



UT Tyler COLLEGE OF EDUCATION & PSYCHOLOGY

School of Education

EDRM 6353: Qualitative Methods in the Education Setting

Instructor: Julie Delello, PhD, Professor

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Office Hours (Online [Zoom link](#)) Wed. 9am-Noon* (*By appointment outside of normal office hours)

Course Description

This course is an introduction to qualitative research design and methods and is focused on the field of qualitative research and foundational philosophies of and approaches to qualitative research in educational settings. In this course, students explore the stages of qualitative research including the development of educational research questions, research designs, conceptual frameworks, methodological stances, data collection and analysis and instrument design and implementation in education settings.

Required Textbook/Materials

1. Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2024). *Qualitative inquiry & research design: Choosing among five approaches* (5th ed.). SAGE. 978-1544398396
2. American Psychological Association. (2019). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th ed.). Washington, DC: Author. ISBN-13: 978-1433832161.
3. Venkatesh, S. (2008). *Gang leader for a day: A rogue sociologist takes to the streets*. New York: Penguin. ISBN-13: 978-0143114932.
4. Field journal
5. Instructor provided readings and materials

Doctoral Program Goals

- a. Produce the next generation of educational leaders who understand the philosophical and historical perspectives of school reform, diversity, learning opportunities for all, and can address educational issues using a variety of strategies.
- b. Develop critical reasoning and a deep understanding of change theory to address challenges in school improvement contexts. This will include the skills to provide transformative leadership to schools that are failing to meet academic, social, and emotional standards.
- c. Provide opportunities to develop doctoral students' ability to approach challenges in innovative data-driven ways, including the use of interdisciplinary teams, as well as expand their problem solving, creative design, communication, and collaboration skills.
- d. Challenge the norms within educational systems using data and the engagement of other educators and stakeholders in professional learning to lead disruptive change through interdisciplinary work with experts in other educational fields.
- e. Conduct research of practice and responsiveness to improve teaching and learning experiences, counseling and support services, school leadership, educational organizations and structures, and all other educational disciplines.
- f. Prepare the next generation of educators with the knowledge, skills and tools to utilize data to

guide school improvement and policy and to improve learning outcomes leading to college and career readiness.

g. Prepare educators with a deep understanding of assessment and accountability systems.

h. Produce scholar practitioners that have a P-20 perspective of the education system to address school improvement in the broader perspective including educator preparation, teaching and learning.

Course Competencies

1. Technology-Based Skills – The student will demonstrate proficiency in creating, editing, and submitting professional-quality documents, presentations, and multimedia assignments using cloud-based platforms. The student will effectively navigate Canvas and other online learning tools to engage with course content, collaborate with peers, and complete projects in a connected digital environment.
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.
4. Problem Solving (Critical Thinking) – The student will apply conceptual thinking to analyze field data, reflect critically on research experiences through a reflexive journal, and design a qualitative research proposal grounded in appropriate methodological frameworks.
5. Ethical Issues in Decision Making and Behavior— the student will gain an appreciation of the ethics of field work. They will learn 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.

Course Evaluation and Grading

Grading Criteria

- A 90-100% of points
B 80-89% of points
C 70-79% of points
D 60-69% of points
F below 59.9% of total points

Overview of Major Assignments

Class Participation, Quizzes, and Online Discussions – 20%

Active participation is essential in a qualitative research course, where learning is enriched through dialogue, reflection, and collaborative inquiry. Students are expected to complete assigned readings prior to class and contribute meaningfully to both small-group and whole-class online discussions. Discussions are structured as collaborative learning experiences and occur in two phases:

- **Initial Post** – By Wednesday at 11:59 PM, students will respond to the weekly prompt in a 200–250-word original post.
- **Peer Responses** – By Sunday at 11:59 PM, students will reply to at least two classmates, with each response being a minimum of 100 words.

