EDL 682
Field Studies in Qualitative Research
FALL 2015
Western Illinois University

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Assistant Professor
Department of Educational Studies
Educational Leadership Programs
Room 115D
Macomb Campus

Office: (309) 298-1776 (Least effective contact method)
Cell: (319) 670-8717 (before 9 p.m.)
Home: (319) 524-8184 (before 9 p.m.)
E-mail: ll-wolff@wiu.edu
Office Hours: Before and after each class meeting;
Tentatively--Wednesdays 2-3 p.m.; Thursdays 2-3 p.m.
Online: I will check online communications at least once daily
including the weekends.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Through a qualitative research or field study students will demonstrate mastery of the content and their ability to integrate and synthesize it through collecting and analyzing qualitative data, generating new knowledge, and/or to applying existing knowledge to specific practical situations.

PREREQUISITE

Admission to the doctoral program in Educational Leadership or permission of instructor.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

The student will:

1. Analyze and evaluate qualitative research. (Assignment #4, #10)
2. Demonstrate knowledge of the skills necessary for conducting qualitative research including observations, interviewing, and focus groups. (Assignment #5, #6, #7, #8, #9, #10)
3. Define, utilize and analyze fieldnotes. (Assignment #3, #5, #6, #7, #8, #9, #10)
4. Analyze qualitative data (e.g. interview data, focus group data, artifacts, observations and fieldnotes) including coding, triangulation, analytical memoing, and validating data. (Assignment #3, #5, #6, #7, #8, #9, #10)
5. Define and utilize thick description. (Assignment #5, #6, #7, #8, #9, #10)
6. Understand the role of the researcher in qualitative research including subjectivity, reflexivity, positionality, transparency, bias and assumptions, and power and authority. (Assignment #4, #8, #9, #10)
7. Apply an understanding of triangulation and its importance in qualitative research. (Assignment #4, #5, #9, #10)
8. Understand validity, generalizability, objectivity, equity, and ethics as they apply to qualitative research. (Assignment #4, #8, #9, #10)
9. Demonstrate knowledge of different ways to establish trustworthiness including member check, interview corroboration, peer debriefing, prolonged engagement, negative case analysis, auditability, confirmability, bracketing, and balance. (Assignment #4, #8, #9, #10)
10. Become familiar with the principles and methodologies of a number of paradigms within qualitative research (e.g. narrative, phenomenological, grounded theory, ethnographic, and case studies). (Assignment #4, #10)
IN THIS COURSE STUDENTS WILL ALSO...
1. Continue to develop the research and writing skills necessary at the doctoral level.
2. Further develop fluency with APA style.
3. Develop peer reviewing and critiquing skills through collaborative and individual activities.

COURSE TIMEFRAME
- Online Access to Course Begins: July 26, 2015 (Students may begin working on assignments. However, some activities may not open up until the appropriate "week.")
- Week 1: August 10 – August 16
- Week 2: August 17 – August 23
- Week 3: August 24 - August 30
- Week 4: August 31 - September 6
- Week 5: September 7 - September 13
- Week 6: September 14 - September 20
- Week 7: September 21 - September 27
- Week 8: September 28 - October 4
- Week 9: October 5 - October 11
- Week 10: October 12 - October 18
- Week 11: October 19 - October 25
- Assignments due no later than: December 15, 2015
- Online Course Access Ends: April 1, 2016

COURSE FORMAT
This online course utilizes a blended format of synchronous and asynchronous activities. Course activities (including both synchronous and asynchronous activities) will focus on our developing understanding of qualitative theory and practice. The course is about sharing our ongoing, honest, deep and critical analysis of our meaning making. Students need to actively participate in class discussion (both synchronous and asynchronous) with openness, consideration of classmates, and the desire to understand others and be understood.

Synchronous Activities: The synchronous portions of the course will be in a seminar format that is collaborative, interactive, and dialogic and will require all students to be online at the same time. Synchronous activities will consist of instructor and student-led discussions and presentations utilizing Codec video-conferencing, Skype, Google Hangouts or another similar tool. Additionally, students may have the opportunity to meet face-to-face or via Codec with the instructor and other students on:
- Saturday, August 29 (time to be determined)
- Saturday, September 19 (time to be determined)
- Sunday, October 25: Class will meet synchronously at 8 a.m. for distribution of and an explanation of the final exam.

Asynchronous Activities: Asynchronous activities along with all course materials will be available on WesternOnline (EDL 682 Field Problems in Qualitative Research). These may be done whenever it is convenient for the student. That being said students should adhere to the posted deadlines/due dates.
VIRTUAL OFFICE HOURS
I will be a regular and consistent online presence. I will check online communications (posted to WesternOnline and email) daily. I will also be online at the times listed above (See header of syllabus). If for some reason, I am not able to check communications for an extended period of time, I will send an email to class members (e.g. travelling to a conference, extreme illness, a death in the family). Generally, I am online in the early morning (7-9 a.m.) and in the early evening (6-8 p.m.). I also have email open multiple times during the day so that is the best form of online communication. If you have an urgent request/question/subject, your best bet is to email me.

SUBJECT LINE IN EMAIL
If you need to contact me via email (ll-wolff@wiu.edu), please include “682” in the subject of your email (e.g. 682 Assignment 4 Question). This will alert me to a student correspondence related to our class.

AVAILABILITY
Just a reminder that you can see my availability (along with the availability of your classmates) in WesternOnline. Log on to WesternOnline, go to “Communication.” Then select “Classlist.” You will see a green bubble/dot to the right of the person’s name if they are online. If online, you can engage the person in a “chat.” See “virtual office hours” above for information about when I'll be online and available.

RESPONSIVENESS
Responding to Communications: I will do my best to reply to your communications within 24-hours. If I have not replied to your communications in a timely fashion, please re-contact me.

