

**SOCIOLOGY 5113**  
**Qualitative Methods**  
**Sept – Dec 2017**  
**Tuesday 11:30-2:30**  
**RB 2027**

**Dr. Barbara Parker**

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**Welcome to SOC 5113 Qualitative Methods.** In this course, we will examine qualitative sociological research methodology, methods and epistemology. We will explore the relationship between theory and methodology and query why and when qualitative research methods are best employed. This will involve thinking about ethical issues relating to a qualitative research process. We will learn how to conduct qualitative research by designing a research methodology and undertake techniques in observational research, interviewing skills and critical self-reflexivity. Finally, emphasis will be placed on working through qualitative analysis and writing up results.

### **LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

- Develop knowledge of the synergy between epistemology, methods and methodology in qualitative research;
- Understand methods employed in qualitative research design;
- Understand significance of ethics and self reflexivity in qualitative projects;
- Propose a qualitative project;
- Understand the relationship between qualitative research and the construction of theory; and
- Develop university-level research, analytical and writing skills.

### **REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS**

1. *Qualitative Inquiry & Research Design: Choosing Among Five Approaches*, (2018), by John W. Creswell and Cheryl N. Poth.

2. *Qualitative Research in Action: A Canadian Primer*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. (2015), by Deborah K. van den Hoonaard.

\*\* Additional required readings will be posted on the Desire to Learn (D2L) course website that accompanies this course.

## HOW THE COURSE IS ORGANIZED

This is a seminar course and as such, requires your full participation. This means that you are required to come each week to class with the readings done. You should be prepared to discuss the content and provide critical observations or reflections on the weekly assigned materials. Seminars work best when everyone is informed and there is a collective sense of curiosity and interest in the subject. To this end, we will take turns facilitating our seminar class. Regardless if it is your turn to facilitate, you are expected to read and reflect on the readings, and bring questions and comments for discussion to each class.

If you have questions, at any time during this course, please visit me in my Office Hours (as listed above) or contact me through email at: [barbara.parker@lakeheadu.ca](mailto:barbara.parker@lakeheadu.ca)

**Please note:** I will only respond to emails sent from a Lakehead university email account. Also in the subject heading, please put the Course Number (SOC 5113). Please recognize that I will do my best to reply to your emails within 24 hours.

**CLASSROOM ETTIQUETTE:** As a courtesy to your peers and the instructor, please turn off or mute all phones and be advised that laptops are only to be used in the classroom for note-taking purposes.

**LEARNING ACCOMODATIONS:** Lakehead University is committed to achieving full accessibility for persons with disabilities. Part of this commitment includes arranging academic accommodations for students with disabilities to ensure they have an equitable opportunity to participate in all of their academic activities. If you think you may need accommodations, you are strongly encouraged to contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) and register as early as possible. For more information, please visit: <http://studentaccessibility.lakeheadu.ca>

**PLAGIARISM & ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT:** Plagiarism is a serious academic offence. Please take the time to familiarize yourself with what it means to plagiarize the words or ideas of others and your responsibilities as a student at Lakehead University. From the Course Calendar:

<http://navigator.lakeheadu.ca/Catalog/ViewCatalog.aspx?pageid=viewcatalog&catalogid=21&chapterid=3506&loaduserredits=False>

Plagiarism shall be deemed to include:

1. Plagiarism of ideas as where an idea of an author or speaker is incorporated into the body of an assignment as though it were the writer's idea, i.e. no credit is given the person through referencing or footnoting or endnoting.
2. Plagiarism of words occurs when phrases, sentences, tables or illustrations of an author or speaker are incorporated into the body of a writer's own, i.e. no quotations or indentations (depending on the format followed) are present but referencing or footnoting or endnoting is given.
3. Plagiarism of ideas and words as where words and an idea(s) of an author or speaker

are incorporated into the body of a written assignment as though they were the writer's own words and ideas, i.e. no quotations or indentations (depending on format followed) are present and no referencing or footnoting or endnoting is given.

The following rules shall govern the treatment of candidates who have been found guilty of attempting to obtain academic credit dishonestly.

(a) The minimum penalty for a candidate found guilty of plagiarism, or of cheating on any part of a course will be a zero for the work concerned.

