

SOC204H1F
Introduction to Qualitative Methods in Sociology
University of Toronto
Class hours: Mondays 12:10 — 14:00
Location: SS1070

Instructor: Sébastien Parker

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Office Hours: By appointment, please refer to Quercus calendar

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Statement of Acknowledgement

We acknowledge this sacred land on which the University of Toronto operates. It has been a site of human activity for 15,000 years. This land is the territory of the Huron Wendat and Petun First Nations, the Seneca, and most recently, the Mississaugas of the Credit River. The territory was the subject of the Dish With One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant, an agreement between the Iroquois Confederacy and Confederacy of the Ojibwe and allied nations to peaceably share and care for the resources around the Great Lakes. Today, the meeting place of Toronto is still the home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island and we are grateful to have the opportunity to work in the community, on this territory. [Council of Aboriginal Initiatives, 2014]

Course Description

Introduction to the methods and issues of qualitative research, the theories, methods for data collection and analysis, and the personal and ethical issues relating to qualitative research. Restricted to sociology majors and specialists.

Prerequisites

The prerequisites to take SOC204H are SOC100H1+ SOC150H1.

Learning Objectives

There are three learning outcomes for this course:

- (1) create and answer thoughtful qualitative research questions
- (2) develop and evaluate qualitative research
- (3) code, analyze, and synthesize qualitative data

Grading Description

Participation (10% + 5%)

There will be, in total, five participation assignments throughout the term. The participation prompts will vary (each worth 2%). The first two, for example, will ask students to introduce themselves on the discussion board and contribute to our collective interview guide. Other participation prompts will be discussed during lectures and tutorials. For all due dates, please refer to the course schedule below (on pg. 4).

In addition, there is a mandatory tutorial on Wednesday, October 5th. During the tutorial, you will interview and be interviewed by a fellow student. Attendance for the tutorial will be worth 5% to ensure that everyone participates.

Doing and reflecting on qualitative research (3 x 20%)

Three times during the term, students will have to complete written assignments based on a different qualitative method: specifically, interviews, ethnography, and content analysis. Along with evidence of ‘doing’ the research (e.g., coded interview transcripts, organized field notes) students will write a reflection based on their experience and specific guidelines outlined in the assignment document on Quercus (also communicated during the mandatory tutorials).

Evaluating qualitative research (25%)

Every student (*i.e., this is an individual submission, not a group project) will also evaluate a qualitative book based on the principles outlined by Small and Calarco – to be discussed during lectures and tutorials. Students will need to engage with one of the two following books:

- (1) Gowayed, Heba. (2022). *Refuge: How the state shapes human potential*. Princeton University Press.
- (2) Garrido, Marco Z. (2019). *The Patchwork City: Class, Space, and Politics in Metro Manila*. University of Chicago Press.

The paper is due on December 5th and is 3 pages, single-spaced.

Course policies

Students enrolled in LEC0101, MUST enroll in ONE of the following mandatory tutorials: TUT0101 (Wednesdays, 12-1) or TUT0201 (Wednesdays, 4-5) or TUT5101 (Wednesdays, 5-6). The tutorial schedule is included in the course schedule below (on pg. 4).

Missed work

Students who miss submitting an assignment for medical reasons, need to email the instructor (not the TA), and also declare their absence on the system (ACORN).

(NOTE: Because of Covid-19, students do NOT need to submit the usual documentation, i.e., medical notes or the Verification of Illness forms).

Students who miss or are late in submitting an assignment for other reasons, such as family or other personal reasons, should request their College Registrar to email the instructor.

Handing in assignments

All assignments must be submitted electronically via Quercus. The instructor and TA will not accept electronic copies of assignments via email.

Deadlines

The assignments are due online via Quercus for the stated date. Please refer to the Due Dates of the Syllabus and the Course Schedule.

Late tests and assignments

If a student misses a test or submit assignments later for medical reasons, the student must contact me (not the TA) within 2 days of the missed test or assignment and also declare their absence on ACORN. For other reasons, such as family emergencies or personal reasons, they must have the college registrar email me.

Accessibility

If you require accommodations or have any accessibility concerns, please visit <http://studentlife.utoronto.ca/accessibility> as soon as possible.

