research Methods in Psychology

Fall Session 2007

Instructor: L. Radtke

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Office: Admin 255B

Office Hours: MW/12:00-1:00 pm

(or by appointment)

Lecture Location: SH 157

Lecture Days/Time: MWF/11:00-11:50 am

Teaching Assistant: Courtney Chasin

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Office: Admin 255A

Office Hours: TBA

Lab Location: Admin 253

Lab Days/Times: T/12:00-1:50 pm

F/8:00-9:50 am

Course Description and Goals

An introduction to qualitative research methods in psychology. We will discuss the theory and practice of qualitative approaches to psychology. Three specific approaches - interpretative phenomenological analysis, grounded theory, and discourse analysis - will be used to illustrate basic principles but also to provide students with experience in conducting qualitative analysis. Students will develop skills related to conducting research interviews and analysing verbal data. Lectures will focus on theory and analysis; labs will provide an opportunity to practice analysis. Through course projects, students will also develop their writing skills.

[NOTE: This course is under development. Consequently, there may be some changes to aspects of the course, such as the lecture schedule. Any changes will be posted on Blackboard.]

Required Text

Flick, U. (2006). *An introduction to qualitative research* (3rd ed.). London: Sage.
[Available in the bookstore.]

Optional Readings

From: Smith, J.A. (2003). *Qualitative psychology: A practical guide to research methods*. London: Sage Publications.

Chapter 4: Interpretative phenomenological analysis

Chapter 5: Grounded theory

Chapter 8: Discourse analysis

[On reserve at the MacKimmie Library.]

Evaluation

Final course grades will be based on three course components - (1) Exams (45% of final grade), (2) a Paper (20% of final grade), and (3) Lab assignments (35% of final grade). Details are provided below (also see the attached lecture and lab schedules):

(1) **Exams** (35% of final grade): There will be four quizzes with short answer format. Please note that there is no registrar-scheduled final exam in this course.

| Date | Course Component | Weighting |
|-------------------|---|-----------|
| October 1, 2007 | Quiz 1 (Lectures 1-9 and assigned readings) | 10% |
| October 29, 2007 | Quiz 2 (Lectures 11-20 and assigned readings) | 15% |
| November 26, 2007 | Quiz 3 (Lectures 22-31 and assigned readings) | 15% |
| December 7, 2007 | Quiz 4 (Lectures 33-36 and assigned readings) | 5% |

(2) **Paper** (20% of final grade): Students will find a journal article on a piece of empirical research in psychology utilizing one of the three qualitative approaches covered in the course (interpretative phenomenological analysis, grounded theory, discourse analysis). You will analyse the article in terms of how the approach was used and evaluate it according to appropriate criteria for qualitative research. Topics you must discuss include the following:

- Ethics – How were ethical considerations taken into account? Was this adequate?
- Use of literature – How did the researchers use the literature? Was this adequate?
- Theoretical position – What theoretical position did the researchers adopt? Was this appropriate to the chosen qualitative approach?
- Research process – Was the research process, as described in the article, what you would expect for a piece of qualitative research using this approach?
- Research question(s) – What was/were they? Were they appropriate?
- Sampling – What was it and was it appropriate?
- Research design – What was it and was it appropriate?
- Data collection method – How were the data obtained and was this appropriate?
- Data documentation – What kinds of documentation did the researchers use? Was this appropriate?
- Data coding and categorization – How were the data analysed? Was the analysis adequate?
- Quality criteria – What quality criteria did the researchers use to evaluate their study? Was this adequate?
- Anything else you think is important about the research as an example of a particular type of qualitative research

Essentially, for each topic, you will (a) describe what the researchers did, (b) discuss how adequate it was based on your knowledge of qualitative research, and (c) indicate what you would do differently if you identify problems with what the researchers did.

The instructor will first approve the chosen articles. Please note that you cannot use the articles used as examples in class. You can have the selected article approved by email by sending me the details (i.e., author, title, journal, year, volume, and page numbers). If an electronic copy of the article is not available, then you must meet with me in person so that I can review a print copy. You have until **November 16, 2007** to have your article approved.

