



## Syllabus for Political Science 5033: Research Methods (Qualitative)

### Course Information

College: Liberal Arts  
Department: Political Science  
Course title: Research Methods  
Semester: Fall 2019  
Course number: POL 5033  
CRN: 15628  
Building and Classroom: OKC Carnegie Center (Downtown Campus)  
Meeting Day/Time: Wednesday, 6-8:45 PM

### Instructor Information

Instructor name: Dr. Alyssa L. Provencio  
Office location: Liberal Arts (LAR) 206  
Office hours: By appointment or anytime during regular business hours (M-F, 9 AM-5 PM) via Skype or Google Hangout by request.  
Email (*BEST way to get ahold of me!*): [aprovencio@uco.edu](mailto:aprovencio@uco.edu)

I will respond as soon as possible, within 24 hours, as long as it during regular business hours (M-F, 9 AM-5 PM); I cannot guarantee any responses outside of those hours.

Campus telephone: (405) 974-5537

Personal Google Voice phone number: (405) 896-0906 – This number forwards to my personal cell phone; I cannot receive text messages at this number.

### Course Description and Objectives

#### Course Description

The course explores qualitative data gathering and data analysis procedures relevant to the collection, interpretation, and application of data useful today by social scientists. We focus the bulk of our attention on a review of qualitative methodological approaches offering special attention to tools helpful to political scientists. We also explore the how-to of qualitative methods techniques.

#### Prerequisites

None

#### Course Objectives

- Explore the practical dimensions of qualitative research, such as creating a research design, conducting interviews and observations, and analyzing qualitative data.
- Explore the central concepts, issues, and dilemmas associated with qualitative research.
- Analyze qualitative research studies.
- Become familiar with the principles and methodologies of a number of paradigms within qualitative research.
- Understand a range of ethical considerations involved in conducting qualitative research.

#### Transformational Learning Objectives

This course supports the following tenets of transformative learning:

- Discipline Knowledge—students explore, discuss, and practice the techniques, conventions, and processes that produce researched written arguments.
- Leadership—students learn how to present claims and evidence fairly and civilly, to consider thoroughly and respond ethically to counterevidence and counterarguments, and to develop a clear, well-informed stance about ongoing issues or problems.
- Global and Cultural Competency—students read and write arguments about global and cultural issues and direct writing to diverse audiences.
- Problem Solving (Research, Scholarly, and Creative Activities)—students learn to analyze complex arguments, to produce arguments informed by careful research, and to document sources following academic conventions.
- Service Learning and Civic Engagement—in service learning sections, students research and write about a significant service learning experience; in other sections, students learn how the public use of argument has the

- potential to affect an audience and to effect a change in their communities.
- Health and Wellness—students read arguments about, write arguments about, and discuss those intellectual, emotional, and spiritual issues that give human existence vitality and meaning.

#### Textbook Information

Required: Gorden, R. L. (1998). Basic interviewing skills. Waveland Press. ISBN-13: 9781577660200

Any additional text or materials used will be provided via D2L free of charge.

#### Course Outline, Requirements & Assignment Weights, and Grading

Course Outline - See Appendix A

Course Requirements & Assignment Weights

**More information about the following assignments will be provided in class and via D2L.**

Participation – 10%

Weekly Memos – 15%

Students should prepare a one-page, **single-spaced** memo on each week's readings. The memo should respond to issues or questions raised by the readings; these may refer to concerns related to the readings themselves or their relevance to the student's own research concerns. At the bottom of every memo each person should include one relevant question **per article or chapter**. These should be posted to D2L by 8 AM each Tuesday morning before the class session.

Team Teaching – 10%

Throughout the semester, students (in groups) will present qualitative research studies. The groups must collaboratively select the study, as well as plan and lead discussion about the study in class. The team will:

- 1) Summarize key findings
- 2) Analyze the research methods used
- 3) Highlight the theories used
- 4) Critique the study
- 5) Help the class engage in critical Q&A

I will be available to help the teams select the study, access necessary resources, or generally assist in whatever way I can.

Sample Literature Review – 5%

A sampling of five academic journal articles that are related to the topic of your choice and a short paragraph summarizing the article, including methods and key findings **for each article**. The articles must be from high-quality, academic, peer-reviewed journals. They can come from any discipline, but preferably related to public administration. In addition, a 300-word (minimum) overview of how the literature ties together is required.

Ethics Training – 5%

All students must complete CITI training. More information will be provided.