(b) A candidate found guilty of cheating on a formal examination or a test, or of serious or repeated plagiarism, or of unofficially obtaining a copy of an examination paper before the examination is scheduled to be written, will receive zero for the course and may be expelled from the University.

If you have questions, consult the professor.

## COURSE EVALUATION

Self-Reflexivity Paper.....	10% (Due: Sept 19)
Ethics: Tri-Council Policy Certificate & Commentary....	10% (Due: Oct 17)
Participant Observation.....	10% (Due: Oct 24)
Conducting an Interview.....	10% (Due: Nov 7)
Developing Qualitative Methodology.....	30% (Due: Dec 5 by 4pm)
Seminar Participation.....	30%

\* **Late Penalty** Students are reminded that late assignments will be penalized 5% per day, including weekends and holidays, unless PRIOR approval for an extension has been obtained.

## EVALUATION INFORMATION

All assignments will be discussed in class and you will have the opportunity to ask questions about expectations. Please note that unless otherwise specified, assignments are due in class on the due date. All written work will be evaluated based on organization, presentation, grammar and clarity as well as content. Ensure that all assignments are double-spaced in 12 font, with a title page. Finally, you are required to use ASA (American Sociological Association) Referencing Style for all assignments. See:

<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/583/1/>

It is suggested that for your benefit, keep a back up copy of all work.

## 1. Self-Reflexivity Paper (10%)

An important piece of qualitative research is self-reflexivity. Identify a piece of qualitative research (journal article or book) that interests you, and discuss the role played by your own social location in shaping your interest and choice of reading. Include a discussion of how your social location affects:

- the kinds of research / research questions that interest you;
- your philosophical or theoretical approach to research;
- what you are able to find out as you do research; and
- with reference to your identified interest, are there ways in which your social location constrains what you can learn?

Your assignment will be 5 pages in length, double-spaced in 12 font, with a title page and references page in ASA style.

\*\* You may find it helpful to use the list of selected qualitative journals I will provide for you OR see Appendix A in the van den Hoonaard textbook for a selected list of Canadian qualitative research resources.

## 2. Ethics - Tri-Council Policy Statement (TCPS) Certificate & Commentary - 10%

Please complete and submit the TCPS 2 tutorial certificate to me by the due date. As part of this assignment, you must also complete the newly added Module 9, *Research Involving the First Nations, Inuit and Métis People of Canada*, located at the same link provided below.

The link for the tutorial is located at: <http://www.pre.ethics.gc.ca/eng/education/tutorial-didacticiel/>

Please note that there can be difficulties with registering to complete the tutorial so begin the registration process early to avoid delays. Once you begin, the tutorial plus Module 9 will take you 3.5-4 hours to complete.

Please bring to class a **2-3 page commentary with 2 critical questions** on **October 17<sup>th</sup>** that you can share with the class. You will be required to hand in your commentary at the end of class so please ensure you have a title page.

## 3. Participant Observation - 10%

For this assignment you will choose some type of social setting that you can observe social life without interacting with others such as the library, the mall, a restaurant or cafeteria, a church, a waiting room, a hotel lobby, a bar, a bus depot, the airport etc. It is suggested that

you choose a time to observe unobtrusively for approximately 30 minutes. You will record your observations, which you will hand in as an attachment to your paper.

From your observation notes, write up an analytical and reflexive paper that demonstrates your knowledge of the process that is 5 pages in length, double-spaced with 12 font. Please include a separate title page and references page using ASA style.

#### **4. Interview Techniques – 10%**

For this assignment, you are required to work with a classmate to develop a set of research questions based on your conversation of a specific issue or idea (from the media, an experience you have had). Once you have developed questions together (I will provide time in class for this activity), you will arrange a time outside of class to conduct a mock interview with one another and then practice your interview techniques. If you are each agreeable, audio record the process of asking each other the interview questions and take notes of the process. Once you have completed the mock interview, transcribe a minimum of 15 minutes of the audio recording, and then write up an analytical and reflexive paper of the process.

Your paper will be 5 pages in length, double-spaced in 12 font. Please include a separate title page, references page using ASA style and attach the transcript of your mock interview.

