QUALITATIVE METHODS IN APPLIED ETHICS & INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH

INDS 502U/SPPH 519 (3 credits)

Session: Winter term 2
Schedule: Mondays from 1 pm to 4 pm
Location: Neville Scarfe, Room 203
Registration: Through ISGP or SPPH; Maximum Enrolment: 16

Instructor
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Seminar Description

Qualitative methods are now widely employed in many areas of applied ethics research (e.g., biomedical ethics, animal welfare, environmental ethics, research ethics) and across a wide spectrum of interdisciplinary research. Training in qualitative research design and methods of analysis is, however, seldom offered in conjunction with studies in applied ethics. Tailored to the applied ethics and/or interdisciplinary student embarking upon their first qualitative project or dissertation, this course surveys the range of theoretical, methodological, and practical issues that arise in designing and conducting qualitative research in a range of applied ethics and/or interdisciplinary settings.

Though there will be strong emphasis placed on pragmatic aspects of qualitative analysis (such as designing a coding scheme or choosing software for analysis) as well as presenting and defending qualitative findings to non–social science audiences, the course will also cover topics such as the epistemological commitments of various paradigms for qualitative research (including positivist, postpositivist, constructivist and postmodern), strengths and limitations of qualitative approaches, the ethics of doing fieldwork and interviews, techniques for establishing the rigour and validity of the findings (especially with skeptical audiences), and avenues for publication in relevant journals.

Participants will also play a role in identifying specific topics of interest that will, where possible, be incorporated into the course material and selected readings.

Seminar Participants
This course is intended for interdisciplinary and applied ethics students, postdoctoral fellows and others who are: designing and/or preparing to conduct a qualitative study, currently engaged in conducting a qualitative study, or collaborating with others who are planning or conducting a qualitative study.

Participants in the course must identify a qualitative project to focus on during the course. This project may be at any stage of development from a new or emerging idea for a dissertation topic, to a fundable research proposal, partially collected or analyzed data set, or draft of a potentially publishable qualitative manuscript.

The course will be especially useful for those who do not have a strong background in the social sciences and/or previous experience in qualitative analysis and write-up.

Goals and Objectives
The seminar has the following *goals and objectives*:
- to understand and assess the uses of qualitative research
- to think critically about when and why to adopt a qualitative approach to applied ethics and/or other areas of research
- to provide guidance in the hands-on experience of doing qualitative research, from the design stage right through to establishing the validity and rigour of findings, and presenting the findings to a range of potential audiences; and
- to consider how qualitative research contributes to ethical analysis and/or other areas that do not traditionally employ such strategies for empirical work
- to build capacity for individual and collaborative approaches to conducting qualitative and/or mixed methods research in applied ethics and other areas of interdisciplinary research.

Required and recommended reading
Readings selected by the instructor and course participants will be circulated electronically in advance of each seminar. Some readings will be required core readings and others will be recommended such that participants may choose to read only those that are of the greatest relevance.

Suggested relevant books
There is no text for this course but there are a great many relevant books that will be referred to throughout the course. A few core selections that you may want to purchase include:

Charmaz, K. (2014 2nd edition). *Constructing Grounded Theory; A Practical Guide Through Qualitative Analysis*. Thousand Oaks, Sage.
Coffey, A. and P. Atkinson` (1996). *Making Sense of Qualitative Data: Complementary Research Strategies*. Thousand Oaks, Sage.

Creswell, J. W. (2013 3rd edition). *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Traditions*. Thousand Oaks, Sage.

Kvale, S. (2009 2nd edition). *InterViews: An Introduction to Qualitative Research Interviewing*. Thousand Oaks, Sage.

Schwandt, T. A. (2007 3rd edition). *Dictionary of Qualitative Inquiry*. Thousand Oaks, Sage.

Evaluation

Participation in seminar	10%
Facilitation of in–class discussion on a book chapter, published article or other relevant reading selected by student and approved by instructor	10%
Presentation of work in progress for project	20%
Completion of qualitative analysis project (topic and format to be determined by instructor and individual student)	60%

Seminar Format

Participants will attend regular seminar sessions and actively engage with the instructor, other participants and (occasional) guest speakers in all discussions and activities. Each seminar will include interactive discussion of a problem or approach to qualitative research in applied ethics as well as presentation of work in progress. Emphasis will be placed on active participation and demonstrated progress in designing a qualitative project, undertaking data collection (if project has received independent ethics approval), conducting qualitative analysis of existing data and/or writing up the research for publication.

Rationale for Seminar and Availability of Alternative Courses at UBC

No currently offered course (in IISGP or a specific department at UBC) meets the needs of interdisciplinary and applied ethics students conducting a qualitative project or dissertation on applied ethics topics. Other graduate courses on qualitative research methods offered at UBC include Anthropology 516 (Qualitative Methods in Anthropology), Sociology 503 (Research Design and Techniques, Qualitative), Nursing 550 (Qualitative Research Methods), Education 503 (Ethnographic Methods in Educational Research), Social Work 554 (Qualitative Methods in Social Work Research). Each of these courses emphasizes the literature, research topics and contributions of a specific discipline or profession and/or focuses on one particular area of research (e.g., education or health research) or approach to qualitative research (e.g., ethnography) to the exclusion of others. In addition, most graduate courses in qualitative methods emphasize the theoretic over the practical aspects of doing the research or focus primarily on the design and data collection phases whereas this course provides an emphasis on the pragmatics of qualitative research design, data collection, analysis and presentation (from design to write-up).

