

Qualitative Explorations  
SOCIOLOGY 416  
Spring 2018  
Tuesday 5:30 - 8:15 PM  
Room: Wimberly Hall 113

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### Course Objectives

This course is designed to familiarize students with the major techniques of qualitative data collection and analysis used by sociologists and other social scientists. These include feminist methods, participant observation, in-depth interviewing, biographical methods, content analysis, archival research, and a variety of nonreactive techniques. This course will also address the links among theory, data, and methods and provide an appreciation for the qualitative tradition in social sciences. Students will learn how to conduct field research. The course will follow a seminar format emphasizing reading, group discussion, in- and out- of class exercises, oral presentations, original research and writing. Prerequisite: SOC 350; SOC 390 or SOC 395.

### Required Texts

Warren, Carol and Tracy Karner. 2005. *Discovering Qualitative Methods: Field Research, Interviews, and Analysis*. Los Angeles, CA: Roxbury Publishing Company.

Emerson, Robert M, R. Fretz and L. Shaw. 1995. *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Marina, Peter. 2017. *Down & Out in New Orleans*. Columbia University Press.

Duneier, Mitch. 2000. *Sidewalk*. Farrar, Straus and Giroux; 1st edition.

**Highly Recommended Text** (see the list at the end of the syllabus for other recommended books):

Lofland, John and L. Lofland. 1995. *Analyzing Social Settings: A Guide to Qualitative Observation and Analysis*, 3d. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing.

\*\* Supplemental Readings on D2L

### Course Requirements

Attendance: It is important to attend every class. Students who miss class often perform poorly on this research and writing intensive class. Excess lateness and absence may result in grade reduction.

Reading Assignments: Read all required class literature prior on the date assigned.

Assignments: While much of this class is composed of lectures and class exercises, professor guided independent research makes up the majority of this senior capstone class. A major requirement will be to spend time engaging in activities related to your research.

Participation: Students are expected to discuss all the latest developments in their research project throughout

the semester. We will become well acquainted with each student's research process in each class.

Research Paper: This class requires a final research paper, similar to a Bachelor's Thesis, based on independent research that requires extensive fieldwork. The paper should be analytical and shed some empirical light on a methodological or substantive problem that emerged from fieldwork. A purely descriptive paper is not acceptable. Students submit an IRB proposal describing their research on or before the date indicated on the course schedule. The final paper will be 4,000 to 6,000 words in length (double spaced). All final papers are due on the date indicated below.

Oral Presentation: Students present their research to the department. The last two weeks of the course have been set aside for class presentations.

Class Structure: Each class period will begin with:

**Tales from the Field:** Students discuss their research experience and class assignments in every class. We discuss interesting or important matters related to research, or to ask questions about our research projects. All students are expected to share frequently.

Following these discussions, we will launch into the topic for the day. While class will include lectures, it will be comprised primarily of discussions about the topic areas covered related to student research projects. Examples from my own life and projects, the research of other sociologists, and stories from your life will be used to help clarify the concepts and ideas that are presented in the class and textbooks.

Grades and Policies

400 total possible points for this course:

Requirements	Points
IRB Approval	20 points
Assignment # 1 Describing the Scene	10 points
Assignment # 2 Fieldnotes	10 points
Assignment # 3 Conducting an Interview I	10 points
Assignment # 4 Describing the Scene II	10 points
Assignment # 5 Conducting an Interview II	10 points
Root Note Assignment	30 points
Literature Review	50 points
Journal and Oral Presentation	50 points
Senior Capstone Paper	200 points
<b>TOTAL POSSIBLE POINTS</b>	<b>400 POINTS</b>

Grade	Total Points
A	372-400
AB	356-371
B	332-355
BC	316-331
C	280-315
D	240-279
F	239 or less

Make-up Policy: In-class assignments, oral presentations and class participation cannot be made up. Late assignments will receive a grade reduction. Please see me ahead of time if you know there will be a problem getting something done on time.

