
Course Syllabus for HRD 6345 Foundations of Qualitative Research

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Virtual Office Hours: See Course Shell for Dates and Times

Course Overview

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.

Overview: This course explores the epistemological and ontological bases of qualitative research, emphasizing a critical analysis of five key methodologies: narrative research, phenomenology, grounded theory, ethnography, and case studies. Students will develop skills to align research questions with suitable methods and methodologies. Through academic discussion and writing, learners will improve their ability to clearly articulate and justify qualitative research designs appropriate for doctoral-level work.

Learning Outcomes:

- 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 using a reflexive journal.

Instructional Mode:

This course is a 3-credit asynchronous online class where students are expected to spend 9 hours on average/week on learning activities such as reading, writing, problem sets, and studying, depending on their individual learning styles and unit assignments.

Required Course Materials:

- American Psychological Association. (2019). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th ed.). Washington, DC: Author.
- Creswell, J. & Poth, C. (2023). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (5th ed.). SAGE Publications. ISBN-10: 1544398395
- Crotty, M. (1998). *The foundations of social research: Meaning and perspective in the research process*. Sage Publications.
<https://openurl.ebsco.com/openurl?sid=ebsco:plink:mosaic&id=ebsco:nlebk:1099439>
- Glesne, C. (2016). *Becoming qualitative researchers: An introduction* (5th ed.). Pearson. ISBN-10: 0133859398
- Guba, E. G. (1990). *The paradigm Dialog*. Sage Publications. ISBN-10: 0803938225
- Other assigned electronic resources are listed in Canvas

Optional Course Materials

- Crotty, M. (1998). *The foundations of social research*. Sage Publications. ISBN-10: 0761961062
- Saldaña, J. (2025). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers* (5th ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Schwandt, T. J. (2015). *The Sage Dictionary of Qualitative Inquiry* (4th ed.). Sage Publications. ISBN-10: 1452217459 (This dictionary is a valuable resource, with in-depth descriptions of key constructs, theories, and practices in qualitative inquiry)
<https://openurl.ebsco.com/openurl?sid=ebsco:plink:mosaic&id=ebsco:nlebk:3361820>

Active Participation

This course thrives on active participation! Your contributions are essential for creating a rich learning environment where everyone can benefit from diverse perspectives. By actively participating, critically analyzing course materials, and applying your learning to real-world scenarios, you'll develop your expertise in this subject and unlock your potential for further exploration.

Course Schedule:

This is the preliminary course schedule. If an unexpected reason arises that requires a schedule change. Students will be informed of the necessary change through a Canvas Course announcement.

Module #. Module Name (Beginning of Week)	Module Work	Section Quiz	Assignment	
Module 1: Introduction to Qualitative Research and Paradigms				
Week 1: Aug 24-30			Reference List: Qualitative Methodology	20 pts
Week 2: Aug 31 – Sep 6			- Research Workbook: Step 1 and 2 - Research Methodology/Methods Alignment	10 pts 20 pts
Module 2: Narrative Research Methodology				
Week 3: Sep 7 – Sep 13			Group 1: Presentation – Narrative	20 pts*
Week 4: Sep 14 – Sep 20			Research Workbook: Step 3	5 pts
Module 3: Phenomenology Research Methodology				
Week 5: Sep 21 – Sep 27			Group 2: Presentation – Phenomenology	*
Week 6: Sep 28 – Oct 4			- Research Workbook: Step 4 - Research Poster	5 pts 25 pts
Module 4: Grounded Theory Research Methodology				
Week 7: Oct 5 – Oct 11			Group 3: Presentation – Grounded Theory	*
Week 8: Oct 12 – Oct 18			- Research Workbook: Step 5 - Interview Guide: Development	5 pts 20 pts
Module 5: Ethnography Research Methodology				
Week 9: Oct 19 – Oct 25			Group 4: Presentation – Ethnography	*
Week 10: Oct 26 – Nov 1			- Research Workbook: Step 6 - Data Analysis	5 pts 20 pts
Module 6: Case Study Research Methodology				
Week 11: Nov 2 – Nov 8			Group 5: Presentation – Case Study	*
Week 12: Nov 9 – Nov 15			Research Workbook: Step 7	5 pts
Module 7: Research Alignment and Final Course Project				
Week 13: Nov 16- Nov 22			Final Course Presentation: Research Alignment	50 pts
Thanksgiving Break (Nov 23-29)				
Week 14/15: Nov 30 – Dec 12			- Reflexive Journal - Final Research Report - Critical Reflection Paper	25 pts 150 pts 25 pts

Note. Schedule and syllabus are subject to change. The current syllabus and assigned readings are available in Canvas. Specific due dates in Canvas.

