



EPSY/EDCI 6280.001: Qualitative Research in Education Fall 2019

Classroom: 315 Wooten Hall
Instructor: Dr. Janelle Mathis
sessions)

Time: Tuesday, 5:30-8:20
(hybrid/2 sessions on Canvas
and supported by Canvas)

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Office Hours: *Tues.-- 1-4:00
*Wed. – 1-4:00
or by appointment

*Exceptions to these office hours are when instructor is out for conference or research purposes. Currently 10/02; 10/03; 11/26; 11/27 are known dates when office hours are not held but the professor can be reached via email if needed. Other times for these weeks will be announced in class. Appointments can be made outside the designated office hours and are recommended during office hours to avoid waiting.

Course Objectives:

This course provides the doctoral student with the opportunity to develop a knowledge base and basic skills in naturalistic research. Course content will focus on honing the skills of the researcher as research instrument. In-class exercises and assignments are designed to introduce the novice researcher to qualitative data collection methods such as observation, participant observation, and interviewing. Additionally, students will have the opportunity to concentrate their reading in the literature of a particular approach to qualitative investigation such as narrative inquiry (life history, oral history, biography, etc.), case study, phenomenology (ethnomethodology), participatory action research, feminist ethnography, postmodernist ethnography, or critical ethnography.

Required Texts and Course Readings:

Hesse-Biber, S., N. (2017). *The practice of qualitative research* (3rd ed.). Los Angeles, USA: SAGE.

Research articles identified on Canvas. An online library list of course readings will be provided during the first week of class. Some of these are required and some are optional. Each week there will be 2-3 articles besides the assigned text chapter to which students will respond online the day before the class on the topic they represent. Besides the 50 plus articles from which readings will be assigned, other articles will be added as new resources are discovered. Student suggestions and findings are important as we share our insights to qualitative research.

Requirements: (Requirements will be detailed further beginning session 2 in class and online)

1. Attendance and Engagement: Attendance is mandatory as much of our learning is around the engagements with others. Absences can lower your grade and more than three will result in not passing the course. Personal situations – emergencies, illness, etc.—will be addressed individually. Additionally, coming prepared to participate and be engaged in each session’s topics is required. (Points for engagement in class are included in the following requirements.) Aligned with attendance is participation in any engagements the instructor plans for teaching specific topics. There may be some preparation ahead in light of these activities, but you will know of this well in advance (by September 4 the details of each session will be complete on Blackboard as I like for the class to confirm acceptance of such after reading and visiting Canvas). Such items as a short interview with a peer, or identifying a text for which you have questions about content, or other information might be needed in advance for an in-class activity. **(100 points)** are allowed for this to include the visual positionality statement and other items as part of class. Only the positionality visual is currently on canvas. Others will be added and attendance calculated at the semester’s end.)
2. Focus group preparation and participation (120 points). Each session requires each person to be prepared as if you are the leading person in your “focus group”. We will define this during our second session, divide into groups and meet discuss the readings. A leader will be assigned/ decided for each of the following sessions beginning with session 3. While one person will take the lead, others will be responsible for asking questions and requesting further insights based on the big ideas that may differ or be the same. The process will be explained during the first session. The focus group meetings will usually occur during the second half of the class but this order may change according to the plans for the evening.

To prepare for each session, you are to create a response for each required reading. Please do this for each session beginning with Sept. 3 and ending with Nov. 19--with exceptions of Oct. 1 when a different approach will be used. The response for **EACH** article will include: Five *big ideas* and One *golden quote*. The points indicated above are for both *BIGQs* and focus group participation. These will be the basis for discussions and questions for the evening’s focus group meetings.

- Please post/upload your *Big Ideas* and *Golden Quotes BIGQs* for each focus group prior to class – by the Monday evening before--to the Canvas Discussions. Each person should have access to the responses, either online or printed.
- You will be assigned focus group readings to read for that particular week. In many cases there will be options but no more than 3 journal readings will be required. *You may read all the focus group*

readings listed for each class if you choose to. The 2-3 designated articles are the ones for which you provide the 5 big ideas and one golden quote. There is a chapter to read for each session that gives the foundation for the evening's discussion. You do not have to post 5 ideas and a quote for the text chapter but the expectation is that you will read this and contribute to the various engagement activities around the chapter.

