CLASS SYLLABUS

ANT 3497 –Introduction to Qualitative Research Methods

Section –RVC 1238 / Fall 2023

Professor - Sheilla R. Madera, Ph.D.

Office - SIPA #334

Office Hours – By appointment

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COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course introduces students to qualitative research (QR) methods applied to investigating social science issues related to health, culture, and policy. It addresses QR methods' theoretical underpinnings, uses, and ethical considerations. Through video lectures, reading-based lessons, discussion forums, case studies, quizzes, and practical exercises, students will acquire the basic skills and principles needed to conduct appropriate, original, and responsible QR applied to social sciences. The course focuses on diverse data collection techniques and provides an overview of practical skills for analyzing qualitative data.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

* Critically assess the theoretical underpinnings of different approaches to QR
* Contrast different QR methods commonly used in social sciences
* Understand the main ethical and validity issues related to QR methods
* Formulate applied QR questions
* Identify appropriate uses for different QR techniques
* Articulate an appropriate QR design
* Analyze qualitative data through coding, text retrieval, and interpretation
* Describe the components of data dissemination reports/manuscripts
* Develop a QR proposal

COURSE STRUCTURE:

This course will combine diverse activities and practical experience to stimulate active student participation and critical thinking. It provides students with the intellectual tools needed to QR and practical skills to be gained through exercises (e.g., development of guides and code book, participant observation), data analysis training, and study assignments. Educational strategies will include discussion forums, practical exercises, written work, oral presentations, data analysis, and paper analysis.

REQUIRED TEXTS AND READINGS:

The professor will provide all reading materials via Canvas.

PROCTORED EXAM POLICY:

There are no exams in this course.

EXPECTATIONS OF THE COURSE:

This is an online course, which means that students are fully responsible for completing the assigned work within the established parameters and dates. Therefore, students must review and follow the course calendar and weekly outlines and submit assignments by the corresponding deadline. No late work will be accepted.

OVERVIEW OF COURSE ASSIGNMENTS:

Students will have to complete weekly assignments that will be submitted via Canvas. Instructions for each assignment will be posted one week before its due date (See table for specific due dates).

STUDENT LEARNING ASSESSMENT:

The following activities must be submitted via Canvas on the day stipulated.

1 - Written paper: (10 pts.) Students will analyze a peer-reviewed journal article based on a study that used QR. The study must be related to social science issues related to health, culture, and policy. In 3 double-spaced pages, students must consider the following areas:

* + Description of the journal (1 pt.)
  + Identification of the research aims (1. pt.)
  + Identification of the gap that the study intended to fill (2 pts.)
  + Summary of the research design, method, and findings (6 pts.)

2 - Field notes: (20 pts.) Students will have to take field notes of an observation experience. Each one will determine what circumstance, event, place, dynamic, etc., want to observe, and based on the observation, must develop a field note. The professor will evaluate the following components:

* + Description of the occasion (6 pts.)
  + Analysis of learned lessons based on the guiding question(s) (6 pts.)
  + Reflection on what has been learned from a personal perspective (6 pts.)
  + Writing quality (Absence of spelling and/or grammatical errors and good organization of ideas) (2 pts.)

3 - Interview guide: (20 pts.) Students must develop an interview guide. They will have to evaluate its content through a panel of two experts (professionals with expertise in the selected thematic area or QR). Students will send to the professor four different documents: the original (raw) version submitted to the experts (5 pts.), the two documents returned by the professionals with their input (5 pts. each), and the reviewed version (integrating the input) (5 pts.).

4 - Qualitative research proposal: (50 pts.) This is the final work of the course. The proposal must be written in Arial 12-point font and 1.5 line spacing. Students must develop a QR proposal including the following:

* + Title page (1pt.)
  + Abstract (100 words) (2 pts.)
  + Significance (Includes the problem statement, the justification and relevance, the theoretical framework, and the literature review) (20 pts.)
  + Specific aims (5 pts.)
  + Research design and methods (20 pts.)
    - Design (4 pts.)
    - Participants (4 pts.)
    - Instruments (4 pts.)
    - Procedure (4 pts.)
    - Analysis (4 pts.)
  + References (1 pt.)
  + Appendixes (optional - 1 extra pt.)
  + Writing quality (Absence of spelling and/or grammatical errors and good organization of ideas) (1 pt.)