The paper is **due no later than Monday, December 3, 2007 at 4:30 pm** (but students are encouraged to hand it in earlier in the term). Maximum word count is 3000 words. Use double spacing. They may be given directly to the instructor or put in the green box outside Admin 275. Late assignments will be penalized one letter grade per day, e.g., an A paper handed in on December 4 will have the grade reduced to A-, etc. Students must provide a printed copy of their paper and include a print copy of the article; emailed papers will not be graded.

(3) Lab (35% of final grade): **Please note that students must pass the lab component in order to pass this course.**

The labs will involve a substantial amount of group work and discussion, although students will be graded individually. Hence, attendance in labs is very important - for yourself and for the members of your group. Also, you must attend the lab in which you are registered to ensure continuity of the group work.

Other than the exceptions noted below, lab assignments must be submitted in print form (i.e., emailed copies will not be accepted). Late lab assignments will be penalized one letter grade per day, e.g., an assignment that is one day late and awarded an A will have the grade reduced to A-, etc. More detailed information on the content of the labs will be provided during the first lab.

The lab grade will consist of seven components:

| Due Date (Lab 01/02) and Place | Lab Component | Weighting |
|--|--|------------------|
| September 18/21, 2007 at end of lab | Structured interview | 1% |
| October 8/11, 2007 OR October 15/18, 2007 electronic submission by 4:30 pm | Transcription of semi-structured interview | 2% |
| October 23/26, 2007 at beginning of lab | Project 1: IPA research report | 10% |
| November 5/8, 2007 electronic submission by 4:30 pm | Transcription of focus groups | 1% |
| November 19/15, 2007 electronic submission by 4:30 pm | Transcription of interviews - theoretical sampling | 1% |
| November 27/23, 2006 at beginning of lab | Project 2: Grounded theory research report | 10% |
| December 11/7, 2007 put in green box outside Admin 275 | Project 3: Discourse Analysis research report | 10% |

Grading Scale

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|----|---------|----|--------|----|--------|----|--------|
| A+ | 96-100% | B+ | 80-84% | C+ | 67-71% | D+ | 54-58% |
| A | 90-95% | B | 76-79% | C | 63-66% | D | 50-53% |
| A- | 85-89% | B- | 72-75% | C- | 59-62% | F | 0-49% |

As stated in the University Calendar, it is at the instructor's discretion to round off either upward or downward to determine a final grade when the average of term work and final examinations is between two letter grades. In this course there will be no rounding up of final grades, especially in light of the opportunities students have to increase their final grade via bonus credits.

Lecture and Lab Schedules

Lecture Schedule

| DATE | TOPICS AND READINGS | EXAMS/ ASSIGNMENTS |
|-------------------|--|-----------------------|
| Sept. 10 - M | Lecture 1: Introduction | |
| Sept. 12 - W | Lecture 2: Why and how [Flick-Ch.2] | |
| Sept. 14 - F | Lecture 3: Ethics [Flick-Ch. 4] | |
| Sept. 17 - M | Lecture 4: Research process [Flick-Ch. 8] | |
| Sept. 19 - W | Lecture 5: Research questions [Flick-Ch. 9] | |
| Sept. 21 - F | Lecture 6: Interviewing [Flick-Ch. 13] | |
| Sept. 24 - M | Lecture 7: Interviewing [Flick-Ch. 14] | |
| Sept. 26 - W | Lecture 8: Documentation of data [Flick-Ch. 22] | |
| Sept. 28 - F | Lecture 9: Coding and categorizing [Flick-Ch. 23] | |
| Oct. 1 - M | Lecture 10 | Quiz 1 |
| Oct. 4 - W | Lecture 11: Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis [Smith & Osborn-optional] | |
| Oct. 5 - F | Lecture 12: Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis | |
| Oct. 8 | Thanksgiving Day – no classes | |
| Oct. 10 - W | Lecture 13: Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis | |
| Oct. 12 - F | Lecture 14: Use of literature [Flick-Ch. 5] | |
| Oct. 15 - M | Lecture 15: Sampling [Flick-Ch. 11] | |
| Oct. 17 - W | Lecture 16: Focus groups [Flick-Ch. 15] | |

