



THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
School of Social Work
Course Outline - SOWK 554C (Sec 001): Qualitative Methods in Social Work Research

The UBC School of Social Work acknowledges that we are located on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam) people.

School Vision: Building upon a foundation of social justice and an ethic of care, we are a community of learners actively engaged in the development of critical, transformative knowledge for social work practice.

MSW Mission: The MSW program offers an accessible, advanced professional degree focused on social work practice in the fields of child and family welfare, health and social care, and international and social development, using a social justice lens. The purpose of this MSW program is to prepare our graduates to be competent social work professionals, equipped with state-of-the-art knowledge and skills, a critical analytic lens, and a social justice orientation.

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| Year/Term | 2019-2020, (Term 1&2) |
| Course Title | SOWK 554C (Sec 001): Qualitative Methods in Social Work Research |
| Credit Value | 6 |
| Course Schedule | Fridays, 9 a.m. – 12 p. m. |
| Course Location | Jack Bell Building, Room 222 |

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| Instructor | Office Location | Office Phone | e-mail address |
| Dr. Vaughan Marshall | TBA | TBA | Vaughan.marshall@ubc.ca |
| Office Hours | By appointment | | |

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course provides an overview of the research questions and designs in Social Work that are appropriately addressed using qualitative methods. The first term will focus both on developing a theoretical understanding of qualitative methodology and on designing a research study. The second term will provide the opportunity to apply this understanding through the implementation of the proposed study.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

1. Understand major concepts, issues, and techniques of qualitative research
2. Understand the epistemological underpinnings of qualitative research
3. Understand what kinds of methods are useful for discovering certain kinds of information
4. Able to reflect upon, critically evaluate, and discuss key issues in qualitative research
5. Able to critically evaluate research and research methods
6. Understand methods of data collection and analysis
7. Able to plan and carry out a small-scale qualitative research project

UNIVERSITY POLICIES:

Support: UBC provides resources to support student learning and to maintain healthy lifestyles but recognizes that sometimes crises arise and so there are additional resources to access including those for survivors of sexual violence. UBC values respect for the person and ideas of all members of the academic community. Harassment and discrimination are not tolerated nor is suppression of academic freedom. UBC provides appropriate accommodation for students with disabilities and for religious observances. UBC values academic honesty and students are expected to acknowledge the ideas generated by others and to uphold the highest academic standards in all of their actions.

Details of the policies and how to access support are available on [the UBC Senate website](#).

Attendance: *“Regular attendance is expected of students in all their classes (including lectures, laboratories, tutorials, seminars, etc.). Students who neglect their academic work and assignments may be excluded from the final examinations. Students who are unavoidably absent because of illness or disability should report to their instructors on return to classes.”* (UBC Calendar)

Academic Dishonesty: Please review the UBC Calendar “Academic regulations” for the university policy on cheating, plagiarism, and other forms of academic dishonesty. Also visit www.arts.ubc.ca and go to the students’ section for useful information on avoiding plagiarism and on correct documentation.

Retaining Assignments: Students will submit their assignments electronically so they will retain a copy of all submitted assignments.

COURSE POLICIES:

Attendance

The attendance policy is in the student handbook on page 11:
<https://socialwork.ubc.ca/current-students/>.

The School considers class attendance to be an essential component of integrated learning in professional social work education. Therefore, regular attendance is required in all social work courses. Instructors may count repeated late arrivals or early departures as an absence, and a meeting should be setup to discuss this with the student.

The University accommodates students with disabilities who have registered with Access and Diversity. Students, who will require accommodation for attendance due to disability, are encouraged to inform the instructor, and if necessary, to contact Access and Diversity preferably not later than the first week of class. The School will also accommodate religious observance, according to University Policy 65, and students are expected to inform the instructor. Students who wish to be accommodated for unavoidable absences due to varsity athletics, family obligations, or other similar commitments, must notify their instructors in writing at least two weeks in advance, and preferably earlier. This reflects expectations for professional social workers in their place of employment.