5 - Self-assessment: (10 pts.) On a 1.5-line spacing page, the students must share how they perceive their performance in the course and how their understanding of QR has changed due to the course experience.

6 - Assignments: (151 pts.) Each week students must complete different activities (e.g., reading, completing quizzes, and preparing parts of the QR proposal). Each assignment has a deadline. It is important to plan ahead of time in order to complete it in a timely manner.

GRADE BREAKDOWN:

Final grades will be based on a point system (261 total pts.):

* Written paper – 4% of total grade
* Assignments – 58% of total grade
* Field notes - 8 % of total grade
* Interview guide - 8 % of total grade
* QR proposal – 18% of total grade
* Self-assessment – 4% of total grade

GRADING SCALE:

100-92.6% A

92.5-89.6% A-

89.5-86.6% B+

86.5-82.6% B

82.5-80.0% B-

79.9-77.0% C+

76.9-70% C

69.9-60% D

< 59.9% F

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:

The following issues are essential to be considered since they can influence the course’s progress and students’ grades.

* Canvas platform – All students must be registered in the Canvas platform. Written communication in this course will take place via the Canvas Inbox.
* Discussion forums - When we engage in virtual discussions, the learning process depends on the professor's and students' interactions. It is critical that students contribute to this conversational experience by asking questions, clarifying issues, or making relevant comments to extend the material. The professor may also consider online discussions to calculate the final course grade.
* Netiquette guidelines - Netiquette is a set of rules for behaving properly online. Your professor wishes to foster a safe online learning environment. Therefore, all opinions and experiences, no matter how different or controversial they may be perceived, must be respected in the tolerant spirit of the academic environment. Students are encouraged to comment, question, or criticize an idea but may not disrespect others. A sensitive, polite, and respectful course community must be built.
* Style of written assignments - All written assignments (e.g., QR proposal) must be in APA format.
* Format - Use MS Word, 1-inch top, bottom, side margins, and Arial 12-point font. Do not use footnotes. Documents must be submitted through Canvas unless otherwise instructed.
* Timeliness - Written assignments must be sent electronically through Canvas in a Word format before midnight on the due date. No late work will be accepted. The grade book will record a zero if students submit an assignment after it is due. The only exception to this rule is that students with a bona fide excuse (death in the immediate family, major illness, etc.) provide the evidence (obituary, doctor’s note, etc.) to the professor within a few days of its occurrence. The professor will work out arrangements on a case-by-case basis.
* Participation - To succeed in this course, students are expected to participate in all online activities as listed on the course calendar. The professor will use Canvas’s tracking tool, discussions, chat sessions, and group work to monitor their participation in the course.
* As students in this course (and at FIU), they are expected to maintain high degrees of professionalism, commitment to active learning and participation in this class, and integrity in their behavior. Plagiarism or using artificial intelligence applications and programs to generate work required in the course is inadmissible. Students who engage in this activity will be referred to the institutional committee for these cases.
* Before starting this course, please review FIU’s policies at <https://online.fiu.edu/html/canvas/policies/>
* Students with disabilities - Students who require academic accommodations should contact the Services for Students with Disabilities area of the Office of the Dean of Students at 471-6259 (voice) or 471-4641 as soon as possible to request an official letter outlining the needed and authorized accommodations.