Responding to Discussions: I will work to respond to discussions within 48 hours during the assigned week. I intend to reply to/comment on original discussion postings. However, please note that I will not reply to each and every discussion reply.

Responding to Assignments/Submissions: My goal is to turn around your assignments/submissions as quickly as possible. A lot of this depends on when people submit, the number of people who submit in a given timeframe, and my other professional responsibilities. If after a reasonable amount of time, you haven't received feedback, please, please, please send me a quick email. Sometimes in an online course, an assignment/submission can get overlooked. For assignments submitted to the “dropbox,” I will generally send feedback via WesternOnline in the form of a PDF. In some cases, I may only write comments in the comment box. In some instances, I may also send response back to you via email.

REQUIRED TECHNOLOGY
- Access to a computer (laptop or desktop) for the duration of the class
- Access to high speed Internet
- Access to...
  - Adobe Acrobat Reader
  - Microsoft Word (or a comparable word processor)
  - Microsoft PowerPoint
  - Firefox, Internet Explorer, or Safari
  - Appropriate plugins for your Internet browser
  - Skype (potentially Google Hangouts)
NETIQUETTE

It is important that we all “play nice in the sandbox.” Some guidelines for this include:

- Treat all people in our learning community with respect.
- Avoid using the caps lock feature AS IT IS USUALLY INTERPRETTED AS YELLING.
- Be cautious when using humor or sarcasm...the intended tone of a message is sometime lost online.
- Make sure your posts are on topic and within the scope of the course material.
- Take your posts seriously and review them before posting.
- Be sure to read all messages in a thread before replying.
- Avoid short, generic replies such as, “I agree.”
- Always be respectful of others’ opinions even when they differ from your own.
- When you disagree or have a different viewpoint, you should express your position in a non-critical way.
- Do not make personal or insulting remarks.
- Be positive.
- Be self-reflective...think about what you are posting.
- Use proper language.
- Be professional.

For more information about netiquette or if this is your first online course, please visit, http://www.albion.com/netiquette/corerules.html including:

- Rule 1: Remember the Human
- Rule 2: Adhere to the same standards of behavior that you follow in real life
- Rule 3: Know where you are in cyberspace
- Rule 4: Respect other people’s time and bandwidth
- Rule 5: Make yourself look good online
- Rule 6: Share expert knowledge
- Rule 7: Help keep flame wars under control
- Rule 8: Respect other people’s privacy
- Rule 9: Don’t abuse your power
- Rule 10: Be forgiving of other people’s mistakes
OUR ONLINE CLASSROOM AND PROCEDURES

Class week: Each class week begins on Monday and ends on Sunday. See “Course Timeframe” on p. 2 of this document for more details.

News/Announcements: I will use the “News” section of our class to share important (at least in my mind) information about the class. These announcements are available on our course homepage and can also be accessed via “Communication” and then clicking on “News.” You can see previous announcements by clicking on “Show All News Items” (in the bottom right corner of the “News” box). I anticipate posting a “News” posting at least once a week that outlines the activities for the week.

Course Content and Materials: To access our course content...

- Log on to WesternOnline
- Select our course (EDL 682 Field Problems in Qualitative Research)
- Click on “Resources” on the purple information bar
- Select “Content”
- Look on the left column in the Table of Contents.

Generally, the content for the course is arranged by week in a folder. There are additional folders that contain other course resources.

Discussion Area: All class “discussions” are found by logging on to WesternOnline and then:

- Clicking on “Communication” on the purple information bar
- Choose “Discussion”
- Then select the appropriate discussion topic.

There will be at least one discussion for each week of the course. Each discussion forum will be open for posting a few days before the “week begins.” Note: I have also linked the “discussions” to each week of the course. There is also a student lounge discussion for casual case discussions.

FAQ: There is a FAQ (frequently asked questions) section where I have tried/will try to answer questions that you may have about our online course.

ASSIGNMENT SUBMISSION

All written assignments (#3, #4, #5, #6, #7, #8, #9, and #10) should be submitted to the WesternOnline dropbox by the date indicated (See p. 11 and subsequent pages for descriptions of the assignments). For some assignments, I will ask that you also post to a discussion (e.g. for peer reviewing).

Save your assignments (documents) in the following manner:

- Last Name Assignment #X (where X = the assignment number)
- Johnson Assignment #5

Include the following information on the left side of the first page (single-spaced):

- First name Last name
- EDL 682 – FALL 2015
- Assignment #X: Name of Assignment (where X = the assignment number)
- Date

Please note there are deadlines for your assignment submissions. See the detailed assignment description for deadlines. Should you miss a deadline, please email me or call and we will discuss this. Please see “Problems” and “Extensions” on the next page for more information.
GRADING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>93 - 100%</td>
<td>A = Superior Graduate Work</td>
<td>489-525 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85 - 92%</td>
<td>B = Good Graduate Work</td>
<td>446-488 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70 - 84%</td>
<td>C = Unacceptable Work at the Graduate Level</td>
<td>367-445 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 - 69%</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>315-366 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>00 - 69%</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>000-299 points</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

POSTING OF GRADES

Grades will be posted in your “gradebook.” To access your grades...

- Log on to WesternOnline.
- On the menu bar, click on “Grade Tools”
- Choose “Grades.”

The assignments are listed there along with your score. Comments if included are also displayed there. If I’ve attached a document with additional comments, you will find it there. You will need to download that document to view comments. If you feel there are any errors in your grades (discrepancy between your score and what is posted), please email me right away. Again, use the name of our course in the subject line of the email.

PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS

Timeliness: Participation in discussions must be completed within the week assigned. For the discussions to be valuable, the postings must be timely.

Participation: Students are expected to participate in our online class by responding to the instructor’s prompts. Additionally, students are to ask questions and/or comment on the responses of classmates.