If students miss three or more classes, they may be considered to have not met the requirements of the course. If students have valid reasons, they could be withdrawn from the course with the approval of the instructor – otherwise, they would fail the course.

SUBMITTING ASSIGNMENTS:

Assignments are due as noted in this course outline, unless otherwise informed by the instructor.

RETURN OF MARKED STUDENT ASSIGNMENTS:

All assignments are to be submitted via email to Vaughan.marshall@ubc.ca. Assignments will be marked with track changes and comments provided.

LATE ASSIGNMENTS:

Generally, late assignments will not be accepted. In emergency situations, students must discuss any potential lateness with their instructor and be prepared to have a medical certificate available. Assignments submitted after the deadline with no documentation will be penalized by one percentage point per day.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK(S):

Required Course Texts:

Creswell, J. W. & Poth, C.N. (2017). Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five traditions (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Maxwell, J.A. (2012). Qualitative research design: An interactive approach (3rd ed.) Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Supplementary Readings:

American Psychological Association. (2009). Publication manual of the American Psychological Association (6th ed.). Washington, DC: APA.

Szuchman, L.T., & Thomlison, B. (2010). Writing with style: APA style for Social Work (4th ed.). Belmont, CA: Brooks-Cole.

COURSE SCHEDULE:

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| SESSION 1: | Sept. 6, 2019 |
| TOPIC: | Introduction to Term 1 |
| READING: | None |
| SESSION 2: | Sept. 13, 2019 |
| TOPIC: | Introduction to Qualitative Research, Critiquing the Literature/ Developing the Literature Review |
| READING: | Required Readings Maxwell, Ch. 1, 2 and 3 Creswell, Ch. 1, 2 Supplementary Readings Eisner, E. (2003). On the art and science of qualitative research in psychology. In P.M. Camic, J.E. Rhodes, & L. Yardley (Eds.). Qualitative research in psychology (pp. 17-29). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association. Hart, C. (1998). Writing the review. Doing a literature review: Releasing the social science imagination. London: Sage. Mackay, G. (2007). Is there a need to differentiate between qualitative and quantitative searching strategies for literature reviewing? Qualitative Social Work, 6(2), 231-241. Sandelowski, M, & Barosso, J. (March, 2002). Reading qualitative studies. International Journal of Qualitative Methods 1(1). [Available online at http://www.ualberta.ca/~ijqm/]. |
| SESSION 3: | Sept. 20, 2019 |
| TOPIC: | Library Research: Class meets in Koerner Library, Room 217 (2nd Floor) with librarian Susan Paterson |
| SESSION 4: | Sept. 27, 2019 |
| TOPIC: | Purposes/ Narrative Research |
| READING: | Required Readings: Creswell, pp. 66-78, 113-114, 127-146 (Ch. 6), 329-345 (Appendix B) Murray, M. (2003). Narrative psychology and narrative analysis. In P.M. Camic, J.E. Rhodes, & L. Yardley (Eds.). Qualitative research in psychology (pp. 95-112). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association. |

