

**University of Florida
Department of Psychology
PSY 6930
Qualitative Research
Fall 2023**

Instructor: Roberto L. Abreu, Ph.D. (he/him/él)
Phone: 786-925-8140 (personal cell phone number)
Class Days/Times: Wednesdays, 12:50PM - 3:50PM
Office Hours: Wednesdays, 10:00AM - 12:00PM
Location: PSY 0191
Email: rabreu26@ufl.edu

Required Text and Readings

Hays, D.G. & Singh, A.A. (2023). *Qualitative research in education and social sciences*. (2nd ed.). Cognella.

Levitt, H. M. (2019). *Reporting qualitative research in psychology: How to meet APA style journal article reporting standards*. American Psychological Association (APA).

Reader Sections: Weekly reader sections are listed in the course schedule and are available on Canvas

Course Description

This course focuses on qualitative research methods in psychology and social science, including attention to research design, observation, interviewing, data analysis, and transformation of primary field data into research writings. The course will consist of experiential opportunities related to specific research methods, formulating a research project, and discussing theoretical and ethical aspects of these methods.

The goal of this course is to prepare students to design research using qualitative methodology and to analyze qualitative literature critically. Topics to be discussed include: (1) theoretical underpinnings of qualitative methodology; (2) possibilities and limitations of qualitative research methods; (3) review of the most widely used qualitative methods; and (4) the practice of qualitative studies that include (a) techniques of data collection; (b) analysis of qualitative data; (c) interpretation of results; and (d) writing up qualitative reports.

Course Objectives

- 1- Understand philosophical and paradigmatic assumptions and decisions underlining qualitative research methods
- 2- Understand questions that qualitative research can resolve fruitfully
- 3- Distinguish among qualitative approaches
- 4- Study and practice qualitative data collection methods
- 5- Study and practice qualitative data analysis

Collective Knowledge

This course has been built and influenced by different mentors and scholars who teach qualitative research in psychology and related fields across the United States, including Drs. Nadine Nakamura, Tiffany Williams, and Heidi Levitt. Their collective knowledge, wisdom, and *consejos* (advice), have helped built and strengthened this course. I also invite students to bring and share their ideas and cultural experiences throughout the semester. It is my hope that we will learn and growth as a collective throughout this course! Please share topics and resources that may expand our discussion in areas you believe our class needs to be strengthened.

Learning Process and Teaching Philosophy

I believe that learning occurs when we are able to make meaningful connections to the material presented. I believe that the meaning-making process occurs through relationships with: 1) the instructor, 2) the course content, 3) peers and 4) self. The assignments, expectations, tasks, and goals of this course are created to facilitate one or more of these relationships. If students are to benefit and learn from this course, then it will take a collaborative effort in which each student and the instructor is fully engaged to understand and make relevant the material that is to be learned. This includes challenging each other! While I recognize the power dynamics that exist in our relationship, I invite you all to challenge and hold me accountable. My goal is to model how to be held accountable while remaining open to growth. I will practice clarity, transparency, authenticity, humility, and genuineness to the course and our relationship. My hope is that you will afford me the same and that you will engage meaningfully in all aspects of the course.

Attendance

I expect that you will attend each of our weekly sessions. With that said, from extreme acts of anti-Blackness being displayed in the media consistently to xenophobic and transphobic policies being passed locally, statewide, and nationally (to just name a few oppressive acts), I understand that we are living through unprecedented times. Therefore, please do not hesitate to reach out if you need accommodations and/or need to be absent; and this invitation extends to each and everyone in the class. I do request that you reach out ahead of time so we can come up, collaborative, with a plan for you to make any assignments and information you might have missed for that class.

Provision of changes to the syllabus

The included schedule, policies, and assignments are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances or by mutual agreement between the instructor and class participants.

Use of APA style

All papers must use APA formatting and style, including references, citations, use of non-biased language, etc. Students must refer to the APA Publication Manual, 7th edition, for all questions related to APA style. Here is a link to Owl Purdue, where you can find information about APA style: https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_style_introduction.html

Email communication

I will respond regularly to email between 8:00am and 4:00pm Monday –Friday. If I have not responded to your email after two (2) business day (48 hours), please resend the email. **I will communicate all course related materials and announcements to your UF email account.** You are encouraged to either check your UF email at least once a day or forward your account email to your preferred email provider.