Qualitative Methods in Applied Ethics & Interdisciplinary Research

2015 Seminar Schedule

Session Date	Seminar Topics
Jan 4	INTRODUCTION TO COURSE THE NATURE OF QUALITATIVE RESEARCH
Jan 11	RESEARCH PARADIGMS & TRADITIONS
Jan 18	QUALITATIVE RESEARCH DESIGN
Jan 25	METHODS OF GENERATING QUALITATIVE DATA I
Feb 1	METHODS OF GENERATING QUALITATIVE DATA II
Feb 8	FAMILY DAY HOLIDAY
Feb 15	READING BREAK
Feb 22	RESEARCH IN CONTEXT/ ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS
Feb 29	HANDLING QUALITATIVE DATA & RESEARCH RELATIONS
Mar 7	ANALYZING & ASSESSING QUALITATIVE DATA I
Mar 14	ANALYZING & ASSESSING QUALITATIVE DATA II
Mar 21	(RE)PRESENTING, TRANSLATING & APPLYING QUALITATIVE FINDINGS
Mar 28	WRITING A QUALITATIVE DISSERTATION OR GRANT PROPOSAL
Apr 4	PRESENTATIONS OF WORK IN PROGRESS POTLUCK CELEBRATION

KEY ELECTRONIC RESOURCES

1) Theses Canada Portal
http://www.collectionscanada.ca/thesescanada/index-e.html
This is your central access point for Canadian theses and information about the Theses Canada program. From here you will be able to:

* Search AMICUS, Canada's national online catalogue, for bibliographic records of all theses in Library and Archives Canada's theses collection, which was established in 1965;
* Access and search the full text electronic versions of numerous Canadian theses and dissertations;
* Find out everything you need to know about Theses Canada, including how to find a thesis, how our program works, information on copyright and much more.

The electronic theses and dissertations on this site are for the personal use of students, scholars and the public. Any commercial use, publication or lending of them in libraries is strictly prohibited.

2) SAGE Publications
http://www.sagepub.com/
SAGE Publications has an extensive selection of books on all aspects of research methods and evaluation. They also publish many journals on research methods, evaluation and qualitative research.

3) The Qualitative Report Listing of Qualitative Research Journals
http://www.nova.edu/ssss/QR/calls.html
The hyperlinked list consists of journals that regularly publish qualitative research papers or journals which are putting out special issues or sections on qualitative research. See especially the link to *The Qualitative Report* http://www.nova.edu/ssss/QR/index.html a free on-line journal that has, since 1990, been a leading source of information on the latest developments in qualitative inquiry.

4) Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Networking Project
http://caqdas.soc.surrey.ac.uk/
CAQDAS provides practical support, training and information in the use of a range of software programs which have been designed to assist qualitative data analysis. The project also provides various platforms for debate concerning the methodological and epistemological issues arising from the use of such software packages. CAQDAS has no commercial links to any software developer or supplier. The project is in receipt of its fifth consecutive term of funding by the UK Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC).

The CAQDAS Networking Project provides a number of resources for qualitative software users including:
* **Advisory Helpline**
* **CAQDAS Bibliography**
* **Online Articles**
* **Stop Press!!** News....including links to recent upgrade information
* Jiscmail **Qual-software Discussion List**

*   Co-ordinated **Qualitative Resources Brochure**
*   **Web Links**
*   Software Developer websites
*   General Qualitative Research Resources
*   **Forthcoming Conferences** relating to qualitative research and software useage

5) The International Institute for Qualitative Methodology
http://www.iiqm.ualberta.ca
IIQM is an interdisciplinary institute, under the auspices of the Faculty of Nursing, at the University of Alberta, in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. The institute was founded in 1998, with the primary goal of facilitating the development of qualitative research methods across a wide variety of academic disciplines. The institute hosts 2 international conferences per year: the Qualitative Health Research series and the Advances in Qualitative Methods series, alternating between the Canadian and international sites. They also offer an extensive list of workshops and training in qualitative methods.

6) Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans
http://www.pre.ethics.gc.ca/eng/policy-politique/initiatives/tcps2-eptc2/Default/
The *Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans* 2nd Edition (TCPS2) describes the policies of the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC), and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC).
The site includes an on-line tutorial. The tutorial helps to educate the research community about the TCPS2. It also facilitates the use, interpretation and implementation of the TCPS2.
N.B. All research involving human subjects (whether funded or not) must comply with these guidelines and all UBC graduate students must complete the tutorial if doing research with human subjects.

7) UBC Office of Research Services: Human Ethical Review
http://research.ubc.ca/ethics/home (UBC Research Ethics: A Division of ORS)
See also the link to training and resources available to UBC researchers.

The ORS is responsible for the following research administration functions:
*   Providing information and assistance in the research grant application process.
*   Providing the institutional signature for research grant applications.
*   Establishing research accounts and spending limits for research grants in accordance with U.B.C. and granting agency policies.
*   Providing administrative support for a variety of research programs offered by several internal U.B.C. committees.
*   Ensuring compliance with government regulations and granting agency requirements for the use of human subjects, animal subjects and biohazardous materials in research conducted at U.B.C.
*   Establishing inter-institutional arrangements for the transfer of funds to research collaborators at other institutions.
*   Providing statistical information on research funding at U.B.C.