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# QUALITATIVE RESEARCH METHODS IN COMMUNICATION

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## CLASS

Tuesdays  
3:30 – 6:20 pm  
Centennial 206



## PROFESSOR

Dr. Stephanie Dailey  
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512.245.3856



## OFFICE HOURS

Tuesdays (Centennial 322) 1-3 pm  
Thursdays (zoom# 486-652-2965) 2-3 pm  
Anytime by Appointment

This course is based on the assumption that we are all inherent qualitative researchers. Every day, we watch others, ask questions, listen to stories, and read emails, texts, and social media content. Through these natural behaviors, we are gathering qualitative data about social phenomena (Tracy, 2012). In this class, you will learn how to take these everyday behaviors one step further to systematically collect and analyze phenomena to better understand your personal, academic, and professional interests.

Our journey into qualitative methods is divided into four stages. In the first few weeks of the course, we will *identify* the role of qualitative research through readings that serve as an introduction to qualitative methods. Next, you will *develop* research skills by collecting qualitative data through documents, observation, interviewing. Third, we will *interpret* communication phenomena by analyzing qualitative data through coding techniques, seeking to address pressing personal, organizational, and social problems. Lastly, you will *synthesize* what you have learned in the course to complete a class research project.

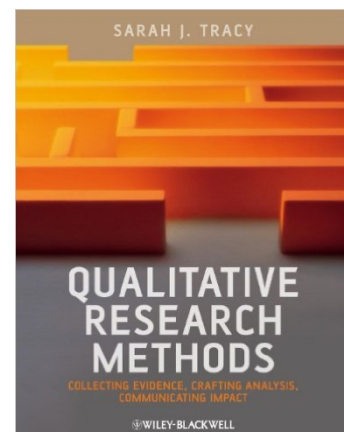
## REQUIRED TEXTBOOK + READINGS

Tracy, S. J. (2012). *Qualitative research methods: Collecting evidence, crafting analysis, communicating impact*. Chicago, IL: John Wiley & Sons.

Access Alkek's e-book here:

<https://catalog.library.txstate.edu/record=b4245198~S1a>

[Additional readings posted on TRACS.]



## ASSIGNMENTS + GRADING



### READINESS ASSURANCE DIAGNOSTICS (100 POINTS)

Short, 5-question quizzes will be administered at the beginning of every seminar to assess your understanding of the reading assignments. To prepare for these weekly Readiness Assurance Diagnostics (RADs), you should be able to identify basic ideas put forth in each reading and connect readings together. RADs begin week 2 of our seminar.



### PARTICIPATION (100 POINTS)

You should come to seminar prepared to participate and to discuss reading assignments. As you read, it is expected that you will take notes about your reading, list questions, and share these thoughts during our seminar. I also expect you to view each reading as part of a larger body of research, and compare new information to existing knowledge (methods, studies, and theories) you have read from other classes and fields.



### STUDENT RESEARCH EXEMPLAR (100 POINTS)

You will sign up to bring a research exemplar to one seminar class. Before class, you will find a full-length (20+ pages) qualitative study published in a communication journal that we are not covering in class. After reading the study in detail, you should write a 500-word script that summarizes the article in layman's terms. The summary should incorporate at least 3 concepts from the week's seminar topic, defining clearly and citing sources. Upload the script to TRACS > Assignments, and bring 15 copies for your classmates on the date of your topic. Next, record a PowerPoint show that animates the script you wrote, using a picture (e.g., unsplash.com) or icon (e.g., deszone.net) to illustrate every few sentences. Export the PowerPoint file as a MP4 video, and upload it to TRACS > Assignments. In class, we will watch your video (following along with your printed script), and you will respond to 10 minutes of Q+A about your research exemplar. In sum, your research exemplar should:

- Identify a qualitative study published in a communication journal
- Create a 500-word script that summarizes the article in layman's terms
- Connect the research to at least 3 defined concepts from that week's seminar topic
- Animate script via PowerPoint movie
- Respond to 10-minute in-class Q+A regarding article and related concepts



### COMPREHENSIVE ORAL FINAL (50 POINTS)

This one-on-one oral final will include comprehensive questions to assess your knowledge of qualitative research methods and prepare you for comprehensive exams. I will assign 10-minute time slots for your final exam.



### QUALITATIVE PROJECT (150 POINTS)

You will collect and analyze qualitative data as part of a class project. Although we will complete this project in two separate groups, you will be graded on your individual a) field notes (50 points), b) interview transcripts (50 points), and 3) data and code book (50 points).

## ATTENDANCE + COURSE EXPECTATIONS

### ATTENDANCE

You cannot do well in this seminar if you do not attend regularly. It is assumed that you will attend seminar and be on time for each seminar. If you have an excused absence, you should contact me before seminar begins, and we can arrange out-of-class accommodations. If you miss more than one seminar, you will be encouraged to withdraw from the course; missing more than two will result in a failing course grade. *Graduate students should never miss class.*

### COMPLETION OF ASSIGNMENTS

I assume that you will turn in and present your assignments on time. All written assignments are due at the beginning of seminar on the due date. All assignments should be proofread carefully before turning them in. *I do not accept late work.* Also, I expect reading assignments to be completed even on days when assignments are due. All work should be written in accordance with APA guidelines.

### ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Examination answers and written work for this course must be your original work. Any student guilty of knowingly using, or attempting to use another person's work will receive a grade of "F" for the course. Such conduct may also constitute grounds for dismissal from the University. This includes, but is not limited to 1) removing any RAD from the classroom for any reason, 2) copying from someone else's material, 3) permitting someone else to copy from one's exam, and 4) plagiarizing other work (without citing) and self-plagiarism.