**Class Schedule** (The schedule & procedures are subject to modification based on class needs)

**Week One: Introduction to a Research Project**

1/23: Introduction to Research Projects, the fieldwork perspective, Ethnography, Types of Research Projects (Ethnography, Participant Observation, Focus Groups, Qualitative Interviews, Content Analysis), The sociological imagination, IRB forms

- \* Read: Mills, *The Sociological Imagination* – D2L; Duneier Chapter 1,2 – D2L; UW-L IRB Guidelines
- \* Due: Tentative research topic and question

**Week Two: Qualitative Methods and Research Design**

1/30: Qualitative Methods and Research Design, Literature Reviews; Submitting Final IRB, Planning for Initial Research, Code of Ethics, Theoretical Lenses of Qualitative Work; Using Description to Highlight Major Themes

- \* Read: ASA Code of Ethics; Finish Duneier Part I; D2L Wacquant, *Scrutinizing the Street*; Warren and Karner 1 and 2; Marina, *Chasing Religion in the Caribbean* – D2L

- \* Due: Assignment I: Describing the Scene

**Week Three: Ethnography**

2/6: The Research Setting, Gaining Entrée, Roles, Getting Along, Types of Interviews, Interview Guidelines, Literature Reviews, Thin versus Thick Description

- \* Read: Emerson et al, 1-3; Geertz, *Notes on the Balinese Cockfight* – D2L; Humphrey's, L. *Tearoom Trade: Impersonal Sex in Public Places* – D2L; Finish Duneier Part II, Warren and Karner 3 and 4

- \* Due: Assignment II: Fieldnotes

- \* Other Due Assignments: IRB Completion

**Week Four: Ethnographic Observations and Fieldnotes**

2/13: Observations, Taking & Writing Fieldnotes, First Days in the Field, Strategies for Getting Organized

- \* Read: Finish Duneier Part III & IV; Warren and Karner 5 -7; Emerson et al, 4

- \* Due: Assignment III: Conducting an Interview I

**Week Five: In-depth Interviews and Observations** (Meet at Root Note)

2/20: Conducting Formal and Informal Interviews, Making Observations, Interpreting Data, Journal Notes

- \* Read: Williams, *Crackhouse: Notes from the End of the Line* – D2L; Marina, *Down and Out NOLA* Chapters 1-3; Warren and Karner 6 & 7

- \* Assignment IV: Describing the Scene II (written copy due next week)

**Week Six: In-depth Interviews and Observation** (Continued)

2/27: Conducting Formal and Informal Interviews, Making Observations, Interpreting Data, Journal Notes

- \* Read: Warren & Karner 8; Marina, *Down and Out NOLA* chapters 4-7

\* Due: Assignment V: Conducting an Interview II

**Week Seven: Composing Ethnography**

3/6: Collecting and Analyzing Materials; Analytic Induction; Developing Themes

\* Read: Marina, Down and Out NOLA chapters 8-conclusion; Becker, Becoming a Marijuana User

**Mid-semester Spring Break (March 9-19)**

**Week Eight: Composing Ethnography**

3/20: Collecting and Analyzing Materials; Developing Themes

\* Read: Warren & Karner 8 and 9

\* Due: Literature Review Summary

**Week Nine: Organizing, Analyzing, and Coding**

3/27: Organizing, Analyzing, and Coding

\* Read: Emerson et al. 5&6

**Week Ten: Organizing, Analyzing, and Coding**

4/3: Organizing, Analyzing, Coding, Reporting Findings, Connecting Findings to Literature, Theoretical Perspectives

\* Assignments/Exercises: Fieldwork Findings Report or in the Field (discuss in class)?

