



**B794 Part B
Intro to Qualitative methods
Winter 2019
Feb 26-April 2**

**Human Resources and Management
DeGroote School of Business
McMaster University**

COURSE OBJECTIVE

This half seminar course provides students with an introduction to some methods commonly used in management research that fall under the umbrella of qualitative research. The objectives are for students to become familiar with (1) what kinds of questions these methods can help answer, and (2) how to use these methods.

INSTRUCTOR AND CONTACT INFORMATION

Dr. Erin Reid
Associate Professor
reidem@mcmaster.ca
Office: dsb 426
Office Hours: by appointment
Tel: (905) 525-9140 x 24707

Class: Tuesdays, 9am-12pm, Feb 26-April 2
DSB 421

Office hours: By appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is designed to survey the key methods that fall under the umbrella of qualitative research. It cannot be exhaustive, due to time limitations, but it will hopefully give you a taste of qualitative research and provide you with the orientations necessary to help you go further.

This course will be conducted as a seminar. There will be six three-hour meetings. Every week we will read some articles about the particular method or research design topic we are discussing. These will be complemented by a recent or classic article that illustrate the method or design. Through reading and discussing these articles, we will learn together about both the theory of how this is done, and how it is done.

Your weekly assignments and the data you gather to fulfill these assignments will culminate in a research proposal. I encourage you to pick a field site that interests you and that is related to your broader research interests.

In this course, the role of the professor will be to stimulate and guide student discussion. I will ask questions and encourage you to present, and support, different points of view in discussion.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. Test their understanding of methods presented in the readings.
2. Develop skills in communicating ideas, in developing and presenting arguments, in listening to and understanding others, and in challenging others' views in a way that advances everyone's understanding.
3. Learn to think independently and critically: you will need to be able to analyze the methodological strengths and deficiencies of the articles that are being discussed, and how these methods issues influence the kinds of theoretical claims that can be made. These skills will be useful to you when you conduct your own independent research.

REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS AND READINGS

Books:

These should be available second-hand online.

Charmaz, Kathy. 2006. *Constructing Grounded Theory*.

Lofland, John, David Snow, Leon Anderson, Lyn Lofland. 2006. *Analyzing Social Settings: A Guide to Qualitative Observation and Analysis*.

Weiss, Robert. 1994. *Learning from Strangers: The Art and Method of Qualitative Interview Studies*.

Articles:

As noted in each class session. These are all available via the McMaster library system.

EVALUATION

There are three graded components to this part of the course. Students' grades will be calculated as

follows:

Three Assignments	20%
Final Paper	50%
Participation	20%
Total	100%

Conversion

At the end of the course your overall percentage grade will be converted to your letter grade in accordance with the following conversion scheme. (*SUGGESTED conversion scheme*)

LETTER GRADE	PERCENT
A+	90 - 100
A	85 - 89
A-	80 - 84
B+	75 - 79
B	70 - 74
B-	60 - 69
F	00 - 59

Three Assignments (3 x 10% = 30%)

In weeks 2, 4 & 6, you are asked to complete an assignment. These assignments are designed to help you practice using qualitative methods and will help you work towards developing your final assignment for the class.

I ask you to share your work with your classmates because an important part of learning to be an academic is learning from your colleagues' work and learning how to help your colleagues in their work. Part of every class session will therefore be devoted to helping each other advance your respective research projects.

All work must be completed independently. Each assignment should be submitted to me and your classmates **via email on the day before our class**, according to the order of the class schedule. Late assignments will not be accepted.

Final Proposal (50%)

Your final assignment is to pull together the work you have done so far to draft a paper that identifies a research question, explains its empirical and theoretical significance, summarizes the methods and data you have used so far to understand this question, explains the findings from the data you have gathered

so far, and proposes a detailed plan for a complete qualitative research study that would build on these initial findings. The paper should be about 15 pages excluding tables and references, double-spaced, in 12 point font, excluding bibliography, tables and figures. Please summarize your current findings in both table and model format. I recommend finding and using an example paper to guide your write-up.

I am flexible about your choice of topics (e.g., you might like to choose something related to your dissertation), but you should discuss your choice with me before beginning your project. You are not required to choose a topic that we have discussed in class.

In terms of data, you are expected to have gathered some combination of up to five interviews and/or five hours of observation. Opportunities to build this data set are provided in the weekly assignments.

This paper is due exactly two weeks after our final class meeting. No extensions are available except under extraordinary circumstances.

