

GEOG 9108A - Qualitative Methods Fall 2021

1. Course Information

1.1. Course location and time:

- Lecture/Seminar
- SH 3355
- Monday 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Contact Information:

- Instructor: Dr. Diana Lewis, SSC Room 3213
- Office Hours: (Monday 12:00 – 1:00/Tues: 9:00 – 10:00) or by appointment.
- Phone: 661-2111 X 85103
- Email: Diana.Lewis@uwo.ca (Preferred method of contact)

The Department of Geography and Environment strives at all times to provide accessibility to all faculty, staff, students and visitors in a way that respects the dignity and independence of people with disabilities. Please contact the course instructor if you require material in an alternate format or if you require any other arrangements to make this course more accessible to you. You may also wish to contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) at 519-661-2147 for any specific question regarding an accommodation.

Please visit the “[Accessibility at Western](#)” website for more information.

2. Calendar Description

This course provides students with an overview of several of the main types of qualitative research methods, as well as the epistemological issues that distinguish qualitative from quantitative methods. It also considers ethical issues, data analysis and management challenges that are associated with qualitative research.

3. Textbook - Access to digital text will be provided where available.

- DeLyser, D. (2010). *The SAGE handbook of qualitative geography / edited by Dydia DeLyser ... [et al.]*. Los Angeles, CA: SAGE (Available online)
- Hay, Iain. 2021. *Qualitative Research Methods in Human Geography 5th Edition*. Oxford University Press.

Suggested text: Kleinknecht, S., Sanders, C., & Van den Scott, L. (2018). *The craft of qualitative research: a handbook / edited by Steven W. Kleinknecht, Lisa-Jo K. van den Scott, and Carrie B. Sanders*. Toronto, ON: Canadian Scholars.

Additional Readings

Additional readings will also be assigned throughout the semester and are required for seminar discussions and engagement. These readings should be read prior to class.

4. Course Objectives: Qualitative research aims to understand how people think about the world and how they act and behave in it, an approach that requires researchers to understand phenomena based on discourse, actions and documents, and how and why individuals interpret and ascribe meaning to what they say and do, and to other aspects of the world (including other people) they encounter (Tri-Council Policy Statement, 2018, p. 133). This course will provide an overview of the epistemological issues that distinguish qualitative from quantitative methods and Indigenous methodologies and methods. From a pedagogical perspective, this will be an active learning experience for students, with limited instructor-led lectures.

This is a seminar-based course where students will:

- Consider the philosophies underlying qualitative research methodology and methods;
- Examine issues central to qualitative methodology such as researcher positionality, ethics and power relations;
- Think critically about the use and practice of qualitative data collection;
- Determine how to select the appropriate forms of data analysis;
- Have an opportunity to present and share qualitative data; and
- Prepare a hypothetical research proposal.

Enrollment in this course is restricted to graduate students in the MA, MSc, or PhD in Geography, as well as any student that has obtained special permission to enroll in this course from the course instructor as well as the Graduate Chair (or equivalent) from the student’s home program.

5. Learning Outcomes:

- Identify and explain the various approaches to qualitative research.
- Understand power dynamics, positionality, relationality, temporality and space/place concerning research involving human participants.
- Assess critically ethical issues related to specific qualitative research methods and working with certain population groups; and
- Effectively design, collect, analyze, and present qualitative data.

6. Evaluation:

Component	Percentage	Due Date
Seminar Participation	15%	Weekly
Seminar Lead	15%	1 seminar (TBD)
Assignment # 1 – How to develop research questions and objectives?	10%	October 1st
Assignment # 2 – Determining the appropriate research methodology and method(s) to answer your research questions.	10%	October 15th
Assignment # 3 – Thinking about positionality and reflexivity	10%	October 29th
Assignment # 4 – Interview and coding using NVivo/Presentation to class	20%	November 19th
Pecha Kucha of Research Proposal Presentation	5%	November 29th
Final Paper – Research Proposal	15%	December 3rd (last day of term)

Students are responsible for material covered in the lectures as well as the assigned chapters/sections in the text. Students are **REQUIRED TO COMPLETE ALL COMPONENTS** of this course. There are no exceptions to this. Extra assignments to improve grades **will NOT** be accepted.

