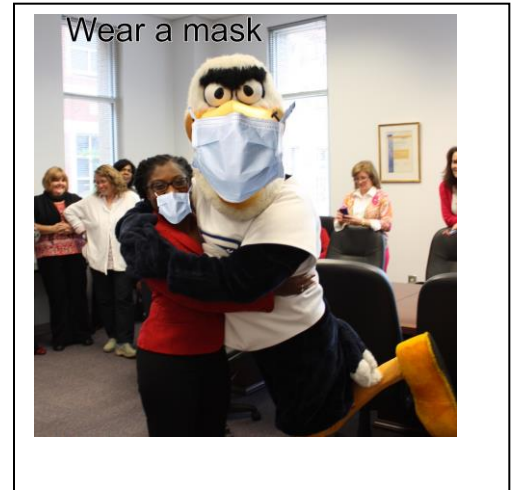




**Qualitative Research**  
EDUR 9231  
Fall 2020  
Meca R. Williams-Johnson, Ph.D.

**Instructor Information**

Address: College of Education  
Department for Curriculum, Foundations, and &  
Reading  
Georgia Southern University  
Statesboro Campus  
Office: #3131  
Office Hours: Virtual appoints only  
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**Catalog Description**

This is an introductory graduate level course in qualitative research in education that examines a broad survey of major designs of qualitative research as well as major field work techniques and problems associated with conducting qualitative research. **Students must have experience with Web browsing (Chrome, Explorer or Mozilla) and Word. Access to the Internet and an email account are required. Discussion posts are required.**

**Course Description**

This course is designed for graduate students who are approaching the completion of their course work or working on qualitative research projects. This course examines qualitative methods used in social science research, focusing primarily on observation, data collection, data analysis and alternative data representations. Course readings on specific research methods will contribute to the formulation of a research analysis projects carried out during the semester. Recent literature on the theoretical and ethical aspects of qualitative methods will also be considered in the context of this project.

**Course Objectives**

As a learner you will be able to:

1. describe the various traditions of qualitative research and respond to debates in the philosophy of science.
2. compare and contrast major forms of qualitative data and assess them for credibility, authenticity, reliability and validity: observational field notes, interview and questionnaire transcripts, public and private documents and other participant artifacts, film, tape and photographic records

3. match qualitatively formulated research problems and questions with appropriate selection and sampling procedures to appraise the procedures for how they affect data generation and analysis.
4. develop strategies for writing a qualitative research report by comparing, contrasting and aggregating and ordering a narrative or visual report.
5. analyze the ethnical concerns associated with qualitative research.

### **Relationship to College’s Conceptual Framework**

This course will provide an overview of diverse qualitative research philosophies, methods and analyses as it applies to research in education. In particular, this course invites educators, teacher, administrators and other educational practitioners to become more critical, reflective, and reflexive researchers. The assignments in this course will help students develop and expand the educational research community, put their research passion into social action to increasingly diversifying democratic schools and societies.

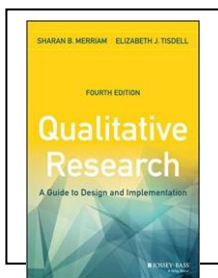
### **Academic Integrity Expectation**

Students are expected to abide by the GSU Student Conduct Code and Regulations regarding academic integrity. Academic misconduct such as cheating and plagiarism will be reported to the Office of Judicial Affairs and appropriate penalties imposed that could affect course grade. See Student Conduct Code, Section III.

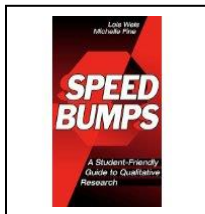
### **Disability Accommodations**

If a student has a documented and declared disability, reasonable accommodations will be provided if requested by the student according to the recommendations of the GSU Disabled Student Services office.

### **Required Texts (available from the GSU bookstore)**



Merriam, S. (2016) Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation. (4<sup>th</sup> ed) San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.



Weis, L and Fine, M (2000) Speed bumps: A student friendly guide to qualitative research. New York: Teachers College Press.