#### **5. Developing Qualitative Methodology – 30%**

For this assignment, you are required to develop a qualitative research proposal. This will include identifying a research question (with rationale & supporting literature review) and methodology with clear methods for approaching your research study. The methodology should be outlined, including why it is appropriate and important for your particular research study. Describe how you will collect data including recruitment strategies. Do not forget to include any ethical considerations emerging in the construction of your research design.

Your final assignment will be 15-20 pages in length, double-spaced in 12 font. Please include a separate title page and references page in ASA style. As well, attach any appendices as required.

#### **6. Seminar Participation (30%)**

This is a seminar course and therefore requires your active engagement. You are expected to come to class prepared to discuss issues raised by the readings, even if it is not your week to facilitate the seminar or present the readings. During the term I may request that you attend a guest lecture on campus if the content of the lecture aligns with our focus of

study in qualitative methodologies. I will give you advance notice and expect that you will attend with a concession to our regularly scheduled class.

Your grade will reflect a mark assigned by your classmates (10%), self-assessment (10%) and the Instructor (10%). In the final class, there will be time allotted to assign a mark for your colleagues and do a self-evaluation. I recommend that you keep a journal each week where you note your thoughts about your own and your colleagues' participation, which can then assist you in assigning a grade at the end of Term.

In my assessment of participation I consider the following:

- attendance;
- completion of required readings;
- participation level (i.e. none, little, active, above the norm);
- level of analysis and/or critique of readings;
- pertinence of comments to course content;
- willingness to ask for clarification and identify problem areas in the readings;
- ability to link specific readings to the broader themes of the course;
- ability to present summaries of readings when requested; and
- ability to respond to questions posed by classmates / professor.

In thinking about participation, I encourage you to think about your own contributions and those of your classmates to furthering our discussion and understanding of the theories and praxis of qualitative methodology.

You may choose to use other criteria than those suggested above, but be sure to apply your criteria consistently for all your peers and across the term.

**READINGS BY WEEK** \* Please note that all readings are in the textbook or on the D2L website that accompanies this course.

## **Week 1 – Sept 5**

### **Welcome & Overview: Introduction to Qualitative Research**

Review Syllabus and discuss expectations

Readings:

Chapter 1 (1-14), *Introduction*, in Creswell & Poth

Chapter 1 (1-11), *Introduction*, in van den Hoonaard

**Week 2 – Sept 12**  
**Epistemology and Meaningful Knowledge**

Readings:

Chapter 2 (15-38), *Philosophical Assumptions and Interpretive Frameworks*, in Creswell & Poth

Chapter 2 (12-33), *Asking Questions and Identifying Goals*, in van den Hoonaard

Carter, S. M., & M. Little (2007). Justifying Method, Taking Action: Epistemologies, Methodologies and Methods in Qualitative Research. *Qualitative Health Research* 17(10): 1316-28.

**Week 3 – Sept 19**  
**Reflexivity and the Intersections of Social Location**

Readings:

Broom, A., K. Hand & P. Tovey, (2009). The Role of Gender, Environment and Individual Biography in Shaping Qualitative Interview Data, *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 12(1): 51-65.

Finlay, L., (2002). Outing the Researcher: The Provenance, Process and Practice of Reflexivity. *Qualitative Health Research*, 12(4): 531-45.

Manderson, L., E. Bennett & S. Andajani-Sutjahjo, (2006). The Social Dynamics of the Interview: Age, Class and Gender. *Qualitative Health Research* p. 1317-1334.

**Week 4 – Sept 26**  
**Designing Qualitative Research & Data Collection**

Readings:

Chapter 3 (34-54), *Strategies for Designing Research*, in van den Hoonaard

Chapter 6 (127-146), *Introducing and Focusing the Study*, in Creswell & Poth

Chapter 7 (147-180), *Data Collection*, in Creswell & Poth

**Week 5 – Oct 3**

**NO CLASS**– Please use this time to complete the TCPS 2 Ethics Tutorial including Module 9: *Research Involving the First Nations, Inuit and Métis People of Canada*

## **Week 6 – Oct 10**

### **NO CLASS FALL READING WEEK**

## **Week 7 – Oct 17**

### **Ethical Issues and Confidentiality in Qualitative Research**

#### Readings:

Doucet, A. & Mauthner, N. S., (2002). Knowing Responsibility: Linking Ethics, Research Practice and Epistemology. In *Ethics in Qualitative Research*, edited by M. Mauthner, M. Birch, J. Jesop & T. Miller, pgs. 123-145.