Course Assignment Overview

Course Assignment Procedures

- Assignments must be submitted by 11:59 p.m. Central time, unless otherwise noted in Canvas.
- Written assignments should be typed and adhere to the current APA style guidelines.
- Please upload your assignments to Canvas; email submissions will not be accepted.
- Files should be in Microsoft Word format (doc or docx), unless specified otherwise.
- This syllabus and assignment due dates may change, with any updates communicated by the instructor through Canvas or University email.
- See Canvas for additional details.

Course Assignment Description

- **Critical Reflection Activity:** This course reflection activity gives students an opportunity to critically examine the course learning outcomes and evaluate their intellectual and professional growth. It aims to go beyond simply summarizing course content, instead offering a comprehensive and meaningful analysis of their own learning journey.
- **Data Analysis:** There are many methods for analyzing qualitative data. Although mastering every approach isn't feasible, for this assignment, you will analyze the assigned transcript using thematic analysis. You will share your results on the discussion board to see how others interpreted the same data and to participate in a scholarly discussion of your findings. This dialogue offers a valuable chance to debate and appreciate different data analysis outcomes.
- **Final Course Presentation: Research Alignment (Quant/Qual Comparison):** The objective of this individual project is to deepen your understanding of research methodology and methods by applying them to your research topic and question(s). You will design and deliver a research presentation that highlights the methodological choices you make and the rationale for those choices. This project will not only reinforce the concepts covered in class but also develop your critical thinking, research skills, and ability to communicate complex ideas effectively.
- **Final Research Report:** The student will choose a topic of interest within an organization or the field of HRD for their qualitative research project. They will submit a project proposal, which must be approved by the instructor before collecting any field data for this assignment (Note: IRB is optional, and the 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 a review of relevant literature, qualitative methods for gathering data, the source of data, and 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 including an Infographic) will be the deliverable for this project.
- **Interview Guide: Development:** Although writing interview questions may seem like an easy task, developing an interview protocol requires careful thought and purpose. A well-crafted protocol helps researchers gather comprehensive data that addresses the main research questions. In this assignment, you'll focus on creating an interview protocol for a potential research study. Considerations include obtaining participant consent, making interviewees feel at ease, and framing questions appropriately based on theory, literature, and methodology.
- **Reflexive Journal:** As the primary instrument for data collection and analysis, qualitative researchers should cultivate ongoing self-awareness to ensure research quality and trustworthiness. Throughout the course, students keep a continuous journal to reflect on their developing role as qualitative scholars. Each entry prompts critical reflexivity about personal assumptions, identity, and positionality, while also documenting their learning across qualitative methodologies and HRD research design.

- **Research List: Qualitative Methodology:** Qualitative research encompasses various traditions, each with unique epistemological and ontological foundations. By compiling a list of quality peer-reviewed articles or book chapters, you will start to learn about the five major qualitative methodologies: Narrative, Phenomenology, Grounded Theory, Ethnography, and Case Study. This activity helps to build a bank of resources for students to access and review.
- **Research Methodology/Methods Alignment:** Methodological alignment is the cornerstone of rigorous qualitative inquiry, ensuring that philosophical assumptions, research questions, theoretical lenses, and empirical procedures function as a unified system. In this assignment, students complete and share a comprehensive alignment worksheet that maps their working title, problem statement, purpose, research questions, paradigm, design, and data collection procedures. Through an interactive discussion board, students present their methodological logic, identify specific design challenges, and engage in constructive peer review to evaluate coherence, qualitative rigor, and alignment before finalizing their research report.
- **Research Poster:** This assignment tasks students with transforming their qualitative research designs into a visually appealing academic poster and a brief verbal presentation. Students outline their study's problem, research questions, theoretical framework, methodology, qualitative results, and HRD implications within a structured poster. Along with a 3 to 5-minute recorded presentation that emphasizes methodological consistency and participant evidence, students share their research with the class and offer meaningful peer feedback on data integration, qualitative rigor, and overall study alignment to foster scholarly discussion.
- **Research Workbook:** The Qualitative Research Workbook is a guide designed to help you understand qualitative research methods, which are fundamental in doctoral social science research. The workbook will cover research paradigms and introduce you to the five main qualitative research methods. While the workbook entries may seem brief, a thorough understanding requires a substantial time investment. Dedicate enough time for in-depth reading, reflection, and responding to each assignment reflection, and responding to each assignment.
- **Qualitative Research Methodology: Group Presentation:** The group project requires a presentation on one of five qualitative research methods: Narrative, Phenomenological, Grounded Theory, Ethnography, or Case Study. The goal is to engage peers and spark curiosity, not just present facts. The presentation should be organized, starting with a clear introduction of the method. Cover core principles, advantages, limitations, and data collection techniques, using real-world examples, visuals, and a brief activity. End with a summary and a thought-provoking question. Groups range from 2 to 5 students. The instructor will assign approved groups and topics.

