



University of Maryland School of Public Health

HLTH 625 – Community Assessment Through Qualitative Methods

Semester: Spring 2019
Classroom and Time: SPH 0302 Tuesday 4:00 – 6:45 PM
Instructor: Elizabeth Aparicio, PhD **Office Hours:** By appointment
Office: 1242V SPH
Phone: 301-405-2029
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Course Description: As community-engaged public health professionals and scholars, we regularly tackle complex research questions as we work in partnership with the communities we serve towards health equity in our society. Training in a wide range of innovative qualitative, quantitative, and mixed-methods research approaches is critical to preparing us to do this important work. Learning how to serve as a conduit for community voice through use of qualitative methods in public health research is an important skillset. This experiential course will include in-depth discussion of major paradigms in qualitative inquiry, an overview of the process of qualitative research, and an introduction to several qualitative research methods. Students will collect, transcribe, analyze, and present qualitative data using introductory interview and analytic techniques. Finally, we will explore a range of innovative methodological applications through our “research in action” guest scholar series. This course is designed to provide students core skills in rigorous, innovative qualitative research design as they prepare to conduct their own qualitative studies with and for communities tackling public health challenges.

Course Learning Objectives:

Upon completing this course, the student will be able to:

1. Define qualitative inquiry and relate it to its epistemological bases.
2. Design a qualitative research study, including developing the primary research question, defining the study sample, and constructing a semi-structured interview guide.
3. Collect and analyze qualitative data using introductory techniques.
4. Present qualitative findings in oral and written form.

Program Competencies Addressed in this Course:

The following PhD competency for the Department of Behavioral and Community Health is addressed in this course:

Build emergent themes and sub-themes within qualitative data which require re-reading of text and an iterative process of data aggregation and interpretation.

The following MPH competency for the Department of Behavioral and Community Health is addressed in this course:

Build emergent themes and sub-themes within qualitative data which require re-reading of text and an iterative process of data aggregation and interpretation.

Required Texts and Other Readings:

Required:

Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2017). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. ISBN-13: 978-1506330204

Recommended:

Charmaz, K. (2014). *Constructing grounded theory (2nd ed.)*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. ISBN-13: 978-0857029140

Saldaña, J. (2015). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. ISBN-13: 978-1473902497

Smith, L. T. (2013). *Decolonizing methodologies: Research and indigenous peoples*. New Zealand: Zed Books Ltd. ISBN-13: 978-1848139503

Additional Materials Required: Students will be required to obtain or have access to NVivo 11 Starter. All references readings beyond the required Creswell & Poth text are available on ELMS.

Course Requirements:

Assignment 1: Weekly Check-ins (due: every Tuesday at 3:59PM, unless otherwise noted; 10% of final grade)

In lieu of formal exams, this course includes weekly assessment of basic knowledge derived from course readings. These weekly check-ins are completed online through ELMS and due by 3:59PM (before class begins) each Tuesday, unless otherwise noted in the schedule below. Weekly check-ins are open note, open book and should be completed independently by each student *after* reading each week and *before* coming to class.

Assignment 2: Participant Observation Assignment (due: 2/19/19 at 3:59PM; 15% of final grade)

Amplifying thoughtful, empathic, and critical observation skills is a critical part of effective qualitative research. In this assignment, you will select a site of interest related to the planned research project and spend an hour recording detailed observations. Then, you will use these observations to generate a 3-5 page research memo and accompanying 1-3 page reflexive journal entry, due via ELMS. Additional instructions on participant observation, research memos, and reflexive journals will be provided in class.

Assignment 3: Data Collection, Transcription, and Analysis Assignment (due: 4/16/2019 at 3:59PM; 30% of final grade)

Confucius once said, "I hear and I forget; I see and I remember; I do and I understand." In this experiential exercise, you will conduct an individual in-depth qualitative interview using a semi-structured guide co-developed with Dr. Aparicio, transcribe the data into a Word file, upload the file into NVivo, and systematically analyze the data. Your audit trail and research memo with final themes and subthemes should be turned in on ELMS. The class will be divided into smaller research teams to facilitate peer debriefing and support. Although this is a training interview only, we are preparing you for "real" data collection; as such, CITI training and IRBnet registration are required. Dr. Aparicio and members of your research team will train and support you throughout this experiential learning process. Additional instructions will be provided in class. *Please note that this assignment requires data collection in the field outside of class.*

