

Course Number	EDLD 750C (CSUSM) / EDS 287C (UCSD)
Course Title	Qualitative Research Methods
Course Location	University Hall 441
Semester / Year	Spring 2018
Professor	Joni Kolman, Ed.D.
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Office	CSUSM University Hall 406
Office Hours	By appointment

COURSE OVERVIEW

This course introduces students to the theories, assumptions, and practices underlying the use of qualitative research in social sciences including education.

Student Learning Outcomes

1. Examine a variety of qualitative methods and specific methodological approaches
2. Understand the role of theory, philosophy, and ethics in qualitative research
3. Identify appropriate qualitative methods to answer a variety of research questions
4. Engage in critical conversations and writing about qualitative research methods
5. Consider both the practical and ethical implications of a qualitative research project

Program Student Learning Outcomes

By the end of the program, students will be able to:

PSLO 1: Demonstrate and engage in critical analysis around creating and sustaining organizational conditions that promote socially just and equitable learning environments.

PSLO 2: Use evidence-based decision-making.

PSLO 3: Generate and use applied research.

PSLO 4: Demonstrate and apply leadership skills and dispositions that are applicable to positively impact organizational culture and practice.

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION MISSION & VISION STATEMENT

(Adopted by SOE Governance Community, January 2013)

Vision

To serve the educational needs of local, regional, and global communities, the School of Education advances innovative practice and leadership by generating, embracing, and promoting equitable and creative solutions.

Mission

The mission of the School of Education community is to collaboratively transform education. We:

- Create community through partnerships
- Promote and foster social justice and educational equity
- Advance innovative, student-centered practices
- Inspire reflective teaching and learning
- Conduct purposeful research
- Serve the School, College, University, and Community

BASIC TENETS OF OUR CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

- Student centered education
- Research and theory specific to the program field inform practice
- Connections and links between coursework and application
- Strong engagement between faculty and candidates
- Co-teaching clinical practice
- Culturally responsive pedagogy and socially just outcomes

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SAN DIEGO MISSION & VISION STATEMENT

Vision

Develop passionate and empathetic educational leaders who shape an equitable future for a diverse society.

Mission

The Joint Doctoral Program in Educational Leadership at UCSD/CSUSM is committed to supporting and developing education leaders who are dedicated to equity, justice, inclusivity, compassion, and diversity of thought, cultures, and backgrounds.

JDP CORE VALUES /JDP COMMUNITY OF LEADERS:

- Creates inclusive, compassionate, and safe environments
- Learns from and with others
- Demonstrates empathy with desire to cross boundaries (Boundary Crossers)
- Dreams, wonders, imagines new educational environments
- Designs creative solutions with and for people
- Questions convention, status quo, assumptions
- Works relentlessly to close equity gaps
- Embraces doubt
- Nurtures strengths and vulnerabilities

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Advanced Research and Evaluation Methods

Addresses more advanced topics in research design and methodology. Students hone the requisite research skills to conduct dissertation research. Students gain varied hands-on experiences in collecting and analyzing data relevant to schooling, as well as learn how to develop, manage, and analyze large data files. Students create a research agenda and develop skills needed in proposal writing: development, organization and coherence, conceptualization of research design, and attention to audience and writing style.

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

CSUSM School of Education attendance policy

Students *must* participate in 80% of the course sessions to receive credit for this course. Additional absences may further impact the course grade. If the absence is predictable (e.g. professional obligation), the student should inform the instructor ahead of time. If the absence is unanticipated, the student should initiate contact with the instructor as soon as possible. Notification of an absence does not constitute an excuse.

CSUSM Accommodation Services

Students with disabilities who require reasonable accommodations must seek approval for services by providing appropriate and recent documentation to the Office of Disability Support Services (DSS). This office is in Craven Hall 4300, contact by phone at (760) 750-4905, or TTY (760) 750-4909. Students authorized by DSS to receive reasonable accommodations should meet with their instructor during office hours. Alternatively, in order to ensure confidentiality, in a more private setting.

CSUSM Academic Honesty Policy

“Students will be expected to adhere to standards of academic honesty and integrity, as outlined in the Student Academic Honesty Policy. All written work and oral assignments must be original work. All ideas/materials that are borrowed from other sources must have appropriate references to the original sources. Any quoted material should give credit to the source and be punctuated with quotation marks.

Students are responsible for honest completion of their work including examinations. There will be no tolerance for infractions. If you believe there has been an infraction by someone in the class, please bring it to the instructor’s attention. The instructor reserves the right to discipline any student for academic dishonesty in accordance with the general rules and regulations of the university. Disciplinary action may include the lowering of grades and/or the assignment of a failing grade for an exam, assignment, or the class as a whole.”