Course Evaluation

Component	Individual or Group	Points
Critical Reflection Activity	Individual	25
Data Analysis	Individual	20
Final Course Presentation: Research Alignment	Individual	50
Final Research Report	Either	150
Interview Guide: Development	Individual	20
Reflexive Journal	Group	25
Research List: Qualitative Methodology	Individual	20
Research Methodology/Methods Alignment	Individual	20
Research Poster	Either	25
Research Workbook	Individual	35
Qualitative Research Methodology	Group	20
Total		410

A = 90% – 100% B = 80% – 89% C = 70% – 79% D = 60% – 69% F = < 60%

Course Policies

Students are responsible for knowing and adhering to all university-wide and school-specific policies and procedures. These include, but are not limited to, policies on academic integrity, student conduct, attendance, disability services, and grievance procedures. It is your responsibility to familiarize yourself with these regulations, which are detailed in official university and school publications and websites. Additional course-specific policies are outlined in this syllabus.

Academic Dishonesty Statement

The faculty expects from its students a high level of responsibility and academic honesty. Because the value of an academic degree depends upon the absolute integrity of the work done by the student for that degree, it is imperative that a student demonstrates a high standard of individual honor in his or her scholastic work.

Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, statements, acts or omissions related to applications for enrollment of the award of a degree, and/or the submission, as one's own work of material that is not one's own. As a general rule, scholastic dishonesty involves one of the following acts: cheating, plagiarism, collusion and/or falsifying academic records. Students suspected of academic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary proceedings.

University regulations require the instructor to report all suspected cases of academic dishonesty to the Dean of Students for disciplinary action. In the event disciplinary measures are imposed on the student, it becomes part of the students' official school records. Also, please note that the handbook obligates you to report all observed cases of academic dishonesty to the instructor.

Plagiarism will not be tolerated and learners should be aware that all written course assignments will be checked by Plagiarism detection software. Violations of academic integrity will be reported and processed according the guidelines established by the University.

APA

All required course activities should follow the current APA guidelines.

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 (see below) 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. This course has specific assignments where artificial intelligence (AI) tools (such as ChatGPT or Copilot) are permitted and encouraged. When AI use is permissible, it will be clearly stated in the assignment directions, and all use of AI must be appropriately acknowledged and cited. Otherwise, the default is that AI is not allowed during any stage of an assignment.

Classroom Climate

An open exchange of ideas is vital for learning. Be mindful of your contributions in class, refrain from dominating discussions, and interact with your classmates. I aim to cultivate an environment where every student can engage fully, in a respectful and sensitive manner. Please communicate any concerns you may have promptly.

Copyright Policy and Intellectual Property

This course, along with its materials such as lectures, assignments, quizzes, exams, and multimedia content, belongs to the instructor and/or the University. These resources are intended solely for your personal use within this course. Students are strictly forbidden from:

- Distributing, publishing, or uploading any course materials to public or commercial websites or other unauthorized platforms.
- Selling or reproducing course materials for commercial purposes.
- Sharing course materials with individuals not enrolled in this course.

Any unauthorized distribution or reproduction of copyrighted course materials violates federal copyright law and university policy. Such conduct may also breach the university's academic integrity policies, potentially resulting in disciplinary or university sanctions.