MPH Students' Assignment 4: Methods Comparison Assignment (due to partner: 4/23/19; feedback due to partner: 4/30/19; due to Dr. Aparicio 5/7/2019 – all 3:59PM; 30% of final grade)

Part of this course is learning a range of qualitative methodologies to explore behavioral and community health issues, each with its own purpose and process. In this assignment, you will create a matrix quick guide of the main approaches covered in this course (thematic; narrative; phenomenology; grounded theory; ethnography; case study; and action research) by their key methodological characteristics (purpose, a sample research question [of interest to you], data sources, data collection, analytic steps and tools, and findings representation). The matrix will be composed individually then be exchanged with your partner so that you can give one another feedback (cc Dr. Aparicio on both exchanges). The final assignment is due to Dr. Aparicio via ELMS.

PhD Students' Assignment 4: Case Study and "Next Steps" Presentation (due to partner 4/23/19; feedback due to partner: 4/30/19; due to Dr. Aparicio 5/7/2019 – all 3:59PM; 30% of final grade)

Building on your individual qualitative interview and analysis, in this assignment, you will select, analyze, and integrate additional sources of qualitative information related to your case that provide a rich social-ecological context for understanding the in-depth interview. These additional sources of information may include (but are not limited to) participant observation, historical documents, and community health data. You will exchange your slides and "next steps" materials and meet with a partner for feedback (cc Dr. Aparicio on both emails), then present your case and "next steps" (see below) to the class during one of our final two sessions. Of note, your presentation should have two clear parts: case presentation and "next steps." During the next steps portion, you will pose a research question for a qualitative study informed by the experience of your case study analysis and your own research interests. You should specify a design for this study, including sampling strategy, methodological and analytic approach, and data collection tool (such as an in-depth individual or focus group interview guide). Slides (including your case, your "next steps" research question, methodological approach overview, and data collection tool) should be uploaded to ELMS prior to your presentation.

Participation (15% of final grade)

Our class is an active body of scholars wherein every voice and set of experiences matters and is valued. Furthermore, class activities are heavily oriented towards discussion, direct application, and practice of qualitative research concepts. In order to facilitate our work together, please complete all readings prior to class and come prepared to discuss and apply them. As attendance is critical to learning and successful attainment of the course objectives and curriculum competencies, class attendance and participation are critical for performing well in this course. Consistent with University policy, one absence will not significantly impact your grade, though please let Dr. Aparicio know that you will not be present. Subsequent medically-related absences require a confirmation of illness by a medical provider. If you do not have a regular medical provider, please remember that we have a clinic on campus. Other absences require appropriate documentation. See the full University policy at <https://www.president.umd.edu/administration/policies/section-v-student-affairs/v-100g>

Your feedback on this course is valued and important as part of our adult learning community; as such, completion of the online course evaluation (or active opt-out) is included in the participation grade.

Course Policies:

All enrolled students are provided access to the University's email system and an email account. *All official University email communication will be sent to this email address (or an alternate address if provided by the student).* Email has been adopted as the primary means for sending official communications to students, so email must be checked on a regular basis. Academic advisors, faculty, and campus administrative offices use email to communicate important and time-sensitive notices.

Students are responsible for keeping their email address up to date or for redirecting or forwarding email to another address. Failure to check email, errors in forwarding email, and returned email (from "full mailbox" or "unknown user" errors for example), will not excuse a student from missing University announcement, messages, deadlines, etc. Email addresses can be quickly and easily updated at www.my.umd.edu or in-person at the Student Service Counter on the first floor of the Mitchell Building.

For technical support for University email: www.helpdesk.umd.edu or call 301-405-1400.

Absence Policy:

In accordance with University policy if you are absent for a single (1) lecture due to illness or some form of personal or family emergency, this absence will be considered "excused" and the instructor will accept a note from you attesting to the date of the illness/incident, along with an acknowledgement that the information is true. Whenever feasible, you should contact the instructor in advance.

Multiple or prolonged absences, and any absences that prevent attendance at a major scheduled grading event (such as the final presentation) will require written documentation from an appropriate health care provider/organization.

A link to pull information on the new policy covering absences from class can be found at <http://www.president.umd.edu/policies/v100g.html>

Late Work and Missed Exams/Assignments:

Detailed instructions for all assignments in this course are provided in advance. You can plan for the unexpected by starting all assignments early. As a general rule, late or incomplete work is not accepted. Late or incomplete work can be made up only in serious extenuating circumstances that prohibit working on the assignment (such as death in the family, a students' debilitating illness, or a students' hospitalization) and with prior arrangement with the instructor.

