

Course Syllabus, Fall 2006
Advanced Seminar in Educational Psychology
EDPY 645A-001
Dr. Jan Armstrong, College of Education
University of New Mexico

Thursdays 4 - 6:30
Mitchell 109
Credit Hrs: 3
Prereqs: see below

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Course home page: [http:// www.unm.edu/~jka/qualres.htm](http://www.unm.edu/~jka/qualres.htm)
Instructor's home page: [http:// www.unm.edu/~jka/](http://www.unm.edu/~jka/)

Introduction and overview

Welcome to this year's Advanced Seminar in Educational Psychology. This seminar provides an introduction and overview of key contemporary research and professional issues in the field. Advanced study in Educational Psychology can help students develop well-informed, empirically sound, creative, and ethical judgments about educational aims, policies and practices.

The focus of the seminar this semester is on qualitative research in the psychological sciences. The course will provide an introduction to the philosophical, conceptual and methodological features that distinguish qualitative research methods from other empirical approaches. It will provide opportunities for you to acquire hands-on familiarity with established qualitative research practices. This, in turn, should help you become a more confident, critical reader of qualitative and mixed methods studies. Learning how to design and carry out full-scale qualitative research projects requires extensive preparation beyond what can be accomplished in one course alone. However, this class will help you better understand the kinds of questions for which a qualitative approach is suited (and conversely, when another approach might make more sense).

Students from all doctoral program areas are welcome. Students enrolled in masters programs should talk with me before registering for the course.

Course objectives

This course will provide experiences that will help you

- Understand the most important theoretical and methodological traditions in qualitative psychology today
- Learn how to use basic qualitative research methods in an ethical and technically defensible manner
- Practice basic interviewing and field observation techniques
- Learn how to analyze and interpret qualitative data
- Think creatively about qualitative research design and analysis issues
- Critically examine your own personal and professional values as an aspect of your work as an educational researcher

Course texts and reading materials

Auerbach, C.F. & Silverstein, L.B. (2003). *Qualitative data: An introduction to coding and analysis*. New York and London: New York University.

Camic, P.M., Rhodes, J.E., & Yardley, L. (2003). *Qualitative research in psychology: Expanding perspectives in methodology and design*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Course prerequisites

The course will be taught at the doctoral level. Ideally, you should already have a basic understanding of the aims and underlying assumptions associated with psychological and educational research. It is helpful to know about conventional research methods and design as a foundation for understanding the role of qualitative and “mixed methodologies” in psychological research. Qualitative traditions emphasize holistic and contextual conceptions of the person. For this reason, it may also be helpful, though not essential, to have broad training in the humanities and social sciences (e.g., anthropology, history, sociology, comparative education, economics, women’s studies, ethnic studies).

Course format

The class will provide opportunities to learn about qualitative research design through readings and hands-on activities and assignments. The format of the class will include a range of activities: seminar discussions, collaborative data collection and analysis exercises, talks by guest speakers, and instructor presentations. Please come to class prepared to discuss, analyze, and/or critique assigned readings. At least one class will be scheduled in a computer lab so that you will have an opportunity to work with a qualitative data analysis software program (HyperResearch or Atlas ti).

Class attendance, withdrawals and incompletes

Attendance is an essential part of this course. However, if you must miss a class (or a part of a class) please see to it that a classmate takes notes for you, collects handouts, and generally fills you in on what you missed. *Please do not call me or program secretaries to explain your absence from a particular class, but do call a fellow student.*

I will award incompletes following established UNM policies and procedures. (See the Office of Graduate Studies website and the *UNM Pathfinder* for details). If you find it necessary to request an incomplete due to circumstances beyond your control, be sure to give me a letter indicating that you want an “I” for the course and specifying a date by which you plan to submit all remaining coursework. Allow at least two weeks for me to read and evaluate your work. Be aware, however, that I may not be able to evaluate and submit a grade for your incomplete work until the end of the semester in which it is submitted.

Special learning needs

Let me know if you require special accommodations or instructional modifications at the beginning of the semester, or as soon as difficulties become evident. Contact the UNM Accessibility Services Office (277-3506; <https://as.unm.edu/home/>) for assistance with evaluation and documentation.

