

**University of North Texas
College of Liberal Arts and Sciences
Department of Sociology**

**SOCI 3240.001 Qualitative Data Collection
Spring 2018**

Instructor: Nikolitsa Grigoropoulou

Class time: MWF 10:00 - 10:50 am

Classroom: Gate 141

Office: Sycamore Hall 288V

Office hours: Tuesday and Wednesday 11:00 am – 12:30 pm or by appointment

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Course Description:

This course introduces qualitative social science research methods. You will learn the basics of social scientific thinking, the foundations of social science research, and the fundamentals of conducting qualitative social science research. By the end of this course, you should be able to

- ✓ Familiarize yourselves with concepts of qualitative data collection and analysis;
- ✓ critically evaluate social research;
- ✓ choose appropriately the qualitative technique that suits best the purpose of your study;
- ✓ conduct research following ethical guidelines;
- ✓ describe the features of different qualitative research methods and the strengths and weaknesses of these designs;
- ✓ construct interview material, undertake interviews, transcribe and analyze interview data;
- ✓ conduct ethnographic observations and draw meaningful conclusions out of them;
- ✓ develop coding schemes and perform content analysis;
- ✓ and design, implement, and write reports on basic social research projects.

Course Material:

Textbook: Bruce L. Berg and Howard Lune (2012). *Qualitative Research Methods for the Social Sciences*. . Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education.

Blackboard: Assignments, datasets, grades, syllabus, and other course materials will be provided to the UNT Blackboard at <https://learn.unt.edu/>

Reading Assignments & Participation:

Students are responsible for reading the assigned materials from the textbook before each class session. It is very important to keep up with readings because the course material is cumulative. That is, later content and information builds on material presented in earlier chapters. The lecture presentations will be available online, but not the lecture notes, so it is in your best interest to attend every class.

Class attendance will be taken in every meeting and counts toward your final grade. You can miss up to 3 class meetings without harming your grade.

Exams: There will be **2 exams** throughout the semester.

Location: Exams will be taken online from Friday at 8:00 am until Sunday at 11:59 pm on the designated dates.

Format: Exams will cover material from assigned readings, lectures, and class discussions and will typically consist of multiple choice, short answer, and/or essay questions with an emphasis on critical thinking and application of covered concepts and research techniques. Make-up exams can be given with appropriate documentation for a serious illness, death in the family, required university-sponsored event, or the instructor's consent.

Literature Review: Knowledge of existing literature on the topic of the one's interest is a key component for the design and organization of any research project.

Location: Done outside the classroom and turned in through Blackboard by **Friday, March 2 at 11:59 pm.**

Format: The literature review should be 2-3 pages summarizing previous studies (preferably using qualitative methods) relevant to your research project. Specific guidelines, formatting instructions, and grading criteria will be posted on Blackboard as separate documents later during the semester.

Observation Project: Students will be required to engage in a short observation project in which they will apply principles of observation research. For this project you should observe a public space / social meeting and write a brief report on what you have observed. Your report should be approx. 3-4 pages long. You will be graded on the detailedness of your description, the use of the methodological approaches learned in the class, and the clarity and organization of your paper. The observation project is due by **Monday, March 19 at 11:59 pm.**

Content Analysis Project: For this assignment, you will be requested to develop an appropriate coding scheme and analyze the content of written material (newspaper articles, twitter feeds, political speeches, etc.) or visual material (pictures, films, TV commercials, etc.). Your assignment should be approx. 2-3 pages long and you will be graded based on the clarity and appropriateness of the coding scheme and the reasonableness of your analysis. Detailed guidelines will be provided in class later

during the semester. The content analysis project is due by **Friday, April 13 at 11:59 pm.**

Interview Project: The purpose of this assignment is to allow students to create their own interview schedule and collect qualitative data by conducting interviews. Even though the interview schedule will be developed in groups, each student will have to conduct at least one interview, tape record it (with subject's consent) and transcribe it. Each interview should involve at least 30 minutes of active interview time. Further instructions will be given in class. The interview transcript is due on **Monday, April 30 at 11:59 pm.**

Research Paper:

Your research papers will give you experience in designing, implementing, and reporting a qualitative research project.

