



**SOCI 5389: QUALITATIVE RESEARCH METHODS**  
**100% online**

Professor: Roslyn Schoen, PhD

Office: Heritage Hall 204B

Office hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays 1-4 PM, and by appointment

**Course Description:** This course will provide students with an advanced understanding of the methodological approaches we commonly think of as qualitative research methods, with special emphases on various types of interviewing, observation techniques, ethnographic field-based methods, and content analysis. Students will learn both the techniques of qualitative research and engage in philosophical, ethical, and theoretical conversations around qualitative methods. The course will explore issues of research ethics as they pertain to qualitative research in the social sciences as well as the history and epistemological basis of qualitative research methodology.

**Course Objectives:** The primary objective of this course is to familiarize students with the intellectual and pragmatic issues concerning qualitative research methods in the social sciences. Students will be able to...

1. Understand qualitative research in the social sciences, including data collection techniques, analysis, writing, and presenting qualitative material.
2. Be familiar with the history of qualitative research in the social sciences.
3. Apply the theoretical conventions of qualitative research methodology to empirical cases.
4. Practice various forms of data collection and analysis related to observation, interviewing, and textual analysis.
5. Discuss the epistemological history of qualitative methods and understand the distinction between these epistemological assumptions and those of other types of social science research.
6. Examine the ethical responsibilities of qualitative researchers in light of the much closer contact with “subjects” and “informants” than in other areas of research.
7. Think collectively and critically about qualitative research, including the ability to locate and assess the quality of published qualitative studies.
8. Identify the professional norms and styles for writing and presenting qualitative research findings.

**Mode of instruction and course access:** This is an online course with all assessments and lectures available through our course Canvas page.

*\*Students should set notification preferences in Canvas so that you receive course announcements in your email inbox or via text. Set preferences: <https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-10624>*

**Contacting your professor:**

The best way to contact me is through email (roslyn.schoen@tamuct.edu). I check email every day during the week and often on the weekends as well. I do not respond to email after 8 PM; if you email in the middle of the night, please look for my response the following day. I am on campus during my office hours should you need to talk to me in person.

\*Please note that the best way to refer to your professor in email or in person is as “Professor Schoen” or “Dr. Schoen,” pronounced *SHANE*.

**Required Reading and Textbook(s):**

Saldana, Johnny and Matt Omasta. 2017. *Qualitative Research: Analyzing Life*. Sage Publications. 978-1506305493

Goffman, Alice. 2014. *On the Run: Fugitive Life in an American City*. The University of Chicago Press.

Other required reading materials listed on the syllabus will be available through our course E-Reserve page.

**Recommended Book(s):**

*ASA Style Guide*, 5th edition. American Sociological Association.

**Technology Requirements**

This course will use the A&M-Central Texas Instructure Canvas learning management system. Logon to A&M-Central Texas Canvas [<https://tamuct.instructure.com>].

Username: Your MyCT username (xx123 or everything before the "@" in your MyCT e-mail address)

Password: Your MyCT password

**Canvas Support**

Use the Canvas Help link, located at the bottom of the left-hand menu, for issues with Canvas. You can select “Chat with Canvas Support,” submit a support request through “Report a Problem,” or call the Canvas support line: 1-844-757-0953.

For issues related to course content and requirements, contact your instructor.

**Other Technology Support**

For log-in problems, students should contact Help Desk Central.

24 hours a day, 7 days a week:

Email: [helpdesk@tamu.edu](mailto:helpdesk@tamu.edu)

Phone: (254) 519-5466

[Web Chat](http://hdc.tamu.edu): [<http://hdc.tamu.edu>]

*Please let the support technician know you are an A&M-Central Texas student.*

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

Below is a description of the main activities for this course. They include (1) completing the readings, (2) participation on eight discussion boards, (3) submitting five methods exercises, (4) completing two exams, and (5) one final paper with outline.

Detailed instructions for methods exercises will be available in their respective weekly modules.

**Discussion Boards:** Students will participate on our course discussion board, with graded discussion taking place during 8 of the 16 weeks this semester. Participation on graded discussion boards is an important part of learning for this course. Primary/initial postings will address my weekly discussion question(s) and should be 300 words or longer. Primary posts are due by midnight (11:59 PM CST) each Thursday. Once several initial posts have been made, you will move on by reading and responding to at least two of your peers' primary posts. Response posts commenting and reflecting upon the comments of your peers should be made by midnight (11:59 PM CST) each Sunday.

**Methods Exercises:** Students will complete 5 methods exercises in order to practice and apply information from the readings. Exercises are worth 50 points each for a total of 250 points. The exercises will be...

- a. Analysis 1 – analyzing spaces and objects in their surroundings
- b. Earning a CITI certificate in human subjects research
- c. Conducting an interview
- d. Ethics essay – applying ethical principles to a hypothetical research situation
- e. Analysis 2 – coding and analyzing interview data

**Exams:** Students will take one mid-term and one final exam. Exams will be essay in format and worth 100 points each.

**Final paper and outline:** Students will submit one final paper that applies course concepts and theories to the Goffman ethnography *On the Run*. The paper should examine all aspects of the book salient to the research methodology presented. Students will submit an outline prior to their final paper to receive feedback on the direction the paper is taking.

### **Posting of Grades:**

- All student grades will be posted using the Canvas grade book and students should monitor their grade status through this tool.
- Students should always refer to the syllabus for total points and points possible. The Canvas gradebook tool may misinform students from time to time.
- Grades will usually be posted within 7-10 days of due dates. Some assignments require more personalized feedback. These assignments could take longer to grade and so you may need to be patient.

**POINT BREAKDOWN:**

Activity	Breakdown	Total Points
Discussion boards	1 @ 10 points 2-8 @ 20 points each	150 points
Methods exercises	5 @ 50 points each · CITI certificate · Analysis #1 · Interview exercise · Ethics essay · Analysis #2	250 points
Mid-term and final exams	2 @ 100 points each	200 points
Final paper	Outline @ 20 points Paper @ 80 points	100 points
	<b>Total:</b>	<b>700 points</b>

**COURSE SCHEDULE:**

The course schedule is a plan, not a promise.

Many of the assigned chapters are from your book, *Qualitative Research: Analyzing Life*, and are marked with page and/or chapter numbers. Other readings not in your book will be available on our course E-Reserves page, which you can access through the TAMUCT library web site. Password: research

Week 1. Jan 14 Introduction to the course

Read: Saldana and Omasta chapter 1

(eRes) Denzin and Lincoln “Introduction: Entering the Field of Qualitative Research” In: *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, Pgs. 1-18.

Complete: [Discussion board 1](#)

Week 2. Jan 21 Introduction to qualitative research

Read: Introduction to Sociological Research (see link in [week 2 Module](#))

(eRes) Vidich and Lyman “Qualitative Methods: Their History in Sociology and Anthropology” In: *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, Pgs. 23-59.

Begin [CITI online modules](#) for Social-Behavioral-Educational (SBE) basic course

Complete: Discussion board 2

Week 3. Jan 28 The field site

Read: Saldana and Omasta chapter 2

Complete: CITI Certificate (due Sunday, Feb 3rd)

Week 4. Feb 4 Documents, artifacts, and digital materials

Read: Saldana and Omasta chapter 3

(eRes) Ian Hodder “The Interpretation of Documents and Material Culture” Pgs. 393-402 In: *Handbook of Qualitative Research*

Complete: Analysis exercise #1 (due Sunday, Feb 10th)

Week 5. Feb 11 Preparing and analyzing interviews

Read: Saldana and Omasta chapters 4 and 5

(eRes) Fontana and Frey “Interviewing: The Art of Science” Pgs. 361-376 In: *Handbook of Qualitative Research*.

Complete: Discussion board 3

Week 6. Feb 18 Active interviewing

Read: (eRes) Holstein and Gubrium chapters 1-4 (pgs. 1-37) In: *The Active Interview*

Goffman prologue, preface, and introduction (\*Goffman = Alice Goffman's book *On the Run*)

Complete: Discussion board 4

Week 7. Feb 25 The active interviewer and collaborative construction

Read: (eRes) Holstein and Gubrium chapters 5-8 (pgs. 38-80) In: *The Active Interview*

Goffman chapter 1

Complete: Interview exercise (Complete interview by March 3rd, transcripts due Sunday, March 10th)

Week 8. March 4 Methodological frameworks

Read: Saldana and Omasta chapter 6

(eRes) Gubrium and Holstein chapter 1 “Method Talk.” Pgs. 3-16. In: *The New Language of Qualitative Method*

(eRes) Donna Haraway “Situated Knowledges.” Pgs. 575-599 in *Feminist Studies*

Goffman chapter 2

Mid-term exam posted this week. Answers due by Sunday, March 17th.

**Spring Break is March 10 to 17<sup>th</sup>, 2019**

Week 9.      March 18      Research design

Read: Saldana and Omasta chapter 7

Goffman chapter 3 and 4

Complete: Discussion board 5

Week 10.     March 25      Ethical concerns in qualitative research

Read: Saldana and Omasta chapter 8

(eRes) Glesne and Peshkin “But is it Ethical?” Pgs. 109-125 In: *Becoming Qualitative Researchers*

Goffman chapter 5

Complete: [Ethics essay](#) (due Sunday, March 31st)

Week 11.     April 1          Analysis: Condensing, patterning, unifying

Read: Saldana and Omasta chapter 9

(eRes) Marshall and Rossman chapter 5 “Managing, Analyzing, and Interpreting Data.” In: *Designing Qualitative Research*, 4<sup>th</sup> edition

Goffman chapter 6

Complete: Discussion board 6

Week 12.     April 8          Analysis: Interpreting and theorizing

Read: Saldana and Omasta chapter 10

(eRes) Altheide and Johnson “Criteria for Assessing Interpretive Validity in Qualitative Research” Pgs. 485-499 In: *Handbook of Qualitative Research*.

Goffman chapter 7 and conclusion

Complete: Analysis exercise #2 (due Sunday, April 14th)

Week 13.     April 15          Writing qualitative research

Read: Saldana and Omasta chapter 11

(eRes) Richardson “Writing: A Method of Inquiry” pgs. 516-529 In: *Handbook of Qualitative Research*

Complete: Paper outline (20 points, due Tuesday, April 16th) and Discussion board 7

Week 14.     April 22          Analytic presentation

Read: Saldana and Omasta chapter 12

Complete: Discussion board 8

Complete: Final paper (80 points, due Sunday, April 28th)

Week 15. April 29 Exit and closure

Read: Saldana and Omasta chapter 13

Goffman's epilogue

*Final exam due by Wednesday, May 9th, 2019*

**Spring commencement: Saturday, May 11<sup>th</sup>, Bell County Expo Center at 7:00 p.m.**

**Final grades will be submitted to the Registrar on or before Tuesday, May 14<sup>th</sup>.**

## **COURSE GUIDELINES**

### **Late/Makeup policy**

Exams may be rescheduled in case of a documented illness or injury. A student may make up an assignment if there is illness, injury, or another documented excuse. If a student foresees that they might miss an assignment due to illness, injury, or something out of their control they must 1. Provide documentation (doctor's note, police report, etc.), 2. Notify me as soon as possible of intent to make up the exam, and 3. Prepare to make up their work within 1 week of the excused absence. Students who miss an exam without a documented excuse will receive a zero on the assignment. If the student foresees that s/he will be unable to complete the course, then s/he should drop the course or accept the posted grade. Students cannot make up coursework for undocumented events.

## **UNIVERSITY RESOURCES, PROCEDURES, AND GUIDELINES**

### **Drop Policy.**

If you discover that you need to drop this class, you must complete a [Drop Request Form](https://www.tamuct.edu/registrar/docs/Drop_Request_Form.pdf) [https://www.tamuct.edu/registrar/docs/Drop\_Request\_Form.pdf].

Professors cannot drop students; this is always the responsibility of the student. The Registrar's Office will provide a deadline on the Academic Calendar for which the form must be completed, signed and returned. Once you return the signed form to the Registrar's Office, you must go into Warrior Web and confirm that you are no longer enrolled. If you still show as enrolled, FOLLOW-UP with the Registrar's Office immediately. You are to attend class until the procedure is complete to avoid penalty for absence. Should you miss the drop deadline or fail to follow the procedure, you will receive an F in the course, which may affect your financial aid and/or VA educational benefits.

### **Academic Integrity.**

Texas A&M University -Central Texas values the integrity of the academic enterprise and strives for the highest standards of academic conduct. A&M-Central Texas expects its students, faculty, and staff to support the adherence to high standards of personal and scholarly conduct to preserve the honor and integrity of the creative community. Academic integrity is defined as a

commitment to honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. Any deviation by students from this expectation may result in a failing grade for the assignment and potentially a failing grade for the course. Academic misconduct is any act that improperly affects a true and honest evaluation of a student's academic performance and includes, but is not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work, plagiarism and improper citation of sources, using another student's work, collusion, and the abuse of resource materials. All academic misconduct concerns will be reported to the university's Office of Student Conduct. Ignorance of the university's standards and expectations is never an excuse to act with a lack of integrity. When in doubt on collaboration, citation, or any issue, please contact your instructor before taking a course of action.

For more [information regarding the Student Conduct process](#),

[<https://tamuct.campuslabs.com/engage/organization/tamuct-student-conduct-panel>].

If you know of potential honor violations by other students, you may [submit a report](#),

[[https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?TAMUCentralTexas&layout\\_id=0](https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?TAMUCentralTexas&layout_id=0)].

### **Academic Accommodations.**

At Texas A&M University-Central Texas, we value an inclusive learning environment where every student has an equal chance to succeed and has the right to a barrier-free education. The Office of Access and Inclusion is responsible for ensuring that students with a disability receive equal access to the university's programs, services and activities. If you believe you have a disability requiring reasonable accommodations please contact the Office of Access and Inclusion, WH-212; or call (254) 501-5836. Any information you provide is private and confidential and will be treated as such.

For more information please visit our [Access & Inclusion](#) web page

[<https://www.tamuct.edu/student-affairs/access-inclusion.html>].

### **Important information for Pregnant and/or Parenting Students.**

Texas A&M University-Central Texas supports students who are pregnant and/or parenting. In accordance with requirements of Title IX and related guidance from US Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights, the Dean of Student Affairs' Office can assist students who are pregnant and/or parenting in seeking accommodations related to pregnancy and/or parenting. Students should seek out assistance as early in the pregnancy as possible. For more information, please visit the [Student Affairs](#) web page [<https://www.tamuct.edu/student-affairs/index.html>]. Students may also contact the institution's Title IX Coordinator. If you would like to read more about these [requirements and guidelines online](#), please visit the website [<http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/pregnancy.pdf>].

Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972 prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex and gender—including pregnancy, parenting, and all related conditions. A&M-Central Texas is able to provide flexible and individualized reasonable accommodation to pregnant and parenting students. All pregnant and parenting students should contact the Associate Dean in the Division of

Student Affairs at (254) 501-5909 to seek out assistance. Students may also contact the University's Title IX Coordinator.

### **Tutoring.**

Tutoring is available to all A&M-Central Texas students, both on-campus and online. Subjects tutored on campus include Accounting, Advanced Math, Biology, Finance, Statistics, Mathematics, and Study Skills. Tutors are available at the Tutoring Center in Warrior Hall, Suite 111.

If you have a question regarding tutor schedules, need to schedule a tutoring session, are interested in becoming a tutor, or have any other question, contact Academic Support Programs at (254) 519-5796, or by emailing Dr. DeEadra Albert-Green at [deadra.albertgreen@tamuct.edu](mailto:deadra.albertgreen@tamuct.edu).

Chat live with a tutor 24/7 for almost any subject from on your computer! Tutor.com is an online tutoring platform that enables A&M-Central Texas students to log in and receive FREE online tutoring and writing support. This tool provides tutoring in over 40 subject areas. Access Tutor.com through Canvas.

### **University Writing Center.**

Located in Warrior Hall 416, the University Writing Center (UWC) at Texas A&M University–Central Texas (TAMUCT) is a free workspace open to all TAMUCT students from 10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Monday thru Thursday with satellite hours in the University Library Monday thru Thursday from 6:00-9:00 p.m. This semester, the UWC is also offering online only hours from 12:00-3:00 p.m. on Saturdays.

Tutors are prepared to help writers of all levels and abilities at any stage of the writing process. While tutors will not write, edit, or grade papers, they will assist students in developing more effective composing practices. By providing a practice audience for students' ideas and writing, our tutors highlight the ways in which they read and interpret students' texts, offering guidance and support throughout the various stages of the writing process. In addition, students may work independently in the UWC by checking out a laptop that runs the Microsoft Office suite and connects to WIFI, or by consulting our resources on writing, including all of the relevant style guides. Whether you need help brainstorming ideas, organizing an essay, proofreading, understanding citation practices, or just want a quiet place to work, the UWC is here to help!

Students may arrange a one-on-one session with a trained and experienced writing tutor by visiting the UWC during normal operating hours (both half-hour and hour sessions are available) or by making an appointment via [WCOOnline](#). In addition, you can email Dr. Bruce Bowles Jr. at [bruce.bowles@tamuct.edu](mailto:bruce.bowles@tamuct.edu) if you have any questions about the UWC and/or need any assistance with scheduling.

### **University Library.**

The University Library provides many services in support of research across campus and at a distance. We offer over 200 electronic databases containing approximately 250,000 eBooks and 82,000 journals, in addition to the 85,000 items in our print collection, which can be mailed to

students who live more than 50 miles from campus. Research guides for each subject taught at A&M-Central Texas are available through our website to help students navigate these resources. On campus, the library offers technology including cameras, laptops, microphones, webcams, and digital sound recorders.

Research assistance from a librarian is also available 24 hours a day through our online chat service, and at the reference desk when the library is open. Research sessions can be scheduled for more comprehensive assistance, and may take place on Skype or in-person at the library. Assistance may cover many topics, including how to find articles in peer-reviewed journals, how to cite resources, and how to piece together research for written assignments.

Our 27,000-square-foot facility on the A&M-Central Texas main campus includes student lounges, private study rooms, group work spaces, computer labs, family areas suitable for all ages, and many other features. Services such as interlibrary loan, TexShare, binding, and laminating are available. The library frequently offers workshops, tours, readings, and other events. For more information, please visit our [Library website](http://tamuct.libguides.com/index) [http://tamuct.libguides.com/index].

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