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| | <p>Thorne, S. (2009). Is the story enough? <i>Qualitative Health Research</i>, 19, 1183-1185. [Available online from UBC Library].</p> <p>McKenzie-Mohr, S., & LeFrance, M.N. (2017). Narrative resistance in social work research: Counter-storying in the pursuit of social justice. <i>Qualitative Social Work</i>, 16(2), 189-205</p> <p>Examples of Narrative Research:</p> <p>Marshall, V., & Long, B. (2010). Coping processes as revealed in the stories of mothers of children with autism. <i>Qualitative Health Research</i>, 20(1), 105-116. [Available online from UBC Library].</p> <p>Richards, R. (2008). Writing the othered self: Autoethnography and the problem of objectification in writing about illness and disability. <i>Qualitative Health Research</i>, 18(12), 1717-1728 [Available online from UBC Library].</p> <p>Richards, T.A. (2001). Spiritual resources following a partner's death from AIDS. In R.A. Neimeyer (Ed.). <i>Meaning reconstruction and the experience of loss</i> (pp. 173-190). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.</p> <p>Riessman, C.K. (2001). Personal troubles as social issues: A narrative of infertility in context. In I. Shaw & N. Gould (Eds.). <i>Qualitative research in social work</i> (pp. 73-82). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. [Chapter 5]</p> <p>Robinson, I. (1990). Personal narratives, social careers and medical courses: Analyzing life trajectories in autobiographies of people with multiple sclerosis. <i>Social Science and Medicine</i>, 30(11), 1173-1186.</p> <p>Stern, S., Doolan, M., Staples, E., Szmukler, G.L., & Eisler, I. (1999). Disruption and reconstruction: Narrative insights into the experience of family members caring for a relative diagnosed with serious mental illness. <i>Family Process</i>, 38(3), 353-369. **</p> <p>Taylor, R.M., Franck, L.S., Dhawan, A., & Gibson, F. (2010). The stories of young people living with a liver transplant. <i>Qualitative Health Research</i>, 20(8), 1076-1090. [Available online from UBC Library].</p> <p>Bettina – a sample of a narrative study</p> |
| SESSION 5: | Oct. 4, 2019 |
| TOPIC: | NO CLASS (Individual appointments by request) |
| SESSION 6: | Oct. 10, 2019? |
| TOPIC: | Presentations by former SOWK 554 students (Date to be confirmed) |

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| SESSION 7: | Oct. 18, 2019 |
| TOPIC: | Phenomenology/ Reflexivity/ Research Questions |
| READING: | <p>Required Readings: Creswell, Ch. 3, pp. 75-82, 349-363</p> <p>Maxwell, Ch. 4</p> <p>Finlay, L. (2002). "Outing" the researcher: The provenance, process, and practice of reflexivity. <i>Qualitative Health Research</i>, 12(4), 531-545. [available online through UBC Library]</p> <p>Supplementary Reading: Caelli, K. (2001). Engaging with phenomenology: Is it more of a challenge than it needs to be? <i>Qualitative Health Research</i>, 11, 273-281. Ellis, C. & Bochner, A. (2003). Autoethnography, personal narrative, reflexivity: Researcher as subject. In N.K. Denzin and Y.S. Lincoln (Eds.) <i>Collecting and interpreting qualitative material</i>. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.</p> <p>Examples of Phenomenological Research: Hjeltnes, A., Moltu, C., Schanche, E., & Binder, P. (2016). What brings you here? Exploring why young adults seek help for social anxiety. <i>Qualitative Health Research</i>, 26(12), 1705-1720.</p> <p>Jacobsen, J. & Wright, R. (2014). Mental health implications in Mormon women's experiences with same-sex attraction: A qualitative study. <i>Counseling Psychologist</i>, 42(3), 664-696.</p> <p>Riemen, D.J. (1997). The essential structure of a caring interaction: Doing phenomenology. In J.W. Creswell, <i>Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five traditions</i>. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. **</p> |
| SESSION 8: | Oct. 25, 2019 |
| TOPIC: | Sampling and Data Generation |
| READING: | <p>Required Readings Creswell, Ch. 7</p> <p>Maxwell, Ch. 5</p> <p>Malterud, K., Siersma, V.D., & Guassora, A.D. (2015). Sample size in qualitative interview studies. <i>Qualitative Health Research</i>, 26(13), 1753-1760.</p> <p>Morse, J.M. (2000). Determining sample size. <i>Qualitative Health Research</i>, 10(1), 3-5. [available online from UBC Library].**</p> |