Please review the rubric for “participation” in the “Rubrics” folder in our class content. The rubric outlines the grading criteria (including quantity of participation, quality of participation, frequency of participation, and amount of participation). Please note that you do not have to reply to each and every posting by each and every student in our “discussion” area. Please try to post to a variety of students, not just your “online friends” or those who post early.

Grading of Participation: Each discussion post is worth five (5) points based on the participation rubric. There are a total of fifteen (15) discussions for the course.

PEER REVIEW

Almost all research designs go through a peer review process and this class is no exception. Students will participate in reviewing other students’ work. Each of us bring different skills, perspectives, and insights to the peer review process. This process is designed to be supportive and constructive providing you the opportunity to improve the quality of your submissions and your research. You will provide and receive constructive suggestions. Our work will involve mutual support and collaboration. You are expected to practice your best professional relationship skills in your peer reviewing.

PROBLEMS

If personal, work or family problems arise that interfere with your ability to complete or continue this course (in a timely manner), contact me immediately. We will work together to resolve the problems.
EXTENSIONS
I understand that we are all busy people and sometimes we are not able to adhere to stated due dates. If you need an extension, please talk with me (Skype or phone). Make sure you contact me prior to the due date if you need an extension. If you choose to take advantage of my liberal policy, I will not grant any future extensions. **Note: Extensions will not be given for discussion postings.**

REWRITES
Four of the assignments (#4, #5, #6, and #9) if turned in on or before the due date will be allowed one subsequent rewrite. That rewrite must be submitted within one week of your having received feedback from me.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS


RECOMMENDED BOOKS FOR STUDENTS PLANNING ON A QUALITATIVE STUDY


RESOURCE MATERIALS FOR THIS COURSE AND DOCTORAL PROGRAM
**Note:** Resources in bold would be particularly helpful if you are considering a qualitative or mixed methods research study for your dissertation.


Western Illinois University Educational Leadership Doctoral Dissertation Guidelines

Other materials will be available on WesternOnline in the “Course Content” section.

**OTHER READINGS—See Appendix A**
DEPARTMENT AND UNIVERSITY POLICIES

COMPREHENSIVE EXAMS
IMPORTANT: In order for students to take their written comprehensive (final) exams, students must not have any incompletes in any doctoral coursework.

INCOMPLETE GRADE FOR MISSING COURSE REQUIREMENTS
An incomplete grade ("I") may be given only when a student, due to circumstances beyond his or her control, is unable to complete course requirements within the official limits of the term. The instructor may allow additional time for completion of the requirements after consideration of a written petition from the student to the instructor. The petition must include what the student will do to complete the requirement and the expected date of completion of the incomplete requirements.

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS
In accordance with University policy and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), academic accommodations may be made for any student who notifies the instructor of the need for an accommodation. For the instructor to provide the proper accommodation(s), you must obtain documentation of the need for an accommodation through Disability Support Services and provide it to the instructor. It is imperative that you take the initiative to bring such needs to the my attention, as I am not legally permitted to inquire about such particular needs of students. Students who may require special assistance in emergency evacuations (i.e. fire, tornado, etc.) should contact the instructor as to the most appropriate procedures to follow in such an emergency. Contact Disability Support Services at (309) 298-2512 for additional services.

WIU ACADEMIC DISHONESTY POLICY
Western Illinois University is dedicated to the discovery and communication of knowledge. The University can best function and accomplish its objectives in an atmosphere where high ethical standards prevail. For this reason and to insure that the academic work of all students will be fairly evaluated, the University strongly condemns academic dishonesty. The most prevalent forms of academic dishonesty are cheating and plagiarism. Dishonesty of any kind with respect to examinations, course assignments, alteration of records, or illegal possession of examinations shall be considered cheating. It is the responsibility of the student to not only abstain from cheating, but also to avoid making it possible for others to cheat. Any student who knowingly helps another student cheat is as guilty of cheating as the student he or she assists.

The submission of the work of someone else as one's own constitutes plagiarism. Plagiarism can also be self-plagiarism. Academic honesty requires that ideas or materials taken from another course for use as a course paper or project be fully acknowledged. Plagiarism is a very serious offense in whatever form it may appear, be it submission of an entire article falsely represented as the student's own, the inclusion within a piece of the student's writing of an idea for which the student does not provide sufficient documentation, or the inclusion of a documented idea not sufficiently assimilated into the student's language and style.

Please see WIU's Policy on Academic Integrity for more information: http://www.wiu.edu/policies/acintegrity.php
STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES
A complete set of links to student rights and responsibilities can be found at the following URL: http://www.wiu.edu/Provost/students/

UNIVERSITY WRITING CENTER
The University Writing Center is available to assist you with general and specific questions on writing assigned in any discipline and at any academic level. The one-on-one assistance available at the University Writing Center is valuable for generating ideas, talking about global-level issues such as organization and outlining, and even working through grammatical problems. The University Writing Center is located in the Malpass Library (3rd floor, west side). Call for an appointment (309-298-2815). Be sure to take a copy of your assignment/project. There is also a Writing Center at the Moline campus.

AMMENDABILITY
The instructor reserves the right to change any part of this syllabus provided sufficient notice is given to students.

