The University of Oklahoma
College of Continuing Education
Advanced Programs – Ph.D. Course Syllabus

Course Title:
Qualitative Research Methods

Course Number:
LSTD 5913-801

Course Description:
This course is designed to acquaint students with qualitative research methods in interdisciplinary studies. By the end of the course, the student will be familiar with the most common forms of qualitative research, including how to design a study, ethical issues that must be recognized and appropriately addressed, and analysis of qualitative data.

Class Dates, Location and Hours:

Location: Heidelberg, Germany. Classroom is located in Tompkins Barracks (Schwetzingen) Education Center, Bldg. 4236, Rooms 6 and 7.
Hours: Friday 6:00 pm to 9:00 pm; Sat & Sun 8:30 am-4:30 pm
Last day to enroll or drop without penalty: December 5, 2011

Site Director:
Rebecca Fussnecker. Phone: DSN 370-6687; CIV 06221-768118; DSN Fax (call first) 370-6687; CIV Fax: 06221-768945; E-mail: apeupprograms@ou.edu

Professor Contact Information:
Course Professor: Susan F. Sharp, Ph.D.
Mailing Address: University of Oklahoma
                Department of Sociology
                780 Van Vleet Oval, KH331
                Norman, OK 73019
Telephone Number: (405) 325-2829
Fax Number: (405) 325-7825
E-mail Address: ssharp@ou.edu
Professor availability: The professor will be available via e-mail to students before and after the class sessions. On-site office hours are half an hour before and after each class session, by appointment.

Textbook(s) and Instructional Materials:
Student materials are available at the Follett/AP Bookstore located in the Oklahoma Memorial Union, 900 Asp Ave., Norman, OK. Orders can be placed online at www.oklahomaunion.bkstr.com or by telephone at 866-369-9713 (toll free in the U.S.) or 405-325-5960 (outside the U.S.). E-mail orders may be sent to oklahomaunion@bkstr.com. Representatives are available from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. CST Monday through Thursday and 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. CST on Friday. Summer hours: 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. CST. Faxed orders may be placed 24 hours a day to 866-223-5607 (toll free in the U.S.) or 405-325-1557 (outside the U.S.).


3. Materials posted on the OU Desire to Learn (D2L) system: Access D2L at http://learn.ou.edu; enter your OU NetID (4+4) and password, and select course to access material. Please contact your local

Note: The Follett/AP Bookstore is the Advanced Programs contractual textbook provider. Should text changes become necessary after publication of the course syllabus, Advanced Programs will facilitate text returns/refunds only for texts purchased through the Follett/AP Bookstore.

**Course Goals or Overview:**

This course is designed to acquaint students with qualitative research methods. By the end of the course, the student will be familiar with the most common forms of qualitative research, including how to design a study, ethical issues that must be recognized and appropriately addressed, and analysis of qualitative data.

**Course Objectives:**

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Identify the major types of qualitative research
- Identify topics appropriate to qualitative research
- Describe major ethical concerns in the conducting of qualitative research
- Understand and describe strengths and weaknesses of qualitative research
- Describe problems facing qualitative researchers
- Conduct content analysis
- Understand the difficulties of gaining access to conduct ethnographic research
- Be able to take good field notes when conducting ethnographic research
- Be able to conduct a focus group.
- Be able to conduct an in-depth interview
- Be able to organize data from interviews and focus groups
- Know how to write a qualitative research paper

**Assignments, Grading and Due Dates:**

**Unit I: Pre-Class Assignment: Introduction to Qualitative Research**

(Pre-class assignment, complete all readings and then complete the exam (posted on D2L) and submit to D2L drop box by January 13)

In Unit 1, the student is introduced to the perspectives and issues of doing qualitative research. Students will read the following chapters and online assignments and then complete an essay exam over the materials. Qualitative research methods are very time-consuming and detailed. Additionally, there are numerous pitfalls with which the researcher must be familiar. This unit provides a good introduction to these. The open-book exam (20% of final grade) will include focus on the strengths and weaknesses of qualitative research, ethical issues, and problems you might face.

**Exam is due on or before the first day of class.**

- Lofland et al., Chapter 1: Starting where you are
- Lofland et al., Chapter 2: Evaluating Data Sites
- Berg, Chapters 1-3 (Introduction/Designing Qualitative Research/Ethical Issues)

**Online Readings:**

- LSTD 5913 course website: http://www.ou.edu/cls/online/lstd5913 ; Unit 1 readings
- Ethics of Deception in Social Science Research: http://www.sahealthinfo.org/ethics/ethicsqualitative.htm
UNIT II: Content Analysis and Other Unobtrusive Measures (Read for January 14)

In Unit 2, the focus is on types of qualitative research that do not involve direct contact with individuals but instead use existing materials, such as archives, histories, magazines, films, etc., as the data.