All contributions must demonstrate critical thinking and reference course materials or other scholarly sources in APA 7 format. In addition to discussion posts, students will complete short quizzes or other formative assessments throughout the term. These activities are designed to reinforce key concepts from the readings and support student readiness for deeper application

in class. Other brief, low-stakes assignments may also be incorporated to enhance engagement and promote continuous learning.

Midterm Exam – 10%

A midterm exam will be administered via Canvas to assess students' understanding of key concepts from course readings, lectures, and class discussions. The exam may include a combination of multiple-choice, short answer, and brief analytic responses. This assessment is designed to evaluate students' ability to apply foundational qualitative research concepts and terminology in both theoretical and practical contexts.

Electronic Reflexive Journal (ERJ) – 30%

Reflexivity (Lincoln & Guba, 2000) is a cornerstone of qualitative inquiry. Students will maintain an ongoing Electronic Reflexive Journal (ERJ), submitted as a link to a shared Google Document, to critically reflect on their evolving identity as researchers and record analytic insights throughout the course. Entries will include:

- Critical reflections on positionality, bias, and subjectivity in the research process.
- Responses to readings (e.g., *Gang Leader for a Day*), emphasizing methodology, ethics, and the researcher role.
- Research memos and analytical notes stemming from course activities.

The ERJ will be reviewed and evaluated based on depth of reflection, integration of course content, and scholarly APA 7 writing.

Qualitative Research Practice – 30%

Students will engage in a series of structured experiential activities to practice core qualitative research skills. These include activities such as:

Observations

- Field Assignment #1 (Week 1): Non-participatory observation without notes.
- Field Assignment #2 (Week 9): Non-participatory observation with structured field notes and a quantitative element.

Developing Questions with Peer Feedback

- Design interview or focus-group questions.
- Create open-ended survey questions.

Group Coding and Thematic Activity

Independently code qualitative data using initial coding techniques, then work in small groups to compare thematic interpretations. Discuss similarities, differences, and rationales to achieve inter-coder agreement. This collaborative process supports the development of analytic rigor and reflexivity.

Note: IRB approval is not required for these activities as they are considered practice exercises. However, if a student intends to pursue IRB approval for a future study and has obtained it, they must notify the instructor before collecting data.

Three-Page Research Proposal – 10%

Students will prepare a concise, single-spaced proposal outlining a qualitative study, which may serve as a component for a broader mixed-methods design. The proposal must follow *APA 7th edition* guidelines for student papers.

Course Expectations

Late Work: Assignments and projects are expected to be handed in on time. Assignments are expected to be uploaded to the assignment box on Canvas. You may turn in your assignment early. **Late assignments are not accepted unless prior arrangements have been made with the instructor.**

Attendance: The attendance policy recommended by the University is followed in this course. Course objectives and performance outcomes cannot be met unless you participate in class activities. If you are absent for an extended period, you should plan to explore options such as retaking the course or taking an incomplete grade.

Read chapters assigned from the instructor in each module.

You are responsible for this information on tests as well as during class participation. Criteria for all assignments will be posted online unless otherwise notified by the instructor.

Canvas– You are responsible for enrolling on **Canvas** (<https://www.uttyler.edu/canvas/index.php/>) prior to the second day and monitoring the course Canvas site regularly for course information. Assignments will be turned in through the assignment tab in Canvas.

Writing and Correct Attribution of Work

This is a graduate-level course, and it demands a high standard of written communication. All assignments must be free from spelling and grammatical errors, demonstrate clear organization, reflect critical thinking, and include proper citation of sources according to the APA (American Psychological Association, 7th edition) guidelines. For assistance with your writing, including APA style and formatting, you are encouraged to utilize the UT Tyler Writing Center. Please plan your visits well in advance to allow sufficient time for feedback and revisions. For more information or to schedule a session, visit the [UT Tyler Writing Center](#). Additionally, correct attribution of sources is critical in maintaining scholarly integrity. For comprehensive guidelines on APA style:

- **Use your APA Manual** as the primary reference for formatting and citation rules.
- Consult [Purdue OWL](#), which offers extensive resources on APA formatting and style.
- Access the [UT Tyler Library Citation Resources](#) for additional citation guides and support.

