

Marshall University

Course Title/Number	Qualitative Research Methods: CMM 676
Semester/Year	Spring 2015
Days/Time	Wednesday 4:00-6:20 pm
Location	Smith Hall 227
Professor	Dr. Jill C. Underhill
Office	Smith Hall 250
Phone	(304) 696-3013
E-Mail	underhillj@marshall.edu
Office/Hours	<p>Mondays: 12:00—1:00 Tuesdays: 5:00—9:00 Wednesdays: 12:00—1:00; 2:00—4:00 Fridays: 12:00—1:00; 2:00—3:00</p>
University Policies	<p>By enrolling in this course, you agree to the University Policies listed below. Please read the full text of each policy by going to www.marshall.edu/academic-affairs and clicking on “Marshall University Policies.” Or, you can access the policies directly by going to http://www.marshall.edu/academic-affairs/?page_id=802</p> <p>Academic Dishonesty/ Excused Absence Policy for Undergraduates/ Computing Services Acceptable Use/ Inclement Weather/ Dead Week/ Students with Disabilities/ Academic Forgiveness/ Academic Probation and Suspension/ Academic Rights and Responsibilities of Students/ Affirmative Action/ Sexual Harassment</p>

Course Description

This course provides an introduction to qualitative research methods and their application in communication studies.

General Education Program Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the core curriculum at Marshall University, students will be able to master the following core domains of critical thinking:

1. Aesthetic/Artistic
2. Communication (oral, written, visual)
3. Information Literacy: Exploring; Questioning; Searching; Evaluating; Synthesizing; Creating; Communicating; Assessing.
4. Mathematical and Abstract
5. Multicultural/International
6. Scientific

- 7. Social/Ethical/Historical
- 8. Ethical Self Awareness
- 9. Civic Well Being

Relationships among Course, Program, and Degree Profile Outcomes

Course Student Learning Outcomes	How students will practice each outcome in this Course	How student achievement of each outcome will be assessed in this Course	Program Outcomes	Degree Profile Outcomes
Students will understand theory as a context for communication.	Class discussion; Class reading; Class activities; Research Project.	Reflection Papers, Exams, Research Paper.	2,3,6,7	Applied learning; Intellectual skills;
Students will generalize communication patterns from qualitative inquiry.	In-depth interviews, observations, primary source data.	Research Paper.	2,3,6,7	Applied learning; Intellectual skills;
Students will assess the ways qualitative research methods inform theoretical understanding.	Class discussion; Class reading; Class activities; Research Project.	Exams, Research Paper.	2,3,6,7	Specialized knowledge; Applied learning; Broad, Integrative Knowledge
Students will synthesize and analyze qualitative data.	Class Activities; Transcribing and Analyzing Interviews	Research Paper.	2,3,6,7,9	Broad, Integrative Knowledge; Intellectual skills; Civic Well Being
Student will modify core beliefs and ethical principles based on analysis of the perspective and experience of others.	Class Activities; In-depth Interviewing, Class discussion	Reflection Papers; Research Paper	8	Ethical Self Awareness

Students will create new, more accurate explanations for social problems on the basis of ongoing, discipline-specific civic involvement	Analysis for Research Project; Class discussion	Research Paper	9	Civic Well Being
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Required Texts, Additional Reading, and Other Materials

Lindlof, T. R. & Taylor, B. C. (2011). *Qualitative Communication Research Methods* (3rd Ed). Los Angeles: Sage Publications.

Frey, L. R. (1998). Communication and social justice research: Truth, justice, and the applied communication way. *Journal of Applied Communication Research*, 26(2), 155-164.

Hogan, J. M., Andrews, P. H., Andrews, J. R., & Williams, G. (2014). Democratic Citizenship and the Ethics of Public Speaking (Chapter 1). In *Public Speaking and Civic Engagement* (3rd Edition). USA: Pearson. (will be posted)

Additional Readings will be detailed on Blackboard.

Course Policies

Attendance: Attendance is necessary for this course and will be taken at each session. You are allowed 1 unexcused absence during the semester (on a day that does not include your oral presentation or a major grading event). The unexcused absence does not include major illnesses that require hospitalization or medical care or university-sponsored events. After the one unexcused absence (a week's worth of class), you will lose -20 points off your total grade for each additional absence. Excused absences must be documented to the Dean of Students. Please see the university catalog for the definition of excused and unexcused absences.

Late Assignments: Assignments not received by the due date will be subject to a reduced grading scale. For every day that the assignment is late without the instructor's approval, the assignment grade will drop 20%.

Grade Inquiries: All grades will be recorded on Blackboard and can be viewed by the students throughout the semester. All questions about graded assignments, quizzes, or exams must be brought to the instructor within two weeks of the day the grade is posted. We will schedule an appointment to discuss the grade outside of class time.

Plagiarism: Copying another's work without proper citation of the source constitutes plagiarism. Plagiarism in any form will not be tolerated. A student that is found plagiarizing another's work will automatically receive an "F" in the course and may be subject to further university discipline.

Cheating: According to university policy, cheating is defined as the use of any unauthorized materials during an academic exercise to include notes, study aids etc. Cheating also includes the viewing of another person's work or securing any part of an assignment or examination in advance of distribution by the instructor. Cheating will not be tolerated in this class and will result in an automatic "F" for the class and the possible recommendation of suspension or expulsion from the university.

Civility:

Cell Phones: Let's create an oasis of civility in our classroom. Please make sure that all cell phones are silenced before class starts. Please try to abstain from using your phone in class.