Course Communication

Course related communication happens through the following channels:

Class Announcements: Available on our Canvas home page. Subscribe to get them through your University email. Remember to check the "Announcements" section on Canvas often.

Email: Please check your email regularly. Feel free to email me with any questions, concerns, or feedback, including your section number and team if relevant. Use your university email to prevent messages from going to spam. The professor will generally respond to emails within 24-48 business hours.

Extra Credit

No extra credit work will be accepted or offered in this course. To achieve a good grade in the course, it is essential to read all assigned materials, allocate ample time for studying and preparing assignments, and submit all tasks on time.

Grading Feedback and Scores (Assignments)

Your instructor is committed to providing timely feedback on coursework, with a typical turnaround time of 48 to 72 business hours from the assignment's due date. Should you require additional feedback or clarification, please do not hesitate to contact your professor via email.

If you believe there is an error in a graded assignment, you must contact your professor within three business days of the grade's publication to initiate a dispute. Be aware that a grade dispute entails a comprehensive reassessment of the entire assignment, which may result in the original score being raised, lowered, or remaining the same.

Late Work

Late submissions incur a deduction of one grade per week past the deadline. No assignments will be accepted after the final day of class unless an incomplete is approved.

Recordings and Photos

Videos, audio recordings, or photographs of any class activities, including those during office hours, are not allowed unless the instructor gives permission.

Soules College of Business Statement of Ethics

The ethical problems facing local, national, and global business communities are an ever-increasing challenge. It is essential the Soules College of Business helps students prepare for lives of personal integrity, responsible citizenship, and public service. In order to accomplish these goals, both students and faculty of the Soules College of Business at The University of Texas at Tyler will:

- Ensure honesty in all behavior, never cheating or knowingly giving false information.
- Create an atmosphere of mutual respect for all students and faculty regardless of race, creed, gender, age, or religion.
- Develop an environment conducive to learning.
- Encourage and support student organizations and activities.
- Protect property and personal information from theft, damage, and misuse.
- Conduct yourself in a professional manner both on and off campus.

Student Standards of Academic Conduct

Disciplinary proceedings may be initiated against any student who engages in scholastic dishonesty, including, but not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such acts.

i. "Cheating" includes, but is not limited to:

- copying from another student's test paper;
- using, during a test, materials not authorized by the person giving the test;
- failure to comply with instructions given by the person administering the test;
- possession during a test of materials which are not authorized by the person giving the test, such as class notes or specifically designed "crib notes". The presence of textbooks

constitutes a violation if they have been specifically prohibited by the person administering the test;

- using, buying, stealing, transporting, or soliciting in whole or part the contents of an unadministered test, test key, homework solution, or computer program;
 - collaborating with or seeking aid from another student during a test or other assignment without authority;
 - discussing the contents of an examination with another student who will take the examination;
 - divulging the contents of an examination, for the purpose of preserving questions for use by another, when the instructors has designated that the examination is not to be removed from the examination room or not to be returned or to be kept by the student;
 - substituting for another person, or permitting another person to substitute for oneself to take a course, a test, or any course-related assignment;
 - paying or offering money or other valuable thing to, or coercing another person to obtain an unadministered test, test key, homework solution, or computer program or information about an unadministered test, test key, home solution or computer program;
 - falsifying research data, laboratory reports, and/or other academic work offered for credit;
 - taking, keeping, misplacing, or damaging the property of The University of Texas at Tyler, or of another, if the student knows or reasonably should know that an unfair academic advantage would be gained by such conduct; and
 - misrepresenting facts, including providing false grades or resumes, for the purpose of obtaining an academic or financial benefit or injuring another student academically or financially.
- ii. “Plagiarism” includes, but is not limited to, the appropriation, buying, receiving as a gift, or obtaining by any means another’s work and the submission of it as one’s own academic work offered for credit.
- iii. “Collusion” includes, but is not limited to, the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing academic assignments offered for credit or collaboration with another person to commit a violation of any section of the rules on scholastic dishonesty.
- iv. All written work that is submitted will be subject to review by plagiarism software.

Technical Issues

Make sure to submit assignments ahead of the deadline to prepare for possible technical difficulties.

University Policies and Information

For University policies and information, please see the UT Tyler Syllabus Module in Canvas.

Writing Assistance

Even skilled writers can always enhance their abilities. Utilize the university resources offered to students. The Writing Center provides support for writing and editing.