Student Responsibilities and Expectations

Email Policy

I will respond to your email within two business days (48 hours, except weekends and holidays). In an email exchange, you must use your official University of Toronto email. Please also include the course code (e.g., SOC204) in the subject line and your full name and student number in your message. Please do not send a repeat email (e.g., “did you get my email?”).

In general, please treat emails as you would any other professional communication. You should be respectful in the way you address the instructor and the TA. Email is most suitable for questions that are clear, concise, and easily answerable. If you need help on course material, I strongly encourage you to attend office hours or make an appointment. For all general inquiries, please refer to the course syllabus.

Help from your Teaching Assistant

Your T.A. will hold scheduled office hours and respond to your emails. Please be judicious in your use of email. Use it only for questions that are brief and specific. Before sending a question by email, be sure to check the syllabus to see if an answer is already available. Emails should not be seen as an alternative to doing the assigned reading or attending lectures. Expect to receive a response from your T.A. within two working days. For more in-depth discussions, please take advantage of your T.A.’s office hours.

Grade Appeals

You have 7 days after receiving a mark to appeal it. Please note that upon re-grade your mark may go down, stay the same, or go up. To proceed with an appeal, you must provide a document outlining why you deem your work was marked unfairly and explain why you believe your work should receive a higher mark.

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is fundamental to learning and scholarship at the University of Toronto. Participating honestly, respectfully, responsibly, and fairly in this academic community ensures that the U of T degree that you earn will be valued as a true indication of your individual academic achievement and will continue to receive the respect and recognition it deserves.

Familiarize yourself with the University of Toronto’s Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters (<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm>). It is the rule book for academic behaviour at the U of T, and you are expected to know the rules.

The University of Toronto treats cases of academic misconduct very seriously. All suspected cases of academic dishonesty will be investigated following the procedures outlined in the Code. The consequences for academic misconduct can be severe, including a failure in the course and a notation on your transcript. If you have any questions about what is or is not permitted in this course, please do not hesitate to contact me. If you have questions about appropriate research and citation methods, seek out additional information from me, or from other available campus resources like the [U of T Writing Website](#). If you are experiencing personal challenges that are having an impact on your academic work, please speak to me or seek the advice of your college registrar.

Course Schedule

Week	Date	Topic	Readings	Tutorials	Assignment
1	Sept. 12	Outline of course and expectations			
2	Sept. 19	Dreaming, thinking, & good questions	AL (ch. 2 + ch. 3)	Yes	Participation 1
3	Sept. 26	Preparing and conducting a good interview	AL (ch. 3 + ch. 4)	Yes	Participation 2
4	Oct. 3	Qualitative literacy, ethics, and open coding	Intro to S+C	Yes	Tutorial interview (5%)
5	Oct. 10	Focused coding and cognitive empathy	S + C (ch. 1)	Yes	N/A
6	Oct. 17	Ethnography and heterogeneity	AL (ch. 6) S + C (ch. 2)	Yes	Assignment 1: Interviews
7	Oct. 24	Field notes and palpability	AL (ch. 7) S + C (ch. 3)	Yes	Participation 3
8	Oct. 31	Reasoning, iteration, and follow-up	S + C (ch. 4)	Yes	Participation 4
9	Nov. 7	Reading Week	N/A	N/A	N/A
10	Nov. 14	Dilemmas and self-awareness	S + C (ch. 5)	Yes	Assignment 2: Ethnography
11	Nov. 21	Adding tools: content analysis	L + B (ch. 11)	Yes	N/A
12	Nov. 28	Communicating qualitative research	L + B (ch. 12)	Yes	Participation 5
13	Dec. 5	Doing and evaluating qualitative research: summative reflections	N/A	No	Assignment 3: Content analysis

AL = Annette Lareau, (2021). *Listening to People: A Practical Guide to Interviewing, Participant Observation, Data Analysis, and Writing it all Up*. University of Chicago Press.

L + B = Howard Lune and Bruce L. Berg, (2017). *Qualitative Research Methods for the Social Sciences*, New York: Pearson. 9th edition.

S + C = Mario Luis Small and Jessica McCrory Calarco, (2022). *Qualitative Literacy: A Guide to Evaluating Ethnographic and Interview Research*. University of California Press.