COURSE SCHEDULE:

MODULE 0 – Introduction to the course

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| **Week 1** | **Topics/Objectives** | **Key topics:**   1. Basic principles of qualitative research (QR)   **Learning objectives:**   1. Understand the expectations and responsibilities related to the course 2. Describe what QR is 3. Contrast between the epistemological bases for QR 4. Identify the 5 Ws in QR |
| Learning Activities | Lecture videos  Discussion forums  Quizzes  Assignments:   1. Introduce yourself (5 pts.). 2. Read pages 24 to 31 from the book 'Collecting Qualitative Data' and complete the quiz (5 pts). |
| Assignments Due | 1. Introduce yourself on the forum before 11:30 PM, August 23. 2. Complete the quiz before 11:30 PM, August 25. |
| Tasks required for this module:   * Watch the videos 1 & 2 * Read the syllabus (if you have doubts, write to the professor). * Participate in the introductory forum. * Read the book segment. * Complete the quiz. | | |

MODULE 1 - Positionality, intersectionality, and ethics

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| **Weeks 2 & 3** | **Topics/Objectives** | **Key topics:**   1. Positionality and intersectionality 2. Decolonial production of knowledge 3. Research ethics   **Learning objectives:**   1. Critically assess the theoretical underpinnings of different approaches to QR 2. Problematize from an ethical perspective on issues related to positionality, intersectionality, and the domination and universalistic claims of the Global North 3. Reflect on ethical considerations related to the implementation of QR |
| Learning Activities | Lecture videos  Readings  Discussion forums  Assignments:  3. Read chapters 2, 3, and 5 from the book 'New Approaches to Qualitative Research and Uncertainty' and answer the quiz (12 pts.).  4. Read the article ‘North and South: Naming practices and the hidden dimension of global disparities in knowledge production’ and participate in the discussion forum (6 pts.).  5. Read a case study (Twitter, data collection, and informed consent) and complete the quiz (4 pts.). |
| Assignments Due | 1. Complete the quiz on the chapters before 11:30 PM, September 3. 2. Post a response on the forum by 11:30 PM, August 31, and provide feedback to at least two classmates by September 5th. 3. Complete the quiz on the case study before 11:30 PM, September 10. |
| Tasks required for this module:   * Watch the videos 3-5. * Read the chapters. * Complete the quiz. * Read the article. * Participate in the forum. * Read the case. * Complete the quiz. | | |

MODULE 2 – Approaches and research design considerations

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| **Weeks 4 & 5** | **Topics/Objectives** | **Key topics:**   1. Methods (i.e., phenomenology, ethnography, case study, grounded theory) 2. Research question 3. Objectives (aims) 4. Literature review 5. Framework   **Learning objectives:**   1. Contrast different QR methods commonly used in social sciences 2. Formulate applied QR questions 3. Articulate QR objectives 4. Conduct a literature review for their QR proposal 5. Select the theoretical/conceptual framework for the QR proposal |
| Learning Activities | Lecture videos  Readings  VoiceThread  Small group discussion  Assessment activity #1  Assignments:  6. Read pages 31-61 from the book 'Collecting Qualitative Data' and complete the quiz (5 pts.).  7. Read the guidelines in the ‘Literature Review - Conducting & Writing.’ You can access it at <https://libguides.uwf.edu/c.php?g=215199&p=1420520>). Conduct a preliminary literature review (based on five recent publications in peer-reviewed journals) to determine the gap in the existing knowledge regarding your selected research problem. Submit a one-pager including (1) how the problem has been addressed in the published studies, (2) what is the remaining gap in the literature, and (3) what is the research question you have that will contribute to the area (9 pts.).  8. Read the article 'Ten Steps for Conceptualizing and Conducting Qualitative Research Studies in a Pragmatically Curious Manner' and complete the quiz (5 pts.).  9. Putting together the proposal, part 1: Using VoiceThread, submit four (4) PowerPoint slides, including:   * + the statement of the problem   + the research question(s)   + the specific objectives (aims)   + What methodological approach would best answer your research question and help achieve the study’s aims (12 pts.)?   This is a small group exercise. Thus, you will receive feedback from your professor and other members of your group. You should also provide feedback to your peers.  Assessment activity #1 – Submit the ‘written paper’ (10 pts.). |
| Assignments Due | 1. Complete the quiz on the pages of 'Collecting Qualitative Data' before 11:30 PM, September 15. 2. Submit the one-pager before 11:30 PM, September 18. 3. Complete the quiz on 'Ten Steps…’, September 22. 4. Post your ppt on the small group forum by September 24 and provide feedback to at least two of your classmates in the small group before 11:30 PM, September 27. 5. Submit your assessment #1 by September 24. |
| Tasks required for this module:   * Watch the videos. * Read the book segment. * Complete the quiz. * Read the guidelines. * Submit the one-pager. * Read the article. * Complete the quiz. * Share your ppt with the small group. * Participate in the small group discussion to provide/receive feedback. * Submit assessment #1. | | |