Turnitin is a tool that will be used to check documents for plagiarism. The tool provides feedback on the degree to which a document's text closely matches other sources, including content on the internet, in journal databases, and previously submitted papers. It also evaluates the probability of artificial intelligence (AI) use. If a student is found to have plagiarized or improperly used AI, a grade of zero will be assigned, along with a formal disposition. **No more than 20% of the submitted document may reflect exact matched text without a citation.** Matches resulting from properly cited quotations and references are expected but should not constitute the majority of the paper. Each paper will be considered case-by-case.

Tentative Course Outline

Week	Topic	Reading	Assignments
1 Aug 24 – Aug 28	Introduction to the Course/ Syllabus Introduction to Qualitative Research	• Begin Venkatesh: <i>Gang Leader for a Day</i> (Preface-Ch. 1) • Creswell, Chapter 1	• Course Introductions • Pre-Assessment • Field Assignment #1 (Delayed Notes)
2 Aug 31 – Sept 4	Qualitative Research Designs Epistemology, Axiology, and Ontology <i>Improvement Science as a Framework</i>	• Creswell, Chapters 2-3 • Venkatesh: <i>Gang Leader for a Day</i> (Ch.2)	• Discussion #1: Case Analysis • ERJ1: Post Reflection of Field Assignment #1 • Sorting Activity
3 Sept 7 – Sept 11	Basic Qualitative Research Narrative Inquiry Grounded Theory	• Creswell, Chapter 3-4 • Venkatesh (Ch. 3) • <i>On Being a Cripple</i> by Nancy Mairs • Liu, Y., & Xu, Y. (2011). Inclusion or exclusion? A narrative inquiry of a language teacher's identity experience in the "new work order" of competing pedagogies. <i>Teaching and Teacher Education</i>, 27(3), 589–597.	• ERJ2: Research Setting in Context • Mapping a Narrative (based on Nancy Mairs) • Discussion on Grounded Theory
4 Sept 14 – Sept 18	Ethnographic & Field Research Phenomenology Positionality	• Creswell, Chapter 4-5 • Venkatesh (Ch. 4) • Anderson, E. (2005). Jelly's place: An ethnographic memoir. <i>International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society</i>, 19(1/2), 35–52.	• Discussion on <i>Jelly</i> • ERJ3: Researcher Bias and Identity • Audio Reflection
5 Sept 21 – 26	Portraiture and Photo Voice	• Creswell, Chapter 4-5 • Lightfoot, S. L. (1986). On Goodness in schools: Themes of empowerment. <i>Peabody Journal of Education</i>, 63(3), 9–28.	• ERJ4: Voice, Vulnerability • Discussion: Photovoice

6 Sept 28 – Oct 2	Action Research Case Study	• Creswell, Chapter 4-5 • Venkatesh (Ch. 5) • Clay, D. A. (2018). <i>Addressing technology integration practices in an urban middle school through 21st century learning design</i> (Doctoral dissertation, University of Georgia). • Dissertation: A Qualitative Case Study of Students • Delello, J. A., & McWhorter, R. R. (2017). Reducing the digital divide: Connecting older adults to iPad technology. <i>Journal of Applied Gerontology</i>, 36(1), 3–28. • Taylor, E. W. (2006). Making meaning of local nonformal education: Practitioner's perspective. <i>Adult Education Quarterly</i>, 56(4), 291–307.	• ERJ5: Comparing Approaches • Discussion: Framing Your Study as a Bounded Case
7 Oct 5 – Oct 9			• Midterm Exam – Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design
8 Oct 12 – Oct 16	The Problem & Purpose Bias and Ethical Issues	• Chapter 3 and 6 Creswell • Venkatesh (completed Chapters 4-6) • Guillemin, M., & Gillam, L. (2004). Ethics, reflexivity, and “ethically important moments” in research. <i>Qualitative Inquiry</i>, 10(2), 261–280. • Dissertation: <i>Support services and state standardized assessments for homeless and high mobility youth: A mixed methods case study</i>	• ERJ6: Ethical Boundaries • Discussion #6: Sharing your Problem, Purpose, and Questions
9 Oct 19 – Oct 23	Fieldwork, Observations	• Creswell; Chapter 6-7 • Venkatesh (Ch. 7) • Eileen Barker, <i>The Making of a Moonie</i>	• Field Assignment #2 (With Notes) • ERJ7: Making of a Moonie