University Honesty Policy

"We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity." This applies, but is not limited, to cheating and plagiarism.

If you do a paper for this class, write it in your own words. It is possible to plagiarize a source even if no full sentences are copied word-for-word. In writing papers, please consult with APA style (7th edition). Reference your sources and write in your own words. According to the Academic Dishonesty guide and the University's Student code of Conduct, "Plagiarism, cheating, or other forms of academic dishonesty" may lead to grade penalty, "formal disciplinary probation, suspension, or dismissal."

Accommodations

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565; <https://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc>) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

I strive to make this course accessible to students with diverse needs, strengths, and abilities. Please talk with me about any concerns you may have regarding accessibility and this course. If you think you may need accommodations, please contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) as early as possible in the semester so that I can make any necessary adjustments to the course. You can call the DRC at **(352) 392-8565** or visit **www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/** for more information. They are dedicated to making sure students with various abilities have success at the university. Usually, you'll talk with someone and may do additional assessments in order to develop the best plan possible. After you register with them, you'll get a letter that you show to me so that I can make the appropriate accommodations. It's okay to call them with any questions you might have. I am also more than happy to talk with you as well. If anything happens during the semester that may necessitate accommodations, please reach out to me and the DRC as soon as possible to make sure you have what you need to learn and be successful in the course.

Evaluation of this course

I appreciate and value your feedback so that I can continue to improve upon this course and my teaching skills. You can complete the evaluation online at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results/>.

Because I believe that student feedback is crucial for the success of a course, I will seek your feedback before the semester ends. That is, I will seek your feedback halfway through the semester via an anonymous link. We will discuss themes/patterns about what is working and not working and make reasonable changes for the rest of the semester accordingly.

Student Privacy

There are federal laws protecting your privacy with regards to grades earned in courses and on individual assignments. For more information, please see:
<http://registrar.ufl.edu/catalog0910/policies/regulationferpa.html>

Campus Resources

Health and Wellness

U Matter, We Care: If you or a friend is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu or 352-392-1575 so that a team member can reach out to the student.

Counseling and Wellness Center: <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc>, and 392-1575; and the University Police Department: 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies.

Sexual Assault Recovery Services (SARS): Student Health Care Center, 392-1161.

Academic Resources

E-learning technical support: 352-392-4357 (select option 2) or e-mail to Learning-support@ufl.edu. <https://lss.at.ufl.edu/help.shtml>.

Career Resource Center: Reitz Union, 392-1601. Career assistance and counseling. <https://www.crc.ufl.edu/>.

Library Support: <http://cms.uflib.ufl.edu/ask>. Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.

Teaching Center: Broward Hall, 392-2010 or 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring. <https://teachingcenter.ufl.edu/>.

Writing Studio: 302 Tigert Hall, 846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers. <https://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/>.

On-Line Students Complaints: <http://www.distance.ufl.edu/student-complaint-process>.

Sexual Harassment

Sexual Harassment is not tolerated in this class, in the Department of Psychology, or at the University of Florida. Sexual harassment includes: the inappropriate introduction of sexual activities or comments in a situation where sex would otherwise be irrelevant. Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination and a violation of state and federal laws as well as of the policies and regulations of the university. All UF employees and students must adhere to UF's sexual harassment policy which can be found here: <https://hr.ufl.edu/forms->

policies/policies-managers/sexual-harassment/. Please review this policy and contact a university official if you have any questions about the policy. As mandatory reporters, university employees (e.g., administrators, managers, supervisors, faculty, teaching assistants, staff) are required to report knowledge of sexual harassment to UF's Title IX coordinator. For more information about UF's Title IX office see: <https://titleix.ufl.edu/>. You can also complete a Sexual Harassment Report online (Title IX) at: <https://titleix.ufl.edu/title-ix-reporting-form/>.

Assignment Requirements and Evaluation Criteria

Assignment #1: Professionalism and Participation (100 pts)

This is not an assignment for submission. The grade for this assignment is based on your level of participation and engagement in class. This course is conducted as a doctoral seminar. As such, your participation is essential for its success and everyone's learning. Please be present and on time for all class sessions. Excessive absences will have a negative effect on your participation in class. Limitations on participation in either quality or level of involvement will be reflected in the course grade.