Students who enroll in the class at any time during the drop-add period are responsible for all in-class work to date.

Course Evaluations

The University, the School of Public Health, and the Department of Behavioral and Community Health are committed to the use of student course evaluations for improving the student experience, course and curriculum delivery, and faculty instruction. Your evaluations help instructors improve their courses; help deans and department chairs decide on merit pay for faculty, renewal of contracts, and support tenure and promotion decisions; and help current and future students decide on classes. **The system (www.CourseEvalUM.umd.edu)** will be open at the end of this semester for course evaluations.

Inclement Weather / University Closings:

Please ensure you are familiar with use of WebEx, which is what typically will be used in the event of inclement weather. In the event that the University is closed for an emergency or extended period of time, the instructor will communicate to students via email regarding schedule adjustments, including rescheduling of examinations and assignments due to inclement weather and campus emergencies. Official closures and delays are announced on the campus website (<http://www.umd.edu>) and snow phone line (301-405-SNOW), as well as local radio and TV stations.

Resources:

CITI (Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative):

www.citiprogram.org if there is any difficulty:
<http://www.umresearch.umd.edu/RCO/New/IRBTraining.html>

IRBnet registration:

<https://www.irbnet.org/release/public/register.jsp>

*We all need help in our lives from time to time.
 Don't hesitate to reach out to Dr. Aparicio or below
 resources in our community:
 Counseling Center 301-314-7651
 After-hours Crisis Line 301-314-7651
 UMD Pantry 301-314-8054
 Emergency Financial Assistance:
https://financialaid.umd.edu/aid/emergency_assistance.html*

Grading Procedures:

Evaluation Item & Percentage of Final Grade	Grading
Participation: 15%	96 - 100% A+
Weekly Check-in's: 10%	93 - 95 A
Participant Observation Assignment: 15%	90 - 92 A-
Data Analysis, Transcription, and Analysis Assignment: 30%	86 - 89.99 B+
MPH Only: Methods Comparison Assignment: 30%	83 - 85 B
PhD Only: Case Study and "Next Steps" Presentation: 30%	80 - 82 B-
	76 - 79.99 C+
	73 - 75 C
	70 - 72 C-
	66 - 69.99 D+
	63 - 65 D
	60 - 62 D-
	≤ 59.99 F

Course Outline/Course Calendar:

Week	Date	Topic & Readings	Assignments
# 1	1/29/19	Introduction to qualitative methods <i>Creswell & Poth ch. 1-2</i>	Sign on to ELMS & get oriented
# 2	2/5/19	Ethics, power, and privilege in qualitative research; Reflexivity <i>Tuhiwai Smith Introduction & ch. 1</i> <i>Padgett ch. 4</i>	CITI Training & IRBnet registration Weekly Check-in (note: covers week 1-2 readings)

Week	Date	Topic & Readings	Assignments
# 3	2/12/19	Designing a qualitative research study (research questions and individual interview/focus group guide development) <i>Creswell & Poth ch. 3 & 6</i>	Weekly Check-in
# 4	2/19/19	Main approaches: an overview (thematic; narrative; phenomenology; grounded theory; ethnography; case study; action research) <i>Braun, V. & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. Qualitative Research in Psychology, 3, 77-101.</i> <i>Creswell & Poth ch. 4 & 5</i>	Weekly Check-in Observation Assignment Due
# 5	2/26/19	Strategies to enhance rigor; Collecting rich data (effective interviewing, facilitation, co-facilitation, and observation) <i>Creswell & Poth ch. 7 & 10</i>	Weekly Check-in Interview guide finalized
# 6	3/5/19	Preparing rich data for analysis (responsibility to represent voice; transcription) <i>Scheper-Hughes, N. (2000). Ire in Ireland. Ethnography, 1(1), 117-140.</i>	Weekly Check-in Fieldwork: individual in-depth interviews
# 7	3/12/19	Analysis <i>Creswell & Poth ch. 8</i>	Weekly Check-in Fieldwork: individual in-depth interviews
# 8	3/19/19	SPRING BREAK – No class	None
# 9	3/26/19	Analysis <i>R&R example</i> <i>Tong, A., Sainsbury, P., & Craig, J. (2007). Consolidated criteria for reporting qualitative research (COREQ): A 32 item checklist for interviews and focus groups. International Journal for Quality in Health Care, 19(6), 349-357.</i>	Weekly Check-in Aim to have transcription completed
# 10	4/2/19	Analysis; Preparing findings for dissemination <i>Creswell & Poth ch. 9 & 11</i>	Weekly Check-in
# 11	4/9/19	Research in action: thematic analysis and template analysis; grounded theory Guest speaker: Dr. Lynn Michalopoulos (topic: thematic analysis – trauma, mental health, and HIV risk among fisher folk in Zambia) <i>Michalopoulos, L. T. M., Baca-Atlas, S. N., Simona, S. J., Jiwatram-Negrón, T., Ncube, A., & Chery, M. B. (2017). "Life at the River is a Living Hell:" a qualitative study of trauma, mental health, substance use and HIV risk behavior among female fish traders from the</i>	Weekly Check-in