**Week: Eleven: Challenges in the Field and**

4/10: Discussion of Class Research Projects, Overcoming Challenges in the Field, Looking for Themes, Connecting Themes to Literature, Developing Theoretical Perspectives

\* Read: Warren and Karner 10; Emerson et al. 7

**Week Twelve: Major Findings in the Field/Exit Strategies/Writing Results**

4/17: Progressing Major Themes, Connecting Themes to Literature, Advancing Theoretical Perspectives, Writing Results, Last Days in the Field, Writing results, Presenting Findings, Oral Presentations

**Week Thirteen: Oral Presentations**

4/24: See Student Schedules

**Week Fourteen: Oral Presentations (Starlight Lounge)**

5/1: See Student Schedules

**Final Paper Due:** Monday, May 7 (9pm)

Congratulations.

### **Highly Recommended Books for Class**

Margaret LeCompte and Jean Schensul, *Designing and Conducting Ethnographic Research: An Introduction (Ethnographer's Toolkit, Second Edition)* Altamira Press; Second Edition, 2010

Bearman, Peter. *Doormen (Fieldwork Encounters and Discoveries)*. University Of Chicago Press 2005

### Other Recommended Readings

Becker, Carol. *The Subversive Imagination*. Routledge 1994.

Burawoy, Michael. *Ethnography Unbound*. Berkeley: University of California Press 1991.

Clifford, James. *The Predicament of Culture*. Harvard University Press 1988.

Duneier, Mitchell. *Sidewalk*. Farrar, Strauss and Giroux. 1999.

Emerson, Robert M., et al. *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes*. University of Chicago 1996.

Humphries, Laud. *Tearoom Trade: Impersonal Sex in Public Places*. Aldine 1975.

Lippard, Lucy. *The Lure of the Local*. New Press, 1997.

Malinowski, Bronislaw. *Argonauts of the Western Pacific*. 1922.

Marcus, Geroage E. *Ethnography Through Thick and Thin*. N.J. Princeton University Press 1998.

Miles, Malcolm. *Art, Space and the City*. Routledge, 1997.

Orwell, George. *Down and Out in Paris and London*. 1933.

Sanjek, Rober. *Fieldnotes: The Making of Anthropology*. Cornell University Press, 1990.

Smith, Carolyn D, and W. Kornblum. *In the Field: Readings on the Field Research Experience*. Praeger, 1996.

L. Schatzman and A. Strauss. *Field Research*, Prentice Hall. 1973.

Wacquant, Loic. *Body and Soul: Notebooks of an Apprentice Boxer*. Chicago. University of Chicago Press, 2004.

Waterston, Alisse. *Love, Sorrow and Rage: Destitute Women in a Manhattan Shelter*. Temple University. Press. 1999.

Williams, Terry. *Crackhouse: Notes from the End of the Line*. Addison-Wesley, 1992.

Willis, Paul. *The Ethnographic Imagination*. Cambridge. Polity Press, 2000.

### Recommended Books on the Craft of Qualitative Research

Berg, Bruce L., *Qualitative Research Methods for the Social Sciences*, Allyn&Bacon, 2008.

Creswell, John W., *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Approaches*, Sage Publications, 2006.

- Gerring, John, *Case Study Research: Principles and Practice*, Cambridge University Press, 2006.
- Given, Lisa M (ed.), *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Qualitative Research Methods*, Sage Publications, 2008.
- Gillham, Bill, *Observation Techniques: Structured To Unstructured (Real World Research)*, Continuum, 2008.
- Krueger, Richard A., Casey, Mary Anne, *Focus Groups: A Practical Guide for Applied Research*, Sage Publications, 2008.
- Kvale, Steinar, Brinkmann, Svend, *InterViews: Learning the Craft of Qualitative Research Interviewing*, Sage Publications, 2008.
- Marshall, Catherine, Rossman, Gretchen B., *Designing Qualitative Research*, Sage Publications, 2006.
- Silverman, David, *Qualitative Research: Theory, Method and Practice*, Sage Publications, 2004.
- Silverman, David, *Interpreting Qualitative Data: Methods for Analyzing Talk, Text and Interaction*, Sage Publications, 2006.
- Stewart, David W., Shamdasani, Prem N., Rook, Dennis, 2006, *Focus Groups: Theory and Practice*, Sage Publications, 2006.
- Yin, Robert K., *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*, Sage Publications, 2008.