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| | Sandelowski, M. (1995). Sample size in qualitative research. <i>Research in Nursing and Health</i> , 18, 179-183. |
| SESSION 9: | Nov. 1, 2019 |
| TOPIC: | Ethics |
| READING: | <p>Required: ***TCPS 2Tutorial: Go to this page to find the link to the tutorial: http://www.pre.ethics.gc.ca/eng/education/tutorial-didacticiel/ . This tutorial takes approximately 3 hours, and students are required to complete it before they do their application for ethical review. You need an institution-specific email to do this tutorial (e.g., jane.doe@ubc.ca)</p> <p>Recommended Reading: Cole, P. (2004). trick(ster)s of aboriginal research: or how to use ethical review strategies to perpetuate cultural genocide. <i>Native Studies Review</i>, 15(2), 7-29. [available online from UBC Library].</p> <p>Duncombe, J., & Jessop, J. (2002). 'Doing rapport' and the ethics of faking friendship. In M. Mauthner, M. Birch, J. Jessop, & T. Miller (Eds.). <i>Ethics in qualitative research</i> (pp. 107-122). London: Sage.</p> <p>Mertens, D.M., & Ginsberg, P.E. (2008). Deep in ethical waters: Transformative perspectives for qualitative social work research. <i>Qualitative Social Work</i>, 7(4), 484-503 [Available online from UBC Library].</p> <p>Miller, T., & Bell, L. (2002). Consenting to what? Issues of access, gate-keeping and 'informed consent.' In M. Mauthner, M. Birch, J. Jessop, & T. Miller (Eds.). <i>Ethics in Qualitative Research</i> (pp. 53-69). London: Sage.</p> <p>Opsal, T., Wolgemuth, J., Cross, J., Kaanta, T., Dickmann, E., Colomer, S., & Erdil-Moody, Z. (2016). "There are no known benefits...": Considering the risk/ benefit ratio of qualitative research. <i>Qualitative Health Research</i>, 26(8), 1137-1150.</p> <p>Shaw, I. (2008). Ethics and the practice of qualitative research. <i>Qualitative Social Work</i>, 7(4), 400-414 [Available online from UBC Library].</p> |
| SESSION 10: | Nov. 8, 2019 |
| TOPIC: | More Strategies of Inquiry |
| READING: | <p>Required Readings: Creswell, pp. 82-108, Appendices D, E, and F (Ethnography, Grounded Theory, Case Studies)</p> |

Recommended Reading:

Charmaz, K. (2005). Grounded theory in the 21st century: Applications for advancing social justice studies. In N. Denzin & Y. Lincoln (Eds.), *The Sage handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 507-535). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Morgan, S.J., Pullon, S.R.H., McDonald, L.M., McKinlay, E.M., & Gray, B.V. (2017). Case study observational research: A framework for conducting case study research where observation data are the focus. *Qualitative Health Research*, 27(7), 1060-1068.

PAR and Aboriginal Epistemology: A Really Good Fit.

www.aboriginalsocialwork.ca/special_topics/par/epistemology.htm.

[underscore between "special" and "topics"]

Kovach, M. (2005). Emerging from the margins: Indigenous methodologies. In L. Brown and S. Strega (Eds.). *Research as Resistance: Critical, Indigenous, and Anti-oppressive Approaches* (19-36). Toronto: Canadian Scholars' Press/ Women's Press.

Sandelowski, M. (1996). One is the liveliest number: The case orientation of qualitative research. *Research in Nursing and Health*, 19, 525-529.

Examples of Grounded Theory:

Chronister, K.M., Marsiglio, M.C., Linville, D., & Lntrip, K.R. (2014). The influence of dating violence on adolescent girls' educational experiences. *Counseling Psychologist*, 42(3), 374-405.

Dubbin, L., McLemore, M. & Shim, J.K. (2017). Illness narratives of African Americans with coronary heart disease: A critical interactionist analysis. *Qualitative Health Research*, 27(4), 497-508.

Examples of Ethnography:

McCoy, B. (2008, April). Outside the ward and clinic: Healing the aboriginal body. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, 37(2), 226-245. [Available online from UBC Library].

Nicholas, D.B., Zwaigenbaum, L., Ing, S., MacCullough, R., Roberts, W., McKeever, P., & McMorris, C.A. (2016). "Live it to understand it": The experiences of mothers of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder, *Qualitative Health Research*, 26(7), 921-934.

