

## **CJT 764: Advanced Topics in Qualitative Methods**

**Spring semester 2014**

**Monday, 3:30-6:00 p.m.**

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Office hours: Monday 1:00-3:00 p.m., Tuesday 9:00-11:00 a.m., and by appointment

### **Course Description and Objectives**

Here is the description of CJT 764 from the UK Bulletin:

A focused treatment of one or more issues, topics, or problems in qualitative research methodology in communication, such as ethnography, discourse analysis, semiotics, or historical methods. Prereq: CJT 664 or consent of instructor

This semester's class will deal almost exclusively with ethnography, defined very broadly as "the attempt to understand another life world using the self – as much of it as possible – as the instrument of knowing" (Ortner, 1995, p. 173). There is not enough time this semester to address everything entailed in that definition, so choices must be made. Specifically, we will devote most of our collective attention to these areas:

- Qualitative project design
- Interviewing practices
- Working in/with material culture, virtual culture, and documents
- Analysis and interpretation of qualitative data
- Construction and evaluation of research texts

***This seminar is designed to be most useful to students who want to employ qualitative methods in their own research.*** Accordingly the major learning objectives of CJT 764 are as follows: 1) To gain a deeper understanding of the assumptions, uses, strengths, and limitations of qualitative field methods for studying communication; 2) To develop greater competence in the design, fieldwork, analysis, and writing phases of qualitative research; and 3) To engage with such issues as the standards of quality, the ethics and politics, and the multiple values of qualitative research. The assignments in CJT 764 will involve all three of these objectives.

Please note that this class builds upon the knowledge that students bring to the seminar. If you are not already familiar with basic concepts of qualitative research, you might be better served by taking CJT 664 (Qualitative Methods in Communication Research), taught this semester by Dr. Phillip Hutchison.

## **Required Readings**

Two required books, listed below, have been ordered and should be available at the UK Bookstore and/or Kennedy Bookstore.

Kvale, S., & Brinkmann, S. (2009). *InterViews* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Gibbs, G. (2007). *Analyzing qualitative data*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Other required articles and chapters, shown in the semester schedule, are available in electronic form on Blackboard (or via links to web resources).

## **Some Recommended General Texts on Qualitative Methods**

Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (2011). *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research* (4<sup>th</sup> Edition). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Lindlof, T R., & Taylor, B. C. (2011). *Qualitative communication research methods* (3<sup>rd</sup> Edition). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Tracy, S. J. (2013). *Qualitative research methods*. West Sussex, UK: Wiley-Blackwell.

## **Course Requirements**

*Detailed instructions will be distributed for the following assignments and discussed in class.*

### **Presentation of Reading (20%)**

Working in groups of two, everyone in class will assume responsibility for introducing two topics on the semester schedule. As part of this assignment, your group will “unpack” and critique a required article that goes with the topic. You will also incorporate at least one other article into your presentation. During the January 27<sup>th</sup> class, this assignment will be discussed in more detail, and seminar members will express their preferences for topics and dates.

### **Research Project Proposal (20%)**

Drafting a proposal is an important step in the life cycle of a research project – especially those projects that depend on review by academic committees (graduate program, internal funding, IRB, etc.), external funding agencies, the gatekeepers to research sites, and others. The project

proposal you write for this class will address the interests of several such audiences, and your instructor will be wearing all of their hats simultaneously when reading it. In a nutshell, the research project proposal will explain such matters as: the nature and rationale of the research problem; the project's import as described in theoretic and conceptual terms; the research questions; the scene you've identified for study; the methodological plan; the human subject protections; and (if needed) the subjectivity statement. A grade of at least B on your proposal is necessary before you can proceed with the project. We'll talk about the proposal and how to prepare it during the February 3<sup>rd</sup> class; the proposal is due on March 3<sup>rd</sup>.

### **Examination (20%)**

During the week of April 14<sup>th</sup>, seminar members will take an examination based on selected course materials up to that point of the semester. A key objective of the exam, for you, is to demonstrate your knowledge of this material, as well as your logic, dexterity, and ingenuity in responding to the exam question(s). Another reason for this examination is to give you a simulated Ph.D. qualifying exam experience. Accordingly this exam will have both written and oral components, and in other respects it follows the protocol of the Ph.D. qualifying exam in this graduate program. Detailed guidelines are forthcoming in class on March 31<sup>st</sup>, and on April 7<sup>th</sup> we will have an in-class review.