Location: Done inside and outside of class and turned in through Blackboard by **Tuesday, May 8 at 11:59 pm.**

Format: Each student will develop **a complete research paper** during the semester. The research paper will practically consist of a thorough report and synthesis of all of your assignments throughout the semester in a way compatible with the principles of writing a qualitative research article. Designing, conducting, and reporting on your work will enable you to gain deeper knowledge on your research interests and practical experience on the field. The research paper should be approx. 10 pages long. Specific guidelines, formatting instructions, and grading criteria will be posted on Blackboard as separate document later during the semester.

Class Presentation:

Location: Presentations will be given in class.

Format: Students will be required to give an approximately 2-3 min individual presentation briefly describing what they did and what they found in their research projects in an informal, laid back, lecture format. PowerPoint presentation is mandatory and a PowerPoint template with the required elements will be provided by the instructor.

NIH Human Subjects Training:

As you prepare to conduct your own research, you are expected to complete the NIH Human Subjects Training online and submit the completion certificate through Blackboard by **Friday, February 9 at 11:59 pm.**

You can access the NIH website at <https://phrp.nihtraining.com/users/login.php>.

Late papers or assignments:

All papers and assignments must be submitted via Blackboard before the posted

deadline to be graded. Students may either submit papers in Microsoft Word or PDF (according to the instructions of each assignment) as attachments or they may cut and paste the content of their papers/assignments into the submission window in Blackboard. If in doubt, cut and paste!

Because life happens, **late submissions will be accepted with a penalty of 5% of the assignment for every additional 24 hours past the due date.** The total penalty can only be up to 50% of the possible grade, no matter how late you submit it (as long as it is before the designated end of the semester, of course, which is **Friday, May 11 at 11:59 pm** for this course. After this date, late assignments of any sort will not be accepted).

Grading:

Exams	2 @ 75 points each	150 points
Research Paper	100 points	100 points
Literature Review	50 points	50 points
Observation Project	50 points	50 points
Content Analysis Project	50 points	50 points
Interview Project	60 points	60 points
Attendance	35 @ 2 points each	70 points
NIH Training	25 points	25 points
Class Presentation	25 points	25 points
Total		580 points

Range of Points	Range of Percentages	Grade
522 - 580	90% - 100%	A
464 - 521	80% - 89%	B
406 - 463	70% - 79%	C
348 - 405	60% - 69%	D
0 - 347	0% - 59%	F

Classroom Etiquette:

Food and drink are prohibited in the computer lab! Cell phones must be turned

on SILENT and put away! Do not use computers for anything other than class work.

Arriving late in class and leaving early are very disruptive to the instructor and other students. Please let the instructor know prior to the beginning of class if you absolutely must leave early and make sure your exit distracts others as little as possible. Please make every effort to respect others.

Disagreements are allowed and expected, but the focus should be on ideas rather than on the individual who expresses them. Signs of disrespect that will not be tolerated include but are not limited to, having background conversations when others are talking, packing up early when others are still talking or asking questions, and working on material for other classes.

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 Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities to consider whether the student's conduct violated UNT's Code of Student Conduct. The university's expectations for student conduct apply to all instructional forums, including university and electronic classrooms, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. UNT's Code of Student Conduct can be found at www.unt.edu/csrr.

Academic Integrity Policy:

Academic dishonesty is defined as follows by the Office of Academic Integrity on the website: <http://www.unt.edu/csrr/development/dishonesty.html>

- **Cheating:** Intentionally using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise. The term academic exercise includes all forms of work submitted for credit or hours.
- **Plagiarism:** The deliberate adoption or reproduction of ideas, words or statements of another person as one's own without acknowledgement.
- **Fabrication:** Intentional and unauthorized falsification or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise.
- **Facilitating academic dishonesty:** Intentionally or knowingly helping or attempting to help another to violate a provision of the institutional code of academic integrity.

