

**QUALITATIVE RESEARCH FOR SECOND LANGUAGE EDUCATORS
INTR 573
WHEATON COLLEGE GRADUATE SCHOOL**

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Department Mission Statement: Our mission is to develop Christian professionals skilled in theory and practice for cross-cultural service in a dynamically changing world.

TESOL Program Goal: To develop specialists in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages who demonstrate a high level of professionalism as the foundation for cross-cultural ministry.

Course Description and Purposes

The development of qualitative research designs in recent decades has provided teachers, social scientists and cross-cultural workers with important tools for understanding people and cultures. The purpose of this course is to introduce you to the methodology for qualitative research with a particular focus for developing skills for cross-cultural settings. Why should you have this background? Here are some ways that the knowledge and skills from this course can be applied to your future work.

- a. Qualitative research provides you with skills which help you **understand and adapt to new cultures** which is a significant aspect of long-term work overseas;
- b. Qualitative research methodology equips you with tools to **solve problems** that you encounter in a particular task (e.g., developing a church-based ESL program);
- c. A grasp of this methodology allows you to **understand published research**;
- d. As teachers, you will also gain techniques which help you to **analyze language in social settings**, providing you with an invaluable source of information for your teaching;
- e. Finally, you can use this methodology to **address research questions** and add to general knowledge about subcultures, cultures and societies.

Course Outcome

Student outcome for this course in relation to the Department Mission Statement is:
The student will have the ability to research language in social and educational contexts.

The student will produce a detailed ethnography of a social or educational context, including a careful analysis of how language is used in that context. If a social context is analyzed, it must be related to educational goals (SP4).

Required Text:

Patton, Michael, Q. 2002. Qualitative Evaluation and Research Methods, 3rd Edition. Newbury Park; CA: Sage Publications.

In addition to this text, there will be articles of published qualitative research in both missiology and TESOL on reserve in Buswell Library.

Course Expectations are:

- (1) **Reading assignments** which are logged on the **Reading Completion Form** and submitted on the last day of class. (15%)
- (2) **Participation in class exercises and discussion** to be completed on the date indicated in the course syllabus. (15%)
- (3) **A limited field research project**, including the writing and analysis of field notes. (30%) [Goal SP4]
- (4) **An ethnographic analysis** of a context in a short paper. (40%) [Goal SP4]

The expectations in detail:

1. Reading assignments

- a. You should complete the reading assignments in Patton by class time and be ready to discuss them.
- b. You will log your reading assignments on the Reading Completion Form included in this syllabus.
- c. You will read two sets of articles on reserve in Buswell library.

2. Participation in class exercises and discussions

- a. You are required to attend all class sessions.
- b. You will write two short (two-page) responses to the two sets of articles you select from the reserve at Buswell library. These responses to ethnographies will form a basis for classroom discussions. Please refer to the "Reserve Readings" sheet at the end of this syllabus.

3. Fieldwork and Field Notes

- a. In order to help you learn the skills of participant observation, the initial fieldwork will be assigned to everyone in class. Each student will be required to observe social settings, record field notes and report back at the next class session when your observations will be discussed, compared and submitted.
- b. After initial exposure to the skills of participant observation, you will focus on a particular context of your choice. An accurate record of visits including data, hours and location must be kept as part of your field notes. These notes will serve as the basis for the short ethnographic paper. Each week you will meet with other students in class to discuss your context and how the data collection is going.

- c. Field notes are the essential record of any qualitative research project. During the course, you will cultivate the ability to keep and analyze accurate field notes. On two occasions, the professor will evaluate your field notes.

The field notes must include:

- 1) An accurate record of times, dates, participants and events must be recorded in a research log. This log should be kept in a notebook which is separate from the field notes. In addition to keeping an accurate record of the data collection, you should use this log as a journal of your thoughts and feelings about the observations and interviews.
- 2) The field notes must be legible, but expediency demands that the notes be handwritten. Don't waste your time rewriting or retyping these notes; write them carefully the first time.