- The class will be divided into focus groups of about 5, and these discussion groups will be held the second half of each session. The format for focus groups is for you to share the 5 big ideas and the *Golden Quote* from your assigned focus group reading in a moderated format with one person each night leading and serving as moderator.

3. Critique of two qualitative research articles selected as per their focus in an area of interest to you (**30 points each**). These should reflect two different qualitative approaches (not mixed methods or quantitative). A rubric is provided on Blackboard to guide this critique but we will be addressing what makes a good critique and readings will be provided that address this. Due **Oct. 8 and Nov. 12.**

4. A qualitative research plan in an area of interest to you that evidences your involvement in the course focus (**120 points**). Students will develop a research proposal for a qualitative research project. **Final paper due Dec. 6.**

Prior to the completion of this, a plan for this proposal of about 3 pages in length (APA, double-spaced and not counting cover page) will be turned in and feedback regarding this will be given to help support your ongoing plan. The **topic choice can reflect a topic you are already interested in or have done some work but it should not be a paper or proposal you are already doing for another class or project. It can be tangential or related to something you are already investigating, for example, from a quantitative perspective since you can develop a qualitative piece that uses much of the same literature review or background. The focus of this project will be the application of a qualitative method and how it might be developed.** We will discuss in class a good choice of topics, but, for example, if you are more a quantitative person, look at your area of interest and decide on a topic that could be explored qualitatively (whether you plan to do this outside the class or not). Then consider the various ways to explore this topic. We will discuss some examples each session prior to this so by the due date, you will be able to write a plan for the proposal. **(Plan Due Oct. 29)**

The final proposal will be between 15 to 20 double-spaced pages (excluding cover page and references) and will include the following elements (each of these elements will have been discussed as to what is included in **each (Due Dec. 6):**

- a. Abstract (150-200 words) and key words (3-5).

- b. Introduction: What is the issue/area to be investigated? What is the purpose of the study? What is the problem statement? What are the key questions or issues of the investigation? What aspects of the problem or issue do you intent to focus on? What research questions do you have? How will this study add to your understanding of the topic or issue? What are the necessary limitations (or de-limitations) of the study?
- c. Review of the literature: Briefly identify pertinent work related to your topic. What do we already know about this area? What conclusion can be drawn from the existing literature? Are there any gaps in the academic literature?
- d. Methods: How do you intend to proceed in your investigation? What information or data will you need? How will you collect data? What research methods and design will you use?
- e. References
- f. Appendices (e.g., interview questions, focus group themes)

Grading: The following grading scale is in effect:

A: 361 – 400 points	D: 241 – 280 points
B: 321 – 360 points	F: Less than 241 points
C: 281 – 320 points	

Requirements	points
Attendance/engagement	100
Focus groups/BIGQs	120
Qual. Article critiques	60
Proposal/plan	120
	400

Schedule Overview:

This schedule is subject to changes as needed to support the learning community we create. Each session here is identified simply by topic and item due. However, Canvas will have a module for each session with greater elaboration to include outline of the session, required readings, videos/U-Tubes, and other items to prepare for the session. The readings and postings for each session are due *before* the session not during or after.

Session 1: August 27—An invitation to qualitative research Introduction of ourselves and the course expectations.

A beginning look at chapter 1 (you can browse through this in the upcoming week as well.)

Session 2: September 3—Paradigmatic approaches

Preparation, Chp. 2 & readings on Canvas

Due: Five ideas and golden quote for each reading posted on September 2

Session 3: September 10—Designing qualitative approaches

Preparation, Chp. 3 & readings on Canvas

Due: Five ideas and golden quote for each posted on September 09

Session 4: September 17—Ethics of Social Research

Preparation, Chp.4 & readings on Canvas

Due: Five ideas and golden quote for each posted on September 16

Writing a research critique—key points to examine.

Begin thinking about your own positionality statement and how you can visually share this (to be shared online by Oct. 1).