Cochran, P. A.L., Marshall, C., Garcia-Downing, C., Kendall, E., Cook, D., McCubbin, L., & Gover, R.M.S. (2008). Indigenous Ways of Knowing: Implications for Participatory Research and Community, *American Journal of Public Health*, 98(1): 22-27.

Chapter 4 (55-74), *Ethics on the Ground: A Moral Compass*, in van den Hoonaard

## **Week 8 – Oct 24**

### **Community-Based Research, Indigenous Peoples and Social Justice**

Martin, D. (2012). Two-eyed seeing: a framework for understanding indigenous and non-indigenous approaches to indigenous health research. *Canadian Journal of Nursing Research*, 44(2): 20-42.

Graveline, F. J., (2000). Circle as methodology: Enacting an Aboriginal paradigm, *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 13:4, 361-370.

USAI Research Framework: Utility, Self-Voicing, Access, Inter-relationality, developed by: Ontario Federation of Indian Friendship Centres, 2012. Available as a PDF on D2L or at: <http://ofifc.org/research/research/research>

Please review the **OCAP Principles** at: <http://fnigc.ca/node/2>

## **Week 9 – Oct 31**

### **Ethnography and Observation**

Chapter 5 (75-98), *Observing Social Life through Field Research*, in van den Hoonaard

Kontos, P. (2004). Ethnographic reflections on selfhood, embodiment and Alzheimer's disease. *Aging and Society*, 24: 829-849.



Buscatto, M. (2011). *Using Ethnography to Study Gender*, Ch 3 in *Qualitative Research*, edited by D. Silverman, pgs 35-52.

Optional Reading:

Appendix E in Creswell. *An Ethnography – “British Born Pakistani and Bangladeshi Young Men: Exploring Unstable Concepts of Muslim, Islamophobia and Racialization”* pgs. 384-406.

## **Week 10 – Nov 7**

### **Interviewing**

Chapter 6 (99-119), In-Depth Interviewing, in van den Hoonaard

DeVault, M. L., (2004). *Talking and Listening from Women’s Standpoint: Feminist strategies for Interviewing and Analysis*, in *Feminist Perspectives on Social Research*, edited by S. Nagy Hesse-Biber & M. L. Yaiser, pgs. 227-250.

Carpiano, R.M. (2009). Come take a walk with me: The go-along interview as a novel method for studying the implications of place for health and well-being, in *Health & Place*, 15: 263-272.

## **Week 11 – Nov 14**

### **Institutional Ethnography**

**Guest Lecturer Dr. Jennifer Chisholm**

Smith, D. *The Ruling Relations*.

Widerberg, K. (2004). Institutional Ethnography: towards a productive sociology, an interview with Dorothy E. Smith, *Sociologisk Tidsskrift*, 2(12): 179-184.

## **Week 12 – Nov 21**

### **Analysis and Interpretation**

Chapter 8 (181-223), *Data Analysis and Representation*, in Creswell & Poth  
Chapter 9 (155-171), *Trust the Process: Analyzing Qualitative Data*, in van den Hoonaard

Pope, C., Ziebland, S., and Mays, N. (2000). Analyzing Qualitative Data. *British Medical Journal*, 320: 114-116.

Hsieh, H, F., and Shanon, S. E., (2005). Three Approaches to Qualitative Health Research, *Qualitative Health Research*. 15(9): 1277-1288.

**Week 13 – Nov 28**  
**Writing Qualitative Research**

Chapter 9 (225-251), *Writing a Qualitative Study*, in Creswell & Poth.

Frank, A. (2004). After Methods, the Story: From Incongruity to Truth in Qualitative Research, *Qualitative Health Research* 14: 430-440.

\*\* Please note that the Readings may change with notice from the Professor.