



**Brescia University College
Department of Sociology
Qualitative Research
Sociology 3307F
Fall 2018**

Instructor: Prof. Rebecca Collins-Nelsen **E-mail:** rcolli32@uwo.ca

Class Times: Wednesdays 8:30am – 11:30 am in BR- UH 26

Office Hours: Thursdays 11:25am – 12:25 am or by appointment **Office:** UH-352

Antirequisites: Sociology 3310F/G or Sociology 3311F/G.

Prerequisites: Enrolment in a Sociology Honours Specialization with a minimum grade of 60% in Sociology 2205A/B and 2206A/B or the former 231. If not in an Honours Specialization, a minimum grade of 70% in Sociology 2205A/B and 2206A/B or the former 231.

Course Description

This course is designed to teach students about a variety of qualitative research methods that are used to analyze the social world. This course will also explore how qualitative research fits in with broader debates in sociology such as the purpose of sociological research, how to research ethically, and what role reflexivity plays in research. Further, students will learn about specific qualitative practices such as interviewing, content analyses, ethnographies and case studies. Students will also get a chance to apply the knowledge they learn in class by collecting and analyzing data for their own small research project. Throughout this course students will be challenged to apply their “sociological imagination” as they engage in hands on research and analysis.

Learning Outcomes

When you have completed this course you should be able to:

- Recognize, make distinctions, and evaluate different qualitative research approaches (Critical Thinking)

- Understand the practical and ethical responsibilities that are involved with being a qualitative researcher (Social Awareness and Engagement; Self-Awareness and Engagement)
- Formulate effective research questions that can be answered using qualitative research methods (Problem Solving)
- Conduct a literature review and design a small research project (Inquiry and Analysis; Problem Solving)
- Gather and analyze data using sociological techniques (Problem Solving; Valuing)
- Effectively communicate the findings from a small research project in presentation and written form (Inquiry and Analysis; Communication)

Required Reading Materials

Hesse-Biber, Sharlene Nagy. 2017. *The Practice of Qualitative Research*. Third Edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

* The following supplemental readings will be posted on OWL. Some main arguments from these readings will be discussed in class, however these readings are **not required** and are simply provided for students who are interested in reading further. The number that corresponds to these readings can be found in the “Course Schedule” on the day which we will be discussing them.

1. Charmaz, Kathy. 2004. “Premises, Principles and Practices in Qualitative Research: Revisiting the Foundations.” *Qualitative Health Research* 14(7): 976-993.
2. Smith, Linda Tuhiwai. 1999. “Introduction” pp. 1-18 in *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*. London: Zed Books Ltd.
3. Baez, Benjamin. 2002. “Confidentiality in Qualitative Research: Reflections on Secrets, Power and Agency.” *Qualitative Research* 2(1): 35-58.
4. Shaffir, William. 2009. “On Piecing the Puzzle: Researching Hassidic Jews” pp. 212-225 in *Ethnographies Revisited: Constructing Theory in the Field*, edited by Antony J. Puddephatt, William Shaffir and Steven W. Kleinknecht. New York: Routledge.
5. DeVault, Marjorie and Liza McCoy. 2004. “Institutional Ethnography: Using Interviews to Investigate Ruling Relations” pp. 191-205 in *Critical Strategies for Social Research*, edited by William K. Carroll. Canadian Scholars’ Press.

6. Broom, Alex, Kelly Hand and Philip Tovey. 2009. "The Role of Gender, Environment and Individual Biography in Shaping Qualitative Interview Data." *International Journal of Social Research Methodology* 12(1): 51 –65.
7. Elliott, Jane. 2005. "The Researcher as Narrator: Reflexivity in Qualitative And Quantitative Research." Pp 152-59 in *Using Narrative in Social Research: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*, edited Jane Elliott. London: Sage.
8. Williams, Christine L. 1992. "The Glass Escalator: Hidden Advantages for Men in the 'Female' Professions" *Social Problems*. 39(3): 253-267.
9. Wingfield, Adia. 2009. "Racializing the Glass Escalator: Reconsidering Men's Experiences in Women's Work." *Gender & Society* 23(1):5-26.

It is essential that readings are done prior to class as the lectures and class discussions are designed under the assumption that students have read the required material.

Grading Scheme

| | | Applicable Brescia Competencies |
|---|------------|---|
| Applied Learning Exercises/Participation | 15% | Critical Thinking, Problem Solving, Inquiry and Analysis, Communication |
| Research Proposal | 15% | Critical Thinking, Communication, Valuing, Self-Awareness and Development, Problem Solving |
| Mid Term Exam | 25% | Critical Thinking, Problem Solving, Social Awareness and Engagement, Communication, Inquiry and Analysis |
| Presentation | 10% | Communication, Critical Thinking, Self-Awareness and Engagement |
| Final Paper | 35% | Critical Thinking, Communication, Inquiry and Analysis, Self-Awareness and Development, Social Awareness and Engagement |

Applied Learning Exercises/Participation

There will be several applied learning exercises throughout the semester whereby students will be asked to apply what they have learned in class to short in-class exercises (ie. participate in observational research, content analysis, etc.). These exercises plus your quality and quantity of participation in class discussions and throughout other students Q and A for their presentations will determine your grade for this section.