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|--------------------|---|--|
| Oct. 19 - F | Lecture 17: Verbal data [Flick-Ch. 16] | |
| Oct. 22 - M | Lecture 18: Grounded Theory [Charmaz-optional] | |
| Oct. 24 - W | Lecture 19: Grounded Theory | |
| Oct. 26 - F | Lecture 20: Grounded Theory | |
| Oct. 29 - M | Lecture 21 | Quiz 2 |
| Oct. 31 - W | Lecture 22: Research design [Flick-Ch. 12] | |
| Nov. 2 - F | Lecture 23: Quality criteria [Flick-Ch. 28] | |
| Nov. 5 - M | Lecture 24: Quality: Beyond criteria [Flick-Ch. 29] | |
| Nov. 7 - W | Lecture 25: Theoretical positions [Flick-Ch. 6] | |
| Nov. 9 - F | Lecture 26: Theoretical positions | |
| Nov. 10-13 | Reading Days – No Classes | |
| Nov. 14 - W | Lecture 27: Texts [Flick-Ch. 7] | |
| Nov. 16 - F | Lecture 28: Analyzing conversation and genres [Flick-Ch. 24] | Articles for paper submitted for approval |
| Nov. 19 - M | Lecture 29: Discourse Analysis [Willig-optional] | |
| Nov. 21 - W | Lecture 30: Discourse Analysis | |
| Nov. 23 - F | Lecture 31: Discourse Analysis | |
| Nov. 26 - M | Lecture 32 | Quiz 3 |
| Nov. 28 - W | Lecture 33: Entering the field [Flick-Ch. 10] | |
| Nov. 30 - F | Lecture 34: Using documents as data [Flick-Ch. 19] | |
| Dec. 3 - M | Lecture 35: Using the internet [Flick-Ch. 20] | Paper |
| Dec. 5 - W | Lecture 36: Writing [Flick-Ch. 30] | |
| Dec. 6 | Last day to allocate Bonus Credits to Fall Session half courses. | |
| Dec. 7 - F | Lecture 37 | Quiz 4 |

Lab Schedule

[Lab 1: Tuesdays, 12:00 - 1:50pm; Lab 2: Fridays, 8:00 - 9:50am]

| LAB | DATE | TOPIC | DEADLINES |
|-----|--------------------------|--|---|
| 1 | Sept. 18 (T) & 21 (F) | Orientation Structured interview | Hand in interview responses at the end of the lab. |
| 2 | Sept. 25 (T) & 28 (F) | Developing a semi-structured interview guide | |
| 3 | Oct. 2 (T) & 5 (F) | Individual interviews/ transcribing | Download, print and bring to class BOTH interview guides— topic 1 (developed by lab 01) and topic 2 (developed by lab 02) |
| 4 | Oct. 9 (T) & 12 (F) | Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) | Transcripts for topic 1 due Monday, Oct. 8th for lab 01 and Thursday, Oct. 11th for Lab 02, submitted electronically by 4:30 pm |
| 5 | Oct. 16 (T) & 19 (F) | IPA cont. | Transcripts for topic 2 due Monday, Oct. 15nd for lab 01 and Thursday, Oct. 18th for Lab 02, submitted electronically by 4:30 pm |
| 6 | Oct. 23 (T) & 26 (F) | Developing a focus group interview guide and focus group recording | IPA report due at beginning of lab |
| 7 | Oct. 30 (T) & Nov. 2 (F) | Grounded theory | |
| 8 | Nov. 6 (T) & 9 (F) | Grounded theory theoretical sampling (and interviewing) | Focus group transcripts due Monday, Nov. 5th for lab 01 and Thursday, Nov. 8th for lab 02, submitted electronically by 4:30 pm |
| 9 | Nov. 16 (F) & 20 (T) | Grounded theory cont. | Theoretical sample transcripts due Monday, Nov. 19th for lab 01 and Thursday, Nov. 15th for lab 02, submitted electronically by 4:30 pm |
| 10 | Nov. 23 (F) & 27 (T) | Discourse analysis | Grounded theory report due at beginning of lab |
| 11 | Nov. 30 (F) & Dec. 4 (T) | Discourse analysis cont. | Discourse analysis research report due Friday, Dec. 7 for Lab 02 and Tuesday, Dec. 11 for Lab 01; put in green box outside A275 before 4:30 pm |

