

SOC254H1F
Intermediate Qualitative Methods in Sociology
University of Toronto
Class hours: Thursdays 14:10 — 16:00
Location: SS1087

Instructor: Sébastien Parker

Email: sebastien.parker@mail.utoronto.ca

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

An in-depth examination of key methods of qualitative research, and an opportunity to design and conduct qualitative research that draws from key debates, methodologies, and methods in the field. Restricted to sociology majors and specialists.

Prerequisites

The prerequisite to take SOC254H1F is SOC204H.

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%)

There will be, in total, five participation assignments throughout the term. The participation prompts will vary (worth 2% each). The first, for example, will ask students to introduce themselves and form groups on the discussion board. Others will be discussed during lectures and tutorials. For all due dates, please refer to the course schedule below.

Stepping-stone group submissions (40%)

In teams of 4 to 6, students will conduct their own original qualitative research, which will include interviews and an additional data collection method (e.g., participation observation). During each step of the project, students will submit a collective document, not individual submissions. The stepping-stone submissions include:

- (1) Questions and literature on topic (10%, due September 22nd)
- (2) Research design (10%, due October 6th)
- (3) Open coding and additional method notes (10%, due October 27th)
- (4) Focused coding and additional method analysis (10%, due November 17th)

Final group paper (25%)

The final group assignment is a research paper, 8-10 pages, single-spaced, due on December 8th. The structure and expectations will be discussed during tutorials. Detailed guidelines will also be provided on Quercus.

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.

Course policies

Students are required to participate in one of the mandatory tutorials associated with this course: TUT0101 (Mondays, 12 to 1 p.m.) and TUT0201 (Mondays, 4 to 5 p.m.). Tutorial sessions are designed to help groups connect, receive concrete support, make progress on assignments, and discuss the principles of good qualitative research. 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., SOC254) 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

Readings legend

T + T = Stefan Timmermans and Iddo Tavory, (2022). *Data Analysis in Qualitative Research: Theorizing with Abductive Analysis*. The University of Chicago Press.

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

Week	Date	Topic	Reading(s)	Tutorial	Assignment
1	Sept. 8	Outline of course and expectations	T + T (ch. 1)	No	N/A
2	Sept. 15	Beginnings, questions, and theories	T + T (ch. 2 and 3)	Yes	Participation 1
3	Sept. 22	Fundamental tools and qualitative literacy	Intro to S+C	Yes	Assignment 1: questions and literature on topic
4	Sept. 29	Research design, ethics, and collection	T + T (ch. 4)	Yes	Participation 2
5	Oct. 6	Craft of interviews and cognitive empathy	S + C (ch. 1)	Yes	Assignment 2: Research design
6	Oct. 13	Dilemmas and heterogeneity	S + C (ch. 2)	Yes	N/A
7	Oct. 20	Open coding and palpability	S + C (ch. 3) T + T (ch. 5)	Yes	Participation 3
8	Oct. 27	Reasoning, iteration, and follow-up	S + C (ch. 4) T + T (ch. 9)	Yes	Assignment 3: open coding and additional method notes
9	Nov. 3	Focused coding, and making sense of qualitative data	T + T (ch. 6) T + T (ch. 7)	Yes	Participation 4
10	Nov. 10	Reading Week	N/A	N/A	N/A

11	Nov. 17	Abductive approach and self-awareness	S + C (ch. 5)	Yes	Assignment 4: focused coding and additional method analysis
12	Nov. 24	Communicating qualitative research and writing it all up	T + T (ch. 8)	Yes	Participation 5
13	Dec. 1	Doing and evaluating qualitative research: summative reflections	N/A	No	Assignment 5: evaluating qualitative research