Research Proposal

Each student will be expected to hand in a research proposal for a small qualitative research project. Proposals are due in class on **October 17th**. Most of the work leading up to the proposal will be done in groups but each student is expected to individually hand in a proposal. The proposals will include an introduction, research questions, an annotated bibliography, a discussion regarding ethics, letter of information, consent form, and interview guide. Some of those components will be consistent among the group members and others will be written individually. There will be a 5% late penalty per day if the proposal is handed in late. More information regarding this assignment will be provided in class and posted on OWL.

Mid Term Exam

There will only be one exam for this course and it will take place in class on **November 7th**. The exam will include short and long answer questions requiring students to engage and reflect on readings, concepts, and discussions from class. More information will be given about the exam in class.

Presentations

The presentations will take place in class on **December 5th**. They will be done individually and be in the form of a conference presentation poster. The poster and presentation should outline the study that was conducted, the analysis, and the findings. More details regarding the expectations of the presentations will be provided in class.

Final Paper

The final research paper will be a culmination of the work that has been accomplished throughout the course. The final paper will be due on **December 5th**. Students will analyze the primary data that they have collected over the course of this class to write their final paper. The final paper will include an introduction, a methods section, and an analysis section. While much of the work throughout the project is done in collaboration with group members the analysis of the final paper must reflect each student's own interpretation of the interview data. There will be a 5% late penalty

per day if the paper is handed in late. More information regarding the final paper will be provided in class and posted on OWL.

Course Schedule

Note: This schedule is subject to minor changes

| Fall Semester | | |
|--------------------------------|---|--|
| Day | Topic | Chapter |
| September 12 th | Introduction to Qualitative Research | Ch. 1 |
| September 19 th | Methodological Approaches and Design of Qualitative Research | Ch. 2 and 3 <i>Article 1</i> |
| September 26 th | Practical and Ethical Considerations | Ch. 4 <i>Article 2 and 3</i> |
| October 3 rd | Interviewing as Data Collection: In-Depth Interviewing | Ch. 5 |
| October 10th | Fall Reading Week | No Class |
| October 17th | Focus Groups and Ethnographies Research Proposals DUE | Ch. 6 and 7 <i>Article 4 and 5</i> |
| October 24 th | Case Studies and Content Analysis | Ch. 8 and 9 |
| October 31 st | Mixed Methods Approaches and Institutional Ethnographies, Reflexivity | Ch. 10 <i>Article 6 and 7</i> |
| November 7th | Mid Term Exam | STUDY |
| November 14 th | Analysis and Interpretation of Qualitative Data | Ch.11 Article 8 and 9 |
| November 21 st | Analysis and Interpretation of Qualitative Data | Review Collected Data |
| November 28 th | Writing and Representation of Qualitative Data | Ch.12 |
| December 5th | Group Presentations Final Paper Due | No Reading |

2018-19 BRESCIA UNIVERSITY COLLEGE ACADEMIC POLICIES AND REGULATIONS

1. POLICY REGARDING MAKEUP EXAMS AND EXTENSIONS OF DEADLINES

When a student requests academic accommodation (e.g., extension of a deadline, a makeup exam) for work representing 10% or more of the student's overall grade in the course, it is the responsibility of the student to provide acceptable documentation to support a medical or compassionate claim. All such requests for academic accommodation **must** be made through an Academic Advisor and include supporting documentation.

Academic accommodation for illness will be granted only if the documentation indicates that the onset, duration and severity of the illness are such that the student could not reasonably be expected to

complete her academic responsibilities. Minor ailments typically treated by over-the-counter medications will not normally be accommodated.

Students must submit their documentation along with a request for relief specifying the nature of the accommodation being requested no later than two business days after the date specified for resuming responsibilities. In cases where there might be an extended absence or serious issue, students should submit their documentation promptly and consult their Academic Advisor for advice during their recovery period. Whenever possible, students who require academic accommodation should provide notification and documentation in advance of due dates, examinations, etc. Appropriate academic accommodation will be determined by the Dean's Office/Academic Advisor in consultation with the student's instructor(s). Academic accommodation may include extension of deadlines, waiver of attendance requirements for classes/labs/tutorials, arranging Special Exams or Incompletes, re-weighting course requirements, or granting late withdrawals without academic penalty.

Please note that personal commitments (e.g., vacation flight bookings, work schedule) which conflict with a scheduled test, exam or course requirement are **not** grounds for academic accommodation.

A UWO Student Medical Certificate (SMC) is **required** if a student is seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds. This documentation should be obtained at the time of the initial consultation with the physician/nurse practitioner or walk-in clinic. A SMC can be downloaded from: http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf. The student must request documentation sufficient to demonstrate that her ability to meet academic responsibilities was seriously affected. Please note that under University Senate regulations documentation stating simply that the student "was seen for a medical reason" or "was ill" is **not** adequate to support a request for academic accommodation.

