

Brescia University College
Department of Sociology
Qualitative Research
Sociology 3307F
Fall 2016

Instructor: Prof. Rebecca Collins-Nelsen **E-mail:** rcolli32@uwo.ca

Class Times: Mondays 10:30am – 1:30 pm in BR-203

Office Hours: Thursdays 1:25 – 2:25 pm and by appointment **Office:** UH-352

Antirequisites: Sociology 3310F/G or Sociology 3311F/G.

Prerequisites: Enrolment in a Sociology Honours Specialization with a minimum grade of 60% in Sociology 2205A/B and 2206A/B or the former 231. If not in an Honours Specialization, a minimum grade of 70% in Sociology 2205A/B and 2206A/B or the former 231.

Course Description

This course is designed to teach students about a variety of qualitative research methods that are used to analyze the social world. This course will also explore how qualitative research fits in with broader debates in sociology such as the purpose of sociological research, how to research ethically, and what role reflexivity plays in research. Further, students will learn about specific qualitative practices such as interviewing, content analyses, ethnographies and case studies. Students will also get a chance to apply the knowledge they learn in class by collecting and analyzing data for their own small research project. Throughout this course students will be challenged to apply their “sociological imagination” as they engage in hands on research and analysis.

Learning Outcomes

When you have completed this course you should be able to:

- Recognize, make distinctions, and evaluate different qualitative research approaches (Critical Thinking)
- Understand the practical and ethical responsibilities that are involved with being a qualitative researcher (Social Awareness and Engagement; Self-Awareness and Engagement)

- Formulate effective research questions that can be answered using qualitative research methods (Problem Solving)
- Conduct a literature review and design a small research project (Inquiry and Analysis; Problem Solving)
- Gather and analyze data using sociological techniques (Problem Solving; Valuing)
- Effectively communicate the findings from a small research project in presentation and written form (Inquiry and Analysis; Communication)

Required Reading Materials

Hesse-Biber, Sharlene Nagy. 2016. *The Practice of Qualitative Research*. Third Edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

* The following additional readings will be posted on OWL:

1. Charmaz, Kathy. 2004. "Premises, Principles and Practices in Qualitative Research: Revisiting the Foundations." *Qualitative Health Research* 14(7): 976-993.
2. Smith, Linda Tuhiwai. 1999. "Introduction" pp. 1-18 in *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*. London: Zed Books Ltd.
3. Baez, Benjamin. 2002. "Confidentiality in Qualitative Research: Reflections on Secrets, Power and Agency." *Qualitative Research* 2(1): 35-58.
4. Shaffir, William. 2009. "On Piecing the Puzzle: Researching Hassidic Jews" pp. 212-225 in *Ethnographies Revisited: Constructing Theory in the Field*, edited by Antony J. Puddephatt, William Shaffir and Steven W. Kleinknecht. New York: Routledge.
5. DeVault, Marjorie and Liza McCoy. 2004. "Institutional Ethnography: Using Interviews to Investigate Ruling Relations" pp. 191-205 in *Critical Strategies for Social Research*, edited by William K. Carroll. Canadian Scholars' Press.
6. Broom, Alex, Kelly Hand and Philip 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.
7. Elliott, Jane. 2005. "The Researcher as Narrator: Reflexivity in Qualitative And Quantitative Research." Pp 152-59 in *Using Narrative in Social Research: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*, edited Jane Elliott. London: Sage.

8. Williams, Christine L. 1992. "The Glass Escalator: Hidden Advantages for Men in the 'Female' Professions" *Social Problems*. 39(3): 253-267.
9. Wingfield, Adia. 2009. "Racializing the Glass Escalator: Reconsidering Men's Experiences in Women's Work." *Gender & Society* 23(1):5-26.

It is essential that readings are done prior to class as the lectures and class discussions are designed under the assumption that students have read the required material.

Grading Scheme

Course Participation	10%
Research Proposal	15%
Mid Term Exam	25%
Presentation	15%
Final Paper	35%

Mid Term Exam

There will only be one exam for this course and it will take place in class on **November 7th**. The exam will include short and long answer questions requiring students to engage and reflect on readings, concepts, and discussions from class. More information will be given about the exam in class.