### **Research Project (40%)**

For your final assignment in CJT 764, you will complete the process already initiated in the research proposal. That is, you will do the following, pretty much in the order shown: Enter the scene of study; engage in research activities in the field (including "data collection"); analyze the findings; develop interpretations at least partly in reference to your research questions and conceptual framework; and write a research report. We will discuss exactly what is expected of this project during the February 3<sup>rd</sup> class.

This project will be scaled to a modest size (in terms of number of participants, length of time in the field, data analyzed, etc.) I point this out in recognition of the many other demands on your time, both in this class as well as in the rest of your life. That said, the execution of this project does require a significant amount of time and effort, much of which occurs in the second half of the semester. To offset this burden a bit, there will be fewer readings in the closing weeks of the semester. In addition, I want to arrange the data analysis portion of the course so that you can work on samples of data from your project. You may also be able to incorporate certain parts of your project proposal into the paper. The report itself is due during final exam week. All students will give a presentation of their work-in-progress during the last week of classes.

What will you get out of this project? Quite a lot, in my view – especially if you see yourself doing more qualitative studies in the future. Your experience with this project should tie together much of what we've read about and discussed this semester. Importantly you will learn what it means to make research decisions in and out of the field – including what works and what doesn't; which skills you are good at, and which skills you'll need to hone later on.

The project might serve purposes reaching beyond the semester. It could be a “pilot study” for a larger, more complex project, maybe even a dissertation. Students have also been known to rework their paper (perhaps after gathering more data), and submit it to a conference or refereed journal.

### **Summary of Graded Components**

Presentation of reading (two, @ 10%)	20%	40 points
Research project proposal	20%	40
Examination	20%	40
Research project	40%	80
TOTAL POINTS POSSIBLE		200 points

The final grading scales for CJT 764: A: 90-100% B: 80-89% C: 70-79% E: Below 70%

### **Procedures, Policies, and Advice**

- 1. Attendance in this class is mandatory;** only your own illness, personal or family emergencies, religious observances, or University-related obligations are acceptable reasons for not attending. **One unexcused absence is permitted without a grade penalty** (albeit not for a class meeting in which you are scheduled to present); each subsequent absence will result in a 10% reduction of your final grade in CJT 764. **Ongoing verbal participation by everybody is important to the success of this seminar.** Although participation is not evaluated formally, I’d like to encourage an open, relaxed atmosphere in which everyone feels free to speak. Please remember that the comments and ideas of your peers deserve your attention and respect, just as you deserve theirs.
- 2. To get through the term happily and successfully, you should keep up with readings and assignments.** You will find that I am “digression-friendly,” up to a point; our class time is actually a scarce resource and needs to be allocated wisely. So, as you read the class texts, think about questions or issues that can be the basis for productive discussion. Don’t be shy about asking questions. If you’re not “getting it,” it’s quite possible – in some cases, likely – that others aren’t either.
- 3. Check your e-mail regularly** for class-related messages.
- 4. It is important to arrive on time and stay for the duration of the seminar.** If you must arrive late or leave early for a legitimate reason, please try to let me know in advance. We’ll have a break midway through class; if it appears as though I am forgetting to take the break, please don’t hesitate to remind me!
- 5. Unless I announce otherwise, all assignments are due on the day indicated in the syllabus. I**

**do not accept late papers**, except in the case of a documented emergency.

6. All written work for this class should be prepared in the formats and style of the latest edition of the **APA Manual**.
7. **There is no assurance that I will allow you to take an I (Incomplete)** if your work is not finished at the end of the semester. Incompletes are definitely *not* conducive to a healthy graduate student life, so you should talk with me sooner rather than later if you face difficulties in completing (or understanding) assignments.
8. **Feel free to contact me** if you want a confidential, one-on-one discussion about any aspect of CJT 764. My office hours are Monday, 1:00-3:00 p.m.; Tuesday 9:00-11:00 a.m.; and by appointment. My office phone number is 859-257-4242. My e-mail address is: [lindlof@uky.edu](mailto:lindlof@uky.edu). I'll read and respond to your e-mails with reasonable dispatch during the week; weekends are different – I cannot guarantee that I can reply to your e-mail until Monday.