Participation (20%)

All students are expected to demonstrate their understanding of the course material, verbally, in class. Generally, you should err on the side of participating more than you would ordinarily. Your comments and questions are welcome, will not be judged, and help to make the entire course more interesting and enjoyable for everyone. There is no penalty for being “wrong” but there is a penalty for being silent.

Professional academic demeanour is mandatory at all times. Academic discourse requires that opinions be expressed honestly, but professionalism requires that these opinions also be expressed respectfully. Behaviours or comments that would be inappropriate in a conference or classroom setting are also inappropriate in our seminar.

If you are wondering if your participation is adequate, send me an email or come to my office and I will provide an estimate of your anticipated participation grade for the semester.

For each class, you should read all the assigned book chapters and articles.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

It is the student’s responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. Please refer to the University Senate Academic Integrity Policy at the following URL:

<http://www.mcmaster.ca/policy/Students-AcademicStudies/AcademicIntegrity.pdf>

This policy describes the responsibilities, procedures, and guidelines for students and faculty should a case of academic dishonesty arise. Academic dishonesty is defined as to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. Please refer to the policy for a list of examples. The policy also provides faculty with procedures to follow in cases of academic dishonesty as well as general guidelines for penalties. For further information related to the policy, please refer to the Office of Academic Integrity at:

www.degroote.mcmaster.ca

<http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity>

MISSED ACADEMIC WORK

Late assignments will not be accepted. No extensions are available except under extraordinary circumstances. Please discuss any extenuating situation with your instructor at the earliest possible opportunity.

POTENTIAL MODIFICATIONS TO THE COURSE

The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check their McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.

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STUDENT ACCESSIBILITY SERVICES

Student Accessibility Services (SAS) offers various support services for students with disabilities. Students are required to inform SAS of accommodation needs for course work at the outset of term. Students must forward a copy of such SAS accommodation to the instructor normally, within the first three (3) weeks of classes by setting up an appointment with the instructor. If a student with a disability chooses NOT to take advantage of an SAS accommodation and chooses to sit for a regular exam, a petition for relief may not be filed after the examination is complete. The SAS website is:

<http://sas.mcmaster.ca>

www.degroote.mcmaster.ca

RESEARCH USING HUMAN SUBJECTS

Research involving human participants is premised on a fundamental moral commitment to advancing human welfare, knowledge and understanding. As a research intensive institution, McMaster University shares this commitment in its promotion of responsible research. The fundamental imperative of research involving human participation is respect for human dignity and well-being. To this end, the University endorses the ethical principles cited in the Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans:

<http://www.pre.ethics.gc.ca/eng/policy-politique/initiatives/tcps2-eptc2/Default/>

McMaster University has mandated its Research Ethics Boards to ensure that all research investigations involving human participants are in compliance with the Tri-Council Policy Statement. The University is committed, through its Research Ethics Boards, to assisting the research community in identifying and addressing ethical issues inherent in research, recognizing that all members of the University share a commitment to maintaining the highest possible standards in research involving humans.

If you are conducting original research, it is vital that you behave in an ethical manner. For example, everyone you speak to must be made aware of your reasons for eliciting their responses and consent to providing information. Furthermore, you must ensure everyone understands that participation is entirely voluntary. Please refer to the following website for more information about McMaster University's research ethics guidelines:

<https://reo.mcmaster.ca>

Organizations that you are working with are likely to prefer that some information be treated as confidential. Ensure that you clarify the status of all information that you receive from your client. You **MUST** respect this request and cannot present this information in class or communicate it in any form, nor can you discuss it outside your group. Furthermore, you must continue to respect this confidentiality even after the course is over.

CLASS SCHEDULE	
SESSION AND TOPIC	
<p>Class 1. What are qualitative methods, and what are they good for?</p> <p>Feb 26</p>	<p>Readings: Edmondson, Amy C., and Stacy E. McManus. "Methodological fit in management field research." <i>Academy of management review</i> 32.4 (2007): 1246-1264.</p> <p>Charmaz, Kathy. 2006.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 1. An invitation to grounded theory. • Chapter 2. Gathering rich data. <p>Lofland et al.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 1. Starting where you are. Pg. 7-13. • Chapter 2. Evaluating data sites. Pg. 15-32. <p><u>Example study:</u> Ranganathan, Aruna. "The Artisan and His Audience: Identification with Work and Price Setting in a Handicraft Cluster in Southern India." <i>Administrative Science Quarterly</i> (2015): 0001839217725782.</p> <p>Assignment (due night before to me and your classmates): No assignment this week. However, please come having read all articles and with some notes about a research question that you would like to use qualitative methods to answer.</p> <p>Topics for class discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are qualitative methods and what are they good for? In what ways do they differ from quantitative methods? • What is “grounded theory”? • What are the main sources of data used in qualitative methods? • What are the strengths and challenges associated with qualitative methods? • How can we gain access to interviewees and field sites? • What are some ethical considerations pertinent to qualitative research with human participants? • What arguments does Ranganathan make? How do the methods (rather than just the findings) employed in the paper important to being able to adjudicate between different possibilities? Would her argument be feasible without the specific research design employed? What are some challenges and benefits of the research design described? <p>In-class workshop: We will workshop your theoretical questions and help you refine them and begin to identify appropriate qualitative data sources and field sites so that you can make progress on this question over the semester.</p>

