

QUALITATIVE RESEARCH METHODS IN EDUCATION: EDPA 700

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Office Hours:
by appointment

This course has three main purposes. First, it introduces advanced doctoral students to different qualitative methods in educational research. Second, it provides opportunities for students to engage systematically and rigorously in the preparation of qualitative studies of compelling individual, professional and social importance. Third, it aims to construct an open, rigorous, and humor-filled intellectual setting within students can continuously subject ideas --their own and others -- to critical reflection and constructive reconsideration.

By the end of the course, students should understand the types of research questions for which qualitative research is appropriate, grasp the ethical dilemmas that arise in the course of a study, grasp the meaning of validity, reliability, sampling, generalizability, objectivity, in relation to qualitative research; become familiar with data collection techniques (e.g. observation, interview, document analysis), forms of description, interpretation. and analysis; and, prepare several well written, tightly reasoned, stylistically appropriate mini-essays.

GENERAL OUTLINE OF CONTENT

- I. MAPPING THE TERRAIN OF QUALITATIVE RESEARCH IN EDUCATION**
- II. ETHICS and MEANING IN EDUCATION RESEARCH**
- III. HISTORY, LIFE HISTORY, ORAL HISTORY, and BIOGRAPHY**
- IV. STUDIES IN SPACE: ETHNOGRAPHY, PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION, THICK DESCRIPTION, STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS**

COMMON READINGS

Barbara Finkelstein, *Readings*. Available for Purchase at Bel-Jean printing center in the Maryland Book Exchange, at the Education Technology Center in the College of Education and in the Graduate Reading Room: McKeldin Library

Recommended:

Denzin, Norman K. and Yvonna S. Lincoln. *Handbook of Qualitative Research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1994. ISBN: 0-8039-4679-1.

Bogdan, Robert C. and Biklen, Sari Knopp. *Qualitative Research for Education: An Introduction to Theory and Methods*. (Boston: Allyn and Bacon) 1981.

EXPECTATIONS

A. It is assumed that every class member will complete assignments in a timely fashion, contribute freely and meaningfully to class discussions, and, as appropriate, prepare critiques of research, readings, and class efforts.

B. In addition to these common expectations, each student will prepare 3 highly focussed mini essays which: 1) Focus on a specific phenomenon; 2) reveal the phenomenon from multiple perspectives; 3) demonstrate the use of various qualitative approaches.

C. As a final exercise, each student will prepare a coherent paper synthesizing the findings and the arguments discussed in the three mini-essays.

Calendar of Requirements:

- A. Feb.5:** Identify a phenomenon which you hope to explore philosophically, historically, sociologically, and culturally and submit a one paragraph description of it
- Feb. 19:** Submit a 5-7 page description of the phenomenon you will study by identifying: 1) the philosophical, sociological, cultural, and/or historical context within which it might be situated; 2) a list of documents, sites, relationships artifacts, interviews that might reveal aspects of the phenomenon; 3) a list of alternative ways to bring the problem into view
- Mar.12:** Submit a 7-10 page mini-essay that analyzes the importance of the phenomenon you are studying and uses the work of at least 3-5 philosophically thoughtful scholars to help you define and frame its most important ethical and political dimensions
- Apr.2:** Bring in five different documents that reveal aspects of your topics and array them chronologically, The documents should cover at least a twenty year period.
- Apr. 16:** Submit a 7-10 page paper on the historical development of the phenomenon you are studying, by analyzing a set of documents and/or artifacts from your site, and applying concepts discussed in readings and class over the last three weeks.

F. May 8: Using informants, documents, photographs, artifacts, and documents from a particular site, please submit a a 7-10 page description and analysis of the phenomenon, making use of the concepts embedded in the readings and class over the last 4 weeks.

G. May 15: Final Exercise: Hand in a paper that puts elements from all essays together into a coherent whole.

RELEVANT JOURNALS, REVIEWS OF RESEARCH: Selected

<i>American Education Research Journal</i>	<i>American Sociological Review</i>
<i>Anthropology and Education Quarterly</i>	<i>Vita Scholastica: A Journal of Biography</i>
<i>Comparative History and Society</i>	<i>Comparative Education Review</i>
<i>Education Evaluation and Policy Analysis</i>	<i>Educational Researcher</i>
<i>Education Theory</i>	<i>History of Education Quarterly</i>
<i>Journal of Education Policy</i>	<i>Journal of Qualitative Inquiry</i>
<i>Journal of Human Studies</i>	<i>Phenomenology and Pedagogy</i>
<i>Review of Research in Education</i>	<i>Sociological Theory</i>
<i>Teachers College Record</i>	<i>Theory into Practice</i>

OUTLINE OF REQUIREMENTS

I. MAPPING THE TERRAIN OF QUALITATIVE RESEARCH IN EDUCATION:

1/29: Discovering the Terrain of Qualitative Research

Required Readings:

Barbara Finkelstein, "Conceptualizing the Terrain of Qualitative Research," in *Readings*.