The student will read the following chapters and then select a topic for content analysis. The student will get approval for the topic and data sources to be analyzed from the course instructor prior to completing a content analysis project.

**Guidelines for Content Analysis Assignment:** Each student will choose a topic to research. You may do a content analysis of websites, magazines, films, etc. You will need to select a topic and identify a source for your data. You will then need to identify categories for analysis, and you will then code words, phrases or sentences from your data source into the appropriate categories you have defined. You will turn in an approximately 4-5 page content analysis coding sheet that will identify the data source, list the categories, and give specific verbatim examples that fall into the categories, identifying the page number or so forth of the quotation. **This assignment is due at beginning of class on January 20, 2012** (25% of final grade).

- Berg, Chapter 8: Unobtrusive Measures in Research
- Berg, Chapter 11: An Introduction to Content Analysis
- Online Readings, LSTD 5913 website http://www.ou.edu/cls/online/lstd5913

UNIT III: Ethnography and Field Work (Read for January 15)

In Unit 3, you will be learning about the type of qualitative research that involves going to the location where the subject you want to study is found and immersing yourself into that setting. Good ethnographies are frequently done over many months, so you will not be doing an ethnographic study during this course but instead proposing how you would conduct a study on a subject that interest you. You will first identify a topic (for example, the social structure of a cancer ward). This would include looking at the roles and interactions of various participants, including nurses, aides, physicians, patients, family members, volunteers.

**Guidelines for Analytical Assignment for Unite 3:** Describe an ethnographic study that you would like to conduct. Answer the following questions? Where would you go to conduct this study? How would you get permission to conduct the study? What ethical issues would be raised in conducting a study of this nature? How would you overcome them? How would you gain the trust of the participants in the social setting? What would your role be (participant-observer, simple observer, etc.)? When and how would you keep your field notes? What protocol would you use for transcribing them? (5 pages) **We will do this in class on January 21, 2012.** (15% of final grade)

- Lofland et al., Chapter 3: Getting In
- Lofland et al., Chapter 4: Getting Along
- Lofland et al., Chapter 5: Logging Data
- Berg, Chapter 6: Ethnographic Field Strategies

UNIT IV: Interviewing, Focus Groups and Case Studies (Read for January 20, 2012)

In this unit, you will be learning the techniques for interviewing people as well as for conducting focus groups and conducting case studies. The following chapters and books will be read, and you will then do a practice in-depth interview.

- Berg, Chapter 4: A Dramaturgical Look at Interviewing
- Berg, Chapter 5: Focus Group Interviewing
- Additional readings may be added online
Guidelines for In-depth Interview: Each student will conduct one thirty minute in-depth interview on a topic that the student will get approved by the instructor first (you will want to limit it to thirty minutes, since transcription is very labor-intensive). It is suggested that you keep your topic simple in order to be able to accomplish the interview in thirty minutes. The schedule of interview questions will be developed by the student and e-mailed to the instructor for input, modification and approval by January 31, 2012. The student will audiotape the interview (with the subject’s permission) and then transcribe the tape. You will turn in your preliminary transcription in first along with a list of three to five categories you believe will be pertinent to data analysis. Once your instructor has approved your categories, you will do an annotation of your transcribed interview, coding the subject’s words into the categories you have identified. Due by February 10, 2012 (40% of final grade)

UNIT V: Writing Research Papers (Read for January 21, 2012)

This unit addresses how to pull things together in analyzing and writing about your qualitative research. You will read the following chapters and we will discuss this in class.

- Berg: Chapter 12: Writing Research Papers
- Lofland et al., Chapters 6: Thinking Topics
- Lofland et al., Chapter 7: Asking Questions
- Lofland et al., Chapter 8, Arousing Interest
- Lofland et al. Chapters 9: Developing Analysis
- Lofland et al., Chapter 10: Writing Analysis

Grading:

This is a letter-graded course: A, B, C, D, or F.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Percent of Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exam over Unit I</td>
<td>January 13</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content Analysis</td>
<td>January 20</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit 3 Analytical Assignment</td>
<td>January 21</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-depth Interview</td>
<td>Feb 10</td>
<td>40%</td>
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NOTICE: Failure to meet assignment due dates could result in a grade of I (Incomplete) and may adversely impact Tuition Assistance and/or Financial Aid.
POLICIES AND NOTICES

Attendance/Grade Policy

Attendance and participation in interaction, individual assignments, group exercises, simulations, role playing, etc. are valuable aspects of any course because much of the learning comes from discussions in class with other students. It is expected that you attend all classes and be on time except for excused emergencies.