HUMAN SUBJECTS CERTIFICATION (aka IRB training)/ See also Assignment #11
1. All persons involved with the human subjects activities need to complete IRB training. This training can be found at http://phrp.nihtraining.com/users/login.php
2. After completion, send a copy of the certificate to the Office of Sponsored Projects, send a copy to Jerrie Walters, and send a copy to me. You only have to do this once, so if you completed this training in another course, you do not have to do it again. IMPORTANT: It is vital that you keep a copy of this certificate because you will need it prior to conducting your actual dissertation research.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Assignment #1: PHOTO Upload</strong> a photo of yourself to WesternOnline&lt;br&gt;See p. 12</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>There are no points attached to this assignment; however, to earn an “A” or “B” in the course, this assignment needs to be completed. If you do not want to upload a photo of yourself, please upload a “picture” or avatar. Due: No later than the end of Week 1 of the course.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Assignment #2: SKYPE</strong>—Send Lora a Skype request (dr_wolff_kcsd; Lora Wolff) and EDL department (dep.edl)&lt;br&gt;See p. 12</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>There are no points attached to this assignment; however, to earn an “A” or “B” in the course, this assignment needs to be completed. Due: No later than the end of Week 1 of the course.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Assignment #3: Fieldwork Notebook (a.k.a Research Journal)</strong>&lt;br&gt;See p. 13 for assignment details</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>Throughout the course students will keep fieldnotes in a fieldwork notebook. This will be an on-going assignment throughout the course. Students will not submit their fieldwork notebook; students will submit a 1-2 page reflection on their fieldnotes. Due: October 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Assignment #4: Analysis of Qualitative Research Article</strong>&lt;br&gt;See p. 14 for assignment details.</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Each student will read, analyze and present a qualitative research article. Due: September 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Assignment #5: Your Fish</strong>&lt;br&gt;See pp. 1-4 of Doing Naturalistic Inquiry.&lt;br&gt;See also pp. 17 for assignment details.</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Students will choose an artifact, study it, and research it. Then write a research report. Students will participate in peer reviewing providing feedback for class members. A rubric is available for the assignment on WesternOnline in the “Assignments/Rubrics” folder. Final Due: August 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Assignment #6: Going Indigenous</strong>&lt;br&gt;See p. 19 for assignment details.</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>Students will do fieldwork in the form of an observation and then write up a qualitative research report. Students will participate in peer reviewing providing feedback for class members. A rubric will be available for this assignment in the “Assignments/Rubrics” folder. Final Due: September 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Assignment #7: Conducting a Qualitative Interview</strong>&lt;br&gt;See p. 21 for assignment details.</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>Students will conduct an interview on a topic of their choice. Students will submit a research memo (See syllabus, p. 21). The interviews will be one-on-one interviews. Due: September 27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Assignment #8: Conducting a Qualitative Focus Group</strong>&lt;br&gt;See p. 22 for assignment details</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>Students will conduct a focus group (3-8 people) on a topic of their choice (This should be coordinated with Assignment #7 and will contribute to Assignment #8). Students should choose a topic related to the literature review conducted in EDL 725 and/or their potential dissertation topic. Students will submit a research memo (See syllabus, p. 22). Due: October 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Assignment #9: Writing up a Qualitative Research Report based on the Interviews and Focus Group</strong>&lt;br&gt;See p. 23 for assignment details.</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>Students will conduct a mini-qualitative study and prepare a report of the research. Students should choose a topic related to the literature review conducted in EDL 725 (if that course has been completed) and/or their potential dissertation topic. Students will submit a written research report and will present their qualitative research project. A rubric will be available for this assignment in the “Assignments/Rubrics” folder. Due no later than: October 24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Assignment #10: Final Exam</strong></td>
<td>100</td>
<td>Due: October 25, 2015 @ 1:30 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Assignment #11: IRB/Human Subjects Training</strong></td>
<td>--</td>
<td>There are no points attached to this assignment; however, to earn an “A” or “B” in the course, this assignment needs to be completed. Due: Prior to September 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Class Participation and Discussions</strong></td>
<td>75</td>
<td>See department attendance policy on p. 3. Participation in discussion and activities is critical to the success of this class. There is an expectation that all students will actively participate in class discussions and activities.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
EDL 682 Assignment Details

Assignment #1: Upload Photo to WesternOnline
• This is required to earn an “A” or “B” in the course.
• Please upload before our first class meeting.
• Note: You may have already completed this during a previous class!

Assignment #2: Send Lora and the Educational Leadership program a Skype contact request
• Send Lora a Skype contact request so we can Skype for conferences.
  o dr_wolff_kcsd
  o dep.edl
• This is required to earn an “A” or “B” in the course.
• Note: You may have already completed this during a previous class!
Assignment #3: Fieldwork Notebook (a.k.a fieldnotes or research journal)

Course Objectives Addressed
Objective 3: Define, utilize and analyze fieldnotes.
Objective 4: Analyze qualitative data (interview data, focus group data, artifacts, observations and fieldnotes) including coding, triangulation, analytical memoing, and validating data.

You will keep a fieldwork notebook (a specialized version of a research journal). More information will be shared about this during the course, but this should be a spiral-bound notebook or a composition notebook (I would not recommend doing this electronically as you need to be able to use it while doing your research [e.g. observing, conducting interviews and focus groups] to take notes). You should have this available at all synchronous class meetings and use it to reflect on our discussions. Additionally, you will write in it when you read for class (articles and textbook), carry it around while you are doing your research and take notes, and as you work on writing up your qualitative research project (Assignment #9). For those of you who began keeping a “research journal” in EDL 725, you may want to continue your fieldwork notebook in this “notebook” or you may want a separate “notebook.” In this notebook you will:

a. Reflect on and process the course content (articles and textbooks)
b. Reflect on and process our discussions
c. Write analytic memos
d. Collect data from your research site
e. Analyze and/or interpret your data
f. Dialogue with yourself on readings, discussions, and your “research”
g. Record your next steps
h. Include artifacts and a description of those artifacts
i. Take notes while doing your observations, interviews or focus groups

This is likely to be a messy document. You might even have artifacts (e.g. documents, photos, photocopies) taped in. There could be drawings of your research site and your focus group members.