The full policy on requesting accommodation due to illness can be viewed at:

http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryID=1&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#Page_12

2. ACADEMIC CONCERNS

If you feel that you have a medical or personal challenge that is interfering with your work, contact your instructor and Academic Advisor as soon as possible. Problems may then be documented and possible arrangements to assist you can be discussed at the time of occurrence rather than on a retroactive basis. Retroactive requests for academic accommodation on medical or compassionate grounds are not normally considered.

If you think that you are too far behind to catch up or that your work load is not manageable, you should consult your Academic Advisor. If you consider reducing your workload by dropping one or more courses, this must be done by the appropriate deadlines (refer to the Registrar's website, <http://brescia.uwo.ca/academics/registrar-services/> or the list of official sessional dates in the Academic Calendar, see the Sessional Dates tab at <http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/index.cfm?SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=>). You should

consult with the course instructor and the Academic Advisor who can help you consider alternatives to dropping one or more courses. Note that dropping a course may affect OSAP eligibility and/or Entrance Scholarship eligibility.

3. ABSENCES

Short Absences: If you miss a class due to a minor illness or other problems, check your course outline for information regarding attendance requirements and make sure you are not missing a test or assignment. Cover any readings and arrange to borrow notes from a classmate. Contact the course instructor if you have any questions.

Extended Absences: If you have an extended absence, you should contact the course instructor and an Academic Advisor. Your course instructor and Academic Advisor can discuss ways for you to catch up on missed work and arrange academic accommodations, if appropriate and warranted.

It is important to note that the Academic Dean may refuse permission to write the final examination in a course if the student has failed to maintain satisfactory academic standing throughout the year or for too frequent absence from the class or laboratory

(http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryID=5&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#SubHeading_68).

4. SCHOLASTIC OFFENCES

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at:

http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryID=1&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#Page_20 .

Students are responsible for understanding the nature of and avoiding the occurrence of plagiarism and other academic offences. Note that such offences include plagiarism, cheating on an examination, submitting false or fraudulent assignments or credentials, impersonating a candidate, or submitting for credit in any course without the knowledge and approval of the instructor to whom it is submitted, any academic work for which credit has previously been obtained or is being sought in another course in the University or elsewhere. Students are advised to consult the section on Scholastic Discipline for Undergraduate Students in the Academic Calendar.

If you are in doubt about whether what you are doing is inappropriate or not, consult your instructor, the Academic Dean's Office, or the Registrar. A claim that "you didn't know it was wrong" is not accepted as an excuse.

The penalties for a student guilty of a scholastic offence (including plagiarism) include refusal of a passing grade in the assignment, refusal of a passing grade in the course, suspension from the University, and expulsion from the University.

Plagiarism:

Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea or a passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence. All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>).

Computer-marked Tests/exams:

Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating. Software currently in use to score computer-marked multiple-choice tests and exams performs a similarity review as part of standard exam analysis.

5. PROCEDURES FOR APPEALING ACADEMIC EVALUATIONS

All appeals of a grade must be directed first to the course instructor. If the student is not satisfied with the decision of the course instructor, a written appeal is to be sent to the School Chair. If the response of the Chair is considered unsatisfactory to the student, she may then submit a written appeal to the Office of the Dean. If the student is not satisfied with the decision of the Dean, she may appeal to the Senate Review Board Academic (SRBA), if there are sufficient grounds for the appeal. For information on academic appeals you can consult your Academic Advisor or see the Student Academic Appeals – Undergraduate in the Academic Calendar

http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryID=1&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#Page_14.

Note that final course marks are not official until the Academic Dean has reviewed and signed the final grade report for the course. If course marks deviate from acceptable and appropriate standards, the Academic Dean may require grades to be adjusted to align them with accepted grading practices.

6. PREREQUISITES

Unless you have either the prerequisites for a course or written special permission from the Dean to enroll in it, you will be removed from the course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisite(s).

7. SUPPORT**Support Services**

The Brescia University College Registrar's website, with a link to Academic Advisors, is at <http://brescia.uwo.ca/academics/registrar-services/>. The website for the Student Development Centre at Western is <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/>.

Mental Health and Wellness

Students may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to your learning, such as increased anxiety, feeling overwhelmed, feeling down or lost, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. Services are available to assist you with addressing these and other concerns you may be experiencing. You can learn more about mental health and wellness at Brescia at <http://brescia.uwo.ca/life/mental-health-wellness/>. Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Health and Wellness at Western, http://uwo.ca/health/mental_wellbeing/index.html, for information about how to obtain help for yourself or others.

Sexual Violence

All members of the Brescia University College community have a right to work and study in an environment that is free from any form of sexual violence. Brescia University College recognizes that the prevention of, and response to, Sexual Violence is of particular importance in the university environment. Sexual Violence is strictly prohibited and unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Brescia is committed to preventing Sexual Violence and creating a safe space for anyone in the Brescia community who has experienced Sexual Violence. If you or someone you know has experienced any form of Sexual Violence, you may access resources at <http://brescia.uwo.ca/life/sexual-violence/>.

Portions of this document were taken from the Academic Calendar, the Handbook of Academic and Scholarship Policy and the Academic Handbook of Senate Regulations. This document is a summary of relevant regulations and does not supersede the academic policies and regulations of the Senate of the University of Western Ontario.