Course requirements and evaluation procedure

Your course grade will be based on class participation (20%), application assignments (40%, credit/no-credit), and two synthesis/reaction papers (40%). *If you wish to substitute a qualitative research proposal or term paper for the second of these reaction papers, you may do so. Talk with me about this option.* The synthesis/reaction papers will give you an opportunity to summarize, synthesize and react to course readings. You may also be expected to lead one class discussion focused on a chapter in the Camic et al text.

If circumstances beyond your control prevent you from completing required assignments before the end of the term, talk to me. A grade of incomplete (I) will be given upon request in accordance with UNM policies, but *you will need to submit the work by a specified due date.* Grades will be based on the percent of total points earned, as follows:

90% and above = A 88-89% = B+ 80 to 87% = B 70 to 79% = C 60 to 69% = D

Bibliographies

A “Qualitative Research in the Psychological Sciences Bibliography” is available online at http://www.unm.edu/~jka/qualpsy_bib05.pdf

A “Qualitative Research Bibliography” focusing on classical and contemporary qualitative research monographs is available at <http://www.unm.edu/~jka/qual/qualbib.htm>

Ethical considerations

The purpose of class assignments and activities is to help you develop specific inquiry skills. In this class, you will not be engaged in formal ("real, publishable") research projects or pilot studies. Rather, you will be participating in training exercises and simulations intended to give you a chance to acquire hands-on familiarity with naturalistic research methods. Ethical and human subjects considerations mandate that you follow carefully my guidelines concerning all course activities and assignments. Failure to do so will result in grade reduction (at best) and could result in a grade of "F" for the course.

On a brighter note, this course provides powerful opportunities to acquire and polish new research skills, learn about/with/from fellow classmates, and explore new and important conceptual territory. If anything transpires during the semester that inhibits your ability to learn effectively and to enjoy this class do not hesitate to let me know. I will do what I can to help change the situation for the better.

Best wishes for a challenging, productive and engaging semester!

Topical overview

Epistemological issues in qualitative research

History of qualitative psychology

Formulating qualitative research questions and designs: basic principles

Political and ethical considerations

The role of theory (grounded and otherwise)

Interviewing

Participant observation and ethnographic methods

Narrative psychology and narrative analysis

Discourse analysis

Video methods and visual analysis

Participatory action research

Portraiture

Data collection and sampling methods and issues

Field notes, field logs, field journals

Analyzing qualitative data: basic principles

How and when to use qualitative data analysis software

Getting and staying organized: qualitative data management

Reading, writing, and representation

Evaluating qualitative studies

Course Schedule - Fall, 2006
Advanced Seminar in Educational Psychology

<u>week</u>	<u>reading/discussion topic*</u>	<u>assignment**</u>
8/24	Introduction and Overview	<i>Bring 5 postcards from NM to class next week</i>
8/31	What is Qualitative Research? Inductive analysis	Auerbach & Silverstein (QD) Preface, 1 (3-9), appendix B(139-167); 2 (13-21)
9/7	Grounded Theory; Credibility	<u><i>Bring t-shirts for analysis</i></u> QD 3-8 (22-87)
9/14	Theoretical sampling; Data management	QD appendix C, 9-11(91-130) QRP 8 (131-155)
9/21	Narrative Psychology and Narrative Analysis Discourse Analysis	QRP 5 (main points), QRP 6 (95-112)
9/28	Video Methods Interviewing I	QRP 7 (main points), QRP 9
10/5	Interviewing II Phenomenological Psychology	<i>First reaction paper due Monday, 10/9</i> QRP 13
10/12	MIDSEMESTER	
10/19	Art and Science of Qualitative Research	QRP 2
10/26	Participatory Action Research Portraiture	QRP 10
11/2	Qualitative Data Analysis Software Workshop	QRP 11 (main points) <i>Meet in TEC 212 6:30-8:30</i> QD appendix A (131-138)
11/9	Ethnographic methods Event Analysis	QRP 12
11/16	Mixed Methods	<i>Second reaction paper due Monday, 11/20</i> QRP 3
11/23	HOLIDAY	
11/30	Toward a Qualitative Stance in Psychology	QRP 4
12/7	Review and synthesis	