Ethics Consent Form – 5%

Draft of an IRB-based consent form for your interview and a 300-word overview of ethical considerations based on a hypothetical research question of your choice.

Bias Examination – 5%

A 300-word examination of personal bias and privilege that may affect your research, also using the hypothetical research question as your frame of reference.

Interview Session – 10%

Conduct an interview and record (audio) the interview; this person cannot be someone that you know personally (e.g., friend or colleague). In a separate memo, describe your interview techniques and critique your attempt (300-word minimum).

Participant Observation – 10% - Conduct a participant observation at a public location, such as a library, coffee shop, park, or open public meeting.

Interview Transcription – 5%

Transcribe the interview in its entirety or up to 30 minutes of the interview (whichever is shorter). In a separate memo, describe and critique your attempt at transcription (300-word minimum).

Interview Coding – 5%

Using in vivo or descriptive coding, code your interview. Write about the major themes or topics discussed (300-word minimum).

Reflexive Paper – 15%

In a reflexive paper, explain how you dealt with/learned from your emotions/self/senses from your previous assignments. How did your positionality as the research influence or not influence how you conducted or interpreted your work? Reference previous work and include detailed examples. (1000-word minimum).

## Grade Scale

A 90-100  
B 80-89.9  
C 70-79.9  
D 60-69.9  
F 0-59.9

## Class Policies

### Missing Class & Make-Up Assignments

You are all adults and should make decisions accordingly. It is your responsibility to obtain the information you missed in class and to keep up with any changes in the course outline. That being said, in-class activities cannot be made up. If you need to miss a class due to illness (with doctor's note), family emergency, death in your immediate family, or any other grave matters, please e-mail, phone, or talk to me in person before with justification, if possible. If one of the above circumstances affects your ability to turn in an assignment, please e-mail/phone/talk to me in person before with justification, if possible, PRIOR to the due date. If it is not possible to contact me before the missed class or due date, please contact me as soon as you can.

### Contesting Grades

If you have received a grade on an assignment that you see as unfair, you have the right to contest the grade with a written explanation sent to me by email. I will consider it, but I reserve the right to give the grade initially given with an explanation of why your request was denied.

Final grades will NOT be changed. You will have had ample opportunity to contest your grades on assignments and/or exams. For example, while figuring final grades, if I find you are one point away from the next highest grade, you will receive the lower grade. If you are .1 point from the next highest grade, you will receive the lower grade. I will NOT raise your grade at the end of the semester if you are one or two points away from the next higher grade. What you earned is what you get. If I do it for one person, I will have to do it for all.

### Classroom Expectations

#### *Participation*

The success of a student's performance is directly related to the quantity and quality of preparation for and participation in classes. I fully expect participation and active engagement during class sessions.

#### *Behavior*

I expect appropriate class behavior. The classroom is a learning environment and a preparation for your entry into the workforce, continuation up the workforce ladder, and/or additional higher education. I want you to come to class, exchange ideas, think, have fun, and challenge other students and me intellectually. Arriving to class late, leaving class early, talking during the lecture, sleeping in class, reading newspapers, laying your head on the desk, listening to music, and displaying other inappropriate behavior are not conducive to a learning environment. If you do not want to be in my class, please don't come.

As this class is participatory, I expect that we will be sharing our own ideas/opinions. These ideas/opinions may not always be that of your colleagues. Please be respectful! I take discrimination very seriously. Racist or sexist remarks will be considered a violation of classroom expectations and I reserve the right to refer the offender to the Office of Student Conduct.

If you are being disruptive, I will ask you to leave. If this occurs twice during the semester, you will not be allowed to return to class, and you will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct.

### Technology

Bringing a laptop or iPad type of device to class is fine – in fact, I encourage it. I may even ask you to bring it for an in-class assignment. Use it well! If I catch anyone not using it properly, then I reserve the right to take away this privilege. PLEASE, NO texting during class. Period. If you have a need to have a cell phone on (e.g. if you are an emergency responder, expecting an important call, and/or going through a family emergency), please set your phone on vibrate and inform me in advance.

#### *D2L*

You all will have access to the online-based instruction program Desire2Learn (D2L). I will use D2L a number of ways, including e-mailing the whole class on updates and information, posting course documents (including any updates to the course outline), using it as an assignment submission tool, to post grades, and other activities. We will discuss the use D2L more in class. It is vital that you understand how to use D2L as it is essential to your success in class. If you have questions, please see me for help.