MODULE 3 – Sampling and data collection methods/techniques

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| **Weeks 6 to 9** | **Topics/Objectives** | **Key topics:**   1. Procedure 2. Recruitment and sampling 3. Research techniques (i.e., participant observation, interviews, focus groups)   **Learning objectives:**   1. Identify appropriate uses for different QR techniques 2. Identify the sampling strategy and methodological techniques for their QR proposal’s data collection section 3. Articulate the procedure for their QR proposal 4. Conduct participant observation on the field 5. Elaborate a field note 6. Develop an in-depth interview guide |
| Learning Activities | Lecture videos  Readings  VoiceThread  Discussion forum  Assessment activity #2  Assignments:  10. From the book ‘Collecting Qualitative Data’ read chapters 2-5 and complete the quiz (20 pts.)  11. Read the article ‘Understanding, selecting, and integrating a theoretical framework in dissertation research: Creating the blueprint for your “house”). Using VoiceThread send a recording to the professor describing which theory (or theories) will be included in the QR proposal and the rationale for that decision (3 pts.)  12. Putting together the proposal, part 2: Submit an answer to the following scientific considerations (a) how many participants will be recruited for your proposed study (provide the rationale), (b) how you would be able to gain access to the data, (c) what ethical considerations you may have for participant recruitment (6 pts.)  13. Read the article 'Centering indigenous college student voices and perspectives through photovoice and photo-elicitation’ and participate in the discussion forum (6 pts.).  Assessment activity #2 – Submit the field notes (20 pts.). |
| Assignments Due | 1. Complete the quiz on chapters 2-5 before 11:30 PM, September 28. 2. Submit the recording before 11:30 PM, October 1st. 3. Submit the answers related to your proposal before 11:30 PM, October 6. 4. Post a response on the forum by 11:30 PM, October 11, and provide feedback to at least two classmates by October 14. 5. Submit assessment activity #2 by October 22. |
| Tasks required for this module:   * Watch the videos. * Read the book segment and chapters. * Complete the quiz. * Read the article ‘Understanding….’ * Send the recording to the professor. * Submit the information on recruitment. * Read the article 'Centering….’ * Participate in the discussion forum. * Submit assessment #2 | | |

MODULE 4 – Data management and analysis

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| **Weeks**  **10 to 12** | **Topics/Objectives** | **Key topics:**   1. Data analysis (i.e., thematic content analysis, discourse analysis) 2. Codebook   **Learning objectives:**   1. Analyze qualitative data through coding, text retrieval, and interpretation 2. Conduct thematic and discourse analyses 3. Articulate the data analysis section for their QR proposal |
| Learning Activities | Lecture videos  Readings  VoiceThread  Small group exercises  Assignments:  14. Read the article ‘Doing a Thematic Analysis: A Practical, Step-by-Step Guide for Learning and Teaching Scholars Guide for Learning and Teaching Scholars’ and complete the quiz (5 pts.).  15. Read the article ‘A General Critical Discourse Analysis Framework for Educational Research and complete the quiz (5 pts.).  16. Small group exercise part 1 - Conduct a thematic content analysis on the transcript provided by the professor. Each small group must upload a collective table including three themes that emerged from the transcript and the relevant codes for each theme (6 pts).  17. Small group exercise part 2 – Revisit the transcript and identify at least two (2) the main social discourses manifested, (b) how they are evidenced, and (c) how do you interpret them. Submit the answers to the professor. (6 pts).  18. Putting together the proposal, part 3: Submit a recording to the professor stating how the data for your QR proposal will be analyzed and why did you select that option (3 pts). |
| Assignments Due | 1. Complete the quiz on article 1 before 11:30 PM, October 26. 2. Complete the quiz on article 2 before 11:30 PM, October 29. 3. Submit the table by November 5th. 4. Submit the answers by November 8. 5. Upload your recording by November 13. |
| Tasks required for this module:   * Watch the videos. * Read the article on content analysis. * Complete the quiz. * Read the article on critical discourse analysis. * Complete the quiz. * Meet with your group and submit the collective table (Just one person in your group should do it). * Submit the answers on the discourse analysis exercise. * Send the recording to the professor. | | |