You will have a minimum of ten (10) fieldnote entries. It is likely you will have more than the minimum. Due date: October 11

Note: You will turn not actually turn in your Fieldwork Notebook. The notebook is your working research document for this class and for your dissertation planning and eventual work. You will turn in a 1-2 page (single-spaced) reflection on any or all of the following or on a topic of your choice related to “doing” fieldnotes (Submit to the “Dropbox” on WesternOnline):

- Describe how you used your fieldwork notebook during the class. When did you use it? Where did you use it? How did you use it?
- Why keep a fieldwork notebook or a research journal? Why keep a fieldwork notebook when conducting qualitative research? Quantitative research?
- How you will continue to use your fieldwork notebook as you continue through your coursework and your dissertation research?
- What struggles did you encounter in keeping a fieldwork notebook? How did you overcome them (if you did)?

I will review your reflection on your fieldwork notebook and provide comments in WesternOnline.
Assignment #4: Analysis and presentation of a qualitative research article

Objective 1: Analyze and evaluate qualitative research.

Objective 6: Understand the role of the researcher in qualitative research including subjectivity, reflexivity, positionality, transparency, bias and assumptions, and power and authority.

Objective 7: Apply and understanding of triangulation and its importance in qualitative research.

Objective 8: Understand validity, generalizability, objectivity, equity, and ethics as they apply to qualitative research.

Objective 9: Demonstrate knowledge of different ways to establish trustworthiness including member check, interview corroboration, peer debriefing, prolonged engagement, negative case analysis, auditability, confirmability, bracketing, and balance.

Objective 10: Become familiar with the principles and methodologies of a number of paradigms within qualitative research (e.g. narrative, phenomenological, grounded theory, ethnographic, and case studies).

For this assignment you will select a qualitative research article to read, review, and present. The article must be from a peer-reviewed journal. I would recommend one of the following journals; however, feel free to use any peer-reviewed journal:

- Anthropology and Education Quarterly
- International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education
- Qualitative Inquiry
- Qualitative Research
- American Educational Research Journal
- American Anthropologist

You could choose to select a qualitative dissertation rather than a peer-reviewed journal.

I would suggest choosing an article that might be of use to you in your future research and dissertation. You might as well be moving your “dissertation” research forward while completing this assignment. So if you are exploring studying the implementation of standards-based grading at the high school, it would behoove you to find a qualitative article about standards-based grading. You’ll be killing two birds with one stone.

If you need assistance in choosing a qualitative study to review, feel free to choose from those listed below. Many of these articles can be found in our WesternOnline class (Qualitative Studies folder).

Auerback, S. (2002). “Why do they give the good classes to some and not to others?” Latino parent narratives of struggle in a college access program. Teachers College Record 104(7), 1379-1392.


Your presentation of the article could take a variety of forms and is up to you. Some possibilities include:

- A typical paper
- A video or podcast
- A PowerPoint with voice over

You will post your article to the “Qualitative Article” discussion along with your “presentation” and a brief posting about the article.

You will also be responsible for skimming two other students’ qualitative research articles, each students’ presentation, and actively participating in the discussions related to each article.

**For the analysis and presentation, you should discuss/analyze/cover:**

1. Statement of the problem. Is the problem clearly stated? Is the problem worthy of research? Does it have practical value?
2. Review of the literature. Is the review of literature a critique or simply a rehashing? Is it relevant? Does it appear to be accurate? Comprehensive?
3. Conceptual or theoretical framework
4. Research questions
5. Methodology and methods employed in the study. Does the method fit the problem?
6. Findings, conclusions and implications. Do the data collected adequately address the problem? Is the researcher's role clear? Do the data collection techniques have a “good fit” with the method? Is the analysis clearly reported? Do the conclusions seem appropriate?
7. Central issues, themes or dilemmas that arise in the study
8. As appropriate draw on the theoretical and methodological readings from the course
9. Any other concerns deemed important about the article or your potential research
10. And Engage class members in critical examination of the study (Qualitative Research Issues and Methods, p. 1065).

Due Date: September 6
Assignment #5: Your Fish

Course Objectives Addressed

Objective 2: Demonstrate knowledge of the skills necessary for conducting qualitative research including **observations**, interviewing, and focus groups.

Objective 3: Define, utilize and analyze fieldnotes.

Objective 4: Analyze qualitative data (interview data, focus group data, artifacts, observations and fieldnotes) including coding, triangulation, analytical memoing, and validating data.

Objective 5: Define thick description and utilize thick description in course assignments.

Objective 6: Understand the role of the researcher in qualitative research including subjectivity, reflexivity, positionality, transparency, bias and assumptions, and power and authority.

Objective 7: Apply an understanding of triangulation and its importance in qualitative research.

Objective 9: Demonstrate knowledge of different ways to establish trustworthiness including member check, interview corroboration, peer debriefing, **prolonged engagement**, negative case analysis, auditability, confirmability, bracketing, and balance.

Students Will Also...
- Continue to develop research and writing skills necessary at the doctoral level.
- Develop peer reviewing and critiquing skills through collaborative and individual activities.
- Display conferencing skills in conjunction with peer reviewing.