		<i>Kafue Flatlands in Zambia. BMC women's health, 17(1), 15.</i>	
Week	Date	Topic & Readings	Assignments
# 12	4/16/19	Research in action: content analysis Guest speaker: Dr. Quynh Nguyen (topic: online communities and using social media data in qualitative research) Nguyen, T. T., Meng, H. W., Sandeep, S., McCullough, M., Yu, W., Lau, Y., ... & Nguyen, Q. C. (2018). Twitter-derived measures of sentiment towards minorities (2015–2016) and associations with low birth weight and preterm birth in the United States. <i>Computers in Human Behavior, 89</i> , 308-315.	Weekly Check-in Data Collection, Transcription, & Analysis Assignment Due
# 13	4/23/19	Research in action: narrative and phenomenological approaches Guest speaker: Dr. Todd Vanidestine (topic: critical discourse analysis – conceptualization of race and racism in the discourse addressing racial and ethnic health inequities) <i>Tracy et al. chapter</i> <i>van Dijk article</i>	Weekly Check-in Draft Methods Comparison or Case Study Assignment due to partner
# 14	4/30/19	Research in action: ethnography and action research Guest speaker: Dr. Kirsten Stoebenau (topic: ethnography – sex work in Madagascar) <i>Stoebenau, K. (2009). Symbolic capital and health: The case of women's sex work in Antananarivo, Madagascar. Social Science and Medicine, 68, 2045-2052.</i>	Weekly Check-in Meet with partner to discuss feedback from Methods Comparison or Case Study Assignment
# 15	5/7/19	Final Presentations	Methods Comparison or Case Study Assignment due to Dr. Aparicio
# 16	5/14/19	Final Presentations & Wrap up	None
		<i>Note: no final exam</i>	

Critical university policies:

Religious Observances:

The University System of Maryland policy provides that students should not be penalized because of observances of their religious beliefs; students shall be given an opportunity, whenever feasible, to make up within a reasonable time any academic assignment that is missed due to individual participation in religious observances. **It is the student's responsibility to inform the instructor in advance of any intended absences for religious observance.**

Special Accommodations / Disability Support Services:

If you have a documented disability and wish to discuss academic accommodations for test taking or other needs, you will need documentation from Disability Support Service (301-314-7682). If you are ill or encountering personal difficulties, please let the instructor know as soon as possible. You can also contact Learning Assistance Services (301-314-7693) and/or the Counseling Center (301-314-7651) for assistance.

Academic Integrity:

The University's code of academic integrity is designed to ensure that the principle of academic honesty is upheld. Any of the following acts, when committed by a student, constitutes academic dishonesty:

- **CHEATING**: intentionally using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in an academic exercise.
- **FABRICATION**: intentional and unauthorized falsification or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise.
- **FACILITATING ACADEMIC DISHONESTY**: intentionally or knowingly helping or attempting to help another to violate any provision of this code.
- **PLAGIARISM**: intentionally or knowingly representing the words or ideas of another as one's own in any academic exercise.

For more information see: <http://www.shc.umd.edu/code.html>.

The Honor Pledge is a statement undergraduate and graduate students should be asked to write by hand and sign on examinations, papers, or other academic assignments. The Pledge reads:

I pledge on my honor that I have not given or received any unauthorized assistance on this assignment/examination.

The University of Maryland, College Park has a nationally recognized Code of Academic Integrity, administered by the Student Honor Council. This Code sets standards for academic integrity at Maryland for all undergraduate and graduate students. As a student you are responsible for upholding these standards for this course. It is very important for you to be aware of the consequences of cheating, fabrication, facilitation, and plagiarism. For more information on the Code of Academic Integrity or the Student Honor Council, please visit <http://www.shc.umd.edu>.