Research Proposal

Each student will be expected to hand in a research proposal for a small qualitative research project. Most of the work leading up to the proposal will be done in groups but each student is expected to individually hand in a proposal. The proposals will include an introduction, research questions, an annotated bibliography, a discussion regarding ethics, letter of information, consent form, and interview guide. Some of those components will be consistent among the group members and others will be written individually. More information regarding this assignment will be provided in class and posted on OWL.

Presentation

The presentations will take place in class on **December 5th**. They will be done in groups and be in the form of a conference presentation poster. The poster and presentation should outline the study that was conducted, the analysis, and the findings. More details regarding the expectations of the presentations will be provided in class.

Final Paper

The final research paper will be a culmination of the work that has been accomplished throughout the course. Students will analyze the primary data that they have collected over the course of this class to write their final paper. The final paper will include an introduction, a methods section, and an analysis section. While much of the work throughout the project is done in collaboration with group members the analysis of the final paper must reflect each student's own interpretation of the interview data. More information regarding the final paper will be provided in class and posted on OWL.

Course Schedule

Note: This schedule is subject to minor changes

Fall Semester		
Day	Topic	Chapter
September 12th	Introduction to Qualitative Research	Ch. 1
September 19th	Methodological Approaches and Design of Qualitative Research	Ch. 2 and 3 Article 1
September 26th	Practical and Ethical Considerations	Ch. 4 Article 2 and 3
October 3rd	Interviewing as Data Collection: In-Depth, Oral History, Focus Group	Ch. 5 - 7
October 10th	THANKSGIVING	No Class
October 17th	Ethnographies Research Proposals DUE	Ch. 8 Article 4 and 5
October 24th	Reflexivity/Content Analysis	Ch. 9 Article 6 and 7
October 31st	Case Study and Mixed Methods Approaches	Ch. 10 and 11
November 7th	Mid Term Exam	STUDY
November 14th	Analysis and Interpretation of Qualitative Data	Ch. 12 Article 8 and 9
November 21st	Analysis and Interpretation of Qualitative Data	Review Collected Data

November 28th	Writing and Representation of Qualitative Data	Ch.13
December 5th	Group Presentations Final Paper Due	

2016-17 BRESCIA UNIVERSITY COLLEGE ACADEMIC POLICIES AND REGULATIONS

1. POLICY REGARDING MAKEUP EXAMS AND EXTENSIONS OF DEADLINES

When a student requests academic accommodation (e.g., extension of a deadline, a makeup exam) for work representing 10% or more of the student's overall grade in the course, it is the responsibility of the student to provide acceptable documentation to support a medical or compassionate claim. All such requests for academic accommodation **must** be made through an Academic Advisor and include supporting documentation. Academic accommodation for illness will be granted only if the documentation indicates that the onset, duration and severity of the illness are such that the student could not reasonably be expected to complete her academic responsibilities. Minor ailments typically treated by over-the-counter medications will not normally be accommodated. Documentation shall be submitted as soon as possible to the student's Academic Advisor indicating the period of illness and when the student should be able to resume academic responsibilities. Students must submit their documentation along with a request for relief specifying the nature of the accommodation being requested no later than two business days after the date specified for resuming responsibilities. Appropriate academic accommodation will be determined by the Dean's Office in consultation with the student's instructor(s). Please note that personal commitments (e.g., vacation flight bookings, work schedule) which conflict with a scheduled test, exam or course requirement are **not** grounds for academic accommodation.

A UWO Student Medical Certificate (SMC) is **required** if a student is seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds. This documentation should be obtained at the time of the initial consultation with the physician/nurse practitioner or walk-in clinic. A SMC can be downloaded from: <http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/2016/pg117.html> The student must request documentation sufficient to demonstrate that her ability to meet academic responsibilities was seriously affected. Please note that under University Senate regulations documentation stating simply that the student "was seen for a medical reason" or "was ill" is **not** adequate to support a request for academic accommodation.

Whenever possible, requests for academic accommodation should be initiated in advance of due dates, examination dates, etc. Students must follow up with their professors and Academic Advisor in a timely manner.