Steps in this assignment:

a. Begin with reviewing this assignment along with the assignment checklist (available in Week 2 folder and “checklist” folder).

b. Read “Fieldnotes”; www.quaires.org/HomeFiel-3650.html

c. The second step for this assignment is to re-read “Look at your fish” (Samuel Scudder) available on WesternOnline (also available in Doing Naturalistic Inquiry (pp. 1-4).

d. Then read “Fieldnotes” (Wikipedia; https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fieldnotes)

e. The fourth step is to select an artifact (a “fish”) and study it. You are to become Scudder. The artifact will become your “fish.” The artifact you choose should be something “new to you” and worthy of being studied. When I did this assignment, I choose a pocketknife (my husband collects pocketknives and I decided it was time I learned more about his hobby, at least about one of his pocketknives). Again, it should not be something you are already very familiar with or knowledgeable about. It should be something that is of interest to you and about which you could interview someone about its history or background. It should be something you can research. Finally, you need to be able to submit a photo of the artifact along with the written assignment. Some ideas:
  - A quilt made by your grandmother or mother
  - Your child’s clay animal from art class
  - A old family photograph
  - A piece of artwork created by a family member
  - A “cuatro” (a Venezuelan four-stringed instrument)
  - A gargoyle
  - A children’s joke/chant (“Jingle Bells/Batman smells/Robin laid and egg…”)
• An antique piece of furniture
• A cigar tin
• A ceramic cat

f. Study your “fish” taking notes in your fieldwork notebook Fieldnotes/Research Journal Entry #1. Research your “fish.” By research, you are to investigate your “fish” by talking to people, using the Internet, examining your fish, and taking notes in your fieldwork journal.

g. Then write a thick description of your “fish” (Draft Assignment #5). The description should be 1-2-3 pages single-spaced, 12-point font (no Times or Times New Roman) with 1” margins. It could be longer (I’ve seen these be 6-7 pages single-spaced).

h. Peer review Assignment #5 (See peer review assignments in Week 2 folder).

i. Revise your Assignment #5 based on peer feedback.

j. Submit final draft of Assignment #5 to WesternOnline dropbox by August 30.

k. Write Fieldnotes Entry #2.

We will peer review this assignment on Saturday, August 29th during our synchronous time. Guidelines and peer reviewing assignments will be shared/distributed to you.

Students should submit “readability statistics” with their assignment. Target statistics:

- Passive sentences: less than 10%
- Reading level: 7.0 – 10.0

Final Draft Due: August 30 (Submit to WesternOnline Assignment #5)
Assignment #6: Going Indigenous

Course Objectives Addressed

Objective 2: Demonstrate knowledge of the skills necessary for conducting qualitative research including **observations**, interviewing, and focus groups.

Objective 3: Define, utilize, and analyze fieldnotes.

Objective 4: Analyze qualitative data (interview data, focus group data, **artifacts**, **observations** and **fieldnotes**) including coding, triangulation, analytical memoing, and validating data.

Objective 5: Define and utilize thick description.

Objective 6: Understand the role of the researcher in qualitative research including subjectivity, reflexivity, positionality, transparency, bias and assumptions, and power and authority.

Students Will Also...

- Continue to develop research and writing skills necessary at the doctoral level.
- Develop peer reviewing and critiquing skills through collaborative and individual activities.
- Display conferencing skills in conjunction with peer reviewing.

For a period of at least two hours, course participants will spend time ideally in a place where you have never been, nor really thought of previously going. Some ideas...perhaps a cultural event of another ethnic group, a laundromat, or religious service or if you were a high school teacher, a kindergarten classroom. The key is for you to choose a setting that would be unfamiliar to you. This assignment is designed to offer you an authentic experience in constructing a narrative about the emic (an insider's view). This is your attempt to gain entry, interact with people in the new setting, and tell a story from an insider's perspective. You will record your experience in field notes, recordings, artifacts, documents, photocopies, and/or photographs or any other documents that assist you in telling the story (this is your data set). For example, if you go to a religious service and they have a bulletin, you’d include that. Or draw a sketch of the setting in your notebook. You might also take photos, print them, and put in your fieldwork notebook.

Once your data is collected, you will identify emergent themes from your gathered data and write a narrative about the experience. The reader of your written narrative should be offered a vicarious experience of what you experienced.

Again, we will peer review your “Going Indigenous” paper. Then you will:

- revise based on your peers’ comments.
- submit to the Assignment #6 dropbox (WesternOnline) for Lora to review.

About this assignment:

- This is a narrative (a written account, a story, a description, a chronicle).
- It should be free of opinion and bias.
- It should be a thick description. We should be able to picture your site. It’s like a good descriptive novel (only it’s not made up).
- Length: Whatever it takes (guessing 2-4 pages single-spaced/4-8 pages double spaced).
Students should submit “readability statistics” with their assignment. Target statistics:

- Passive sentences: less than 10%
- Reading level: 7.0 – 10.0

Due Date: September 13

Lora will review and provide comments on WesternOnline via the Assignment #6 dropbox.
Assignment #7: Conduct Interviews

Course Objectives Addressed

Objective 2: Demonstrate knowledge of the skills necessary for conducting qualitative research including observations, interviewing, and focus groups.

Objective 3: Define, utilize, and analyze fieldnotes.

Objective 4: Analyze qualitative data (interview data, focus group data, artifacts, observations and fieldnotes) including coding, triangulation, analytical memoing, and validating data.

Objective 5: Define and utilize thick description.

Objective 6: Understand the role of the researcher in qualitative research including subjectivity, reflexivity, positionality, transparency, bias and assumptions, and power and authority.

Objective 8: Understand validity, generalizability, objectivity, equity, and ethics as they apply to qualitative research.

Objective 9: Demonstrate knowledge of different ways to establish trustworthiness including member check, interview corroboration, peer debriefing, prolonged engagement, negative case analysis, auditability, confirmability, bracketing, and balance.

Students Will Also…

- Continue to develop research and writing skills necessary at the doctoral level.
- Develop peer reviewing and critiquing skills through collaborative and individual activities.
- Display conferencing skills in conjunction with peer reviewing.

Students will conduct two interviews of two different people (on the same topic) using qualitative principles. Each interview will be with one individual. The interviews can be in person or via Skype (or a similar tool...Google Hangouts, FaceTime). The topic of the interviews is up to the researcher. However, both interviews must be on the same topic. Ideally, it would be on a topic that relates to the researcher’s potential dissertation topic or something related to the researcher’s current position. IMPORTANT: The interviews and the focus group (See Assignment #8) should be on the same topic.

