Southeast Missouri State University
Course Syllabus

Department of: Human Environmental Studies
Course No: HE615
Title of Course: Qualitative Research Design
Revision: ____
New: Fall 2004

I. Catalogue Description and Credit Hours of Course:

Introduction to qualitative research design including data collecting, recording, managing analysis. (3)

II. Prerequisite(s):

HE525, HE600 and CF630 or permission of the instructor

III. Purpose or Objectives of the Course:

A. Compare qualitative and quantitative research designs and assumptions.
B. Investigate and identify qualitative research genres
C. Design sound, relevant conceptual framework support of qualitative research
D. Identify and match data collection strategies to research questions
E. Analyze qualitative data using a variety of methods
F. Develop an appropriate thesis format to report findings
G. Argue the merits of qualitative research
IV. Expectation of Students:

A. Active participation in class discussions and activities.
B. Satisfactory completion of all course assignments.
C. Completion of thesis proposal
D. Oral defense presentation of thesis proposal
E. Satisfactory completion of mid semester and final exams
F. Uphold the University's academic honesty policy.

V. Course Outline:

A. Qualitative vs. Quantitative         3
   1. Qualitative research defined
      a. Eight characteristics of qualitative research
      b. Six rules of qualitative research
      c. Logic of qualitative methodology

   2. Quantitative research defined
      a. Survey research
      b. Correlational research
      c. Experimental research
      d. Causal-comparative research

   3. Qualitative Methods: Historical Overview
      a. Traditional applications
      b. Strategy selection/preference
      c. Role of politics and ethics

B. Qualitative Research Genres          6
   1. Traditional verses postmodern
   2. Typologies of qualitative research
      a. Constructivism
      b. Interpretism
      c. Critical Theory
d. Feminism
e. Ethnic studies
f. Cultural studies

C. Building Conceptual Framework
1. Topic
2. Purpose
3. Significance
4. Posing research questions
5. Limitations
6. Literature review strategies

D. Research Design
1. Setting, population, phenomena
2. Selection samples, actions, events or processes
3. Role of researcher
4. Technical considerations
5. Interpersonal considerations

E. Data Collection Methods
1. Primary Methods
   a. Participation - ethnographic; methods; semiotics methods
   b. Observation-positivism, interactive
   c. Interviewing
   d. Document review

2. Secondary Methods
   a. Life history narrative inquiry
   b. Historical review
   c. Films, videos, photographs
   d. Kinesics
   e. Proxemics
   f. Unobtrusive measurement
   g. Questionnaires and surveys
   h. Case study
   i. Combining data collection methods

F. Data Management and Analysis Methods
1. Validity and reliability
2. Interpretation criteria for assessing interpretive validity
3. Narrative content and semiotic analysis
4. Organizing data and coding
5. Emergent understanding
6. Role of alternate explanation

G. Defending the Value and Logic of Qualitative Research 4
1. Criteria of Soundness
2. Explicit details of design and methods
3. Well grounded in scholarly context
4. Relevance of research questions and data
5. Educating a quantitative world

Total Hours 45

VI. Textbook:


Reference texts


VII. Basics for Student Evaluation:

A. Written Assignments 10%
B. Thesis Proposal 45%
C. Group Assignments 10%
D. Exams 25%
E. Quizzes 10%

The weight of evaluation criteria may vary at the discretion of the instructor and will be indicated at the beginning of each course.