You will work often in small groups with classmates sharing similar professional and academic interests. We will spend some time in small groups and some time in large groups discussing assigned readings and research articles. You and/or your group may be asked to record notes on the discussion for the class, and will be presented to the class as instructed.

Note: You will not receive the full 100 points if you miss class sessions

Assignment #2: Topic Presentation (100 pts/each; 200 pts total)

Each student will select TWO weeks to present and lead a class discussion on the topic for that week. **Your presentation will include the information from the Hays & Singh textbook and the assigned articles for that week (if any).** The students will present the information in an organized manner using PowerPoint, Prezi, handouts, or any other approved format on the designated date. Your presentation needs to be engaging and integrative. Each presentation will last between **40-50 minutes**. Your instructor will provide additional guidelines & rubric.

Assignment #3: Qualitative Research Manuscript (300 pts)

You will prepare a paper using a qualitative methodology. Your paper should be approximately 30-35 pages including references, and adhere to APA style (7th edition). For significantly shorter or longer papers, permission from the instructor is required. You will turn in different components of the paper throughout the semester (see calendar for due dates). Each part of the paper is outlined below. Your instructor will provide additional guidelines & rubric.

IMPORTANT: You are welcome to turn in a paper related to your thesis and dissertation topic. However, it is important for you to understand certain conditions:

(1) a passing grade on this assignment does not substitute feedback and/or the incorporation of further suggestions provided by your committee. For example, simply because I assessed your introduction to meet the needed rigor to pass this course, it does not mean that your committee needs to accept that introduction as a final product for your thesis

or dissertation proposal. In other words, the work you are doing for this course and your thesis or dissertation are two different requirements toward obtaining your degree.

(2) Because this assignment does NOT require you to get IRB approval (i.e., is intended to be a practice activity), you can only interview individuals who will not have a problem with this activity and it **cannot** be used as research to be published (including **not** using the data collected as part of your thesis or dissertation).

(3) The final paper needs to be one cohesive document that meets the requirements for this course. For example, you are welcome to turn in to me your methodology chapter for your thesis or dissertation proposal the date the assignment is due. However, if this document is too long it would need to be reformatted to meet the criteria for this assignment (i.e., the entire paper is not to exceed 35 pages including references). I provide some guidance below. **However, make sure to read and follow guidelines outlined in the required textbook by Levitt (2019) as it applies to your paper.**

(a) Introduction (50 points): In here you will: (1) introduce the topic of your paper. You will need to review and set-up the available literature on your chosen topic. As you write this section keep in mind the following questions: (a) how can I effectively present and summarize what research has already established about my chosen topic? (b) what are some of the gaps in the existing research? (c) what does my proposed project contribute to research? (2) You will select and discuss a theoretical framework from which you will conceptualize your findings. (3) You will provide research question(s)- this is usually found toward the end of your introduction. Research questions usually beginning with How? or What? and can be answered (at least partially) by the data you collected. The instructor will discuss this further in class.

(b) Methodology (100 points): Some of the areas to cover in this section are: (1) participants; (2) Procedures; this subheading includes information such as researcher reflexivity, recruitment, data collection, and data analysis. See more details below for clarification on some of these subheadings.

(i) Data Collection: You will conduct semi-structured interviews or focus groups for this assignment.

You must conduct at least ONE interview with at least ONE participant that lasts 45-60 minutes, or ONE focus group with 4-6 participants. You must have a central research question(s). Interviews must be recorded and transcribed. **Because this is a practice activity and does not need IRB approval, you can only interview individuals who will not have a problem with this activity and it cannot be used as research to be published. Make it clear to your participants that you are simply practicing your skills for a course.**

I recommend that you record field notes using “thick description” as you see fit. Your notes should capture thoughts or questions you have about your observations. In your observation, note the physical setting, the participant(s) nonverbal, etc. In other words, focus on conveying to your readers a sense of what it was like to be there with participant(s). Include as many specific details as appropriate, such as specific reactions to questions, etc. You can turn in your observational notes with your final paper.

(ii) Data Analysis: You will identify an interpretive framework for analyzing your data. You will analyze and code your data using one of methods of data analysis as outlined by Hays & Singh or another methods that is supported in the qualitative research literature. This will be discussed further in class.