Excused absences are given for professor mandated activities or legally required activities such as emergencies or military assignments. Unavoidable personal emergencies, including (but not limited to) serious illness; delays in getting to class because of accidents, etc.; deaths and funerals, and hazardous road conditions will be excused.

If you are obtaining financial assistance (TA, STAP, FA, VA, Scholarship, etc.) to pay all or part of your tuition cost, you must follow your funding agency/institution’s policy regarding “I” (Incomplete) grades unless the timeline is longer than what the University policy allows then you must adhere to the University policy.

Students who receive Financial Aid must resolve/complete any “I” (Incomplete) grades by the end of the term or he/she may be placed on “financial aid probation.” If the “I” grade is not resolved/completed by the end of the following term, the student’s Financial Aid may be suspended make the student ineligible for further Financial Aid.

Students are responsible for meeting the guidelines of Tuition Assistance and Veterans Assistance. See the education counselor at your local education center for a complete description of your TA or VA requirements.

Academic Honesty

Honesty is a fundamental precept in all academic activities and … [you] have a special obligation to observe the highest standards of honesty. Academic misconduct in any form is inimical to the purposes and functions of the University and is therefore unacceptable and is rigorously proscribed. Academic misconduct includes:

- cheating (using unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise), plagiarism, falsification of records, unauthorized possession of examinations, intimidation, and any and all other actions that may improperly affect the evaluation of a student’s academic performance or achievement; assisting others in any such act; or attempting to engage in such acts.

All acts of academic misconduct will be reported and adjudicated as prescribed by the student code of the University of Oklahoma. All students should review the “Student’s Guide to Academic Integrity” found at http://www.ou.edu/provost/integrity

Accommodation Statement

The College of Continuing Education [Advanced Programs] is committed to making its activities as accessible as possible. For accommodations on the basis of disability, please contact your OU Site Director.

Course Policies

Advanced Programs policy is to order books in paperback if available. Courses, dates, and professors are subject to change. Please check with your OU Site Director. Students should retain a copy of any assignments that are mailed to the professor for the course.

Copyright

Any and all course materials, syllabus, lessons, lectures, etc. are the property of professor teaching the course and the Board of Regents of the University of Oklahoma and are protected under applicable copyright.

For more information about Advanced Programs, visit our website at: http://www.goou.ou.edu/
INSTRUCTOR VITA

SUSAN F. SHARP, PH. D.

Education

• M. A. in Sociology, Texas Tech University
• Ph.D. in Sociology, University of Texas at Austin

Current Positions

• L. J. Semrod, Presidential Professor of Sociology and Women’s Studies, Department of Sociology, University of Oklahoma
• Adjunct, Department of Human Relations, University of Oklahoma
• Adjunct and Faculty Fellow, College of Liberal Studies, University of Oklahoma

Frequently Taught Advanced Programs Courses

• HR 5100  Gangs, Drugs, and Violence
• HR 5110  12 Step Programs & Recovery
• LSTD 5913  Qualitative Research Methods
• HR 5110  Multiculturalism

Major Areas of Teaching and Research Interest

• Research Methods
• Gender, Deviance and Crime and Criminal Justice
• Theoretical explanations of Crime and Deviance
• The Effects of Incarceration on Families
• The Death Penalty

Representative Publications and Presentations

• 2005 Sharp, Susan F. Feminist Criminology: The Relationship Between Policy, Practice and Research, Women, Girls and Criminal Justice Newsletter
• 2010 Report to the Oklahoma Commission on Children and Youth and the Oklahoma State Legislature (2009)

Representative Honors and Awards Received

• 2011 University of Oklahoma Student Association’s Outstanding Faculty Member of the University of Oklahoma
• 2009 Kinney-Sugg Outstanding Professor, College of Arts & Sciences
• 2009 L.J. Semrod Presidential Professor
• 2008 Saltzman Award, Division on Women and Crime, ASC
• 2007 Kenneth E. Crook Outstanding Faculty Award, OU College of Liberal Studies
• 2005 University of Oklahoma Good Teaching Award.
• 2003-4 Chair, Division on Women and Crime of the American Society of Criminology
• 2003 Rufus G. Hall Award, Outstanding Faculty, College of Liberal Studies, University of Oklahoma
• 2000 Most Inspiring Faculty, University of Oklahoma Student Athletes
• 1998 University of Oklahoma Student Association President’s Outstanding Faculty Award
• 1997 Arts and Sciences Junior Faculty Summer Research Fellowship
• 1996 Student Paper Competition Winner, Sociologists’ AIDS Network, American Sociological Association
• 1981 Outstanding Undergraduate Paper, Mid-South Sociological Association
• 1969 National Merit Scholar

Major Professional Affiliations

• Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences
• American Society of Criminologists
• American Sociological Association