### **Other UWL Syllabus Related Policies**

#### **Academic Misconduct (Cheating and Plagiarism)**

Academic misconduct is a violation of the ASA code of ethics and the student honor code (<http://catalog.uwlax.edu/undergraduate/academicpolicies/studentconduct/>). Plagiarism, including inadequate referencing or citation of other research is unacceptable. All work handed in for this class must be the students' own individual work. Plagiarism or cheating in any form may result in failure of the assignment or exam, failure of the course, and may include harsher sanctions. Academic misconduct is unacceptable. All work handed in for this class must be the students' own individual work. Plagiarism or cheating in any form may result in failure of the assignment or exam, failure of the course, and may include harsher sanctions. Refer to the Eagle Eye at <http://www.uwlax.edu/Student-Life/Student-handbook/#14.01> for a detailed definition of academic misconduct. For helpful information on how to avoid plagiarism, go to <http://www.uwlax.edu/catl/readiness/ethics.html>. You may also visit the Student Life Office if you have questions about plagiarism or cheating incidents. I encourage you to discuss any concerns regarding plagiarism or cheating with me directly and well before any assignments are handed in. Failure to understand what constitutes plagiarism or cheating is not a valid excuse for engaging in academic misconduct.

#### **Communication about Class Interruptions**

In the event of a campus incident that impacts the availability of teaching spaces, any changes or cancellations will be communicated to you via your university email. Depending on the incident, some or all of the information might be posted on the UWL home page.

#### **Writing Center**

The Writing Center, which is located in the Murphy Learning Center, provides trained peer tutors who can help you with any writing task (e.g., papers, proposals, research projects, summaries, reports, letters, application essays) at any stage of the process — understanding assignments, planning papers, organizing ideas, making revisions, improving sentences, using sources, etc. For current hours or to schedule an

appointment, visit <http://www.uwlax.edu/writingcenter/>

### **Sociology as a Writing-in-the-Major Program**

The Sociology major is a “writing-in-the-major” program (WIMP). The purpose behind the program is to insure that any undergraduate who completes a major in sociology has experienced sufficient informal and formal writing experiences so that graduates are proficient at communicating through a variety of formats. In all your sociology courses, you will be writing, and in each class, you may be asked to do a wide variety of types of writing. The department sees writing as an extremely important skill and as a mechanism to enhance student learning. In addition, you will learn the referencing and citation style used by archaeologists or sociologists. By completing the Sociology major, you will be completing the “writing emphasis” component of your general education requirements. The objectives of the writing-in-the-major program are available at <http://www.uwlax.edu/wimp/>. The student learning outcomes for Sociology major at UWL is available on the department webpage at <http://www.uwlax.edu/sociology/>.

### **Classroom Protocol**

Coming to class late or leaving class early is disruptive and disrespectful. I expect students to be on time and ready for class. I expect that students will take care of personal needs such as getting a drink of water, going to the bathroom, etc. before or after class and not come and go while class is in session. On occasion, students must leave during a class, if you have to leave a class early, please let me know at the beginning of class and make a quiet exit. It is not necessary to inform me that you will not be attending a class unless arrangements need to be made to make up an assignment for that day.

All electronic devices should be silenced during class and put away. Phone calls, texting, email, internet use, MP3 players/iPod use, etc. are not acceptable within a classroom setting. Students who intentionally use prohibited electronics during class will be required to leave the classroom. Students who disrupt the classroom or other students’ learning experience by talking or carrying on side conversations within the classroom will also be required to leave the classroom.

Assignments, papers, and exams must be completed and handed in on the appointed dates. I will not accept late assignments unless I determine the circumstances to be beyond the student’s control. The instructor determines the acceptability of student absences. Students with authorized absences will be allowed to make up exams or papers within a reasonable time-period. Students who are going to be absent for more than 3 days should contact the Student Life Office at 149 Graff Main Hall, 785-8062 and notify them of your absence so that the university and all instructors are informed of your absence (they do not authorize absences).

