Course Syllabus for HRD 6343: Foundations of Qualitative Research
Long Summer 2025

Instructor: Rochell McWhorter, PhD

Preferred Contact is by Email:
rmcwhorter@uttyler.edu
Virtual Office Hours   Tues. 1-3pm*
Face-to-Face Class Meetings (1-5pm):
May 17th, June 7th, June 28th, July 26th

Office #: (903) 566-7330
Fax: (903) 565-5650
*Email for appointment

Course Description:
This course examines foundational qualitative methods and tools for HRD research including designs/methods, data collection, data analysis and reporting of findings. Learning includes a combination of lecture, field assignments, writing, and reporting.

Required Textbook/Materials:
1. Creswell, J. W., & Báez, J. C. (2021). "*30 Essential Skills for the Qualitative Researcher*" (2nd Edition). Note: Textbook is Available in both eBook and Softback book See: ISBN-13: 978-1544355702 ISBN-10: 154435570X
2. American Psychological Association (2019). *APA Publication Manual, 7th edition.* Washington, DC.
3. Field journal (a lined notebook—softback or hardback) for field notes.
4. Various Readings and Videos provided by Instructor or downloaded by students.

Course Learning Objectives:
- Understand the foundational terminology and purpose of qualitative inquiry
- Gain proficiency in field work: mining existing documents, conducting observations, and semi-structured interviews.
- Recruit interview participants and develop a semi-structured interview protocol.
- Analyzing and validating qualitative data.
- Engage in scholarly writing including creation of an Infographic and Poster to highlight findings
- Reflect in a scholarly fashion regarding initial impressions and learning in the course through the use of a reflexive journal.

Course Competencies
1. Computer-Based Skills – the student will complete written assignments using the word processor as well as periodic Canvas assignments via Internet connectivity; will login in utilizing asynchronous platforms.
2. Communication Skills – the student will exhibit a mastery of written skills in completion of an assigned field assignments and both synchronous and asynchronous communication with classmates.
3. Interpersonal Skills – the student will interact in class discussions to clarify thinking regarding field assignments and readings. They will be collegial to their classmates and the instructor, both in writing, and verbally.
4. Problem Solving (Critical Thinking) – the student will use conceptual thinking to analyze field data and making determinations for their research paper, infographic, and poster.
5. Ethical Issues in Decision Making and Behavior— the student will gain an appreciation of the ethics of field work. They will apply the basics of APA, 7th Edition when citing and referencing the ideas of others.
6. Personal Accountability for Achievement – the student will complete projects and activities at the time designated by the instructor and will enter class discussions.
7. Competence in Technology Principles-The student will demonstrate technology competencies as well as the benefits of technology through various technology tools.

Grading:

A	90-100	B	80-89	C	70-79
D	60-69	F	< - 59		

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Grading Policy for HRD 6343:

Class Participation	20%
Field Assignments	30%
Individual Research Paper with embedded Infographic + Poster	30%
Reflexive Journal	20%

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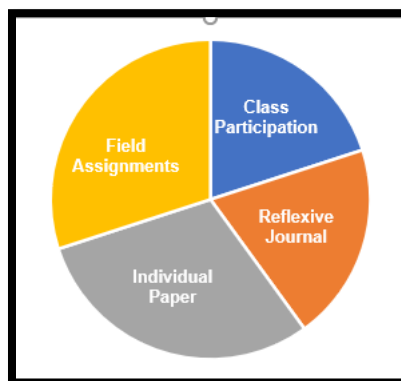
Class Participation

Students are expected to attend class, do their required readings before each class, and be able to converse with classmates within small and/or whole group discussions (in-person, online). Class participation will account for **20%** of semester grade.

Field Assignments

Students will complete five main field assignments comprising two observations (with and without notetaking in the field), two semi-structured interviews with individuals in an organizational setting (in person or Zoom); and, data collection from existing document(s). IRB approval is not required as these field assignments are class practice exercises; however, some students who are particularly focused on their topic have gained IRB approval in past courses. Please notify instructor if IRB approval has been gained before interviewing or conducting IRB-approved observations. Field assignments will account for 30% of semester grade and are vital for practice and application of the techniques covered in course sessions. Completion of all field assignments is required for students to receive credit in this course.

Individual Qualitative Research Paper with Infographic + Poster

The student will choose a topic of interest within the context of an organization/field of HRD for their qualitative research project. They will submit a project proposal and the proposal must be approved by instructor before collecting any field data for this assignment (Note: IRB is optional, and student may instead use this assignment for skill-building only). The project will encompass the identification of a problem, at least one research question, background information and review of relevant literature, qualitative method(s) of gathering data, source of data along with what you might expect to find out (i.e. What new information might you gain and what information might be confirmed for you?). The research report (in APA 7th ed. format and includes an Infographic) will be the deliverable for this project. Students will present a written report to the instructor and will also discuss their research with classmates throughout semester including a final poster presentation. This assignment is worth **30% of semester grade**.