OUR LEARNING COMMUNITY

The following Community Agreements and Teaching/Learning philosophy will serve as the foundational principles by which we relate to each other as we learn together. As a community, we can add specifics to these principles as we need.

Community Agreements

- We speak from our own experience
- We are open to hearing others
- We share air time
- We are willing to have our thinking challenged
- We respect confidentiality
- We share experiences that are issue focused, not necessarily who said it or where
- Each of us participates using a “value added” approach by expanding upon ideas, providing examples, and/or expressing a different perspective.

GRADING STANDARDS

Does not meet standards (B or below)	Approaching Standards (A-/B+)	Meets Standards (A)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Includes some of the required elements as delineated in the syllabus. • Some components of the assignment are included. • Provides a few concrete details of the information required for the assignment. • Includes personal viewpoints. • Organization hard to follow. • Many mechanical errors, including APA format. • Hard to read. • Little sentence/vocabulary variety. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Includes required elements as delineated in the syllabus. • All components of the assignment are included. • Provides concrete details of the information required for the assignment. • Includes personal viewpoints. • Good organization. • Has few, if any, mechanical errors including APA format. • Holds interest – is interesting to read. • Some sentence/vocabulary variety. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Includes required elements as delineated in the syllabus. • All components of the assignment are included. • Provides concrete details of the information required for the assignment and makes clear connections to class discussions, readings and activities. • Insightful commentary using personal viewpoints supported by current learning. • Presents clear and logical organization of thoughts. • Has few, if any, mechanical errors including APA format. • Holds interest – is engaging and thought-provoking to the audience. • Uses a sophisticated scholar researcher vocabulary and sentence structure.

If you are unable to submit the assignment by the due date, it is your responsibility to contact the instructor before the due date.

This rubric represents general guidelines we will use to evaluate your work. As a doctoral candidate it is critical that you communicate your ideas through multiple formats. The written word is a powerful demonstrator of your knowledge, skills, and disposition. Therefore, we hold high expectations of your performance, and we are committed to providing you with useful and meaningful feedback that will support your learning and continued development as an educational leader.

In general, we believe a doctoral student:

- Completes all assignments on time and demonstrates the ability to summarize, analyze, and/or reflect at sophisticated and complex levels.
- Varies sources of information for assignments, demonstrating high degree of effort in pursuing varied perspectives around important educational issues.
- Completes all the reading assignments and develops thoughtful and thorough responses.
- Produces work that reveals a strong commitment to self-discovery and learning.
- Produces work at a highly professional level in terms of both writing and content.
- Develops a high quality presentation, demonstrating significant learning around a contemporary issue.
- Presents confidently and intelligently, demonstrating effective teaching skills.
- Completes assignments in/out of class with a focus on learning and exploration, pushing him/herself to better understand the profession through quality work.
- Attends every class meeting and is fully engaged during class.
- Pushes him/herself to new understandings by participating in discussions, sharing his/her opinions, and valuing others' perspectives.
- Contributes to the positive environment of the class by respecting all members.

COURSE TEXTS AND READINGS

Textbook:

- Creswell, J. (2013). *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Approaches* (3rd Edition). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.

Articles:

- Reagan, E.M., Chen, C., & Vernikoff, L. (2016). "Teachers are a works in progress": A mixed methods study of teaching residents' beliefs and articulations of teaching for social justice. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 59, 213-227.
- Ponce, O.A. & Pagan-Maldonado, N. (2014). Mixed methods research in education: Capturing the complexity of the profession. *International Journal of Educational Excellence*, 1(1), 111-135.

Other readings may be assigned and provided to enhance learning throughout the course.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

As adult learners it is assumed that you will read the texts and articles critically, develop questions and analyses, and complete the written assignment that will facilitate your own learning and class discussions. It is assumed that all students will work to their highest level since mastering research skills will enable you to conduct and complete a high quality dissertation.

Participation (20%)

Your attendance and active participation are essential to achieving the student learning outcomes for this course. Students are expected to come prepared to discuss the readings and to engage in challenging conversations that support the further development of one's understanding of research and academic voice. **Students must bring the textbook with them to every class.**

Reflection Mini-Papers (20%)

These reflection mini-papers are designed to provide an opportunity to really dig into how qualitative dissertators design their studies and write about them. Dissertation writing is a very particular genre of writing so we examine dissertations for this purpose, as opposed to research articles. Prior to the class sessions on January 19, January 20, January 24, and January 31, you will examine an aspect of one of the provided qualitative dissertations:

January 19: Write a reflection mini-paper that describes and evaluates how your chosen dissertation's theoretical and/or conceptual framework shapes the qualitative study. Be sure to include any questions or thoughts you have about their approach.

