**PSYC 415 Qualitative Research Method**

**Mission:** The mission of Forman Christian College (A Chartered University) is to impart, create and disseminate knowledge and develop informed, ethical and responsible citizens who are prepared and committed to learn, lead and serve; persons who exemplify the FCC motto, “***By Love serve one another***”

**Instructor**: Afshi Yahya Khan Course **Information:**

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Class timings: 08:00 to 09:15 am Days: T R

**Office Hours**:

Time: 1:00 to 2:00 MWF (E348)

and also by appointment.

**Course Description:**

This course is An introduction to Qualitative Methods in their various forms and assumptions. Issues of reliability and validity will be discussed. The guidelines of formulating and executing a qualitative research project will be discussed. In order to attempt grounding the assumptions of research and objectivity the history of qualitative research methods will also be examined.

**Textbook:**

Willig, C. (2013). *Introducing qualitative research in psychology*. New York, NY: Open University Press. <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1XQKfHECq09qPfd4KGRi3BYdtIxyzZpcB>

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/11VK4COyIdKIlkzo4Oh9tHMMdOGVokULn37LQEbaOkxY/edit>

**Course Outline**

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| --- | --- |
| Week 1 & 2 | Introduction and Chapter 1: From recipes to adventures (Carla Willig)  Chapter 2: Epistemological Basis of Qualitative Research (Carla Willig) |
| Week 3 | Chapter 1 & 2 Philosophical Assumptions and Interpretive Frameworks (Cresswell)  **(Identify your research topic)** |
| Week 4 | Chapter 3: Qualitative research design and data collection (Carla Willig/ Cresswell) |
| Week 5 | Chapter 4: Role of interpretation (Carla Willig)  **(Goals assignment and Researcher Identity Memo due)** |
| Week 6 | Chapter 6 Doing Research: thematic Analysis (Carla Willig)  Chapter 5: Five Different Qualitative Studies (Creswell)  **(Three Interview Questions due)** |
| Week 7 | Chapter 5: Five Different Qualitative Studies (Cresswell)  **(Conceptual Framework due)** |
| Week 8 | Chapter 10 Doing Research: Discursive Psychology (Carla Willig)  **(Begin working on your interview guides)** |
| Week 9 | Chapter 11: Focauldian discourse analysis (Carla Willig)  **(Begin Interviews)** |
| Week 10 | Data Analysis and representation ( Cresswell)  **(Interview Analysis due)** |
| Week 11 | Writing a qualitative Study ( Cresswell) |
| Week 12 | Complete Proposal Submission |
| Week 13 | Poster Presentation of Proposal ( Recap Sheet) |
| Week 14 | Revision |

**Learning Outcomes**

At the end of the course the student should be able to:

* Understand what qualitative research is and what its findings mean
* Effectively employ qualitative research methods used by psychologists.
* Think critically about psychological concepts, theories and research
* Analyze real world situations using psychological concepts.
* Efficiently use library resources and technology to gather information and solve problems.
* Apply ethical principles of psychologists both personally and through socially responsible behavior.

**Requirement for the course**

PSYC 305 is a formal prerequisite for this course.

**Course Evaluation:**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Criteria for grading** | **Points** | **%age** |
| 1. | Attendance and participation | 20 | 10 |
| 2. | Goals assignment (Personal intellectual practical self reflection) | 10 | 5 |
| 3. | Researcher Identity Memo | 20 | 10 |
| 4. | Three Research Questions | 20 | 10 |
| 4. | Conceptual Framework | 20 | 10 |
| 5. | Interview Assignment | 20 | 10 |
| 6. | Group Presentations (Recap sheet after every class) | 30 | 15 |
| 7. | Final Research Proposal | 40 | 20 |
| 8. | Poster Presentation | 10 | 10 |

The grading system for the course is as follow

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Grades** | **Quality Points** | **Numerical Value** | **Interpretation** |
| A | 4.00 | 93-100 | Superior |
| A- | 3.70 | 90-92 |  |
| B+ | 3.30 | 87-89 |  |
| B | 3.00 | 83-86 | Good |
| B- | 2.70 | 80-82 |  |
| C+ | 2.30 | 77-79 |  |
| C | 2.00 | 73-76 | Satisfactory |
| C- | 1.70 | 70-72 |  |
| D+ | 1.30 | 67-69 |  |
| D | 1.00 | 60-66 | Passing |
| F | 0.00 | 59 or below | Failing |

**Course Policies:**

**Attendance and Punctuality:**

Attendance and punctuality inculcate discipline and discipline is very important for success. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the students to come for class meetings regularly and on time.

**Class Participation:**

Class participation is a very important aspect in active learning. In order to raise the level of effective participation in the class **the students must read the topic before coming to the class.** The students are encouraged to share information relevant to the topic, raise questions, give feedback and **seek help** if a certain point is unclear. Your class participation is also assessed by your participation in assigned activities that occur throughout the course.

**Quizzes:**

There are a total of four quizzes for this course and all of them are based on the research articles that you will read. Each quiz is a total of 10 points and consists of open ended questions that assess your understanding of the research article assigned and specifically the methodology used in that particular research.