Steps in the process (Note: Throughout the process the researcher will keep fieldnotes):

1. Develop interview questions
2. Review developed interview questions with a colleague from class
3. Revise questions
4. Schedule interviews (a minimum of two)
5. Conduct interviews (audio record the interviews [using a tape recorder or software—Audacity] and take notes)
6. Transcribe interviews
7. Analyze the transcription of the interviews
8. Write a research memo (See below)

Students will submit a “research memo” to be no more than one (1) page (single-spaced; 10-12 point font). The memo should include:

- Heading: To, From, RE, Date
- First paragraph: Rationale for deciding on topic for the interviews
- Background: date, time, location, # of questions planned, length of the interview
- Summary of methods used, limitations, initial results (thoughts)

Due: September 27
Assignment #8: Conduct a Focus Group

Course Objectives Addressed
Objective 2: Demonstrate knowledge of the skills necessary for conducting qualitative research including observations, interviewing, and focus groups.
Objective 3: Define, utilize, and analyze fieldnotes.
Objective 4: Analyze qualitative data (interview data, focus group data, artifacts, observations and fieldnotes) including coding, triangulation, analytical memoing, and validating data.
Objective 5: Define and use thick description.
Objective 6: Understand the role of the researcher in qualitative research including subjectivity, reflexivity, positionality, transparency, bias and assumptions, and power and authority.
Objective 8: Understand validity, generalizability, objectivity, equity, and ethics as they apply to qualitative research.
Objective 9: Demonstrate knowledge of different ways to establish trustworthiness including member check, interview corroboration, peer debriefing, prolonged engagement, negative case analysis, auditability, confirmability, bracketing, and balance.

Students Will Also...
- Continue to develop research and writing skills necessary at the doctoral level.
- Develop peer reviewing and critiquing skills through collaborative and individual activities.
- Display conferencing skills in conjunction with peer reviewing.

Students will conduct a focus group using qualitative principles/tools/techniques. The focus group should have a minimum of four people and a maximum of eight people. The focus group needs to be conducted in person. The topic for the focus group is up to the researcher, but must be on the same topic as the two interviews conducted for Assignment #7. Ideally, the focus group would be on a topic that relates to the researcher's potential dissertation topic or something related to the researcher's current position.

Steps in the process (throughout the focus group process, the researcher will keep fieldnotes):
1. Develop focus group questions.
2. Review developed focus group questions with a colleague from class.
3. Revise questions.
4. Schedule focus group (4-8 people)
5. Conduct focus group (record the focus group using a tape recorder or Audacity; take fieldnotes during the focus group session)
6. Transcribe focus group
7. Analyze the transcription of the focus group

Students will submit a “research memo” to be no more than one (1) page (single-spaced; 10-12 point font) to WesternOnline (Dropbox—Assignment #8) no later than October 10th. The memo should include:
- Heading: To, From, RE, Date
- First paragraph: Rationale for deciding on topic for focus group
- Background: date, time, location, # of participants, # of questions planned, length of focus group
- Summary of methods used, limitations, initial results (thoughts)

Due: October 8
Assignment #9: Writing Up Qualitative Research

Course Objectives Addressed
Objective 3: Define, utilize, and analyze fieldnotes.
Objective 4: Analyze qualitative data (interview data, focus group data, artifacts, observations and fieldnotes) including coding, triangulation, analytical memoing, and validating data.
Objective 5: Define thick description and utilize thick description.
Objective 6: Understand the role of the researcher in qualitative research including subjectivity, reflexivity, positionality, transparency, bias and assumptions, and power and authority.
Objective 7: Apply an understanding of triangulation and its importance in qualitative research.
Objective 8: Understand validity, generalizability, objectivity, equity, and ethics as they apply to qualitative research.
Objective 9: Demonstrate knowledge of different ways to establish trustworthiness including member check, interview corroboration, peer debriefing, prolonged engagement, negative case analysis, auditability, confirmability, bracketing, and balance.
Objective 10: Apply an understanding of triangulation and its importance in qualitative research.
Objective 11: Become familiar with the principles and methodologies of a number of paradigms within qualitative research (e.g. narrative, phenomenological, grounded theory, ethnographic, and case studies).

Students Will Also...
- Continue to develop the research and writing skills necessary at the doctoral level.
- Develop peer reviewing and critiquing skills through collaborative and individual activities.
- Display conferencing skills in conjunction with peer reviewing.

Students will write a paper based on their interviews and focus group (See Assignment #7 and Assignment #8). The paper should be a synthesis of the data from both the interviews, the focus group, artifacts collected, and any research/literature consulted.

You should model your paper after a qualitative research report (See samples in WesternOnline “Qualitative Research Studies”). Of course, you will not have all the sections of a full qualitative research report nor will you have the depth of a full qualitative study. See the Assignment #9 template and rubric in the “Rubrics” folder.

About this assignment:
- It should be free of opinion and bias.
- It should be a thick description.
- It should include direct quotes from the transcriptions, but the quotations should support the analysis. In other words, it should not be just a string of quote after quote after quote. Analyze. Synthesize.
- The paper should flow...sentences should be connected....paragraphs should be connected.
- Length: Whatever it takes (guessing 2-4 pages single-spaced/4-8 pages double spaced).

Due Date: October 24th OR a date mutually agreed upon by the student and the professor, but no later than December 15th.
Assignment #10: Final Exam

Course Objectives Addressed

Objective 3: Define, utilize, and analyze fieldnotes.

Objective 4: Analyze qualitative data (interview data, focus group data, artifacts, observations and fieldnotes) including coding, triangulation, analytical memoing, and validating data.

Objective 5: Define thick description and utilize thick description.

Objective 6: Understand the role of the researcher in qualitative research including subjectivity, reflexivity, positionality, transparency, bias and assumptions, and power and authority.