#### *E-mail*

All course e-mails will be sent to your UCO e-mail address; check your e-mails regularly! In addition, when e-mailing me, I ask that you please include POL 5033 and a short descriptor of what your email is about; for example, POL 5033: Interview Questions.

## Fine Print

### Illness

If you are ill/contagious, out of respect for your classmates and me, I request that you do not come to class. If this is the case, please let me know via e-mail. Please refer to “Missing Class & Make-Up Assignments” for further details on how sick days will be handled.

### Incompletes

All students are expected to complete course requirements by the end of the semester. In those rare circumstances in which completion by semester’s end is not possible, I may decide either to submit a final grade based on the work completed or submit a grade of “I” along with a default grade based on work completed. In no case will an “I” grade be submitted unless at least 50% of the required work has been completed by the end of the semester. If an “I” grade is submitted, the student will be allowed no more than one year from the end of the semester to complete course requirements; else, the “I” grade will convert to the default grade.

### Academic Integrity

I seek to uphold equity and fairness in my classroom. Cheating of any kind will not be tolerated in consideration of your fellow students. I abide by UCO’s Academic Dishonesty Policy, which is available in the syllabus attachment. If you are caught violating this policy, I will prosecute to the fullest extent possible.

### ADA Statement Regarding Special Accommodations

The University of Central Oklahoma complies with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Students with disabilities who need special accommodations must make their requests by contacting Disability Support Services, at (405) 974-2516. The DSS Office is located in the Nigh University Center, Room 305. Students should also notify the instructor of special accommodation needs as soon as possible. Per Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (“Title IX”), pregnant and parenting students may request adjustments by contacting the Title IX Coordinator, at (405) 974-3377 or [TitleIX@uco.edu](mailto:TitleIX@uco.edu). The Title IX Office is located in the Lillard Administration Building, Room 114D.

### UCO Policies

Any topic not covered here is covered by university policies.

**Here is the link to the UCO Information Sheet. This information sheet applies to all courses at UCO. The link:**  
<http://www.uco.edu/academic-affairs/files/aa-forms/StudentInfoSheet.pdf>

Appendix A – Course Outline

Week	Date	Themes	Readings (Found on D2L)	Due Tuesday before class by 11:59 PM (on D2L Assignments)
Week 1	8/21/2019	Introductions and Overview – The Nature of Qualitative Research		
Week 2	8/28/2019	Qualitative Research – Ways of Thinking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chapter 1 from McNabb, D. E. (2002). Research methods in public administration and nonprofit management. ME Sharpe.</li> <li>Chapter 2 from Silverman, D. (2017). Doing qualitative research: A practical handbook. SAGE Publications Limited.</li> <li>Guba, E. G., &amp; Lincoln, Y. S. (1994). Competing paradigms in qualitative research. Handbook of qualitative research, 2(163-194), 105.</li> </ul>	
Week 3	9/4/2019	Qualitative Research – What is it and why do it?; Qualitative Research in Action - Modeling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chapter 18 from Silverman, D. (2017). Doing qualitative research: A practical handbook. SAGE Publications Limited.</li> <li>Chapters 4 and 5 from Creswell, J. W. (2013). Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches. Sage.</li> </ul>	
Week 4	9/11/2019	Research Design – Research Question	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chapter 5 from McNabb, D. E. (2002). Research methods in public administration and nonprofit management. ME Sharpe.</li> <li>Chapter 5 and 8 from Silverman, D. (2017). Doing qualitative research: A practical handbook. SAGE Publications Limited.</li> </ul>	
Week 5	9/18/2019	Research Design – Literature Review and Methodology	<p>Literature Review:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Revisit Chapter 18 from Silverman (Do not need to write about again!)</li> <li>Chapter 22 from Silverman, D. (2017). Doing qualitative research: A practical handbook. SAGE Publications Limited.</li> <li>Review UCO Library Guide</li> </ul> <p>Methodology:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chapter 9 from Silverman, D. (2017). Doing qualitative research: A practical handbook. SAGE Publications Limited.</li> </ul>	
Week 6	9/25/2019	Ethics and the Institutional Review Board (IRB)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chapter 2 from McNabb, D. E. (2002). Research methods in public administration and nonprofit management. ME Sharpe.</li> <li>Newman, E., &amp; Kaloupek, D. G. (2004). The risks and benefits of participating in trauma-focused research studies. Journal of traumatic stress, 17(5), 383-394.</li> <li>Martin, D. G. &amp; Inwood, J. (2012). Subjectivity, power, and the IRB. The Professional Geographer, 64(1), 7-15.</li> </ul>	Sample Literature Review
Week 7	10/2/2019	Sampling, Bias, Privilege	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Townsend-Bell, E. (2009). Being true and being you: Race, gender, class, and the fieldwork experience. PS: Political Science &amp; Politics, 42(02), 311-314.</li> <li>McIntosh, P. (2014). White privilege and male privilege.</li> <li>Johnson, A. (2014). Privilege, power, difference, and us.</li> </ul>	Ethics Training and Consent Form