Barbara Finkelstein and Betty Malen, "Critically *Analyzing Research: Guiding Questions*," in BF, *Readings*

Assignment for next week: Identify a phenomenon which you hope to explore philosophically, historically, sociologically, and culturally and submit a one paragraph description of it.

2/5: Making Sense in Qualitative Research

Required Readings:

Egon G. Guba and Yvonna S. Lincoln, "Competing Paradigms in Educational Research," (from Denzin and Lincoln, *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, 105-118), in BF, *Readings*.

Harry Wolcott, "On Seeking - and Rejecting - Validity in Qualitative Research" in *Transforming Qualitative Data: Description, Analysis, and Interpretation*, (Sage Publications, 1994): 61-102

Valerie Janesick, "The Dance of Qualitative Research...." from Denzin and Lincoln, *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, 209-220.

Jacques Barzun, "History as Counter-method and Anti-Abstraction," from *Clio and the Doctors...89-122*.

Submit one paragraph description of the phenomenon you hope to explore.

2/ 12: The Logics of Qualitative Method: Philosophy, History, Anthropology, and Sociology as Ways of Reasoning and Frameworks for Understanding:

Arthur Viddich and Stanford Lyman, "Qualitative Methods: Their History in Sociology and Anthropology," from Denzin and Lincoln, *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, 19-23

Kathleen Casey, "The New Narrative Research in Education," in *Review of Research in Education*, 21, 1995-1996: (New York: The Macmillan Co.): 211-253.

Patti Lather, "Critical Frames in Educational Research: Feminist and Post-Structuralist Practice," *Theory into Practice*, 31: 87-99.

Betty Malen and Rodney Ogawa, "Professional-Patron Influence on Site-Based Governance Councils: A Confounding Case Study," *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*. (Winter 1988). 10, 4: 251-270.

Barbara Finkelstein, "Education Historians as Mythmakers." *Review of Research in Education*, 18 (1992-1993): 1992-1993.

2/19: **Using your readings to date as a guide, prepare a 5-7 page description of the phenomenon you will study by identifying: 1) the philosophical, sociological, cultural, and/or historical context within which it might be situated; 2) a list of documents, sites, relationships artifacts, interviews that might reveal aspects of the phenomenon; 3) a list of alternative ways to bring the problem into view e.g. by studying the content of textbooks, or observing teacher-student relationships, or shadowing a principal, analyzing P.T.A. minutes, interviewing selected groups, or otherwise finding specific expression of the phenomenon you aim to describe.**

II. ETHICS and MEANING IN EDUCATION RESEARCH:

2/26: Philosophy as a way of knowing and form of ethical reflection about researchers and their subjects

Required Readings:

John Dewey, "Educational Values," in *Democracy and Education: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Education*. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1916.

Francine H. Hultgren, "The Phenomenology of Doing Phenomenology...." in *Journal of Human Studies*, 18 (December 1995): 371-388.

Harry Wolcott, "Confessions of a Trained Observer" *Transforming Qualitative Data: Description, Analysis, and Interpretation*, (Sage Publications, 1994)

John Stanfield II, "Ethnic Modeling in Qualitative Research" from Denzin and Lincoln, *Handbook of Qualitative Research*:

For next week, please identify three philosophers or thoughtful scholars who reveal the ethical dimensions of the phenomenon you are studying. They might be formal education philosophers such as John Dewey, Maxine Greene, Kenneth Strike, Jonas Soltis, Walter Feinberg. They might be political philosophers such as Karl Marx, Michel Foucault, Plato, Aristotle. They might be critical theorists such as Gadamer, Gramsci, Merleau Ponty. They might be feminist philosophers or philosophers of art,

music.

3/5: Discovering Virtue, Exploring Meaning, Situating Power, and Attending Values

Required Readings:

Henry A. Giroux, "Schooling as a Form of Cultural Politics: Toward a Pedagogy of and For Difference," from *Critical Pedagogy: The State and Culture Struggle*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1989.

Michelle Fine, "Working the Hyphens: Reinventing Self and Other in Qualitative Research" from Denzin and Lincoln, *Handbook of Qualitative Research*:

Barbara Finkelstein, Consent Forms submitted to Prince George's County School System for A Study entitled "The Contours of Multicultural Education."

3/12 Submit a 7-10 page mini-essay that analyzes the importance of the phenomenon you are studying and uses the work of at least 3-5 philosophically thoughtful scholars to help you define and frame its most important ethical and political dimensions. The scholars might be political, social, or moral philosophers, critical theorists, phenomenologists, etc.

III. HISTORY, LIFE HISTORY, ORAL HISTORY, and BIOGRAPHY

3/19: Locating Phenomena in Time: History as a Way of knowing. Explorations of the Meaning of Tradition, context, time, and evidence.

Historical Documents as Sources of Information: What can they reveal?

