

Course Introduction

Introduction to Qualitative Interviewing and Data Collection

“You can’t fix by analysis what is lacking in the design.”

Numerous researchers and writers

I. Themes from 240 final papers

A. In general, VERY GOOD DRAFTS. The class is making progress. Efforts in applying concepts learned during 240 were evident.

B. Big improvements in writing and editing. APA style much better.

C. Make sure there’s congruence between the research questions and Method—always go back and review research questions as you are writing the Method sections. *This is especially important for your Analysis Plan.*

D. Don’t need hypotheses for straight descriptive or exploratory studies; only for correlational and evaluative designs

E. Those papers that added a table showing the variables, their types of measure (nominal, ratio, etc.), and their attributes were clearer in general

F. Limitations of study in Method section—be more systematic about identifying these (address measurement error & various types of validity, reliability, sample and generalization to population). Selection bias in sampling procedures is a common limitation in many studies that do not involve randomization. In qualitative studies, selection bias is expected and usually is not mentioned.

G. Some of your projects have *criteria for study inclusion* (e.g. by age, or disability, or diagnosis, or agency involvement, or types of organization). Make sure you label this as such (“criteria for inclusion in the study are...”). This makes it clearer for the reader. This can be done in the Sample section, but also may be foreshadowed in your Introduction and Research Questions. In the Method section under Procedures, you might have a screening procedure to determine eligibility for inclusion. Then your *sampling frame* would be a list of those who already have met criteria for inclusion in your study.

H. IRB and Human Subjects Concerns: think of Informed Consent procedures as part of your Method procedures. There should be a clear integration of tasks to obtain informed consent and your general procedures (sampling, interview, etc.), even the human subjects is a separate section.

II. Course overview

A. Broad objectives of course; weekly topics

B. Assignments and readings

C. Labs

III. Review of research designs—class exercise

IV. Review of first assignment: Qualitative Interview Guide

V. Instrument design 101—exercise and discussion

VI. Next week's focus:

A. Qualitative interview guides

B. Narrative and ethnographic research

C. Writing field notes

D. More on Assignment #1

VII. Study questions for this week's reading:

A. Warren, C. A. B. (2000). Writing the other, inscribing the self. *Qualitative Sociology*, 23(2), 183-199.

- What does this description of fieldnotes have to do with scientific inquiry?
- What are the similarities and differences of the purposes of fieldnotes to what you are learning about social work practice?
- How might fieldnotes fit into your Method section?
- If you were asked to write a brief paragraph on your personal biases or hidden assumptions about your topic area, what would it say?
- How much do you identify with the population you would be studying?

B. Study questions for Creswell chapters:

- Do any of the data collection methods for the five approaches seem more familiar or comfortable to you than others?
- What are the commonalities and differences of data collection procedures among the five approaches?
- Take a look at some convenient text (such as a newspaper article or a page in a novel), and think about themes that could be coded. Identify a central theme, then secondary themes that provide context.
- If you were writing a narrative of your life begin, how would it begin?