Appendix A – Course Outline

Week 8	10/9/2019	Interviewing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chapter 14 (ONLY “Collecting Interview Data” pp. 282-295) from Silverman, D. (2017). <i>Doing qualitative research: A practical handbook</i>. SAGE Publications Limited.</li> <li>Gorden – Chapters 2-6 (1 question for each chapter in your memo)</li> </ul>	Bias Examination
Week 9	10/16/2019	Focus Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chapter 14 (“Collecting Focus Group Data” pp. 295-298) from Silverman, D. (2017). <i>Doing qualitative research: A practical handbook</i>. SAGE Publications Limited.</li> <li>Beyea, S. C., &amp; Nicoll, L. H. (2000). Methods to conduct focus groups and the moderator's role. <i>AORN journal</i>, 71(5), 1067-1068.</li> <li>Hopkins, P. E. (2007). Thinking critically and creatively about focus groups. <i>Area</i>, 39(4), 528-535.</li> <li>Sagoe, D. (2012). Precincts and prospects in the use of focus groups in social and behavioral science research. <i>The Qualitative Report</i>, 17(15), 1.</li> </ul>	
Week 10	10/23/2019	Participant Observation, Ethnography	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chapter 14 (“Collecting Ethnographic Data” pp. 298-309) from Silverman, D. (2017). <i>Doing qualitative research: A practical handbook</i>. SAGE Publications Limited.</li> <li>Chapter 24 from McNabb, D. E. (2002). <i>Research methods in public administration and nonprofit management</i>. ME Sharpe.</li> <li>Kahn, S. (2011). Putting ethnographic writing in context. <i>Writing spaces: Readings on writing</i>, 2, 175-92.</li> </ul>	Interview
Week 11	10/30/2019	Archival Research and Oral Histories	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chapter 29 from McNabb, D. E. (2002). <i>Research methods in public administration and nonprofit management</i>. ME Sharpe.</li> <li>Harris, C. (2001). Archival fieldwork. <i>Geographical Review</i>, 91(1-2), 328-334.</li> <li>Winders, J. (2001). On the Outside of "In": Power, Participation, and Representation in Oral Histories. <i>Historical Geography</i>, 29, 45-52.</li> </ul>	
Week 12	11/6/2019	Visual Methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Radley, A., Hodgetts, D., &amp; Cullen, A. (2005). Visualizing homelessness: A study in photography and estrangement. <i>Journal of Community &amp; Applied Social Psychology</i>, 15(4), 273-295.</li> <li>Lorenz, L., &amp; Kolb, B. (2009). Involving the public through participatory visual research methods. <i>Health Expectations</i>, 12(3), 262-274.</li> <li>Parkin, S., &amp; Coomber, R. (2009). Value in the visual: On public injecting, visual methods and their potential for informing policy (and change). <i>Methodological Innovations Online</i>, 4(2), 21-36.</li> </ul>	Participant Observation
Week 13	11/13/2019	Content Analysis/Coding/Data Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chapter 31 from McNabb, D. E. (2002). <i>Research methods in public administration and nonprofit management</i>. ME Sharpe.</li> <li>Chapters 1-3 from Saldaña, J. (2015). <i>The coding manual for qualitative researchers</i>. Sage. (1 question for each chapter in your memo)</li> </ul>	Interview Transcription
Week 14	11/20/2019	Critical Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chapters 25-27 from McNabb, D. E. (2002). <i>Research methods in public administration and nonprofit management</i>. ME Sharpe.</li> </ul>	
Week 15	11/27/2019	NO CLASS – Happy Thanksgiving!		

Appendix A – Course Outline

Week 16	12/4/2019	Sharing Results/Writing the Narrative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Chapter 36 from McNabb, D. E. (2002). Research methods in public administration and nonprofit management. ME Sharpe.</li></ul>	Interview Coding
Finals Week	Reflexive Paper due to D2L Assignments by midnight			