(C) Findings/Results (100 points): In here you will discuss the themes, categories, patterns, etc. that the data revealed through coding as well as any emerging theories or additional questions you may have.

(D) Discussion (40 points): Here is where your paper comes together! In here you will briefly summary your findings, present theoretical implications, study limitations and future directions, and implications for research, practice, and education, and other sections as they apply to your study.

(E) References (10 points): List all references in APA format.

Assignment #4: Research Presentation (50 pts)

You will present on your qualitative research manuscript to your classmates during the final weeks of the semester using PowerPoint, Prezi, handouts, or approved format on the designated date. In your presentation you need to focus on both (1) the content of your paper and (2) the process of working on this assignment (e.g., frustrations, lessons learned, things you would have done differently). Each presentation will last between 10-15 minutes. Your instructor will provide additional guidelines & rubric.

Assignment #5: Comprehensive Interactive Notebook/Journal (50 pts)

You will use this note to record class notes, for designated homework assignments and in class activities, your reflections, for research activities (e.g., data analysis, observations), and other times you are motivated to do so. Journaling and tracking the researcher's thinking about qualitative research and influence on the project is essential to quality control in qualitative research. The journal should include your subjective (subjective I) experiences of beginning the research, the personal life experiences you bring to the research, your reactions to research-related experiences such as class and research meetings. Your notebook should also contain articles that you feel pertinent to your research and handouts provided in class. The notebooks will be collected at the end of the semester.

Grading System

Course Assignments

Professionalism and Participation/ 200 points

Topic Presentation/ 100 points

Qualitative Research Manuscript/ 300 points

Introduction (50 points)

Methodology (100 points)

Findings/Results (100 points)

Discussion (40 points)

References (10 points)

Comprehensive Interactive Notebook/Journal/ 50 points

Research Presentation/ 50 points

Grading Scale

A	>92%
A-	90%-91%
B+	88%-89%
B	82%-87%
B-	80%-81%
C+	78%-79%

C	72%-77%
C-	70%-71%
D+	68%-69%
D	62%-67%
D-	60%-61%
E	< 59%

Late Assignments

It is my intent that all assignments will be turned in on time (see dates on course schedule below). Assignments cannot be made-up except in the case of extreme circumstances that meet the criteria of the University of Florida policy for an excused absence. Make-ups are only given for illnesses that require medical treatment, valid emergencies, and valid scheduling conflicts. With this said, as described earlier in the syllabus, we are living through unprecedented times. Therefore, please do not hesitate to reach out if you need accommodations. And, yes, I do consider being exposed to daily experiences of oppression (e.g., racial trauma; the effects of xenophobic and transphobic policies) an emergency and I will work with you to make sure you are successful in this course while prioritizing your emotional well-being.

Tentative Course Schedule

This calendar is a tentative schedule and is subject to change at the instructor's discretion. Students will be notified of any substantive changes.

Date	Topic/Tasks	Reading Assignments	Class and Home Assignments
8/23	Introduction Syllabus Review	Read Syllabus Hays & Singh, Ch. 1 Weekly Reading List Get a head start on course reading assignments!	Obtain Textbook Obtain Interactive Notebook/Journal
8/30	The Qualitative Researcher's Role	Hays & Singh, Chs. 2 & 3 Weekly Reading List	Obtain Textbook Obtain Interactive Notebook/Journal Materials Class Activity
9/6	Characteristics of Qualitative Research Ethics and Qualitative Research Introducing & Focusing the Study The Literature Review	Hays & Singh, Ch. 4 Weekly Reading List	Topic Presentation Begin work on Qualitative Research Questions
9/13	Qualitative Research Traditions	Hays & Singh, Ch. 5 Weekly Reading List	Topic Presentation
9/20	Selecting a Topic	Hays & Singh, Ch. 6	Topic Presentation
9/27	Entering the Field	Hays & Singh, Ch. 7	Topic Presentation Introduction Draft Due *** Secure Participant(s) ***
10/4	Maximizing Trustworthiness	Hays & Singh, Ch. 8 Weekly Reading List	Topic Presentation
10/11	Observations and Interviewing	Hays & Singh, Ch. 9 Weekly Reading List	Topic Presentation Class Activity