Course Schedule

Please read all of the assigned readings before the corresponding class meeting.

<b>Class</b>	<b>Topics</b>	<b>Readings</b>	<b>Assignments</b>
01-27	Introduction and course overview Fundamentals of qualitative inquiry Qualitative communication research in local and global contexts	Rosen, M. (1986). Breakfast at Spiro's: Dramaturgy and dominance. Lindlof & Taylor (2011). Introduction to qualitative communication research. Taylor & Lindlof (2013). Traveling methods: Tracing the globalization of qualitative communication research	Presentation of Reading (PR) guidelines; topics and dates chosen
02-03	Theory and problem formulation Data-generation overview Design considerations and strategies, including: Ethnography, case study	Lindlof & Taylor (2011). Theoretical traditions and qualitative communication research. Alvesson & Kärreman (2007). Constructing mystery: Empirical matters in theory development. Onwuegbuzie, Leech, & Collins (2010). Innovative data collection strategies in qualitative research. VanWynsberghe & Khan (2007). Redefining case study.	Research project and project proposal guidelines
02-10	Design considerations and strategies, including: Mobility, participatory, mixed (multiple) methods, multi-site	Buscher & Urry (2009). Mobile methods and the empirical. Hannerz (2003). Being there ... and there ... and there! Reflections on multi-site ethnography. Malian, Singh, & Giardina (2010). The challenges of participatory research with 'tech-savvy' youth. Roth & Mehta (2002). The Rashomon effect: Combining positivist and interpretivist approaches in the analysis of contested events Mason (2007). Mixing methods in a qualitatively driven way.	PR: Participatory research PR: Mixed (multiple) methods

02-17	Interview research: Epistemology, variations	Kvale & Brinkman (2008), <i>InterViews</i> . Chapters 1, 2, 3, 8. Novak (2010). Democratizing qualitative research: Photovoice and the study of human communication. Delli Carpini & Williams (1994). Methods, metaphors, and media research: The uses of television in political conversation.	PR: Photovoice interviews PR: Focus group interviews
02-24	Interview research: Procedure, craft	Kvale & Brinkman (2008), <i>InterViews</i> . Chapters 5, 6, 7, 9.	
03-03	Interview research: Reflexivity, ethics	Kvale & Brinkman (2008), <i>InterViews</i> . Chapter 4. Knapik (2006). The qualitative research interview: Participants' responsive participation in knowledge making. Shea (2000). Don't talk to the humans. Hastings (2010). Research and the ambiguity of reflexivity and ethical practice.	Research project proposal due PR: Ethics of interviewing
03-10	Working in/with material culture, virtual culture, and documents	Musello (1992). Objects in process: Material culture and communication. Garcia, Standlee, Bechkoff & Cui (2009). Ethnographic approaches to the Internet and computer- mediated communication. Siles (2012). Web technologies of the self: The arising of the "blogger" identity. Osterlund (2008). Documents in place: Demarcating places for collaboration in healthcare settings.	PR: Usage of documents in qualitative research PR: Studying virtual action and artifacts
03-24	Qualitative data analysis: Overview, data preparation, coding and categorizing	Gibbs (2008). <i>Analyzing qualitative data</i> . Chapters 1-6.	
03-31	Qualitative data analysis for interview research	Kvale & Brinkman (2008), <i>InterViews</i> . Chapters 10-14.	Examination guidelines

04-07	Qualitative data analysis: Issues and protocols of interpretative quality	Gibbs (2008). <i>Analyzing qualitative data</i> . Chapters 7-10. Kvale & Brinkman (2008), <i>InterViews</i> . Chapters 15. Maxwell (1992). Understanding and validity in qualitative research.	Examination review PR: Perspectives on validity
04-14			Examination
04-21	Writing: Practices of reporting and storytelling in qualitative scholarship Funding qualitative research	Kvale & Brinkman (2008), <i>InterViews</i> . Chapter 16. Dicks, Soyinka, & Coffey (2008). Multimodal ethnography. Bourgeault (2012). Critical issues in the funding of qualitative research.	PR: Nontraditional qualitative texts
04-28	Discussion of research projects		
Final exam week			Research project due— date/time TBA

### Required Articles

Most articles can be accessed as Word or PDF files from the Assignments tab of Blackboard; the others can be found through web links.

