Meeting Times & Location:
Monday 5:45-8:15
Room 301 Churchill

Contact Information:
Dr. Amy Farrell
400 Churchill Hall
617-373-7439
am.farrell@neu.edu

Office Hours:
Monday 3:00-5:00
Wednesday 2:30-3:30

Required Texts:


*Additional readings will be posted on the Blackboard Web Page for the course.*

Course Introduction
This is a graduate level course is designed to provide students with an introduction to the principles and use of common qualitative methods used in social science research with a particular focus on the field of criminal justice. Throughout the course we will cover the
basics of qualitative research including: the paradigms that underlie qualitative inquiries; principles of qualitative inquiries such as ethnography and participant observation, interviewing, case studies and qualitative evaluation analysis; and analytic strategies for qualitative data analysis to help transform qualitative data into written research documents. Students will engage in primary data collection and learn how to use a variety of analytic techniques including transcription, field note preparation, memoing, development of coding schemes and conceptual frameworks and data verifying techniques. The course will mix theory and practice. At the same time as we are discussing analytic techniques you will be collecting and analyzing data. As a result, students will be expected to spend 4-6 weeks “in the field” collecting data (e.g. conducting interviews, observing social settings, and collecting documents) that will be used to complete assignments for the course.

Requirements and Assignments

1. Class discussion and participation (10 percent)
   Participation in the discussion of assigned class readings is an important part of this course. Students will be responsible for the discussion of all assigned materials and active engagement in classroom discussions.

2. Book review assignment (10 percent)
   Students complete a 5-7 page review of a social science monograph, which utilizes qualitative research techniques as the primary source of data. The reviews will include a description of the study, including the research methods utilized; a discussion of the research findings and critical evaluation of the strengths and limitations of the research methods utilized and conclusions drawn from the research. The book review should generally look like those found in academic journals, with the exception of having a stronger focus on the method used. A list of potential monographs will be provided on the course Blackboard web page (due February 25th).

3. Mini Fieldwork Assignments (10 percent)
   Three assignments will be completed throughout the semester to demonstrate students’ understanding of non-participant observations, ethnographic observations and interviewing. These assignments will combine in-class and out-of-class exercises.

4. Qualitative Research Project Assignments (45 percent)
   To grasp the principles and methods of qualitative data collection and analysis it is critical for students to undergo the process of actually collecting and analyzing primary qualitative data. Throughout the course, students will engage in a practice research project that utilizes at least one source of qualitative data (interviews, participant observation, ethnography, secondary documents, etc).

   It is understood that students will not be able to conduct a full-fledged qualitative research project during the time of the course, however, it is anticipated that students will be able to
collect a minimum level of qualitative data upon which to practice conducting preliminary analysis and reporting.

Note: Like any other form of research inquiry that involves human subjects, qualitative studies require Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval. In general, students will not be required to seek Northeastern University IRB approval for class based project; however, if you have any thought that your research project may turn out to be something that you would like to pursue further and eventually write up, publish or share beyond this class then we will need to secure IRB approval prior to conducting research. To help students understand how IRB regulations affect modes of qualitative inquiry students will be required to prepare a mock application to the Northeastern University IRB as an assignment for the course. I would additionally recommend avoiding research with populations under the age of 18 or other special groups (e.g. prisoners, mentally ill) that require additional human subjects protections when developing their assigned research project for the course. For more information about Northeastern University’s policies regarding human subjects protections, see the Policies and Procedure for Human Research Protections publication at the Office of Research Integrity website (http://www.northeastern.edu/research/research_integrity/human_subjects/)

A number of assignments will be completed throughout the course to help walk students through the process of collecting and analyzing qualitative data.

- Project description and research questions (5%)
  Students will complete a one-paragraph description of the general area in which they intend to conduct a short qualitative study during the semester. The description should include a general idea of the potential area of study and possible research settings. The assignment should also include a central question and short list of sub questions to guide the proposed research (due electronically January 21st)

- Practice Human Subject Application (10%)
  Students will complete a draft copy of Northeastern University's "Application for the Protection of Human Subjects" required by Northeastern University’s Office of Research Integrity, including consent forms or other documents that would be required by your intended research activities. Assignment includes completion of National Institute of Justice online IRB certification (due February 11th, note: if you plan to submit through NU IRB complete application by February 4th).

  Guidelines for this application can be found at:  http://www.northeastern.edu/research/research_integrity/facts_rates_forms/

- Fieldwork and Interviews – February 18th through March 26th
  - Field note/transcript project I and II (15%)
    Students will conduct research at their selected research site for four to six weeks. If the methodology involves observation students should conduct at least four observations for one hour each. Students conducting observations will turn in two sets of field notes. If the methodology involves interviews students should conduct at least two interviews with key subjects. Two
interviews should be transcribed and submitted for review (due March 11th and March 18th).