Required Readings:

Craft

David Hogan, "The Market Revolution and Disciplinary Power: Joseph Lancaster and the Psychology of the Early Classroom System," *History of Education Quarterly*, 29: 381-419, in *Readings*. (#22).

Carl Kaestle, "Standards of Evidence in Historical Research: How do we Know When We Know," *History of Education Quarterly*. 32 (Fall 1992):361-366, in *Readings*.

Ian Hodder, "The Interpretation of Documents and Material Culture," from Denzin and Lincoln, *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, : 377-393.

Selected Documents from Prince George's County, Down the Hill

Elementary School, and the State of Maryland

SPRING BREAK

4/2: Material Culture: Photographs, Artifact, and Object Analysis

Douglas Harper, "On the Authority of the Image: Visual Methods at the Crossroads"

Joules David Prown, "Mind in Matter: An Introduction to Material Culture Theory and Method," *Winterthur Portfolio*, 17 (1982): 2-19.

Craft

Thomas A. Markus, "Early Nineteenth Century School Space and Ideology," *Paedagogica Historica*, XXXII 2 (1996):9-51.

Bring in five different documents that reveal aspects of your topic. The documents should cover a span of at least 20 years.

4/ 9: Life History, Oral History, and Biography

Required Readings:

Paul Thompson: "Believe it or Not: Rethinking the Historical Interpretation of Memory," in Jaclyn Jeffrey and Glenace Edwall, *Memory and History: Essays on Recalling and Interpreting Experience*, (Lanham, MD: University Press of America).

Donald Richie, "Interviews as Historical Evidence, A Discussion of Standards of Documentation and Access," *The History Teacher* 24, No. 2 (February 1991): 223-238.

Kathryn Anderson and Dana Jack, "Learning to Listen: Interview Techniques and Analyses" in (Sherna Berger Gluck and Daphne Patai, Eds.) *Women's Words: The Feminist Practice of Oral History*, New York and London: Routledge, 1991.

Karen Olson and Linda Shopes, "Crossing Boundaries, Building Bridges: Doing Oral History Among Working Class Men and Women," Sherna Berger Gluck and Daphne Patai, Eds.) *Women's Words: The Feminist Practice of Oral History*, New York and London: Routledge, 1991.

Craft

Barbara Finkelstein, "Reading, Writing, and the Acquisition of Identity in Popular

Primary Schools in Nineteenth Century America," in B. Finkelstein (Ed.) *Regulated Children/Liberated Children: Education in Psychohistorical Perspective*. (New York: The Psychohistory Press).

AERA

4/ 16: Submit a 7-10 page paper on the historical development of the phenomenon you are studying, by analyzing a set of documents and/or artifacts from your site, making use of major secondary historical works on the subject, and applying concepts discussed in readings & class over the last 3 weeks.

TOPIC IV: STUDIES IN SPACE: ETHNOGRAPHY, PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION, THICK DESCRIPTION, STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS

April 23: Studies of Culture and Social Structure in Education : Ethnography, Observation, and Object

Required Readings:

Craft

Harry Wolcott, "The Life History of a Sneaky Kid," in H. Wolcott, *Transforming Qualitative Data*.

Clifford Geertz, "Deep Play: Notes on a Balinese Cockfight," in *The Interpretation of Culture*

Patricia and Peter Adler, "Observational Techniques" from Denzin and Lincoln, *Handbook of Qualitative Research*,

Judith Stacey (1988), "Can There Be a Feminist Ethnography?" in *Women's Studies International Forum* 11 (1) 21-27

Elizabeth Eder, "Seeing the Invisible: Exploring Culture through Objects," from B. Finkelstein and E. Eder, (Eds). *Cultivating Cultural Literacy: Instructional Materials for Critical Cultural Reflection* Yarmouth, ME: The Intercultural Press, 1998 (in press.)

April 30: Studies of Social Structure and Culture, cont.

Required Readings:

Choose 2 of Following:

John Ogbu, "Immigrant and Involuntary Minorities in Comparative Perspective," in Margaret A. Gibson and John U. Ogbu, *Minority Status and Schooling: A Comparative Study of Immigrant and Involuntary Minorities*. New York and London: Garland Publishers, 1991: 3-33, in *BF Reader*.

....Chapter 1:...."Low School Performance as an Adaptation: The Case of Blacks in Stockton, California," *ibid*, Chapter 8: 249-287.

Frederick Erickson, "Transformation and School Success: The Politics and Culture of Educational Achievement," *Anthropology and Education Quarterly*, 18 (1987): 335-356.

- May 7:** **Using informants, and/or documents, photographs, artifacts, and interview data from a particular site, please submit a a 7-10 page description and analysis of the phenomenon, making use of the concepts embedded in the readings and class over the last 4 weeks.**
- May 14:** **Final Exercise: Hand in a seminar paper that puts elements from all essays together into a coherent narrative.**