#### **January 27:**

Rosen, M. (1986). Breakfast at Spiro's: Dramaturgy and dominance. *Journal of Management*, 11, 31-48.

Lindlof, T. R., & Taylor, B. C. (2010). Introduction to qualitative communication research. In *Qualitative communication research methods* (pp. 1-32). Los Angeles, CA: Sage.

Taylor, B. C., & Lindlof, T. R. (2013, October 4). Traveling methods: Tracing the globalization of qualitative communication research. Paper presented at the Qualitative Research in Communication international conference, Bucharest, Romania.

#### **February 3:**

Lindlof, T. R., & Taylor, B. C. (2010). Theoretical traditions and qualitative communication research. In *Qualitative communication research methods* (pp. 33-70). Los Angeles, CA: Sage.

Alvesson & Kärreman (2007). Constructing mystery: Empirical matters in theory development. *Academy of Management Review*, 32, 1265-1281.

Onwuegbuzie, Leech, & Collins (2010). Innovative data collection strategies in qualitative research. *The Qualitative Report*, 15, 696-726.

Van Wynsberghe, R., & Khan, S. (2007). Redefining case study. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 6 (2), Article 6.

[http://www.ualberta.ca/~iiqm/backissues/6\\_2/vanwynsberghe.pdf](http://www.ualberta.ca/~iiqm/backissues/6_2/vanwynsberghe.pdf)

#### **February 10:**

Buscher, M., & Urry, J. (2009). Mobile methods and the empirical. *European Journal of Social Theory*, 12, 99-116.

Hannerz, U. (2003). Being there . . . and there . . . and there! Reflections on multi-site ethnography. *Ethnography*, 4, 201-216.

Malian, Singh, & Giardina (2010). The challenges of participatory research with 'tech-savvy' youth. *Journal of Youth Studies*, 13, 255-272.

Roth, W. D., & Mehta, J. D. (2002). The Rashomon effect: Combining positivist and interpretivist approaches in the analysis of contested events. *Sociological Methods and Research*, 31, 131-173.

Mason, J. (2007). Mixing methods in a qualitatively driven way. *Qualitative Research*, 6, 9-25

### **February 17:**

Novak, D. R. (2010). Democratizing qualitative research: Photovoice and the study of human communication. *Communication Methods & Measures*, 4, 291-310.

Delli Carpini, M. X. & Williams, B. A. (1994). Methods, metaphors, and media research: The uses of television in political conversation. *Communication Research*, 21, 782-812.

### **March 3:**

Knapik, M. (2006). The qualitative research interview: Participants' responsive participation in knowledge making. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 5 (3), Article 6.

[http://www.ualberta.ca/~ijqm/backissues/5\\_3/pdf/knapik.pdf](http://www.ualberta.ca/~ijqm/backissues/5_3/pdf/knapik.pdf)

Shea, C. (2000). Don't talk to the humans. *Lingua Franca*, 10 (6), 27-34.

<http://mailer.fsu.edu/~njumonvi/irb-article.htm>

Hastings, W. (2010). Research and the ambiguity of reflexivity and ethical practice. *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*, 31, 307-318.

### **March 10:**

Musello, C. (1992). Objects in process: Material culture and communication. *Southern Folklore*, 49, 37-59.

Garcia, A. C., Standlee, A. I., Bechkoff, J., & Cui, Y. (2009). Ethnographic approaches to the Internet and computer-mediated communication. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, 38, 52-84.

Siles, I. (2012). Web technologies of the self: The arising of the "blogger" identity. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 17, 408-421.

Osterlund, C. S. (2008). Documents in place: Demarcating places for collaboration in healthcare settings. *Computer Supported Cooperative Work*, 17, 195-225.

### **April 7:**

Maxwell, J. A. (1992). Understanding and validity in qualitative research. *Harvard Educational Review*, 62, 279-300.

**April 21:**

Dicks, B., Soyinka, B., & Coffey, A. (2006). Multimodal ethnography. *Qualitative Research*, 6, 77-96.

Bourgeault, I. L. (2012). Critical issues in the funding of qualitative research. *Journal of Ethnographic and Qualitative Research*, 7, 1-7.