4. Ethnography

- a. Your field data will be turned into a short ethnographic report during the final two weeks of the course. To accomplish this, you will conduct a qualitative data analysis according to the guidelines given in class. Note: This will not be a full ethnography, because of time constraints you need to consider it a "preliminary report" or "pilot study."
- b. Your report should be clear and credible, combining data from a variety of sources to support your insights. Guidelines for writing this report will be handed out at a later time in class.

Grading Procedures

All assignments are to be completed by the start of the class on the day they are assigned. All late work will receive a grade reduction of 10% of the total points for the assignment. In order to provide the maximum amount of time for research and writing, there will be no final examination.

Conferences: Please sign up during office hours to discuss your context.

Course Schedule

Week 1

Basic Concepts of Qualitative Research

- Qualitative Research and Cross-Cultural Ministry
- Qualitative Research and Second Language Learning

- ❑ Essential Terminology
- ❑ Gaining Entrance to a Context
- ❑ Research Groups
- ❑ **Assignment:** Short description of possible research context

Week 2

Participant Observation and Field Notes

Tuesday Reading

Watson-Gegeo “Ethnography in ESL” (on reserve)

Patton, Ch. 1, (34 pp)

Thursday Reading

Patton, Ch. 2, pp 37-54, Note Summary, 40-41

Patton, Ch. 6, pp 259-279, 302-330 and *Note summary, 331*

- ❑ Fundamental concepts and terminology
- ❑ Film: “How to Study Cultures”
- ❑ Strategies for Taking Field Notes/Practice Context Assigned
- ❑ Preliminary Analysis and Coding
- ❑ **Assignment:** Reserve Reading #1:

Two page response paper due

Week 3

Qualitative Research Design

Qualitative Interviewing

Tuesday Reading

Patton, Ch. 5, pp 209-246

Thursday Reading

Ch. 7, pp 339-354, Skim rest of the chapter

- ❑ One to one interviewing
- ❑ Focus Group interviewing
- ❑ Preparation, notetaking, transcription techniques
- ❑ Analysis of an interview transcript
- ❑ **Observation/Log Entry Due**

Week 4

Interaction Analysis

Survey and Document Analysis

Tuesday Reading

Nunan, “Interaction Analysis” (24 pp – on reserve)

- ❑ Principles for recording and analyzing interaction in naturalistic context
- ❑ Applying principles to a transcript
 - Collecting data from questionnaires and documents
- Reserve Reading #2: **Two page response paper due**

Week 5

Ethical Issues in Qualitative Research

Tuesday Reading

Patton, Ch. 7, pp 405-415, *Note checklist, 408-9*

Thursday Reading

Patton, Ch. 9, pp 555-563; 566-581

- Ethics in fieldwork, interviewing, and ethnographic reporting
- Workshop on data analysis in Research Groups

Week 6

Data Analysis

Tuesday Reading

Patton, Ch. 2, pp 55-72

Thursday Reading

Patton, Ch. 8, pp 436-442; 462-468; 487-492

- From preliminary coding to final categories and axial coding
- Workshop on data analysis with raw data
- **Assignment:** Bring field notes/interviews (if any) to class

Week 7

Writing the Qualitative Study

Case Study Analysis

Tuesday Reading

Patton, Ch. 8, pp 502-511

Thursday Reading

Patton, Ch. 9, 553-588 (skim)

- Reporting your results effectively
- Network analysis
- Writing workshop: Models of effective ethnographic reporting
- **Assignment:** Bring field notes/transcripts/coding/analysis notes/outline of paper to class

Week 8

Case Study Analysis

Ethnographic Reports

- Case Study Analysis (Comprehensive Exam preparation)
- Student Projects: Brief preliminary reports from the field
- **Assignment:** Reflection on research project in methodological log
- **Reminder:** Please do the course evaluation on line.

Ethnography Report due _____

Turn in your report, your log/journal, reading log and your coded field notes in a large envelope (provided by Dr. Pierson). The

graded reports will be available _____. You can pick them up in front of Dr. Pierson's office, M232.