Objective 7: Apply an understanding of triangulation and its importance in qualitative research.

Objective 8: Understand validity, generalizability, objectivity, equity, and ethics as they apply to qualitative research.

Objective 9: Demonstrate knowledge of different ways to establish trustworthiness including member check, interview corroboration, peer debriefing, prolonged engagement, negative case analysis, auditability, confirmability, bracketing, and balance.

Objective 10: Become familiar with the principles and methodologies of a number of paradigms within qualitative research (e.g. narrative, phenomenological, grounded theory, ethnographic, and case studies).

Students Will Also...

• Continue to develop the research and writing skills necessary at the doctoral level.

Students will individually complete a final exam covering the content from the course. The final exam will be emailed to the students at approximately 7:45 a.m. on the October 25th. Note: Students should not forward the email or final exam to students not in our class at any time. Students will have until 1:30 p.m. to complete the final exam. A total of 5 ½ hours has been allotted to the final exam. The expectation is a high quality product at the doctoral level. The anticipated length would be 3-14 pages single-spaced.

Students may work on the final exam at a location that is most advantageous/conducive to them. However, we may utilize the EDL Skype account (or a similar connectivity tool), students will meet synchronously with the instructor to review the final exam assignment.

I will be available via Skype between 8:00 a.m. – noon to answer students’ questions about the final exam or other issues with the course assignments. Students wishing to consult with me will need to contact me via Skype (dr_wolff_kcsd). Should Skype fail, students may call me (319-670-8717).

Other information about the final exam:

1. Students may use course materials, materials from other courses, and other resources for the final exam.
2. Proper APA in-text citation format should be utilized. A reference page or works cited page is not necessary.
3. Students will upload their final exam to the Assignment #10 dropbox (no later than 1:30 p.m. on October 25th).
4. The originality report for the final exam must be under 20%. An exam an originality report over 20% will not be scored. The student will have the opportunity to revise the final exam with the revision due no later than 6 a.m. on November 1st.
5. The format for answer the final exam answers is up to the student. The following formats seem appropriate: essays, bulleted lists, T-charts, and/or tables. However, students are not limited to these formats.

Due: October 25
Assignment #11: IRB/Human Subjects
Students will complete the required Western Illinois University IRB/Human Subjects training. See p. 11 of the syllabus for more information.

Accessing the Human Subjects Training

Here are the direct links to the sites that can be used to take the Human Subject Training modules.

NIH =  https://phrp.nihtraining.com/users/login.php  (Recommended training (see below)
CITI=  https://www.citiprogram.org/

If you have trouble with the links above, follow the directions below:

⑤ Go to the WIU Research Compliance Overview page  
(https://www.wiu.edu/sponsored_projects/compliance/)
⑤ Under the heading Informed Consent Templates, the fourth bullet is the Mandatory Investigator Training which has the links to the NIH and CITI training sites.

Please note: You only have to do the NIH or CITI training. I would recommend the NIH training over the CITI training mainly because it is less time intensive.

If you’ve already completed the training, you do not need to redo it. Just send your verification of completion to:

⑤ Office of Sponsored Projects
⑤ Jerrie Walters
⑤ Lora Wolff

Also be sure to keep a copy for your own records.

Due: September 7

Other Activities

In addition to these formal assignments/assessments, students will:

• Have weekly readings to complete.
• Review a variety of videos and/or podcasts as directed.
• Complete and contribute to weekly discussion activities based on readings and videos.
COURSE OUTLINE
A course outline will be distributed to students via email and posted to WesternOnline (Course Content) each week throughout the course. A tentative list of topics follows.

COURSE TOPICS

Introduction to Course
- Discussion of participants backgrounds/interests
- Review of syllabus, course objectives, and assignments

Introduction to Qualitative Research: Why do qualitative research?
- What are the strengths of qualitative research?
- What are the limitations of qualitative research?
- What are the strengths of mixed-methods approach?
- Why doesn't everybody do qualitative research?

Research/Writing as Process (on-going throughout course)

Design a Qualitative Research Study
- What does a qualitative research study look like?
- What are the standard components of a qualitative research study?
- What issues should be considered and what questions resolved before beginning a qualitative research study?
- Analysis and Presentation of Qualitative Research Articles

Fieldwork and Fieldnotes
- What is fieldwork?
- What are fieldnotes?
- What is thick description?
- Fieldwork Notebook

Types of Qualitative Research
- Ethnography
- Case Study
- Grounded Theory
- Phenomenological Inquiry
- Narrative

The Role of the Qualitative Researcher
- Subjectivity
- Reflexivity
- Positionality
- Transparency
- Trustworthiness
- Bias and assumptions
- Power and authority
Methodology: Design Matters

- Research Questions in Qualitative Research
- Site and Participant Selection
- Data Collection Methods
- Interviews and Fieldnotes
- Focus Groups and Fieldnotes
- Documentation and Transcription
- Documents and Artifacts
- Identifying a Research Problem and Purpose

Peer Reviewing Training and Critical Friends

*Your Fish Assignment (Peer review, discussion)*

Observation: Making the Familiar Strange

- Paying attention to issues of context and culture
- Participant observation
- Fieldnotes
- Audiovisual data
- *Going Indigenous*

Qualitative Research and...

- Validity
- Generalizability
- Objectivity
- Equity
- Ethics

Analyzing and Interpreting Qualitative Data

- Coding
- Triangulation
- Analytical Memoing
- Validating Data (Standards of Validation)
Appendix A
Other Resources

Qualitative Research Methods


Books


Qualitative Research Studies
Auerback, S. (2002). “Why do they give the good classes to some and not to others?” Latino parent narratives of struggle in a college access program. Teachers College Record 104(7), 1379-1392.