<p>Class 2. Ethnography and Participant- Observer</p> <p>March 5</p>	<p>Readings: Charmaz, Kathy. 2006. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter 4. Memo-writing. Pg. 72-95. Lofland et al. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter 3. “Getting in.” Pg. 33-51. Chapter 4. “Getting Along.” Pg. 54-79. Van Maanen, John. "The fact of fiction in organizational ethnography." <i>Administrative science quarterly</i> 24.4 (1979): 539-550. Calarco, Jessica. Notes from the field: Show how you know what you know. https://scatter.wordpress.com/2018/11/06/notes-from-the-field-show-how-you-know-what-you-know/#comment-20078 <u>Example study:</u> Mazmanian, M., Cohn, M., Dourish, P. (2014). “Shifting Sociomateriality in Space: Figuring, Configuring, and Reconfiguring in Planetary Exploration.” <i>MIS Quarterly</i>, 38:3 pp. 831-848. Assignment (due night before to me and your classmates): Identify a problem of both theoretical and practical significance that interests you and that you hope to work on using qualitative methods. Identify one theory that your question is likely related to and explain how answering your question might advance this area of scholarship. Describe some possible qualitative data sources for answering this question. (1 page max) Topics for class discussion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How can a scholar identify and gain access to a field site? How does one interact with others and manage one’s identity in the field? How does one make observations, take notes, and write memo’s? What does it feel like to be observing? What arguments do Mazmanian and colleagues make in the article? In what ways are the ethnographic methods crucial to the authors’ ability to make these arguments? How might you further test the arguments made in these papers? What methods might be most helpful in doing so? In-class workshop: You will spend time practicing your observational skills.</p>
<p>Class 3 Interviewing, Part 1</p>	<p>Readings: Weiss, R. 1994. Learning from Strangers. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter 1: Introduction. Pg. 1-14. </p>