10 Oct 26 – Oct 30	The Qualitative Interview and Focus Groups Constructing Questions Transcripts	• Creswell: Read chapters 7 (pp. 197-199) • Qualitative Interview Design (Turner) • Jacob, S. A., & Furgerson, S. P. (2012). Writing interview protocols and conducting interviews: Tips for students new to the field of qualitative research. <i>The Qualitative Report</i>, 17(42).	• Activity: Interview Question Design Table
11 Nov 2 – Nov 6	Use of Surveys Data, Sampling Archival and Historical Research	• Creswell; Chapter 8: Data analysis/software • Venkatesh (Chapter 8)	• ERJ8: Interviews and Focus Groups • Creating Survey Questions
12 Nov 9 – Nov 13	Content Analysis Trustworthiness Coding & Theming	• Creswell: Chapter 8: Data analysis and representation. • Optional: Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). Establishing trustworthiness. In <i>Naturalistic inquiry</i> (pp. 289–331). Sage Publications.	• ERJ9: Sorting Activity • Interview/Focus Group Coding
13 Nov 16 – Nov 20	Writing a Qualitative Study Using Literature Writing a Proposal	• Creswell; Chapter 9: Writing a qualitative study. • Kalpokas, N., & Radivojevic, I. (2021). Adapting practices from qualitative research to tell a compelling story: A practical framework for conducting a literature review. <i>The Qualitative Report</i>, 26(5), 1546-1566.	• Inter-Coder Group Coding Due • Peer Writing Circle (Optional)
Nov 23 – Nov 27	Thanksgiving Break – No Class		
14-15 Nov 30 – Dec 9	Rigor and Validation Evaluation Criteria	• Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2018). Chapter 10: Standards of validation and evaluation. • Morse, J. M. (2015). Critical analysis of strategies for determining rigor in qualitative inquiry. <i>Qualitative Health Research</i>, 25(9), 1212-1222	• Proposal Due (Dec. 9)

Note: The last day to withdraw from this course is October 30, 2026.

In the event of any changes to the course calendar, the instructor will update the calendar on Canvas and notify all students through a Canvas course announcement.

University Policies and Information

Withdrawing from Class

Students may [withdraw](#) (drop) from this course using the [Withdrawal Portal](#). Withdrawing (dropping) this course can impact your Financial Aid, Scholarships, Veteran Benefits, Exemptions, Waivers, International Student Status, housing, and degree progress. Please speak with your instructors, consider your options, speak with your advisor, and visit the One-Stop Service Center (STE 230) or email enroll@uttyler.edu to get a complete review of your student account and the possible impacts to withdrawing. We want you to make an informed decision. UT Tyler faculty and staff are here for you and often can provide additional support options or assistance. Make sure to carefully [read the implications for withdrawing from a course and the instructions](#) on using the [Withdrawal portal](#).