Electronic Reflexive Journal (ERJ)
An ongoing electronic journal (i.e., a Word document) will be kept throughout the semester for the purpose of student reflexivity ("the process of reflecting critically on the self as researcher, the 'human element', Lincoln & Guba, 2000, p. 183) as well as for recording analysis information (i.e. research memos). The ongoing cumulative ERJ will be uploaded into Canvas at the end of each module. Note: An ERJ example will be given in Class 1.

Make-Up Work and Late Work
Make-Up work is allowed with a medical/official university business excuse with proper documentation. Otherwise, there will be a **50% per calendar day penalty (including weekends)** for all late work not otherwise pre-authorized. Email instructor ahead of time if you will not meet the deadline. Also, email for special cases (such as military duty/training, health or family emergencies; Dr. McWhorter will ask you for documentation for these situations).

Writing Expectations
This is a graduate-level university course with numerous written assignments that should be free of spelling and grammatical errors and should include sufficient organization, demonstrate critical thinking, and the proper citing of sources and references according to APA 7 guidelines. If you seek assistance from the UT Tyler Writing Center, you should plan well in advance for them to look over your paper and offer advice. If you need further tutoring, you should plan for at least two hour-long tutorials per assignment. Contact info: https://www.uttyler.edu/writing-center/

Use of Artificial Intelligence

UT Tyler is committed to exploring and using artificial intelligence (AI) tools as appropriate for the discipline and task undertaken. We encourage discussing AI tools' ethical, societal, philosophical, and disciplinary implications. All uses of AI should be acknowledged as this aligns with our commitment to honor and integrity, as noted in UT Tyler's Honor Code. Faculty and students must not use protected information, data, or copyrighted materials when using any AI tool. Additionally, users should be aware that AI tools rely on predictive models to generate content that may appear correct but is sometimes shown to be incomplete, inaccurate, taken without attribution from other sources, and/or biased. Consequently, an AI tool should not be considered a substitute for traditional approaches to research. You are ultimately responsible for the quality and content of the information you submit. Misusing AI tools that violate the guidelines specified for this course is considered a breach of academic integrity. The student will be subject to disciplinary actions as outlined in UT Tyler's Academic Integrity Policy.

For this course, AI is permitted only for specific assignments or situations, and appropriate acknowledgment is required. **Note: You have permission by Dr. McWhorter to utilize an AI tool for locating an existing document in Module 1.**

Important Dates:

Census Date = **May 27, 2025**
Last Day to Withdraw from Classes = **July 10, 2025**

-See University Modules in Canvas for University Policies-

HRD 6343: Foundations of Qualitative Research
*Tentative Course Outline as of 5.12.25**

Class #	Wed Due Dates	Topic/Description	Deliverables Due before Midnight
#1 **May 17, 2025**	**1.1 is due May 26** **1.2, 1.3, 1.4 due June 4, 2025**	Topics: Thinking like a Qualitative Researcher, Collecting Qualitative Data (Ch 13); Activities Include: Paired Observation in the Field (Ch 14); Mining Existing Document (bring a "document" to class)	• 1.1 Field Assignment #1 (Delayed Notes) • 1.2 Field Assignment #2 (With Notes) • 1.3 Upload Your Research Idea with an "Existing Document" (Field Assignment #3) • 1.4 Ongoing Reflexive Journal (RJ) (includes entries before and after Class #1)
#2 **June 7, 2025**	**June 25, 2025**	Topics: Qualitative Designs, Fieldwork (Ch 15), and Beginning Analysis (Ch 18, 19)	• 2.1 Field Assignment #4: Semi-structured Interview #1 with all components • 2.2 Beginning Analysis on 2.1 • 2.3 Ongoing RJ (includes entries before and after Class #2)
#3 **June 28, 2025**	**July 23, 2025**	Topics: Data Analysis Methods II (Ch 20) and Intro to Report Writing (Part III, Ch 24, 25)	• 3.1 Field Assignment #5: Semi-structured Interview #2 with all components • 3.2 Analysis on 3.1 • 3.3 Final Research Report (Infographic is optional) • 3.4 Ongoing RJ (includes entries before and after Class #3)
#4 **July 26, 2025**	**Aug 6, 2025**	Topics: Dealing with Validity (Ch 22, 23), Ethics (Ch 7, 17), Publication (Ch 21), Wrap-Up (Ch 21) Short intro to Qualitative Software	• 4.1 Poster Presentation (in class) • 4.2 Social Media Posting #HRD6343 • 4.3 Cumulative Reflexive Journal (includes entries before/after Class #4 and concluding remarks after 4.1 and 4.2 are submitted)
*Note: This is the tentative course calendar. If an unforeseen reason arises and schedule needs to be altered, instructor will upload a new calendar into Canvas and students will be notified through a Canvas Course announcement as to the needed change and the revised calendar posted.			

Face-to-Face Class Meetings: May 17th, June 7th, June 28th, July 26th
Soules College of Business Building, Room 214