MODULE 5 – Triangulation

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| **Week 13** | **Topics/Objectives** | **Key topics:**   1. Triangulation   **Learning objectives:**   1. Develop a comprehensive triangulation strategy that includes investigators, theories, methods, and data 2. Include triangulation as part of your QR proposal |
| Learning Activities | Lecture videos  Readings  Assessment activity #3  Assignments:  19. Read chapter 34 from the book ‘The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Data Collection’ and complete the quiz (5 pts.).  Assessment activity #3 – Submit the interview guides (20 pts). |
| Assignments Due | 1. Complete the quiz on chapter 34 before 11:30 PM, November 16. 2. Submit assessment activity #3 by November 19. |
| Tasks required for this module:   * Watch the videos. * Read the chapter. * Complete the quiz. * Submit assessment #3. | | |

MODULE 6 – Data storytelling

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| **Weeks 14 & 15** | **Topics/Objectives** | **Key topics:**   1. Report 2. Publications 3. Presentations   **Learning objectives:**   1. Apply storytelling principles to qualitative data 2. Identify the main components of the data report and the development of manuscripts for publication |
| Learning Activities | Lecture videos  Readings  Assessment activities #4 and #5  Assignments:  20. Read chapter 10 from the book ‘Qualitative Research, from Start to Finish’ and complete the quiz (5 pts.)  Assessment activity #4 – Submit the QR proposal (50 pts.).  Assessment activity #5 – Submit the self-assessment (10 pts.). |
| Assignments Due | 1. Complete the quiz on chapter 10 before 11:30 PM, November 22. 2. Submit assessment activity #4 by November 30. 3. Submit assessment activity #5 by November 27. |
| Tasks required for this module:   * Watch the videos. * Read the chapter. * Complete the quiz. * Submit assessments #4 and #5. | | |

TIMELINE:

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| Module | Assignment/Assessment | Submission deadline | Max. points |
| 0 | 1 | 8/23 | 5 |
| 0 | 2 | 8/25 | 5 |
| 1 | 3 | 9/3 | 12 |
| 1 | 4 | 9/5 | 6 |
| 1 | 5 | 9/10 | 4 |
| 2 | 6 | 9/15 | 5 |
| 2 | 7 | 9/18 | 9 |
| 2 | 8 | 9/22 | 5 |
|  | Assessment #1  Written paper | 9/24 | 10 |
| 2 | 9 | 9/27 | 12 |
| 3 | 10 | 9/28 | 20 |
| 3 | 11 | 10/1 | 3 |
| 3 | 12 | 10/6 | 6 |
| 3 | 13 | 10/14 | 6 |
|  | Assessment #2  Field notes | 10/22 | 20 |
| 4 | 14 | 10/26 | 5 |
| 4 | 15 | 10/29 | 5 |
| 4 | 16 | 11/5 | 6 |
| 4 | 17 | 11/8 | 6 |
| 4 | 18 | 11/13 | 3 |
| 5 | 19 | 11/16 | 5 |
|  | Assessment #3  Interview guides | 11/19 | 20 |
| 6 | 20 | 11/22 | 5 |
|  | Assessment #5  Self-assessment | 11/27 | 10 |
|  | Assessment #4  “QR proposal | 11/30 | 50 |