Texas law prohibits students from dropping more than six courses during their entire undergraduate career*. The six courses dropped includes those from other 2-year or 4-year Texas public colleges and universities. Consider the impact withdrawing from this class has on your academic progress and other areas, such as financial implications. We encourage you to consult your advisor(s) and Enrollment Services for additional guidance. **CAUTION #1:** Withdrawing before census day does not mean you get a full refund. Please see the [Tuition and Fee Refund Schedule](#). **CAUTION #2:** All international students must check with the [Office of International Programs](#) before withdrawing. All international students are required to enroll full-time for fall and spring terms. **CAUTION #3:** All UT Tyler Athletes must check with the Athletic Academic Coordinator before withdrawing from a course. **CAUTION #4:** All veterans or military-affiliated students should consult with the [Military and Veterans Success Center](#).
* Students who began college for the first time before 2007 are exempt from this law.

Artificial Intelligence Statement

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. Refer to the About This Course section of the UT Tyler Syllabus Module for specific information on appropriate use of AI in your course(s).

Final Exam Policy

Final examinations are administered as scheduled. If unusual circumstances require that special arrangements be made for an individual student or class, the Dean of the appropriate college, after consultation with the faculty member involved, may authorize an exception to the schedule. Faculty members must maintain student final examination papers for a minimum of three months following the examination date.

Incomplete Grade Policy

If a student, because of extenuating circumstances, is unable to complete all of the requirements for a course by the end of the semester, then the instructor may recommend an Incomplete (I) for the course. The "I" may be assigned in place of a grade *only when **all** of the following conditions are met:* (a) the student has been making satisfactory progress in the course; (b) the student is unable to complete all coursework or final exam due to unusual circumstances that are beyond personal control and are acceptable to the instructor, and (c) the student presents these reasons before the time that the final grade roster is due. The semester credit hours for an Incomplete will not be used to calculate the grade point average. The student and the instructor must submit an Incomplete Form detailing the work required and the time by which the work must be completed to their respective department chair or college dean for approval. The time limit established must not exceed one year. Should the student fail to meet all of the work for the course within the time limit, then the instructor may assign zeros to the unfinished work, compute the course average for the student, and assign the appropriate grade. If a grade has yet to be assigned within one year, then the Incomplete will be changed to an F, or NC. If the course was initially taken under the CR/NC grading basis, this may adversely affect the student's academic standing.

Grade Appeal Policy

Disputes regarding grades must be initiated within sixty (60) days from the date of receiving the final course grade by filing a Grade Appeal Form with the instructor who assigned the grade. A grade appeal should be used when the student thinks the final course grade awarded does not reflect the grades earned on assessments or follow the grading scale as documented in the syllabus. The student should provide the rationale for the grade appeal and attach supporting document about the grades earned. The form should be sent via email to the faculty member who assigned the grade. The faculty member reviews the rationale and supporting documentation and completes the instruction section of the form. The instructor should return the form to the student, even if a grade change is made at this level. If the student is not satisfied with the decision, the student may appeal in writing to the Chairperson of the department from which the grade was issued. In situations where there is an allegation of capricious grading, discrimination, or unlawful actions, appeals may go beyond the Chairperson to the Dean or the Dean's designee of the college from which the grade was issued, with that decision being final. The Grade Appeal form is found in the [Registrar's Form Library](#). NOTE: The Grade Appeal Form is different from the Application for Appeal form submitted to the Student Appeals Committee, which does not rule on grade disputes as described in this policy.

Disability/Accessibility Services

In accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the ADA Amendments Act (ADAAA), the University of Texas at Tyler offers accommodations to students with learning, physical, and/or psychological disabilities. If you have a disability, including a non-visible diagnosis such as a learning disorder, chronic illness, TBI, PTSD, ADHD, or a history of modifications or accommodations in a previous educational environment, you are encouraged to visit <https://hood.accessiblelearning.com/UTTyler/> and fill out the New Student application. The Student Accessibility and Resources (SAR) office will contact you when your application has been submitted and an appointment with the Assistant Director Student Accessibility and Resources/ADA Coordinator. For more information, including filling out an application for services, please visit the SAR webpage at <https://www.uttyler.edu/disability-services>, the SAR office located in the Robert Muntz Library, LIB 460, email saroffice@uttyler.edu, or call 903.566.7079.