Various articles are located on our FOLIO course website listed under journal articles

## Policy and Procedures

### Attendance

Student attendance mandatory for successful completion of the course. Although we are virtual this semester, students are required to attend all ZOOM, WEBEX AND GOOGLE HANGOUT meetings. *Missing any scheduled class will lead to a decrease in the final grade by one letter.* Participation is weighted in the final grade. Attendance will be recorded. Attendance at class meetings may be taken at any time during the class and may be taken more than once per session.

If you know you will be unable to attend our virtual meetings, please contact me for further information concerning the material for the class date. You are expected to submit any work before or on the due date of the assignment. **Late work will not be accepted.** In case of emergency please contact the instructor via email or phone immediately. *Students who can NOT meet during the regularly scheduled classes will be dropped one letter grade for each class date missed.*

### Academic Conduct

Students are expected to abide by the GSU Student Conduct Code and Regulations regarding academic integrity. Academic misconduct such as cheating and plagiarism will be reported to the Office of Judicial Affairs and appropriate penalties imposed that could affect course grade. See Student Conduct Code, Section III.

## Course Specific Material

### Email

All students are required to have and use an electronic mail account. For urgent messages, the class listserv should be used. Other email may be facilitated via GA View, so be sure to check FOLIO regularly. Questions posted concerning readings and discussion will be listed weekly. Please allow me 24-48 hours to contact you with a reply of receipt to your emails, if you have an emergency and need to talk me feel free to call my office at 912-478-5252.

### Discussion Posts

Everyone is to submit a response to comment/questions I will pose on an assigned reading. Post your comments to FOLIO (Discussion posts) on the due date. Everyone will have chance to chime in to the discussion. This is not a chat room time, but it is a space where we will have an opportunity to explore our ideas, concerns, and questions about research.

- Free and open exchange of ideas: Listserv Decorum

As a graduate student at Georgia Southern University, the free discourse of ideas should be expected. I believe the open exchange of ideas is necessary for learning. You may find that

some of the class readings and discussions challenge your views and theoretical frameworks. I expect openness to differences and a willingness to interpret issues from frameworks that may not be quite so comfortable for you.

Please be sensitive in your class participation by not unfairly dominating the listserv. My goal is to create a socially safe space in which everyone feels that they can participate in the discussion. This does not mean people can not disagree. But it does suggest that we all need to be sensitive appreciative, and respectful, no matter how strong we might disagree.

### **Article Discussions and Group Leaders**

Each student must contribute to group discussion on article readings. The articles will be discussed during class time. Reading groups will be organized to discuss a particular article with the larger group. Questions must be composed and delivered by group members to open discussion for the rest of the class. Groups will be determined by Dr. Williams-Johnson and the groups with corresponding articles will be organized on the day of class.

### **Projects, Papers and Assessments**

Formal assessment tests will not be given in this course. However a research strategy paper, data analysis project and interview project will be significant grades for this course. Please make sure you proofread and edit all work. I will assist you with organization, structure, argumentation and a few other issues critical to effective written communication. It is your responsibility to edit for grammar, misspelled words, punctuation and APA citation format.

### **Interview Project**

Students will be required to conduct one audio-taped interview in this course. I understand that some of you may have IRB approval for your research projects and you can use this course to help collect and analyze data. Others will use this activity as a teaching tool in understanding interviewing skills.

You may select one of the following projects and find a participant to interview.

- New Policy or Programs within local school district
- Teachers and Emotions in the classroom
- Community and Schools – history of the community and its impact on the school

I will explain each of these projects in detail and each person will have an opportunity to select one and conduct an interview. You will interview with a stakeholder (i.e. parent, teacher, school administrator, school board member, community leader etc... *BUT NOT ONE OF YOUR STUDENTS*) for a minimum of 30 minutes to a maximum of one and a half hours.

A consent statement is mandatory at the very beginning of the interview. Your interview will be returned ungraded if you do not complete a taped a verbal agreement from the participant. Please read the following script when beginning the interview.