Violations of the policy of academic integrity are taken seriously at UNT and may include (1) failing grades on assignments and/or the course and (2) reports to the VPAA that become a part of the official student record. You should read the procedures and sanctions for academic dishonesty on the website of the Vice President for Academic Affairs at <http://vpaa.unt.edu/academic-integrity.htm>. If you are in doubt

about any of the issues related to academic integrity, it is your responsibility to consult with the course instructor regarding these requirements before your assignments are submitted.

It is the policy of the instructor that submitted work which violates any of academic integrity policies will be **severely penalized or will receive a zero (0)** judging from the type or the extent of the violation. For example, if the assignment is found 30% and above similar with others' work (a.k.a. plagiarized), the student will receive a zero (0) in the given assignment. Repeated violations (2 or more) throughout the semester will result in an automatic F in the class and the student will be reported to the VPAA.

ADA Policy

As per the Office of Disability Accommodation, a syllabus for a course SHALL include the following statement:

The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You may request accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. For additional information see the Office of Disability Accommodation website at <http://www.unt.edu/oda>. You may also contact them by phone at 940.565.4323.

Syllabus as a Contract:

The University attorney advises faculty members to notify students that the syllabus is not a contract and is therefore subject to change. I will try to adhere to the schedule provided, but I reserve the right to alter the syllabus to better suit the needs of the class.

WEEKLY CLASS SCHEDULE

Date	Topic	Reading / Assignment
Week 1		
W 01/17	Review Course Outline	
F 01/19	Introduction	Chapter 1, pp. 1-17
Week 2		
M 01/22	Designing Qualitative Research	Chapter 2, pp. 19-38
W 01/24		
F 01/26		
Week 3		
M 01/29	Designing Qualitative Research	Chapter 2, pp. 38-57
W 01/31		
F 02/02		
Week 4		
M 02/05	Ethical Issues	Chapter 3, pp. 61-99
W 02/07		
F 02/09		NIH Training Due by 02/09 at 11:59 pm
Week 5		
M 02/12	Ethnographic Field Strategies	Chapter 6, pp. 196-238
W 02/14		
F 02/16		
Week 6		
M 02/19	Ethnographic Field Strategies	Chapter 6, pp. 238-251
W 02/21		
F 02/23	Exam #1 Online	
Week 7		
M 02/26	Social Historical Research & Oral Traditions	Chapter 9, pp. 304-321
W 02/28		
F 03/02		Literature Review Due by 03/02 at 11:59 pm

Week 8		
M 03/05	Case Studies	Chapter 10, pp. 325-346
W 03/07		
F 03/09		
Week 9		
M 03/12	Spring Break	
W 03/14		
F 03/16		
Week 10		
M 03/19	Unobtrusive Measures in Research Content Analysis	Observation Project Due by 03/19 at 11:59 pm
W 03/21		Chapter 8, pp. 280-300
F 03/23		Chapter 11, pp. 349-358
Week 11		
M 03/26	Content Analysis	Chapter 11, pp. 358-382
W 03/28		
F 03/30	Exam #2 Online	
Week 12		
M 04/02	Interviewing	Chapter 4, pp. 105-135
W 04/04		
F 04/06		
Week 13		
M 04/09	No class	Group work – Constructing Interview Questions
W 04/11	Interviewing	Chapter 4, pp. 135-159
F 04/13		Content Analysis Due by 04/13 at 11:59 pm
Week 14		
M 04/16	Cognitive Interviewing	In class work
W 04/18		
F 04/20		

Week 15		
M 04/23	Focus Group	Chapter 5, pp. 164-193
W 04/25		
F 04/27		
Week 16		
M 04/30	Student Presentations	Interview Project Due by 04/30 at 11:59 pm
W 05/02	Student Presentations	
F 05/04	Reading Day	No Class
Finals Week		
M 05/07 – F 05/11	Research Paper Due on Tuesday, May 08 at 11:59 pm	

Have a Great Semester!!!