### SPECIAL NEEDS

If you have a specific disability and require accommodations (as documented by the Office of Disability Services), please let me know *at the start of the semester* so I can help meet your learning needs. All discussions will be kept confidential.

### SOCIAL JUSTICE

My goal is that our classroom will be a positive learning environment based upon open communication and mutual respect. There will be no room for discrimination of any kind.

### RECORDING OF CLASSROOM LECTURES & DISCUSSIONS

Students are prohibited from photographing and recording during classes, and from transmitting classroom lectures and discussions unless written permission from the class instructor has been obtained and all students in the class as well as guest speakers have been informed that photographing or audio/video recording may occur. Permission to allow the audio/visual recording is not a transfer of any copyrights to the material recorded. Photographs, videos and audio recordings may not be reproduced or uploaded to publicly accessible web environments, including Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook. An exception to this will be any student determined by the Office of Disability Services (ODS) to be entitled to education accommodations, to exercise any rights protected under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, including needed recording or adaptations of classroom lectures or materials for personal research and study.

## COURSE SCHEDULE

We will follow this course schedule during the semester. I may make slight changes to the schedule, and it is your responsibility to note these changes when announced. Please note that all assignments are due at the start of class.

### INTRODUCTION TO QUALITATIVE METHODS

#### DEVELOPING CONTEXTUAL RESEARCH THAT MATTERS

Jan

21

- Textbook Ch. 1
- Expert Advice: Tracy (2010) – Qualitative Quality
- Class Research Exemplar: Richardson & McGlynn (2011) – Whistle-Blowing

#### ENTERING THE CONVERSATION OF QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

Jan

28

- Textbook Ch. 2
- Expert Advice: Van Maanen (1979) – Reclaiming Qualitative Methods
- Class Research Exemplar: James & Zoller (2017) – Extreme Forms of Workplace Health Promotion
- Student Research Exemplar(s): \_\_\_\_\_

#### PRAGMATIC REFLECTIONS + THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS

[ZOOM OPTIONAL 425-799-499]

Feb

4

- Textbook Ch. 3
- Expert Advice: Rynes (2004) – Qualitative Research
- Class Research Exemplar: Ashcraft & Pacanowsky (1996) – A Woman's Worst Enemy
- Student Research Exemplar(s): \_\_\_\_\_

## COLLECTING QUALITATIVE DATA

### FIELDWORK + FIELDPLAY

Feb

11

- Textbook Ch. 4
- Expert Advice: Tracy (2014) – Fieldwork Horse-Assery
- Class Research Exemplar: Hickey et al. (1988) – Becoming the Easter Bunny
- Student Research Exemplar(s): \_\_\_\_\_

### FIELD ROLES, FIELDNOTES, + FIELD FOCUS

Feb

18

- Textbook Ch. 6
- Expert Advice: Emerson et al. (2011) – Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes
- Class Research Exemplar: Dailey (2016) – Reconceptualizing the Socialization Process
- Student Research Exemplar(s): \_\_\_\_\_

### INTERVIEW PLANNING + DESIGN

Feb

25

- Textbook Ch. 7
- Expert Advice: Blithe & Wolfe (2016) - Analyzing Ruptures in Qualitative Research
- Class Research Exemplar: Miller (2007) – Compassionate Communication
- Student Research Exemplar(s): \_\_\_\_\_

### INTERVIEW PRACTICE

March

3

- Textbook Ch. 8
- Expert Advice: Kearney & Hyle (2004) – Drawing Out Emotions
- Class Research Exemplar: Dailey et al. (2018) – Dual Discourses in a Workplace Wellness Program
- Student Research Exemplar(s): \_\_\_\_\_
- **Field Notes Due**

## ANALYZING QUALITATIVE DATA

### March 10 TRANSCRIBING INTERVIEWS

[ZOOM OPTIONAL 425-799-499]

- Expert Advice: Bird (2005) – How I Stopped Dreading and Learned to Love Transcription

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### DATA ANALYSIS BASICS

### March 24

- Textbook Ch. 9
- Expert Advice: Suddaby (2006) – What Grounded Theory is Not
- Class Research Exemplar: Morgan et al. (2004) – Sources of Employee Identification
- Student Research Exemplar(s): \_\_\_\_\_
- **Transcripts Due**

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### THE NUTS + BOLTS OF QUALITATIVE TALES

[ZOOM OPTIONAL 425-799-499]

### March 31

- Textbook Ch. 12
- Expert Advice: Pratt (2009) – Tips on Writing
- Class Research Exemplar: Shuler & Sypher (2000) - Seeking Emotional Labor
- Student Research Exemplar(s): \_\_\_\_\_

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### DRAFTING, POLISHING, + PUBLISHING

[ZOOM OPTIONAL 425-799-499]

### April 7

- Textbook Ch. 13
- Expert Advice: Fairhurst (2014) – Back Alleys of Publishing
- Class Research Exemplar: Garner & Peterson (2017) – Leaving a Member-Abusive Organization
- Student Research Exemplar(s): \_\_\_\_\_

## QUALITATIVE METHODS IN ACTION

### EXITING + COMMUNICATING IMPACT

April

14

- Textbook Ch. 14
  - Expert Advice: Byers & Wilcox (1991) – Qualitative Opportunity for Researchers
  - Class Research Exemplar: Romo et al. (2015) – Non-drinking Identity
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April

28

### WRAPPING UP

- Data & Code Book Due
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May

12

### SYNTHESIZING OUR EXPERIENCES

- **Comprehensive Oral Final:** 10-minute time slots from 2:00 – 4:30 pm
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