Example of Qualitative Analysis of Documents:

Musso, E., & Wakefield, S.E.L. (2009). 'Tales of mind over cancer': Cancer risk and prevention in the Canadian print media. *Health, Risk, and Society*, 11(1), 17-38. [Available online from UBC Library].

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| SESSION 11: | Nov. 15, 2019 |
| TOPIC: | Establishing Credibility |
| READING: | <p>Required Readings Maxwell, Chapter 6</p> <p>Richardson, L., Denzin, N.K., Bochner, A.P., Ellis, C., & P.T. Clough (2000). Assessing alternative modes of qualitative inquiry, <i>Qualitative Inquiry</i>, 6(2), 251-291. [This is actually a series of articles on assessing the quality of qualitative research that does not conform strictly to the traditions of social science writing. Read them all – they’re interesting and very readable! They’re also available online from UBC Library].</p> <p>Sparkes, A.C. (2001). Myth 94: Qualitative health researchers will agree about validity. <i>Qualitative Health Research</i>, 11(4), 538-552. [full text available online from UBC Library].**</p> <p>Linda B., Scott, S., Cavers, D., Campbell, C., & Walter, F. (2016). Member checking: A tool to enhance trustworthiness or merely a nod to validation? <i>Qualitative Health Research</i>, 26(8), 1137-1150.</p> |
| SESSION 12: | Nov. 22, 2019 |
| TOPIC: | Proposals/Reflections & Future Directions |
| READING: | <p>Required Reading: Maxwell, Ch. 7, Appendix A</p> <p>Sandelowski, M., Holditch Davis, D., & Glenn Harris, B. (1989). Artful design: Writing the proposal for research in the naturalist paradigm. <i>Research in Nursing and Health</i>, 12, 77-84. [a must-read!]**</p> <p>Sandelowski, M. (2000). What ever happened to qualitative description? <i>Research in Nursing and Health</i>, 23(4), 334-340.**</p> |

ASSIGNMENTS:

Evaluation:

The major assignment for Term 1 is the completion of a research proposal. Smaller assignments will provide the opportunity for ongoing feedback throughout the term. Each of these mini-assignments must be submitted by email on the due date.

Assignments for Term 1:

- Oct. 11 Conceptual Context: Literature Review
Review at least eight sources relevant to your proposed study. Use these to develop and outline a conceptual context that provides a rationale for your study. Take a critical eye with respect to flaws or gaps in the existing literature. Look for opportunities to make a contribution to the research literature. Conclude by identifying your research question. This should flow naturally from the way you have set up your literature review.

Length: 15 pages (*maximum*, double-spaced)
- Oct. 25 Reflexivity
In qualitative research, the researcher is the instrument of inquiry. Inevitably, his or her values, opinions, agendas, and past experiences will affect choice of topic, data collection procedures, and interpretive processes. Write a short essay reflecting on the ways in which you as researcher might affect the process and product of your research, given the topic you have chosen.
Length: 3 pages (*maximum*, double-spaced)
- Nov. 1 Research Design: Sampling
Describe the sampling design for your proposed research study. Include your rationale for selecting this strategy and be sure that it is consistent with your research method and your epistemological stance. Identify potential ethical and practical problems associated with your plan. Specify how you will attempt to deal with these problems. Comment on how these decisions impacted your research question. (Make sure you include your research question).

Length: 1 page
- Nov. 8 Research Design: Data Generation
Describe how you will gather/generate the data to answer your research question. Discuss your rationale for this strategy and identify potential ethical and practical problems related to this approach to data gathering. Specify how you will attempt to deal with these issues. Append any data collection tools such as your interview protocol.

Length: 3 pages (*maximum*), plus appendices
- Nov. 22 Notify me of completed RISE application.
- Nov. 22 Present a first draft of your proposal in class for peer critique.
- Nov. 29 **IMPORTANT!** If you are required to submit for full board review, your RISE application must be submitted by **noon** of this date, with all attachments, in order for them to be reviewed in December
- Dec. 13 Submit your research proposal to me by email (*maximum* 20 pages, excluding appendices).