The full policy on requesting accommodation due to illness can be viewed at: http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_illness.pdf

2. ACADEMIC CONCERNS

If you feel that you have a medical or personal problem that is interfering with your work, contact your instructor and Academic Advisor as soon as possible. Problems may then be documented and possible arrangements to assist you can be discussed at the time of occurrence rather than on a retroactive basis. Retroactive requests for academic accommodation on medical or compassionate grounds may not be considered.

If you think that you are too far behind to catch up or that your work load is not manageable, you should consult an Academic Advisor. If you consider reducing your workload by dropping one or more courses, this must be done by the appropriate deadlines (refer to the Registrar's website, www.registrar.uwo.ca, for

official dates). You should consult with the course instructor and the Academic Advisor who can help you consider alternatives to dropping one or more courses. *Note that dropping a course may affect OSAP eligibility and/or Entrance Scholarship eligibility.*

The Dean may refuse permission to write the final examination in a course if the student has failed to maintain satisfactory academic standing throughout the year or for too frequent absence from the class or laboratory (<http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/2016/pg130.html>)

3. ABSENCES

Short Absences: If you miss a class due to a minor illness or other problems, check your course outline for information regarding attendance requirements and make sure you are not missing a test or assignment. Cover any readings and arrange to borrow notes from a classmate. Contact the course instructor if you have any questions.

Extended Absences: If you have an extended absence, you should contact the course instructor and an Academic Advisor. Your course instructor and Academic Advisor can discuss ways for you to catch up on missed work and arrange academic accommodations, if appropriate.

4. POLICY ON CHEATING & ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site: <http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/2016/pg113.html>

Students are responsible for understanding the nature of and avoiding the occurrence of plagiarism and other academic offences. Students are urged to read the section on Scholastic Offences in the Academic Calendar. Note that such offences include plagiarism, cheating on an examination, submitting false or fraudulent assignments or credentials, impersonating a candidate, or submitting for credit in any course without the knowledge and approval of the instructor to whom it is submitted, any academic work for which credit has previously been obtained or is being sought in another course in the University or elsewhere. Students are advised to consult the section on Academic Misconduct in the Western Academic Calendar.

If you are in doubt about whether what you are doing is inappropriate or not, consult your instructor, the Student Services Centre, or the Registrar. A claim that "you didn't know it was wrong" is not accepted as an excuse.

The penalties for a student guilty of a scholastic offence (including plagiarism) include refusal of a passing grade in the assignment, refusal of a passing grade in the course, suspension from the University, and expulsion from the University.

Plagiarism:

Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea or a passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence (see Scholastic Offence Policy in the Western Academic Calendar).

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com.

Computer-marked Tests/exams:

Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate

cheating. Software currently in use to score computer-marked multiple-choice tests and exams performs a similarity review as part of standard exam analysis.

5. PROCEDURES FOR APPEALING ACADEMIC EVALUATIONS

All appeals of a grade must be directed first to the course instructor. If the student is not satisfied with the decision of the course instructor, a written appeal signed by the student must be sent to the Department Chair. If the response of the department is considered unsatisfactory to the student, she may then submit a signed, written appeal to the Office of the Dean. Only after receiving a final decision from the Dean may a student appeal to the Senate Review Board Academic. A Guide to Appeals is available from the Ombudsperson's Office, or you can consult an Academic Advisor. Students are advised to consult the section on Student Academic Appeals under Academic Rights and Responsibilities in the Western Academic Calendar (<http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/2016/pg112.html>)

6. PREREQUISITES AND ANTIREQUISITES

Unless you have either the prerequisites for a course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you will be removed from the course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisite(s).

Similarly, you will also be deleted from a class list if you have previously taken an antirequisite course unless this has the approval of the Dean. These decisions may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course because you have taken an antirequisite course.

7. SUPPORT SERVICES

The Brescia University College Registrar's website, with a link to Academic Advisors, is at <http://brescia.uwo.ca/academics/registrar-services/> . The website for the Student Development Centre at Western is at <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/> . Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health @ Western http://uwo.ca/health/mental_wellbeing/ for information including a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

Portions of this document were taken from the Academic Calendar, the Handbook of Academic and Scholarship Policy and the Academic Handbook of Senate Regulations. This document is a summary of relevant regulations and does not supersede the academic policies and regulations of the Senate of the University of Western Ontario.