Laptops: Feel free to bring a laptop to take notes during class; BUT, other uses of the computer such as e-mailing friends or surfing the web for unrelated class material may result in your dismissal.

<p>This is the only physical copy of this syllabus you will receive. Electronic versions of this syllabus can be accessed on MU Online (Blackboard) and MyMU under the appropriate course listing.</p>
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Course Requirements	Points	Due Date
Midterm Exam	50	March 11
Final Exam	50	May 6
Semester Project- Service Learning Research Project		
Pre-Reflection	10	January 23
Annotated Bibliography	25	February 6
Interview Protocol Draft	10	February 20
Finalized Interview Protocol	40	February 27
Process Reflection	10	March 11
Transcriptions	50	April 10
Project Presentation	50	April 29
Analytic Paper	100	May 1
Summative Reflection	25	May 6
TOTAL	420	

Course Assignments- Service Learning Research Project

The major course assignment will involve a service learning research project for the Department of Communication. Specifically, we will investigate understandings of civic engagement in the basic public speaking course, and perceptions about grounding the course in ideals of civic engagement and social justice.

Guidelines and rubrics for all assignments will be posted on Blackboard. All assignments should be submitted via the drop box function. Below is a brief description of the major assignments for the course.

Pre-Reflection: After reading two articles on civic engagement and learning about the needs of our basic course in public speaking, you will author a reflection on your orientation toward these topics.

Annotated Bibliography: You will review 5 articles from communication journals that are focused on examining the role of race, gender, sexual orientation, or privilege; or promoting citizenship, civic engagement, social justice, and similarly related concepts in public speaking courses. Give priority to articles that use qualitative research methods. To the extent possible, look for articles that use in-depth interviewing and your

secondary method of choice (observation or archival). For each article review (approximately 1 page each), give a complete citation, and describe 1) the research questions, 2) the theoretical perspective (include whether this is explicitly stated or how you figured it out), 3) the data collection methods used, 4) the authors' methodological reflections, and 4) your personal critique of the methods used. If you choose your articles carefully, you will be able to build a stronger methods section and a more meaningful reflection on the effectiveness of your methods in the final paper.

Interview Protocol: We will decide as a group who should be interviewed for this project. You will then create an interviewing protocol for your data collection. First, your protocol needs to include guidelines and steps for implementing the interview. Next, you should include your complete question list, including planned probes. Finally, discuss your interviewing schedule. If needed, you will revise and resubmit the protocol.

Process Reflection: You will reflect on our progress in the research project and ways we are enacting the goals of service learning. We can also reflect on our expectations for data collection.

Transcriptions: You will transcribe the interview data and add your notes and observational data to create a rich text for analysis. You will submit all of your data to earn credit toward your final grade.

Analytical Paper: Use the annotated bibliography to write a literature review that establishes what is currently known about your topic. You must (1) transcribe your interviews and (2) either transform your observation into a narrative structure (who, what, when, where, why, how) OR integrate your primary source data into usable form. Conduct a grounded theory analysis based on your transcripts. Intersect that analysis with your secondary data, using the latter to enrich the former. Reflect upon your analysis and identify:

- (1) important intersections and departures from the existing literature;
- (2) strength and weaknesses of your own experience of data collection;
- (3) strength and weaknesses of your own experience of inquiry;
- (4) implications of your study.

REMEMBER, this is a qualitative research methods course, so I will be most interested in your description of your data collection methods and how you employed the grounded theory method of analysis.

Summative Reflection: After completing the requirements for this course, you will author a reflection on your experience with service learning and qualitative research. Through guided prompts you will reflect upon the how the experiences within the class influenced your understanding of qualitative research and community engagement.

Course Schedule

Meeting	Topic	Readings Due	Assignments Due
1/14	Class Introduction	Lindlof & Bryan Chapter 1 Frey- Communication and social justice research	Complete CITI IRB training by 11:59 pm on Sunday, Jan 18
1/21	Theoretical Assumptions Introduction to Qualitative Traditions	Lindlof & Bryan Chapter 2 Hogan et al.- Democratic Citizenship and Public Speaking	Pre-reflection due by 11:59 pm on Friday, Jan 23
1/28	Planning Research Projects Implementing Research Projects	Lindlof & Bryan Chapter 3 Lindlof & Bryan Chapter 4	
2/4	Producing Data: Participating, Observing, & Recording	Lindlof & Bryan Chapter 5	Annotated Bibliography due by 11:59 pm on Friday, Feb 6
2/11	Producing Data: Qualitative Interviewing	Lindlof & Bryan Chapter 6	
2/18	Producing Data: Qualitative Interviewing (continued)		Protocol Draft due by 11:59 pm on Friday, Feb 20
2/25	IRB Workshop		Finalized Protocol due by 11:59 pm on Friday, Feb 27
3/4	Producing Data: Analyzing Material Culture and Documents	Lindlof & Bryan Chapter 7	
3/11	Midterm Exam		Process Reflection due Wednesday, March 11 at 11:59 pm.

3/18	Spring Break		
3/25	Data Collection		
4/1	Data Collection		
4/8	Sense-making Analysis	Lindlof & Bryan Chapter 8	Transcriptions due by 11:59 pm on Friday, April 10
4/15	Grounded Theory Method		
4/22	Writing Up Results	Lindlof & Bryan Chapter 9	
4/29	Presentation of Findings		Research Presentations Analytic Paper due by Friday, May 1 at 11:59 pm
5/6	Final Exam		Final Exam Summative Reflection due by 11:59 p.m.