Course Title: Qualitative Research Methods

Course Number: COMM 5313-101

Course Description: This course surveys qualitative methodological strategies used in communication and the social sciences to collect and analyze data.

Class Dates, Location and Hours:
- Dates: December 3-9, 2012
- Hours: Mon-Fri 6:00 p.m.-9:30 p.m.; Sat 8:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m.; Sun 8:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.
- Last day to enroll or drop without penalty: November 4, 2012

Site Director:
Steve Watson. Assistant: Carrie Grabil Church. 2189 Crystal Plaza Arcade, Arlington, VA, 22202. Phone: 703-418-4800; Fax: 703-418-2730; E-mail: apwashington@ou.edu.

Professor Contact Information:
- Course Professor: Ryan S. Bisel, Ph.D.
- Mailing Address: University of Oklahoma
  Department of Communication
  Burton Hall, #224
  Norman, OK 73019
- Telephone Number: (405) 364-6042
- E-mail Address: RyanBisel@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 405-325-7140 (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 Site Director if you require assistance.
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 Objectives:**

This course gives students the tools for conducting qualitative investigations in communication. By the end of the course, students will understand:

a) field ethnography  
b) interviewing  
c) constant comparative analysis,  
d) thematic analysis,  
e) ways of enhancing the quality of qualitative research, and  
f) the difference between post-positivist and interpretive epistemologies.

By the conclusion of the course, students will be able to design a qualitative study and critique qualitative research articles.

**Assignments, Grading and Due Dates:**

The following course material is supplemented with material on the course D2L pages.

**Manuscript Review:**

Students will be given an actual qualitative research manuscript. They will write a concise (about 1-2 page, single spaced) argument, which explains whether to recommend publication, rejection, or revision to a journal editor. **15%**

**Final Project Plan:**

A short plan for the final paper will be submitted as a platform for early feedback. **5%**

**Comprehensive Exam-style Questions:**

Students will complete a comprehensive exam. Answers will be supported by class readings. **40%**

**Final Project: Prospectus or Two Article Critiques: 40%**

a. The final paper will be a qualitative research prospectus. This document will be 10-15 pages in length and will include an abstract, rationale embedded within a literature review, research question(s), and proposed qualitative methodology (in terms of both data collection and analysis) for answering the research question(s). See assignment sheet for details.

b. Students may also choose an alternative paper in which they select two qualitative research reports published since 2000 (and originating from an approved journal). They will write two arguments (about 5-7 pages each), which explain and defend three strengths and three weaknesses of the research methodology for each published article.

Written assignments should be submitted to the **D2L Drop Box** as a Word Document attachment.

**Grading:**

Grades for this course will correspond to letters: A, B, C, D, or F.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Percent of Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Manuscript Review</td>
<td>December 7</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Project Plan</td>
<td>December 8</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehensive Exam Final</td>
<td>December 9</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Project</td>
<td>December 14</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. Advanced Programs does not provide duplicating services or office supplies.

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
Ryan S. Bisel, Ph.D.

Education
- Ph.D. Organizational Communication, University of Kansas, Lawrence KS
- M.A. Organizational Communication, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS
- B.A. Organizational Communication, William Jewell College, Liberty, MO

Current Positions
- Assistant Professor, University of Oklahoma, Norman, OK
- Advanced Programs Professor since 2009

Frequently Taught Advanced Programs Courses
- COMM 5333 Organizational Communication
- COMM 6233 Small Group Processes
- COMM 5313 Qualitative Research Methods

Major Areas of Teaching and Research Interest
- Dr. Bisel is an Assistant Professor of Organizational Communication at the University of Oklahoma. His research interests focus primarily on supervisor-subordinate communication, organizational discourse, and organizational culture change.
- In 2007, his research was honored with a Top Paper Award from the Central States Communication Association (CSCA). In 2008, his research was honored with a Top Paper Award from the National Communication Association (NCA). Additionally, he was formerly the editorial assistant for the Journal of Applied Communication Research.
- Dr. Bisel has published four book chapters and his research is published and in press with top communication journals such as Communication Theory, Management Communication Quarterly, Western Journal of Communication, Communication Teacher, and Communication Studies.
- In addition to his academic experience, Professor Bisel has worked as a process consultant and facilitator for organizations such as Douglas County Visiting Nurses and Hospice, Lawrence Chamber of Commerce, Oklahoma Office of Homeland Security, and the Kansas Health Foundation.

Representative Publications: