

**NURSING 783 (LEC 01)**  
**ADVANCED QUALITATIVE RESEARCH METHODS**

**WINTER 2010**

**Faculty of Nursing  
University of Calgary**

**Tuesdays 0900 – 1150  
(Tues, January 12 – Tues, April 13 2008)**

**Professional Faculties Room 2253**

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## **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Exploration of the philosophical foundations and practice of qualitative research methods in health care inquiry. Emphasis on interpretive assumptions and practices relevant to the conduct of qualitative research.

## **COURSE EXPLANATION AND INTRODUCTION**

Approaches to qualitative research methods include diverse approaches such as ethnography, grounded theory, hermeneutic-phenomenology, narrative inquiry, feminist inquiry, and critical social inquiry. A major thematic in the conduct of qualitative research is interpretive practice, encompassing interpretive thinking, reading, writing, and dialogue. Class dialogue and activities will emphasize those methods of choice under consideration for student dissertation development, while highlighting shared and distinct assumptions and practices within the various qualitative research traditions.

## **COURSE OBJECTIVES (AND LEARNING EXPERIENCES)**

Students will have opportunities to engage in interpretive reading, thinking, writing, and dialogue relevant to the following topics:

- Relations between the interpretive turn and the philosophy of science
- Situating the researcher in interpretive research practices
- Dialogue, thinking, reading, and writing as interpretive practices
  - o Data generation in qualitative research methods
  - o Approaches to interpretive writing and analysis
  - o Presentation of interpretive findings
- Exploring, extending, supporting, and challenging interpretations afforded by a variety of interpretive research approaches
- Ethics in qualitative research methods
- Scholarly integrity of interpretive findings
- Writing qualitative research proposals and grant applications for research funding
- Knowledge application, transfer, and dissemination

## **CONTEXT FOR LEARNING**

This graduate seminar relies extensively on student engagement, preparation of course readings, and participation in seminar discussions. It is anticipated that each student will be interested in advancing understanding of a particular qualitative research approach (either an approach intended to be the basis for their dissertation project, or an approach the student wishes to explore in more detail). Students will become increasingly familiar with their selected research approach as they concurrently become increasingly sophisticated at making comparisons with other approaches.

You will be helping each other to make distinctions about various research approaches through the examples that you offer from your own dissertation projects. Your presence in class is essential for a productive learning context for all.

## ONGOING CLASS ACTIVITY – Student consultations of Work-in-Progress

**Purpose:** Application of course concepts, issues, and emerging understandings of qualitative work to student projects and interests.

Each student will have opportunities to seek class consultation regarding aspects of their dissertation work (if qualitatively oriented) or a puzzle/question that they are thinking through related to the application of qualitative methods. During our first class, you will present a brief overview of a qualitative research project that you are working on, or the background to a dilemma that has caught your attention in relation to the conduct of qualitative work. Throughout the course, pose questions that you find you are asking yourself ... seek advice and insights from your classmates!

## COURSE READINGS

Each week, two recommended readings will provide the key focus for seminar discussions. Students are also encouraged to read as widely as possible in the suggested weekly readings offered in the readings syllabus.

All required readings will be available through Blackboard links to online library journals or provided at the prior week's class.  
There is no course text required.

## COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

	<u>Grade</u>	<u>Due Date</u>
ASSIGNMENT 1	15%	Student's choice
ASSIGNMENT 2	35%	One week following seminar presentation
ASSIGNMENT 3	50%	April 13, 2010

### **Assignment #1: Development of the Research Summary for Award/Funding Applications**

Purpose: Concisely describe your qualitative project in a format appropriate for submission for grant or fellowship applications.

Write a brief paper that succinctly describes the essential elements of your qualitative research project, including the research question, significance, method, research process, and feasibility.

Paper length: 2 pages plus references (single spaced, 12 font) APA (6<sup>th</sup> ed.) format required

### **Assignment #2: Appraisal of Qualitative Health Research Journal Publications**

Purpose: Develop skills in critique of published qualitative research reports.

Select an article from a refereed academic/professional journal that reports results of a qualitative health research project of interest to you. Write a brief synopsis that appraises the merit (methodological and substantive) of the research report. Provide a copy of the journal article to classmates the week prior to the selected date for seminar discussion. Lead a seminar discussion in critique of the selected article.

Paper length: Maximum 5 pages (double spaced, 12 font) APA format required. Due one week after seminar presentation.

**Assignment #3: Formal Paper (Maximum 20 pages excluding references)**

Write a paper suitable for publication that explores a topic or issue related to philosophical, theoretical, or practical aspects of qualitative research inquiry. The topic should be related to your proposed dissertation thesis, and should illustrate shifts in your understanding of the qualitative research approach that you are considering as you develop your dissertation project. This paper could contribute to an aspect of your research proposal, or preparation for candidacy examination.

**Rubric for Evaluating Formal Paper**

Elements	Does not meet requirements (<= B-)	Meets requirements (B to B+)	Exceeds requirements (A- to A+)
Thesis statement (Aim or purpose of paper; topic or question to be addressed)	Purpose of paper is difficult to identify, unclear or restatement of an obvious issue. Introduces topic that is not related to NURS 701.01 course intents.	Clearly describes the topic or question that the paper seeks to answer. Significance of the topic is clear (who cares and why).	Purpose & significance of paper are clearly identifiable, sophisticated & insightful, pushing beyond stereotyped questions. The thesis of an A+ paper is highly original, opening new arenas of discussion related to the selected topic.
Analysis/Synthesis	Assumptions and approach to interpreting and analyzing relevant materials is incongruent with selected qualitative research tradition. Points/statements often lack supporting evidence. Quotes may be poorly integrated & explored. Relies primarily on course materials and issues covered in class discussion. It is unclear how the author is making sense of the literature.	Background assumptions and selected organizing framework are consistent with the selected qualitative research tradition. Effectively incorporates examples from a reasonable cross-section of current literature to support key points. Quotes are well integrated, explored and discussed. Demonstrates ability to explain & critique, compare & contrast current literature. Uses several literature sources beyond course readings.	Clearly demonstrates ability to write, analyze and critique materials in a manner that illustrates fluid application of the selected qualitative research tradition. Draws upon cutting edge, current, peer-reviewed literature in specific areas related to the paper topic. Excellent integration of quoted material. Demonstrates analytic depth and sophistication to critique current literature. Clearly links literature to personal professional experience and proposed dissertation project. The analysis & critique of an A+ paper poses essential questions about the topic that push inquiry and understanding well beyond readings and class discussion.
Argumentation	Simplistic view of topic. Little or no effort to grasp possible alternative views. May contain logical contradictions.	Counter-arguments are acknowledged, though perhaps not addressed or explored effectively.	Anticipates and successfully defuses or responds to counter-arguments. Makes novel connections to outside material that illuminates the thesis.
Conclusion	There is no clear conclusion, no attempted response to the question or issue posed in the purpose/thesis statement.	The thesis and its significance are restated, emphasizing the discovered importance, answers, or possibilities explored within the paper.	The thesis and its significance are restated, emphasizing the discovered importance, answers, or possibilities explored within the paper. Clearly proposes answers to questions such as "so what?" or "who cares?" and "what are the implications for the field of nursing &/or qualitative inquiry?" Poses questions that push readers toward thinking about new understandings of the topic.
Literary skill	Writing style is bland & factual, disconnected from the selected qualitative research tradition. Numerous errors in sentence structure, grammar, punctuation & diction.	Writes in a manner that is congruent with the selected qualitative research tradition. Sentence structure, grammar punctuation & diction are strong with occasional minor errors.	Demonstrates throughout a fluent capacity to write in a manner that illustrates and exemplifies the selected qualitative research tradition. Sentence structure, grammar punctuation & diction are excellent with negligible errors.
Style	Numerous errors in APA formatting and citations.	Follows APA (5 <sup>th</sup> Ed) format appropriately with few errors	Meticulous APA format is followed consistently.

**The grading scale to be used will be:**

	<b>The percentage will be taken from:</b>	<b>If the total for all assignments is:</b>	<b>Your final grade will be:</b>	<b>And the GPA for the course will be:</b>
A+	4.0	3.95 - 4.00	A+	4.0 - Outstanding Elegant exposition of publication quality work that would make a significant scholarly contribution to the area of investigation
A	4.0	3.85 – 3.94	A	4.0 - Excellent – superior performance showing comprehensive understanding of the subject matter Exceptional performance that goes beyond the specified requirements of the assignment, and demonstrates a comprehensive understanding of the subject matter that includes the ability to critically assess and creatively apply knowledge to new situations
A-	3.7	3.50 – 3.84	A-	3.7 - Very good performance Clarity of thought and expression that reveals the rich meaning of, and complex relationship between, assumptions, ideas and actions, and includes a critical examination of the topic. Relevant reference material has been correctly documented and effectively integrated into a well developed line of thought
B+	3.3	3.15 – 3.49	B+	3.3 - Good performance Subject matter is generally understood at a literal level. Wide reading, critical questioning, and creative insights may be absent. Prose style reveals a clear, logical, concise, and coherent expression of ideas. Work displays conventional grammar, punctuation, and spelling, with a minimum of errors
B	3.0	2.85 – 3.14	B	3.0 - Satisfactory performance (Note: The grade point value associated with this grade is the minimum acceptable average that a graduate student must maintain throughout the program as computed at the end of each year of the program) Subject matter is generally understood but the work displays minimum scholarship. Some gaps in knowledge and inconsistencies in thinking may be evident. Lapses in clarity of expression and the development of a clear line of thought might be evident. Work may display consistent errors in conventional form and require heavy editing on the part of the professor
B-	2.7	2.50 – 2.84	B-	2.7 - Minimum pass for students in the Faculty of Graduate Studies

				(Note: Students who accumulate two grades of B- or lower may be required to withdraw from program by the Faculty of Graduate Studies, regardless of their grade point average. Work submitted at this level lacks understanding, absence of clarity of expression, or insufficient command of conventional form such that content cannot be effectively conveyed
C+	2.3	2.15 – 2.49	C+	2.3 - Unsatisfactory (Note: All grades below B- are indicative of failure at the graduate level and cannot be counted toward Faculty of graduate studies course requirements)
C	2.0	1.85 – 2.14	C	2.0
C-	1.7	1.50 – 1.84	C-	1.7
D+	1.3	1.15 – 1.49	D+	1.3
D	1.0	0.50 – 1.14	D	1.0
F	0	0.00 – 0.49	F	0

Students are expected to comply with the academic regulations specified in the University of Calgary Calendar. Intellectual honesty is expected.

In the Faculty of Nursing, the Publications Manual of the American Psychological Association 5<sup>th</sup> Ed (2001) is the basis for standards of scholarly writing, academic acknowledgement of intellectual contribution of others, and copyright protection of published materials. Plagiarism constitutes academic misconduct and will be addressed accordingly.

Refer to the University of Calgary website at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/honesty/plagiarism> for the following statement.

“**Plagiarism** is using someone else’s words or ideas in written or oral presentations and passing them off as your own. If you are charged with plagiarism, you can fail an assignment, fail a course, or be suspended from the University.

**This can include:**

Passing off the work of others as your own.

- Submitting an essay that you have entirely (or partially) copied.
- Using wording from published material (including material found on the Web) without using quotation marks or citing the source.
- Paraphrasing (rewriting in your own words) ideas or information from published or spoken material without citing the source. An exception is information that is **common knowledge** (i.e. you don’t need to cite well-known scientific or historical facts). You do have to cite claims and you do have to cite **statistics**.”

**Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy:**

Information (such as phone number, address, tracking sites of practica, etc.) that you may be asked to provide is collected under the authority of the Universities/Colleges Act and Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act Section 32(c). It will be used for contact purposes only. Your personal information is protected by Alberta’s Freedom of Information and Protection and Privacy Act and can be reviewed upon request. If you have any questions about the collection or use of this information, contact Pat Jolly, Graduate Office, at 220-7288.