- Coding project (15%)
  Students will develop a preliminary analytic framework for the analysis of their data including the construction of a coding scheme and demonstration of coding for the data submitted in the fieldnote/transcript project. Codes will be created and entered using the qualitative data analysis program QSR NVivo (due April 1st).

5. Final project paper (25 percent)
A final 20-25 page research will be produced which brings together the literature review, research questions, description of methodology, findings and conclusions for the research project conducted throughout the course of the semester. The final project paper will be due Monday April 22nd at noon and should be submitted through Blackboard.

Class Schedule

January 7th  Introduction and Understanding the Paradigm of Qualitative Inquiry
Assigned Readings:
Creswell, Chapter 2 “Philosophical Assumptions and Interpretive Frameworks” pp. 15-40.


January 14th  Doing Qualitative Research
Assigned Readings:
Creswell, Chapters 3, 4 and 6 “Designing a Qualitative Study” pp. 42-67, “Five Approaches to Inquiry” pp. 69-110 and “Introducing and Focusing the Study” pp. 129-143.


Geertz, Clifford. “Thick Description: Toward and Interpretive Theory of Culture” in Emerson, pp. 55-75.

January 21st  Martin Luther King Observance – No Class

Assigned Holiday Reading

Part 1: Protecting Human Subjects

http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/humansubjects/guidance/belmont.html

Note: Now would be a good time to complete your NIH certification if you do not already have certification. To complete the program go to:
http://phrp.nihtraining.com/users/login.php

Assignments Due:
Project description and preliminary research questions should be submitted electronically

January 28th  Data Collection


Emerson, Ralph, Rachel Fretz, and Linda Shaw. 1995. “In the Field: Participating, Observing and Jotting Notes” in In Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes. Chicago, IL; University of Chicago Press, pp. 17-35. (Blackboard)


Assignments Due:
Write-up of Non-Participant Observation Assignment (posted to Blackboard by January 27th)

February 4th  Relational and Personal Processes in Ethnography and Participant Observation
Assigned Readings:

Baca Zinn, Maxine. “Inside Field Research in Minority Communities” in Emerson, 159-166.

Warren, Carol. “Gender and Fieldwork Relations” in Emerson, 203-223.

Emerson, Robert and Melvin Pollner, “Constructing Participant/Observation Relations” in Emerson, pp. 239-259.


**Assignments Due:**
NU Institutional Review Board Application and NIH certificate

**February 11th**

**Representing Realities**

**Assigned Reading:**

Hammersley, Martyn. “Ethnography and Realism” in Emerson, pp. 102-112.

Weiss, Chapters 1-3, pp. 1-60.


**Assignment Due**
Write up of Ethnographic Field Note Assignment (Posted to Blackboard by February 10th)

**February 18th**  
**Presidents’ Day – No Class**

**Assigned Holiday Reading – Interviews, continued**


**February 25th**  
**Doing Interviews and Case Studies**

**Assigned Reading:**
Weiss, Chapters 4-5, pp. 61-147.  
*In class interviewing and feedback assignment.*


**Assignment Due:**  
Book review

**March 4th**  
*Spring Break – No Class*

**March 11th**  
**Data Reduction and Analysis: Building Conceptual Frameworks From Data**  
**Assigned Readings:**  

Miles and Huberman, Chapter 2, “Focusing and Bounding the Collection of Data,” pp. 16-39


**Assignments Due:**  
Field note/Transcript project I due

**March 18th**  
**Qualitative Data Analysis: Data Display: Coding, Memoing and Ordering Data**  
**Assigned Readings:**  

Miles and Huberman, Chapter 4, “Early Steps in Analysis,” pp. 50-89

Miles and Huberman, Chapter 5 and 7, “Within-Case Displays: Exploring and Describing,” pp. 90-142 and “Cross-Case Display:
Exploring and Describing,” pp. 172-206 (skim material for relevance to specific research project).

Assignments Due:
Field note/Transcript project II due

March 25th

Drawing Conclusions and Verifying
Assigned Readings:

Miles and Huberman, Chapter 6 and 8, "Within-Case Displays: Explaining and Predicting," pp. 143-171 and “Within-Case Displays: Ordering and Explaining” pp. 207-238 (skim for relevance to research project).

Wolcott, Chapter 3, “Keeping Going,” pp. 36-46.

April 1st

Drawing Conclusions and Finalizing Themes
Assigned Readings
Miles and Huberman, Chapter 10, “Making Good Sense: Drawing and Verifying Conclusions,” pp. 245-287.

Creswell, Chapter 9, "Writing the Qualitative Study," pp. 213-242.


Assignments Due:
Coding project

April 8th

Writing and Producing Knowledge from Qualitative Data
Assigned Readings:

Miles and Huberman, Chapter 12, "Producing Reports," pp. 298-306.

Wolcott, Chapters 4-6m “Tightening Up,” pp. 47-88.

April 15th

Patriots Day - No Class

April 22th

Discussion of final project and informal presentation of research findings.
Final Paper due by noon