Your grade for the first term will be based on the quality of the research proposal you submit at the end of the term (90%), and the quality of your BREB application (10%). All other assignments will be given formative evaluation only. Your grade for the first term will be averaged with your grade for second term to yield a final grade for the course.

Research Proposal:

Once you have a reasonable research question, you will design a study to address it. You may choose a “pure” qualitative approach (e.g., grounded theory, phenomenology, narrative), or you may choose a qualitative descriptive approach.

Here is an overview of the elements of your proposal:

Introduction

Literature Review

Statement of the Problem

Statement of the Research Question

Method

- Sampling
- Data Collection
- Data Analysis

Measures for Ensuring Quality (e.g., validity, reliability, credibility, etc.)

References

Appendices (e.g., interview protocol, recruitment poster, consent form)

Your proposal should not exceed 20 typed, double-spaced pages, excluding references and appendices. I expect your proposal to be very well-written, so if you know that your writing is weak, I recommend that you seek help from the UBC Learning Commons: <http://learningcommons.ubc.ca/tutoring-studying/writing/>.

When I evaluate your research proposal, I will consider the following:

1. The quality of your writing: e.g., grammar, spelling, punctuation, organization, readability, conciseness
2. Your ability to critically appraise existing literature in your research area, and to situate your own work in the body of existing knowledge
3. Demonstration that you understand the “logic” of research design: For example, your research question must follow from the way you have framed your research problem; your method must fit with your research question and with the paradigm you are working within
4. The quality of your proposed method: Have you considered the practicality of your proposed method? Potential ethical issues? Have you provided a rationale for the method you propose? Have you designed a good data collection tool (e.g., interview protocol)?
5. Adherence to APA Style Guidelines (e.g., references, citations in the body of your paper, levels of headings, quotes, etc.)

Summary of Due Dates

| Assignment | Due Date |
|-----------------------------------------|---------------------|
| Literature Review | October 11 |
| Reflexivity Essay | October 25 |
| Description of Sampling Strategies | November 1 |
| Description of Data Generation Method | November 8 |
| Notify me of completed RISE application | November 22 |
| Submit RISE application | November 29 (NOON!) |
| Research Proposal | December 13 |

UBC GRADING CRITERIA:

| UBC GRADING CRITERIA | | | |
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| Letter Grade | Percent Range | Mid-Point | |
| A+ | 90-100 | 95 | Represents work of exceptional quality. Content, organization and style are all at a high level. Student demonstrates excellent research and reference to literature where appropriate. Also, student uses sound critical thinking, has innovative ideas on the subject and shows personal engagement with the topic. |
| A | 85-89 | 87 | |
| A- | 80-84 | 82 | |
| B+ | 76-79 | 77.5 | Represents work of good quality with no major weaknesses. Writing is clear and explicit and topic coverage and comprehension is more than adequate. Shows some degree of critical thinking and personal involvement in the work. Good use of existing knowledge on the subject. |
| B | 72-75 | 73.5 | |
| B- | 68-71 | 69.5 | |
| C+ | 64-67 | 65.5 | Adequate and average work. Shows fair comprehension of the subject, but has some weaknesses in content, style and/or organization of the paper. Minimal critical awareness or personal involvement in the work. Adequate use of literature. |
| C | 60-63 | 62.5 | |
| C- | 55-59 | 57 | |
| D | 50-54 | 52 | Minimally adequate work, barely at a passing level. Serious flaws in content, organization and/or style. Poor comprehension of the subject, and minimal involvement in the paper. Poor use of research and existing literature. |
| F | 0-49 | | Failing work. Inadequate for successful completion of the course or submitted beyond final date of acceptance for paper. |

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LEARNING ANALYTICS

Learning analytics includes the collection and analysis of data about learners to improve teaching and learning. No learning analytics are being used in this course.