University of Calgary Curriculum Objectives

This course addresses the following core competencies:

- Critical and creative thinking
- Analysis of problems
- Effective oral and written communication
- Gathering and organizing information
- Abstract reasoning and its applications
- Insight and intuition in generating knowledge
- Interpretive and assessment skills

With the following course characteristics:

- Considerable class discussion; students are prompted to think critically about course material
- Emphasis is placed on discerning which qualitative research methods are most appropriate to address their research questions
- In labs and class, students will have multiple opportunities to practice their oral and written communication skills
- Laboratory assignments entail collecting qualitative data and utilizing appropriate approaches for organizing and analyzing that data
- In developing an understanding of various qualitative research methods, students will learn about their theoretical grounding and how it constrains the research process
- In learning to use qualitative research methods, students are encouraged to become comfortable with the researcher's role in generating knowledge
- Qualitative research methods entail interpretive processes; hence, students will be immersed in tasks that require them to exercise their interpretive skill

Curriculum Redesign Features

This course addresses the following curriculum redesign features:

- An experiential learning component relevant to the program objectives
- Provision of broad and extended faculty-student interaction at the program level
- Integration of research

With the following course characteristics:

- Weekly laboratory assignments
- Lectures will promote discussion and student participation

Many research examples from the current literature are drawn upon to illustrate the various methods

Reappraisal of Grades

A student who feels that a piece of graded term work (term paper, essay, test, etc.) has been unfairly graded, may have the work re-graded as follows. The student shall discuss the work with the instructor within fifteen days of being notified about the mark or of the item's return to the class. If not satisfied, the student shall immediately take the matter to the Head of the department offering the course, who will arrange for a reassessment of the work within the

next fifteen days. The reappraisal of term work may cause the grade to be raised, lowered, or to remain the same.

If the student is not satisfied with the decision and wishes to appeal, the student shall address a letter of appeal to the Dean of the faculty offering the course within fifteen days of the unfavourable decision. In the letter, the student must clearly and fully state the decision being appealed, the grounds for appeal, and the remedies being sought, along with any special circumstances that warrant an appeal of the reappraisal. The student should include as much written documentation as possible.

Plagiarism and Other Academic Misconduct

Intellectual honesty is the cornerstone of the development and acquisition of knowledge and requires that the contribution of others be acknowledged. Consequently, plagiarism or cheating on any assignment is regarded as an extremely serious academic offense. Plagiarism involves submitting or presenting work in a course as if it were the student's own work done expressly for that particular course when, in fact, it is not. Students should examine sections of the University Calendar that present a Statement of Intellectual honesty and definitions and penalties associated with Plagiarism/Cheating/Other Academic Misconduct.

Academic Accommodation

It is the student's responsibility to request academic accommodations. 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.

Absence From A Test

Make-up exams are NOT an option without an official University medical excuse (see the University Calendar). You must contact the instructor before the scheduled examination or you will have forfeited any right to make up the exam. At the instructor's discretion, a make-up exam may differ significantly (in form and/or content) from a regularly scheduled exam. Except in extenuating circumstances (documented by an official University medical excuse), a makeup exam is written within two (2) weeks of the missed exam.

A completed Physician/Counselor Statement will be required to confirm absence from a test for health reasons. The student will be required to pay any cost associated with the Physician Counselor Statement.

Course Credits for Research Participation

Students in most psychology courses are eligible to participate in Departmentally approved research and earn credits toward their final grades. A maximum of two credits (2%) per course, including this course, may be applied to an individual's final grade. Students can create an account and access the Research Participation System website at <http://ucalgary.sona-systems.com>. The last day to participate in research is December 6, 2007.

Student Organizations

Psychology students may wish to join the Psychology Undergraduate Students' Association (PSYCHS). They are located in the Administration building, room 170 or may be contacted at 220-5567.

Student Union VP Academic: Phone: 220-3911 suvpaca@ucalgary.ca
Student Union Faculty Rep.: Phone: 220-3913 socialscirep@su.ucalgary.ca

Important Dates

The last day to drop this course and **still receive a fee refund** is September 21, 2007.
The last day to withdraw from this course is December 7, 2007.