Be sure you have completed the IRB training and show evidence of the certificate. If you have done so already, you do not do it again but if you have not, it is something you will have to do in the future if researching,

Session 5: September 24—In Depth Interviewing & Focus Groups

Preparation: Chp. 5, 6 & readings on Canvas

Due: Five ideas and golden quote for each posted on Sept. 23

Session 6: October 1—Narrative Inquiry, Oral History, Phenomenology, and Auto biographical approaches to research. (ON LINE SESSION)

Preparation: Readings on Blackboard. Each focus group will prepare BIGQs and or questions for one of the topics as a way to introduce this particular unique methodology to others (an initial introduction). Post these and respond to the postings of the other focus groups with thoughtful ideas, questions, etc. Topics will be assigned during Sessions 2-3.

Due: Read and respond to the postings of the other focus groups. **Due: Positionality multimodal sharing & response.** These are very open ended visuals but several specific possibilities will be shared prior to this class/posting.

Session 7: October 8—Ethnography

Preparation: Chp. 7 & readings on Canvas

Due: Five ideas and golden quote for each posted on Oct. 7

Due: First qualitative article critique

Session 8: October 15 –Case Study

Preparation: Chp. 8 & readings on Canvas

Due: Five ideas and golden quote for each posted on Oct. 14

Session 9: October 22—Content Analysis

Preparation: Chp. 9 & readings on Canvas

Due: Five ideas and golden quote for each article on Oct. 21

Session 10: October 29-- Other qualitative forms of interest such as research through/within the arts or other fields of study that pertain to education.

Preparation: Read articles on Blackboard. Be prepared to focus on one aspect of research within your group and share with the class. You can use the 5 ideas and one quote approach or another approach to share this qualitative form. Due: **Research plan (4-5 pages)**

Session 11: November 5-- Action research/Teacher Research (FG) Preparation:

Chp. 9 & readings on Canvas

Due: Five ideas and golden quote for each posted on Nov. 4

Session 12: November 12—Mixed Methods (FG) Preparation:

Chp. 10 & readings on Canvas

Due: Five ideas and golden quote for each posted on Oct. Nov. 11 Due:

Any requested revision of research plan.

Session 13: November 19-- Analysis and interpretation

Preparation: Chp. 11 & readings on Canvas

Due: Five ideas and golden quote for each posted on Nov. 18

Due: Second qualitative article critique. Send to instructor on Blackboard Messages.

Session 14: November 26 –Chapter 12 as well as discussion/reflection online.

Finalized work on qualitative proposal project.

Session 15: December 3—Share research projects

Please post any powerpoints, websites, prezis or other online formats BEFORE each class if you are presenting.

Session 16: December 10- Continued - Share research projects. All final papers should be submitted on the assignments site of Canvas before this date.

NOTE: I reserve the right to modify any portion of this syllabus, including course assignments, grading system and due dates, as circumstances may warrant. This will always be in the best interest of the class members and will not add work to the expectations here.



The Educator as Agent of Engaged Learning:

Improving the quality of education in Texas schools and elsewhere is the goal of programs for the education of educators at the University of North Texas. To achieve this goal, programs leading to teacher certification and advanced programs for educators at the University of North Texas 1) emphasize content, curricular, and pedagogical knowledge acquired through research and informed practice of the academic disciplines, 2) incorporate the Texas Teacher Proficiencies for learner centered education, 3) feature collaboration across the university and with schools and other agencies in the design and delivery of programs, and 4) respond to the rapid demographic, social, and technological change in the United States and the world.

The educator as agent of engaged learning summarizes the conceptual framework for UNT's basic and advanced programs. This phrase reflects the directed action that arises from simultaneous commitment to academic knowledge bases and to learner centered practice. "Engaged learning" signifies the deep interaction with worthwhile and appropriate content that occurs for each student in the classrooms of caring and competent educators. "Engaged learning" features the on-going interchange between teacher and student about knowledge and between school and community about what is worth knowing. This conceptual framework recognizes the relationship between UNT and the larger community in promoting the commitment of a diverse citizenry to life-long learning. In our work of developing educators as agents of engaged learning, we value the contributions of professional development schools and other partners and seek collaborations which advance active, meaningful, and continuous learning.

Seeing the engaged learner at the heart of a community that includes educators in various roles, we have chosen to describe each program of educator preparation at UNT with reference to the following key concepts, which are briefly defined below.