### **Eagle Alert System**

This class will be participating in the Eagle Alert System <https://www.uwlax.edu/academic-advising-center/eagle-alert/student-resources/> through WINGS. The system is designed to promote student success. If I notice that you are experiencing difficulties early in the semester (e.g., low assignment scores or limited participation), I may note this information and you will receive an email indicating that I have entered feedback. I may also enter positive feedback encouraging you to consider additional learning opportunities. The link in the email will take you to WINGS where you can login to see the feedback. I encourage you to meet with me and/or refer to the helpful campus resources listed below under Academic Services and Resources and on UWL’s Student Success page <https://www.uwlax.edu/info/student-success/>.

### **Inclusive Excellence**

UWL’s core values include “Diversity, equity, and the inclusion and engagement of all people in a safe campus climate that embraces and respects the innumerable different perspectives found within an increasingly integrated and culturally diverse global community” (<https://www.uwlax.edu/chancellor/mission/>). If you are not experiencing my class in this manner, please come talk to me about your experiences so I can try to adjust the course if possible.

## **Student Evaluation of Instruction (SEI)**

UWL conducts student evaluations electronically. Approximately 2 weeks prior to the conclusion of a course, you will receive an email at your UWL email address directing you to complete an evaluation for each of your courses. In-class time will be provided for students to complete the evaluation in class. Electronic reminders will be sent if you do not complete the evaluation. The evaluation will include numerical ratings and, depending on the department, may provide options for comments. The university takes student feedback very seriously and the information gathered from student evaluations is more valuable when a larger percentage of students complete the evaluation. Please be especially mindful to complete the surveys.

## **Academic Services and Resources at UWL**

Below are several student services available to students taking online courses:

- Academic Advising Center: <http://www.uwlax.edu/advising/>
- ACCESS Center (formerly Disability Resources): <http://www.uwlax.edu/access-center/>
- Career Services: <http://www.uwlax.edu/careerservices/>
- Counseling and Testing Center: <http://www.uwlax.edu/counseling/>
- Financial Information: Financial Aid Office <https://www.uwlax.edu/finaid/> and It Makes Cents <https://www.uwlax.edu/it-makes-cents/>
- Murphy Learning Center (Walk-in tutoring): <http://www.uwlax.edu/murphy-learning-center/>
- Murphy Library: <http://www.uwlax.edu/murphylibrary/>
- Multicultural Student Services: <http://www.uwlax.edu/mss/>
- Public Speaking Center: <https://www.uwlax.edu/murphy-learning-center/subject/public-speaking-center/>
- Records and Registration: <http://www.uwlax.edu/records/>
- Student Handbook: <https://www.uwlax.edu/student-life/student-resources/student-handbook/>
- Student Support Services: <https://www.uwlax.edu/student-support-services/>
- Veteran Services: <http://www.uwlax.edu/veteran-services/>
- Writing Center: <http://www.uwlax.edu/writingcenter/>

## **Technical Support**

For tips and information about D2L visit the Information Technology Services (ITS) student support page, at <http://www.uwlax.edu/D2L/Help-for-students/>.

Need help making sure your computer is set up correctly for online coursework? D2L's System Check <https://community.desire2learn.com/d2l/systemCheck> ensures that your computer and web browser are configured to properly access their system.

You can also contact the ITS Support Center at (608) 785-8774 or email them at [helpdesk@uwlax.edu](mailto:helpdesk@uwlax.edu) for questions about D2L or any other technological difficulties. The hours for ITS are Monday through Thursday from 7:30 am to 6:30 pm, and Friday from 7:30 am to 4:30 pm, Central Time.

## **Legal Obligations**

See the following link of statements that reflect UWL's legal obligations to students:

<https://www.uwlax.edu/info/syllabus/>