10/18	Online Media and Other Data Sources	Hays & Singh, Ch. 10 Weekly Reading List	Topic Presentation Methodology Draft Due Class Activity
10/25	Basics of Qualitative Data Management and Analysis	Hays & Singh, Ch. 11 & 12	Topic Presentation Class Activity
11/1	Work on Paper Peer Meet-up		
11/8	Qualitative Data Analysis by Research Tradition Writing, Presenting, and Funding Qualitative Research	Hays & Singh, Ch. 13	Topic Presentation
11/15	Qualitative Research and Community and Legislative Action		Findings/Results Draft Due
11/22	THANKSGIVING NO CLASS		
11/29	Work on Paper Peer Meet-up		
12/6	Putting It All Together		Research Proposal Presentations (all students) Qualitative Research Manuscript Due (Entire Manuscript, including discussion and references) Interactive Notebook/Journal Due

Weekly Reading List

Week of 8/23

- Bakan, D. (1954). A reconsideration of the problem of introspection. *Psychological Bulletin*, 51, 105-118. doi:10.1037/h0054157
- Ponterotto, J. G. (2005). Qualitative research in counseling psychology: A primer on research paradigms. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 52, 126-136.

Week of 8/30

- Guillemin, M., & Gillam, L. (2004). Ethics, reflexivity, and "ethically important moments" in research. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 10, 261-280.
- Haverkamp (2005). Ethical perspectives on qualitative research in applied psychology. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 52, 146-155.

Week of 9/6

- Levitt, H. M., Bamberg, M., Creswell, J. W., Frost, D. M., Josselson, R., & Suárez-Orozco, C. (2018). Journal article reporting standards for qualitative primary, qualitative meta-analytic, and mixed methods research in psychology: The APA Publications and Communications Board task force report. *American Psychologist*, 73, 26-46.
- Haverkamp, B. E., & Young, R. A. (2007). Paradigms, purpose, and the role of the literature: Formulating a rationale for qualitative investigation. *The Counseling Psychologist*, 35, 265- 294.
- Schwarz, N. (1999). Self-reports: How the questions shape the answers. *American Psychologist*, 54, 93-105.

Week of 9/13

- Fassinger, R. E. (2005). Paradigms, praxis, problems, and promise: Grounded theory in counseling psychology. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 52, 156-166.
- Rennie, D. L. (2000). Grounded theory methodology as methodical hermeneutics: Reconciling realism and relativism. *Theory & Psychology*, 10, 481-502.
- Polkinghorne, D. E. (2005). Language and meaning: Data collection in qualitative research. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 52, 137-145.
- Suzuki, L. A., Ahluwalia, M. K., Arora, A. K., Mattis, J.S. (2007). The pond you fish in determines the fish you catch: Exploring strategies for qualitative data collection. *The Counseling Psychologist*, 35, 295-327.
- Giorgi, A. (1997). The theory, practice, and evaluation of the phenomenological method as a qualitative research procedure. *Journal of Phenomenological Psychology*, 28, 235-260.

Suzuki, L.A., Ahluwalis, M. K., Mattis, J.S., & Quizon, C. A. (2005). Ethnography in counseling psychology research: Possibilities for application. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 52*, 206-214.

Wertz, F. J. (2005). Phenomenological research methods for counseling psychology. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 52*, 167-177.

Week of 10/4

Leech, N. L., & Onwuegbuzie, A. J. (2011). Beyond constant comparison qualitative data analysis: Using NVivo. *School Psychology Quarterly, 26*, 70-84. Doi:10.1037/a0022711

Morrow, S. (2005). Quality and trustworthiness in counseling psychology. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 52*, 250-260.

Yeh, C. J., & Inman, A. G. (2007). Qualitative data analysis and interpretation in counseling psychology: Strategies for best practice. *The Counseling Psychologist, 35*, 369-403.

Week of 10/11

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology, 3*, 77-101.

Hill et al. (1997). A guide to conducting consensual qualitative research. *The Counseling Psychologist, 25*, 517-572.

Nowell, L. S., Norris, J. M., White, D. E., & Moules, N. J. (2017). Thematic analysis: Striving to meet the trustworthiness criteria. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods, 16*, 1-13.

Week of 10/18

Woods-Giscombé, C. L. (2010). Superwoman schema: African American women's views on stress, strength, and health. *Qualitative Health Research, 20*, 668-683.