

New Course Proposal  
CMN 5005: Qualitative Research Methods

1. **Catalog description**

- a. Course number: CMN 5005
- b. Title: Qualitative Research Methods
- c. Meeting times & credit: (3-0-3)
- d. Term to be offered: Spring
- e. Short title: Qual Res Methods
- f. Course description:  
This course introduces students to qualitative research and interpretive issues in the communication discipline. It includes an orientation to qualitative epistemologies, specific methods and strategies of qualitative inquiry, and pragmatics about the analysis and reporting of qualitative research.
- g. Graduate Standing
- h. Initial term of offering: Spring 2007

2. **Student learning objectives and evaluation**

- a. Student learning objectives:
  - students will learn to articulate the nature of qualitative inquiry (exams, papers, research project)
  - students will learn to identify a variety of interpretive research methodologies (exams, papers, research project, presentation, in-class activities)
  - students will learn to apply standards for evaluating qualitative research (exams, papers, research project, in-class activities, presentations)
  - students will learn to assess reliability and validity of qualitative research forms (exams, in-class activities)
  - students will learn to critically read and produce qualitative research (papers, research project)
- b. Sample Assessment:

Exams	20%
Papers	30%
Research project	25%
Presentations	15%
In-class activities	10%
- c. This course is not technology-delivered.
- d. N/A
- e. N/A

3. **Sample Course Outline**

Introduction & Orientation to Qualitative Research

**Week 1**

Introduction: The discipline & practice of qualitative research

**Week 2**

Locating the field: A history of qualitative methods in Communication Studies

**Week 3**

Paradigms & Perspectives: Epistemological stances for qualitative inquiry  
(Interpretivism, Hermeneutics, and Social Constructionism)

**Week 4**

Critical perspectives and applications (e.g. feminism, racial and ethnic discourses, cultural studies, sexualities and queer theory related to qualitative research)

**Week 5**

Social responsibilities, ethics, and politics in qualitative research

Research Methods & Strategies of Qualitative Inquiry**Week 6**

What counts as “data” in qualitative research? A discussion of artifacts, representation, and fieldwork (longitudinal perspectives)

**Week 7**

Case studies, ethnographies, and grounded theory: Objectivist & constructivist methods

**Week 8**

Narrative & participatory action research

**Week 9**

Interviewing structures & protocols

**Week 10**

Interpreting documents & material culture

Analysis & Reporting Qualitative Research**Week 11**

Data management and analysis methods (software, talk, and text)  
The practice & politics of interpretation

**Week 12**

Researcher as subject: personal narrative, reflexivity, & responsibilities  
Where is the researcher-self situated in qualitative reporting?

**Week 13**

Writing as a method of inquiry: The art & practices of interpretation, evaluation, and representation

**Week 14** Student reports

**Week 15** Student reports

**4. Rationale**

- a. Purpose and need: With the shift of our MA from a one to a two year program, there is room to expand our curriculum to include a richer discussion of both quantitative and qualitative research methods in two courses rather than the existing one. This allows students to more fully examine and experience research methods in both traditions, which better prepares them both for PhD programs and the marketplace in general.
- b. This is a graduate level course for students in the MA program.
- c. Similarity to existing courses: This topic is currently sandwiched in the general research methods course (CMN 5000). Separating it out allows us to add more depth to both courses.
- d. Impact on program(s): This required course adds three hours to the required core of the MA program, which is easily accommodated within the two year time frame.

**5. Implementation**

- a. This course may be taught by any member of the CMN graduate faculty.
- b. There are no additional costs to students.
- c. Text and supplementary materials to be used:

Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y.S. (2005). *Handbook of Qualitative Research* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.), Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

6. **Community College Transfer** (not applicable)
7. **Date approved by the department or school** 3/1/06
8. **Date approved by the college curriculum committee** 4/5/06
9. **Date approved by GGS** 4/18/06