- Consent Statement

Turn on tape

*As part of this interview, I must include a brief consent statement before we continue. The contents of this project will be analyzed in my research course at Georgia Southern University.*

*All information on your identity will be kept confidential unless otherwise required by law. If information about this interview is published, it will use pseudonyms or fake names. This project is for research and educational purpose only.*

*The research is not expected to cause any discomfort or stress. However, some people may feel uncomfortable talking about these subjects. If you feel uncomfortable during the interviews, you may decline to answer and stop participating at any time without penalty. No risks are expected. This interview will last approximately 30 minutes to one hour. Do you have any questions? Do I have your consent to continue with this interview?*

You must transcribe your tape. The transcript must be line numbered in its entirety. Follow the directions below to complete the line numbering process in WORD.

- Line Numbering Transcripts

Type out transcript first

Outline who represents what pseudonym name (i.e. INT= interviewer, INE = interviewee)

Then complete the following to line number the transcript.

**Click**

Page Layout  
Line Numbers  
Continuous  
OK

- Self Critique

You must also complete a self critique for your skills as an interviewer. This should also be attached to the transcript but as the final page of the document. The critique must include your initial reactions while in the interview with the participant, your role during the interview process and what would you do differently if having this opportunity again.

## **Data Analysis Project**

After collecting data through the interview process you move towards analysing the data. Each of you will receive a transcript for data analysis. Try to condense text into blanket themes that would summarize the interview (at least 4-5 themes). Make your notes on the transcript in different colors to allow your comments on the transcript to be more obvious.

Read through the data analysis notes included on FOLIO as well your readings in chapter 8 (play close attention to pages 178-188). Samples will also be listed on FOLIO for your perusal. If you need further assistance on the requirements for this activity email me.

### **Group Representation Presentations**

Each member of the course will be assigned a group to create and perform one of the alternative representations of data (narrative, arts based, poetry, or drama). The group must select an interview to critique and perform to the class. The presenters must introduce the topic, discuss major contributors to the field in that genre and use the appropriate terms to describe this work. Next the group must decide how this interview or people described in the interview could be performed. The performance time should last 10 minutes and should include an introduction, researchers writing on this genre, method use and demonstration. You will be assessed on the delivery, creativity, research on approach and method use in demonstration.

### **Course Requirements**

Debates and Class Discussion	15 points
Interview Project	25 points
Data Analysis	40 points
Group Presentation	20 points

### **Incompletes**

A grade of “I” is not automatically assigned, but rather must be requested by the student for extenuating documented health or family related matters. Missing deadlines or work that is not completed is not appropriate for receiving an “I”. An “I” can never be used in lieu of an “F” nor can an “I” be assigned because of excessive absences or poor grades on submitted work.

### **Grading Scale**

A = 90 – 100 B = 80 – 89 C = 70 – 79

It is likely that not all students will earn a grade of A in this course. Per the Georgia Southern University definition of an “A” grade, a student must possess “exceptional mastery of the course material” before an instructor assigns a grade of “A” to the student’s work. This is a graduate level course, and graduate standards will be applied in assessing all course assignments. There will be no rounding of final grades and no extra credit opportunities available in this course.

### **Syllabus is Subject to Revision When Necessary**

While the provisions of this syllabus are as accurate and complete as possible, the instructor reserves the right to change any provision herein without actual notice, if circumstances so warrant. Every effort will be made to keep students advised of such changes and information about such changes will be available at all times from the instructor. It is the responsibility of each student to know what changes, if any, have been made to the provisions of this syllabus and to successfully complete the requirements of this course.

### Course Calendar

Topic	Assignment	Due Date	Format
Introductions Theoretical Foundations of Qualitative Research  Debates on Qualitative Research  Interviewing / Subjectivity	Merriam Chapter 1 -2 Pages 1- 39  Weis and Fine Chapter 1 Pages 1-24  Peshkin, A. Goodness of Qualitative Research  Weis and Fine pages 59-62 and 105-108	August 22	
Data Collection	<b>DUE: Interview Projects</b>  Merriam Chapters 5 and 6 pages 85-139	September 19	Submit electronic copy to FOLIO
Data Analysis And Qualitative Writing	<b>DUE: Data Analysis Projects</b>  Merriam Chapter 8 165-208	October 17	Submit electronic copy to FOLIO
Data Representation and Alternatives	<b>DUE: Group Presentation</b>  Merriam Chapter 209 -214  <b>Choice Articles on FOLIO</b>	November 14	Presentations