<p>March 12</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Chapter 2. Respondents: Choosing them and Recruiting Them. Pg. 15-38.• Chapter 3. Preparation for Interviewing. Pg. 39-60.• Chapter 4. Interviewing. Pg. 61-120. <p>Lofland et al.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Chapter 5, pg. 99-107 (Subsection on Data Logging in in Intensive Interviewing) <p>Lamont, Michèle, and Ann Swidler. "Methodological pluralism and the possibilities and limits of interviewing." <i>Qualitative Sociology</i> 37.2 (2014): 153-171.</p> <p><u>Example study</u>: Pratt, Michael G., Douglas A. Lepisto, and Erik Dane. "The Hidden Side of Trust: Supporting and Sustaining Leaps of Faith among Firefighters." <i>Administrative Science Quarterly</i> (2018): 0001839218769252.</p> <p>Assignment (due night before to me and your classmates): No formal assignment. However, come to class having identified up to five people who you think might be helpful in better understanding your research question, and who you think you could interview in the next week. Draft 10 questions to pose to them.</p> <p>Topics for class discussion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- What kind of research questions can interviews answer?- What kind of questions can interviews not answer?- How can we identify appropriate interview samples?- How can we design a useful interview guide?- What argument do Pratt and colleagues make? In what ways is the method – interviewing – and the data it produces important to supporting their argument? What other kinds of data might you want? <p>In-class workshop: You will have an opportunity to practice interviewing in-class. We will also workshop your memos, helping you consider who to approach for an interview and also helping you refine your interview questions.</p>
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<p>Class 4. Interviewing, Part 2</p> <p>March 19</p>	<p>Readings Weiss, R. 1993. Learning from Strangers. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 5. Issues in Interviewing. Pg. 121-150. Charmaz, Kathy. 2006. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 3. Coding in Grounded Theory Practice. Pg. 42-71. • Chapter 5. Theoretical sampling, saturation and sorting. Pg. 96-122. Ashford, Susan J. "Having scholarly impact: The art of hitting academic home runs." <i>Academy of Management Learning & Education</i> 12.4 (2013): 623-633.</p> <p><u>Example study:</u> Handlovsky, Ingrid E., et al. "The process of safer crack use among women in Vancouver's downtown Eastside." <i>Qualitative Health Research</i> 23.4 (2013): 450-462.</p> <p>Assignment (due night before to me and your classmates): Complete one interview to better understand your research question. Write a one-page memo summarizing what you saw and observed, and what you think you need to understand next.</p> <p>Topics for class discussion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strategies for growing your sample: focused vs. snowball sampling - What do we learn from pilot interviews, and how can we incorporate that into future interviews? - What is the argument that Pratt and colleagues make? In what ways do their methods support their ability to make this argument? In what ways does their sampling strategy evolve, and does it support their ability to make this argument? Are there any people who you think they ought to have interviewed, who they didn't? - What makes for a "home run" paper? <p>In-class workshop: We will workshop your interview memos, helping you to make sense of the data, and consider what best way to further build your sample.</p>
<p>Week 5: Analyzing your Qualitative Data</p> <p>March 30</p>	<p>Readings: Eisenhardt, Kathleen M., Melissa E. Graebner, and Scott Sonenshein. "Grand challenges and inductive methods: Rigor without rigor mortis." (2016): 1113-1123.</p> <p>Gioia, Dennis A., Kevin G. Corley, and Aimee L. Hamilton. "Seeking qualitative rigor in inductive research: Notes on the Gioia methodology." <i>Organizational research methods</i> 16.1 (2013): 15-31.</p> <p>Deterding, Nicole M., and C. Mary. Forthcoming. "Qualitative Coding: A 21st Century Approach." <i>Sociological Methods & Research</i>.</p>

	<p>Lofland et al.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 9. Developing Analysis. Pg. 193-219. <p><u>Example Study:</u> Kaplan, Sarah. "Framing contests: Strategy making under uncertainty." <i>Organization Science</i> 19.5 (2008): 729-752.</p> <p>Assignment (due night before to me and your classmates): none. Begin thinking about how you will analyze your interview data.</p> <p>Topics for class discussion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How do we make sense of and structure data? What is involved in coding? - How can we represent data and the sense we have made of it to readers? - Some current debates in how analysis is best done. - What argument is Kaplan making? How does Kaplan represent data? How do the representations contained in the paper support or hinder the argument being made? What other representations of data might you want to see? <p>In-class workshop: We will workshop your initial thoughts about analysis and help you think about how to move forward.</p>
<p>Class 6. Developing Theory from Your Qualitative Data.</p> <p>April 2</p>	<p>Readings</p> <p>Langley, Ann. "Strategies for theorizing from process data." <i>Academy of Management review</i> 24.4 (1999): 691-710.</p> <p>Charmaz, 2006.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 6. Reconstructing Theory in Grounded Theory Studies. Pg. 123-150. • Chapter 7. Writing the draft. Pg. 151-176. • Chapter 8. Reflecting on the research process. Pg. 177-end. <p>Pratt, Michael G. "From the editors: For the lack of a boilerplate: Tips on writing up (and reviewing) qualitative research." (2009): 856-862.</p> <p>Barley, Stephen R. "When I write my masterpiece: Thoughts on what makes a paper interesting." <i>Academy of Management Journal</i> 49.1 (2006): 16-20.</p> <p><u>Example study:</u> Scaraboto, D. and Fischer. E. 2013. Frustrated fatshionistas: an institutional theory perspective on consumer quests for greater choice in mainstream markets, <i>Journal of Consumer Research</i>. 39 (6) 1234-1257.</p> <p>Assignment (due night before to me and your classmates): Complete either one more interview OR two hours of ethnographic fieldwork that will build on the data you have gathered so far. Read over your data. Draft a</p>

table summarizing key themes with supporting data. Describe briefly how your findings mirror or depart from key findings in the literature.

Topics for class discussion

- How can we build theory from qualitative data?
- How can we construct our contributions and convince readers?
- How do Scaroboto and Fischer describe their data analysis and theory building? How does their description convince? How does this paper position and describe its contributions?
- Example papers and their utility in writing up?

In-class workshop:

You will have an opportunity to discuss your final papers and how to move them forward.