January 20: Write a reflection mini-paper that describes and evaluates the connection between the research questions and methods in your chosen dissertation. Be sure to include any questions or thoughts you have about their approach.

January 24: Write a reflection mini-paper that describes and evaluates how the dissertation author writes about their methods. Pay particular attention to how they make the argument for their chosen methods. Be sure to include any questions or thoughts you have about their approach.

January 31: Write a reflection mini-paper that describes and evaluates how the dissertation author describes their approach to data analysis. Be sure to include any questions or thoughts you have about their approach.

These four papers are meant to be starting points for discussion in class so bring them as either hard copies or electronic files that will be easily accessible to you.

Qualitative Study Proposal—Due February 7 by 11:55PM (60%)

As part of this assignment, you will write a qualitative study proposal that demonstrates your understanding of how to design a qualitative study to answer a set of research questions related to the topic you would like to investigate in your dissertation. The paper should include the following elements:

1. **Problem Statement:** A description of the topic you want to study. Provide a rationale for why this is an important or meaningful topic to study. Make sure to identify the ways in which your study will contribute to and/or build on the existing literature.
2. **Theoretical/Conceptual Framework:** A set of assumptions that inform your topic and guide your approach to the qualitative research study and your data analysis.
3. **Literature Review:** A *brief* review of existing research on your specific topic, building from the problem statement and theoretical/conceptual framework. Make sure to identify areas of research related to your topic with subsections, as appropriate.
4. **Research Questions:** A set of questions you plan to investigate as part of your proposed qualitative study.
5. **Methods:** A discussion of the design of your qualitative study and the methods that you believe are well-suited to exploring your research questions, inclusive of a rationale for your choices. The methods section needs to have the following subsections: participants, procedures, data collection methods, and data analysis. You must include a table that shows alignment between research questions and your data collection methods.

Your qualitative study proposal should be at least 1500 words. Email a copy of your proposal to me at jkolman@csusm.edu by 11:55PM on February 7. More information will be provided in class.

CLASS MEETING SCHEDULE

Date	Topic	Preparations Required
January 17 WEDNESDAY 6-9 PM	Introduction to qualitative methods Philosophical assumptions Positionality Exploring qualitative dissertations	Read: Creswell Chapters 1 & 2
January 19 FRIDAY 6-9 PM	Qualitative approaches to inquiry Theoretical and conceptual frameworks	Read: Creswell Chapter 4 Due: Reflection mini-paper that describes and evaluates how your chosen dissertation's theoretical and/or conceptual framework shapes the author's qualitative study. Be sure to include any questions or thoughts you have about their approach.
January 20 SATURDAY 10AM-4PM	Conducting a qualitative study Connecting research questions to methods Data collection methods: Interviewing and focus groups Memos	Read: Creswell Chapters 6 & 7 Due: Reflection mini-paper that describes and evaluates the connection between the research questions and methods in your chosen dissertation. Be sure to include any questions or thoughts you have about their approach.
January 24 WEDNESDAY 6-9 PM	Data collection methods: Observations and document review Choosing participants Writing about methods	Due: Reflection mini-paper that describes and evaluates how the dissertation author writes about their methods. Pay particular attention to how they make the argument for their chosen methods. Be sure to include any questions or thoughts you have about their approach.
January 31 WEDNESDAY 6-9pm	Analyzing qualitative data Analytical memos Qualitative analytical software: Nvivo & Atlas.ti	Read: Creswell Chapter 8 Due: Reflection mini-paper that describes and evaluates how the dissertation author describes their approach to data analysis. Be sure to include any questions or thoughts you have about their approach.
February 2 FRIDAY 6-9 PM	Mixed-methods research Issues of reliability and validity	Read: Reagan, E.M., Chen, C., & Vernikoff, L. (2016)—through methods section. Ponce, O.A. & Pagan-Maldonado, N. (2014). Read: Creswell, Chapter 10
February 3 SATURDAY 10AM-4PM	CITI training—<u>online session</u> Writers' Workshop on Synthesis Paper—open drop in session	Due (by 9PM): CITI training certificate showing you have PASSED Read: Creswell Chapter 9

February 7 WEDNESDAY	No formal class meeting	Due: Synthesis Paper on February 7 by 11:55PM.
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