1. **Content and curricular knowledge** refer to the grounding of the educator in content knowledge and knowledge construction and in making meaningful to learners the content of the PreK-16 curriculum.
2. **Knowledge of teaching and assessment** refers to the ability of the educator to plan, implement, and assess instruction in ways that consistently engage learners or, in advanced programs, to provide leadership for development of programs that promote engagement of learners.
3. **Promotion of equity for all learners** refers to the skills and attitudes that enable the educator to advocate for all students within the framework of the school program.
4. **Encouragement of diversity** refers to the ability of the educator to appreciate and affirm formally and informally the various cultural heritages, unique endowments, learning styles, interests, and needs of learners.
5. **Professional communication** refers to effective interpersonal and professional oral and written communication that includes appropriate applications of information technology.
6. **Engaged professional learning** refers to the educator's commitment to ethical practice and to continued learning and professional development.

Through the experiences required in each UNT program of study, we expect that basic and advanced students will acquire the knowledge, skills, and dispositions appropriate to the educational role for which they are preparing or in which they are developing expertise.

A broad community stands behind and accepts responsibility for every engaged learner. UNT supports the work of PreK-16 communities through basic and advanced programs for professional educators and by promoting public understanding of issues in education.

Ethical Behavior and Code of Ethics: The Teacher Education & Administration Department expects that its students will abide by the Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas Educators (Chapter 247 of the Texas Administrative Code www.sbec.state.tx.us) and as outlined in Domain IV: Fulfilling Professional Roles and Responsibilities of the Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities (PPR) Texas Examination of Educator Standards (TExES); and as also addressed in codes of ethics adopted by professionals in the education field such as the National Education Association (NEA) and the American Federation of Teachers (AFT).

Submitting Work: All assignments will be submitted via Blackboard Learn. Assignments posted after the deadline will be considered late and points will be deducted from the final grade.

Grading and Grade Reporting: Grading rubrics for all assignments can be found on the course Blackboard Learn website with the assignment. Students are encouraged to review the grading rubrics to guide them in successfully completing all assignments.

Writing Policy: Teachers are judged on the accuracy of everything they write, whether it is a letter to parents or an email to a principal or a worksheet for students. Your written products – including, but not limited to, papers, lesson plans, and emails – should include appropriate and accurate spelling, grammar, punctuation, syntax, format, and English usage. You should expect

that all assignments will be evaluated on these writing skills, in addition to any other expectations of a particular assignment. The UNT Writing Lab (Sage Hall 152) offers one-on-one consultation to assist students with their writing assignments. To use this resource, call (940) 565-2563 or visit <https://lrc.unt.edu/labs/unt-writing-lab-home>.

Teacher Education & Administration ***Departmental Policy Statements***

UNT Career Connect: All undergraduate students are expected to participate in “UNT Career Connect.” Each student needs to set up a UNT e-portfolio for this purpose. As a UNT student engages in real-life, career-related experiences in curricular and/or co-curricular settings, s/he should upload documentation of these experiences into his/her UNT e-portfolio. Course instructors will help students identify appropriate experiences and accompanying documentation/artifacts for inclusion in the e-portfolio. Through their respective e-portfolios, students are able to make connections across their student experiences and reflect upon their learning and skills in order to prepare them with marketable skills for careers and graduate degrees. The e-portfolio also serves as a useful device for future job interviews. Career Connect places emphasis on important job skills such as communication, teamwork, and critical thinking. For students seeking teacher certification, these on-the-job skills will be evaluated during student teaching using the North Texas Appraisal of Classroom Teaching (NTACT) or its successor instrument. Follow this link to learn more and to set up your personal e-portfolio: <http://careerconnect.unt.edu/default>.

Disabilities Accommodation: “The University of North Texas complies with Section 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act and with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. The University of North Texas provides academic adjustments and auxiliary aids to individuals with disabilities, as defined under the law. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring accommodation, please see the instructor and/or contact the Office of Disability Accommodation at 940-565-4323 during the first week of class.” Dr. Barbara Pazey is the compliance officer and contact person for the Department of Teacher Education & Administration.

Observation of Religious Holidays: If you plan to observe a religious holy day that coincides with a class day, please notify your instructor as soon as possible.

Academic Integrity: Students are encouraged to become familiar with UNT’s policy on Student Standards of Academic Integrity:
http://policy.unt.edu/sites/default/files/untpolicy/pdf/7Student_Affairs-Academic_Integrity.pdf. Academic dishonesty, in the form of plagiarism, cheating, or fabrication, will not be tolerated in this class. Any act of academic dishonesty will be reported, and a penalty determined, which may be probation, suspension, or expulsion from the university.