**Goals Assignment:**

In this assignment, you will,:

1. Describe the topic that you wish to work with and explain why this topic is well suited to qualitative research (4)
2. Explain your goals for this research, differentiating between three different categories of goals i.e. personal, practical and intellectual goals (See Maxwell reading) (6)

There are a total of 10 points for this assignment

**Researcher Identity Memo (**In order to attempt this, first go through the Maxwell reading. This exercise has been taken from the chapter)

The purpose of this exercise is to help you identify the goals, experiences, assumptions, feelings, and values that are most relevant to your planned research and to reflect on how these could inform and influence your research (See Example 7.1)

I would begin working on this memo by “brainstorming” whatever comes to mind when you think about prior experiences that relate to your topic, and jotting these down without immediately trying to organize or analyze them. Then, try to identify the issues most likely to be important in your research, think about the implications of these, and organize your reflections. There are two broad types of questions that it is productive to reflect on in this memo.

1. What prior experiences have you had that are relevant to your topic or setting? What assumptions about your topic or setting have resulted from these experiences? What goals have emerged from these? How have these experiences, assumptions, and goals shaped your decision to choose this topic, and the way you are approaching this project? (10)
2. What potential advantages do you think these goals, beliefs, and experiences have for your study? What potential disadvantages do you think these may create for you, and how might you deal with these? (10)

There are a total of 20 points for this assignment.

**Three Questions Assignment:**

For this assignment, you will narrow down a topic of interest that you believe is well suited to be investigated qualitatively.

i) Describe this topic and explain how it is best researched using qualitative means. (6)

ii) Construct three research questions on the topic each subscribing to one of the three epistemological positions we have studied i.e. realist, phenomenological and social constructionist. (6)

iii) For each of the questions you construct, explain how a particular research question subscribes to a particular epistemology i.e. explain how your realist question subscribes to a realist epistemology. (8)

There are a total of 20 marks for this assignment.

Limit your responses to 1000 words.

**Conceptual Framework:**

For this assignment, you need to focus on one or two research questions, both of which subscribes to the same epistemology. Hence, you need to decide what **epistemology** you need to move forward with as well as your **research question/s.**As you make decisions on this, you need to have logical reasons for why you have chosen this particular epistemology and how it is best suited to your research goals/questions versus other epistemologies.

You also need to explain your **goals** for the research and why you think this research is **important** and why you think this research is best done using **qualitative methods.**

When you begin working on your conceptual framework, you need to **conceptualize** each part of your research question or the concepts and ideas that are central to your research. Please watch the videos related to putting together a research proposal to understand what is involved in the process of forming a conceptual framework.

<https://youtu.be/PKm5QGvHp8Y>

<https://youtu.be/jK_2w03gInU>

There are a total of 20 points for this assignment and the minimum word limit is 1500 words.

**Interview Assignment**

In order to understand your topic of interest better, you will interview an individual twice and make detailed interview notes. Your assignment will include an interpretation of your interview notes and a detailed analysis keeping your conceptual framework in mind.

* A discussion of your goals for this research
* Your research questions (Within this you will also discuss your epistemic assumptions)
* Your conceptual framework
* A discussion of why you chose this particular person to interview
* Ethical considerations
* Reflexivity
* Analysis

There are a total of 20 points for this assignment.

**Final Proposal and Poster Presentation**

Your proposal for your qualitative research has to include the following points:

* An *introduction* to your research *topic* which will include a *discussion* of the *goals* of your research.
* A *conceptual* *framework* which will *incorporate* a literature review. In your conceptual framework, you elaborate upon your *theory* of the phenomenon under study. This theory is informed by existing theory, research studies and your pilot research projects.
* Your research questions
* Your proposed *methods* which will include your *participants* and their demographics/other important characteristics, a discussion of your *access* to participants, questions of *ethics*, *data* *collection* procedures and your *methods* of *analyzing* data. You should elaborate on each point and explain your choice of using a particular method against another (Hence this section will include a discussion of the various data collection methods and research methods and their relative advantages and disadvantages AND how your proposed method makes sense given your research questions, conceptual framework and goals.

This section will also take into account your *epistemic* *assumptions* and your *reflexivity*.

Your proposal is graded on how coherent your research is as a whole in terms of whether the research design makes sense given the research questions, goals and conceptual framework and how each of these parts relate to one another. Additionally you will be evaluated on how well you are able to articulate and explain each step of the research process. Your proposal makes up 20% of your grade.

Your poster presentation will discuss all of the above points AND give an overview of how your research has evolved since the selection of your research topic till the present moment. You are encouraged to be creative in your presentation of this information and are welcome to experiment with your poster. Your poster presentation makes up 10% of your grade.

**Academic Integrity:**

It is expected of the students that they will be honest in their assignments and refrain from cheating or plagiarism. Cheating is referred to offering help to other students or any consultation under exam conditions, possessing any material that will aid in the quiz/exam and looking at others answer sheets. Plagiarism refers to the use of another person’s ideas or words without acknowledging the author. This refers to any material such as websites, articles, books, or another student’s paper. Please refer to the student’s handbook for further details about plagiarism. Note any form of plagiarism will be reported to AIC or the student will get an F.