

**University of Texas at Austin
Course Syllabus**

EDA 381Q, Qualitative Research

Instructor: Dr. Pat Somers

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Office Hours: By appointment, at a mutually convenient time

Course description

Qualitative research is a methodological approach to the study of the everyday world. It includes a variety of methods for understanding (describing and analyzing) social settings from the perspective of those who participate in and construct them. Qualitative research focuses on the ways in which people construct meaning, categorize experiences, and accomplish the myriad of social actions that produce the social world.

This course approaches the topic of qualitative research methods from both a theoretical and a practical perspective through assigned readings, class discussion, writing, and research projects. In particular, the class provides extensive, hands-on experience with analyzing various types of qualitative data.

Course objectives

1. To learn the theoretical foundations of qualitative methods.
2. To understand and apply qualitative analysis techniques.
3. To experience writing up qualitative data.
4. To learn coding and analysis of qualitative data by computer.
5. To evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of qualitative approaches.

Textbooks

Required

American Psychological Association. (2005). *Concise Rules of APA Style*. Washington, DC: Author. (Those students outside the College of Education may use the style manual for their discipline).

Huberman, M., & Miles, M.B. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis: An expanded sourcebook* (2d ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Morse, J., & Richards, J. (2002). *READ ME FIRST for a User's Guide to Qualitative Research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. (Book and CD-ROM).

Optional Book

Hairston, M., Ruczkievicz, J., & Friend, C. (2004). *The Scott-Foresman Guide for Writers* (7th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall. (Companion website: http://occawlonline.pearsoned.com/bookbind/pubbooks/long_hairston_sfh_6/chapter1/deluxe.html)

Hairston et al. (2005). *SF Express* (2d ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Course requirements

Class participation: Students are expected to participate in class and on the online discussion board. (20% of final grade)

Assignments: There are three major work products for this class:

1. Write-up #1 – this is a two-page description and analysis of your observation. (10% of final grade)
2. Write-up #2 – this is a two-page description of your coding and themes for *Do Not Be Sad* (do this in groups of two). (10% of final grade)
3. Your integrative research paper on the 9/11 narrative(s). You will analyze at least 30 pages of narrative using TMT and other relevant theories. Your paper will include an introduction, brief literature review, the method, analysis, discussion, summary and references. The paper should be at least 15 pages in APA format (single space all quotes and references). (60% of final grade)

Written work: The skill of academic writing is an important one for doctoral students. Students who would like additional help in developing their writing skills are encouraged to talk with the instructor.

Plagiarism: Students should clearly identify both ideas and phrases taken from any other source.

Class	Topic	Readings	Other
1	Intro.	M&R, chapter 1, M&H, chapter 1	
2	Conceptualizing research	M&R, chapters 2, 3, 4; Miles & Huberman chapter 2, 3	
3	Conceptualizing, cont.		
4	Data 1 – Visual (documentary)	M&R, Chapters 6, 7, 10 M&H, chapter 4	
5	Writing up results, writing	M&R, chapter 10, M&H, chapter 10	
6	Interviews, Observation		
7	Observation	(off campus)	
8	Data 2 – Do not be said		Write up #1 due (2 pages)
9	Writing		
10	Data 3 – Coding interviews by hand		Write up #2 due (2 pages)
11	Data 4 – Coding by computer	Bring your file of interview, your NVivo CD and your laptop to class	
12	Ethics	M&H, chapter 11, complete 5-step training at http://www.utexas.edu/research/rsc/training/index.php	
13	Presentations		
14	Wrap up		
Final paper due: December 1 (submit by e-mail to pasomers@mail.utexas.edu)			

Course Policies

Class attendance: Class attendance, particularly when we have group activities is important. If you must miss class for some reason, please get the notes from a peer.

Course evaluation: During the semester, I will ask you for feedback on the course. This information will be used to improve the course (formative evaluation). At the end of the course, a standard university-designed evaluation will be given. With all assessment techniques, anonymity is assured.

Academic accommodations: The University of Texas at Austin provides, upon request, appropriate academic accommodations for qualified students with disabilities.

For information, contact the Office of the Dean of Students (471.6259; TTY 471.4641).

Scholastic dishonesty: Students are expected to be beyond reproach in scholastic activities. Those who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and dismissal from the University. According to the Regents Rules, “Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an exam for another person, any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempts to commit such acts.” (*Regents Rules and Regulations*, Part One, Chapter VI, Section 3, Subsection 3.2, Subdivision 3.22). Scholastic dishonesty harms the individual, the students in general, and the integrity of the University as a whole. It will not be tolerated in any course. For further information, please contact Student Judicial Services, <http://www.utexas.edu/depts/dos/sjs>.

Cell phones: If you must have your cell phone on during class, please set it to the “vibrate” mode. (And, you may need to remind me to do the same!).

Please note that the word data is plural (the singular is datum)