Acceptable Student Behavior: Student behavior that interferes with an instructor's ability to conduct a class or other students' opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated in any instructional forum at UNT. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be directed to leave the classroom and the instructor may refer the student to the Dean of Students to consider whether the student's conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct. The university's expectations for student conduct apply to all instructional forums, including university and electronic classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The Code of Student Conduct can be found at <https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/conduct>.

Attendance: See the instructor's attendance policy.

Eagle Connect: All official correspondence between UNT and students is conducted via Eagle Connect and it is the student's responsibility to read their Eagle Connect Email regularly.

Cell Phones and Laptops: Students should turn off cell phones when they are in class unless the phones are being used for learning activities associated with the course. Similarly, laptops should be turned off, unless they are being used to take class notes and/or participate in class activities.

SPOT: The Student Perceptions of Teaching (SPOT) is expected for all organized classes at UNT. This brief online survey will be made available to you at the end of the semester, providing you a chance to comment on how this class is taught. I am very interested in the feedback I get from students, as I work to continually improve my teaching. I consider the SPOT to be an important part of your participation in this class.

Collection of Student Work: In order to monitor students' achievement, improve instructional programs, and publish research findings, the Department of Teacher Education and Administration collects anonymous student work samples, student demographic information, test scores, and GPAs to be analyzed by internal and external reviewers.

Foliotek e-Portfolio. Foliotek is a free to you software data management system (MMS) used in the assessment of your knowledge, skills, and dispositions relevant to program standards and objectives. You will be required to use your Foliotek account for the duration of your enrollment in the College of Education in order to upload required applications, course assignments, and other electronic evidence/evaluations as required. This course may require assignment(s) to be uploaded and graded in Foliotek. The college of Education will track your progress in your program through this data to verify that you have successfully met the competencies required in your program of study. All students must register in the program portfolio that aligns with their degree plan. Registration codes and tutorials can be found on this site: <https://www.coe.unt.edu/office-educator-preparation/foliotek>.

Comprehensive Arts Program Policy. The Elementary Education program area supports a comprehensive arts program to assist preservice and inservice teachers to design and implement

curricular and instructional activities which infuse all areas of the arts (visual, music, theater, and movement) throughout the elementary and middle school curriculum.

Technology Integration Policy. The Elementary, Secondary, and Curriculum & Instruction program areas support technology integration to assist preservice and inservice teachers to design and implement curricular and instruction activities which infuse technology throughout the K-12 curriculum.

TEXES Test Preparation. To meet state requirements for providing 6 hours of test preparation for teacher certification candidates, the UNT TEXES Advising Office (TAO) administers the College of Education TEXES Practice Exams. Students who want to take a practice exam should contact the TAO (Matthews Hall 103). Students may take up to *two exams* per session that relate to their teaching track/field at UNT. Students should also plan accordingly, as they are required to stay for the entire testing period. Current students must meet the following criteria in order to sit for the TEXES practice exams: Students must (1) be admitted to Teacher Education, (2) have a certification plan on file with the COE Student Advising Office, and (3) be enrolled in coursework for the current semester. For TEXES practice exam information and registration, go to: <http://www.coe.unt.edu/texas-advising-office/texas-exams>. If you need special testing accommodations, please contact the TAO at 940-369-8601 or e-mail the TAO at coetao@unt.edu. The TAO website is www.coe.unt.edu/texas. Additional test preparation materials (i.e. Study Guides for the TEXES) are available at www.texas.ets.org.

“Ready to Test” Criteria for Teacher Certification Candidates. Teacher certification candidates should take the TEXES exams relating to their respective certification tracks/teaching fields during their early-field-experience semester (i.e. the long semester or summer session immediately prior to student teaching).

Six Student Success Messages. The Department of Teacher Education & Administration supports the six student success messages on how to succeed at UNT: (1) Show up; (2) Find support; (3) Get advised; (4) Be prepared; (5) Get involved; and (6) Stay focused. Students are encouraged to access the following website: <https://success.unt.edu>. The site contains multiple student resource links and short videos with student messages.