Military Affiliated Students

UT Tyler honors the service and sacrifices of our military-affiliated students. If you are a student who is a veteran, on active duty, in the reserves or National Guard, or a military spouse or dependent, please stay in contact with your faculty member if any aspect of your

present or prior service or family situation makes it difficult for you to fulfill the requirements of a course or creates disruption in your academic progress. It is important to make your faculty member aware of any complications as far in advance as possible. Your faculty member is willing to work with you and, if needed, put you in contact with university staff who are trained to assist you. The [Military and Veterans Success Center \(MVSC\)](#) has campus resources for military-affiliated students. The MVSC can be reached at MVSC@uttyler.edu or via phone at 903.565.5972.

Students on an F-1 Visa

To remain in compliance with Federal Regulations requirements you must do the following:

- Traditional face-to-face classes: Attend classes on the regular meeting days/times.
- Hybrid Classes: Attend all face-to-face classes convened by the instructor according to the schedule set for your specific course.
- Online course: Only one online course can count toward your full-time enrollment. Students are expected to be fully engaged and meet all requirements for the online course.

Academic Honesty and Academic Misconduct

The UT Tyler community comes together to pledge that "Honor and integrity will not allow me to lie, cheat, or steal, nor to accept the actions of those who do." Therefore, we enforce the [Student Conduct and Discipline policy](#) in the Student Manual Of Operating Procedures (Section 8).

FERPA

UT Tyler follows the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) as noted in [University Policy 5.2.3](#). The course instructor will follow all requirements to protect your confidential information.

Absence for Official University Events or Activities

This course follows the practices related to [Excused Absences for University Events or Activities](#) as noted in the Catalog.

Absence for Religious Holidays

This course follows the practices related to [Excused Absences for Religious Holy Days as noted in the Catalog](#).

Absence for Pregnant Students

This course follows the requirements of Texas Laws SB 412, SB 459, SB 597/HB 1361 to meet the needs of pregnant and parenting students. Part of the supports afforded pregnant students includes excused absences. Faculty who are informed by a student of needing this support should make a referral to the Parenting Student Liaison. NOTE: Students must work with the Parenting Student Liaison in order to receive these supports. Students should reach out to the Parenting Student Liaison at parents@uttyler.edu and also complete the [Pregnant and Parenting Self-Reporting Form](#).

Campus Carry

We respect the right and privacy of students who are duly licensed to carry concealed weapons in this class. License holders are expected to behave responsibly and keep a handgun secure and concealed. More information is available at <http://www.uttyler.edu/about/campus-carry/index.php>.

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND PSYCHOLOGY (CEP) VISION AND MISSION

Core Purpose of College of Education and Psychology:

To prepare competent, caring, and qualified professionals in the fields of education, psychology and counseling, to foster discovery and to advance the knowledge base in our respective disciplines.

Vision

The CEP will be a global leader in responding to needs in the fields of education, psychology, and counseling, with a focus on the East Texas region, by creating innovative academic and scholarly pathways and partnerships.

Mission

The mission of the CEP is to prepare competent and passionate professionals in the fields of education, psychology, and counseling; to advance knowledge and expertise; and to impact these fields locally, regionally, nationally, and internationally

UT TYLER'S SCHOOL OF EDUCATION STANDARDS FOR EDUCATOR PREPARATION PROGRAMS

Texas Education Standards: The School of Education are committed to teaching and implementing the Texas Educator Standards at the highest level. The School of Education faculty use the Texas Education Standards, along with the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC) standards used by educator preparation programs throughout the United States.

The list of [Texas Education Standards](#) can be accessed [here](#). Access the [Code of Ethics and Standard Practices for Texas Educators](#).