Grades will not be adjusted on the basis of need. It is important to monitor your performance in the course. Remember: *You* are responsible for your grades in this course.

7. Schedule - Weekly Seminar Topics – Readings (TBD)

Topic	Date
Introductions Theme: What is Qualitative Research – History of Qualitative Research	September 13th
Research Theory	September 20/27th
Research Methodologies – Methods	October 4th
Thanksgiving	October 11th
Positionality, Power, and Reflexivity	October 18th
Research Ethics	October 25th
Fall Reading Week – No Classes	November 1st
Research Analysis	November 8th
Presenting your qualitative data	November 15th
Preparing a research proposal	November 22nd
Pecha Kucha of Research Proposal	November 29th

8. University Policy Regarding Illness

8.1. Illness

Please visit the link to the university policy for more information.

<http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryID=1&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=-> - Page 12

If you feel that you have a medical or personal concern that is interfering with your work, you should contact your Instructor, Graduate Program Administrator, Supervisor, or SGPS.

8.2. Attendance

It is expected that students will attend all classes. The professor does not provide access to lecture notes. Students are encouraged to obtain missed lecture notes from a fellow student.

9. Scholastic Discipline for Graduate Students

For the complete policy and regulations visit the [Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies](#) website

10. Procedures for Appealing Academic Evaluations

Students may appeal an academic decision or ruling in accordance with the appeal procedures set out below. Students have a right to appeal to their graduate programs and, if unsuccessful, to the Vice-Provost (Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies). Some decisions may be appealed further to the Senate Review Board Academic. The Vice-Provost's rulings in academic matters are final unless overturned or modified on appeal to the Senate Review Board Academic (SRBA).

For the complete policy and regulations visit the [Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies](#) website

11. Support Services

11.1. Support Services

[Student Support Services](#)

[Student Development Services](#)

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to [Mental Health@Western](mailto:MentalHealth@Western) (<http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

11.2. Indigenous Services (<http://indigenous.uwo.ca>)

11.3. Short Absences

If you miss a class due to minor illness or other problems, check your course outline for information regarding attendance requirements and make sure you are not missing a test or exam. Cover any readings and arrange to borrow the missed lecture notes from a classmate.

11.4. Extended Absences

If you expect to be away from campus for an extended amount of time, please make prior arrangements with your course instructors and/or supervisor.

For the complete policy on registration visit the [Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies](#) website.

11.5. Academic Concerns

If you are in academic difficulty, it is strongly recommended that you see your Graduate Program Administrator, Supervisor, or SGPS.

12. Important Dates:

September 13th – 1st class

September 17th - Last day to register for first term half course.

October 11: Thanksgiving Holiday – Department Office Closed

November 1 to November 5: Fall Reading Week

November 12th: Last day to drop a first term half course without penalty

December 3: Classes end

13. Other Information

For a list of Graduate Regulations please visit the [Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies](#) website

For The University of Western Ontario Senate Regulations, please see the [Handbook of Academic and Scholarship Policies](#)

Email Policies

Please respect the fact that Professors receive multiple emails from students and will deal with those emails in a fair, organized and timely manner. Please ensure the subject line contains the name, number and section of the course in question.

14. Accessible Education Western (AEW)

All course outlines must contain the following statement:

Western is committed to achieving barrier-free accessibility for all its members, including graduate students. As part of this commitment, Western provides a variety of services devoted to promoting, advocating, and accommodating persons with disabilities in their respective graduate program.

Graduate students with disabilities (for example, chronic illnesses, mental health conditions, mobility impairments) are strongly encouraged to register with Accessible Education Western (AEW), a confidential service designed to support graduate and undergraduate students through their academic program. With the appropriate documentation, the student will work with both AEW and their graduate programs (normally their Graduate Chair and/or Course instructor) to ensure that appropriate academic accommodations to program requirements are arranged. These accommodations include individual counselling, alternative formatted literature, accessible campus transportation, learning strategy instruction, writing exams and assistive technology instruction.