

**Maryland in Europe Graduate Programs
Bowie State University**

**Qualitative Research Methods
PUAD 502**

Term 5, 2003 -- Jun 14, 15, 29, Jul 19,20, Aug 2,3
Stuttgart – Patch Barracks

Instructor: Carol A. Dolan, Ph.D.
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Course Description: This course focuses on the study and application of research methodology for organizations as a tool in decision-making. Emphasis is on theories and designs for qualitative data collection and analysis.

Course Goals: At the completion of this course, a student will have an understanding of:

- Research methods used in management settings
- Qualitative design approaches
- The role of previous research and related literature
- The process of hypothesis formulation
- Data collection, organization, analysis and presentation techniques
- Ethical considerations and constraints
- The role of information technology in qualitative research

+Course Objectives Upon successful completion of this course, the student should:

- Analyze a management/policy situation for research/evaluation purposes
- Generate a qualitative research problem statement
- Design a qualitative research proposal
- Execute a literature review
- Collect data
- Interpret research findings.
- Present research findings in written and graphic or oral formats
- Define ethical and legal constraints on research
- Analyze the application of information technology in research

Required Texts:

Leedy, P.D. (2001). *Practical research: planning and design* (7th ed.). New Jersey: Prentice-Hall.

Weiss, C.H. (1998). *Evaluation* (2nd Edition). New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc.

Supplemental Material: (Not required, but recommended)

American Psychological Association. (2001). Publication manual of the American Psychological Association (5th ed.). Washington DC: Author.

Supplementary Readings from Public Administration Review. Current editions are accessible through the UMUC MdUSA library link at <http://www.umuc.edu/library>

Also recommended: The Qualitative Report, a peer-reviewed on-line journal devoted to qualitative research. <http://www.nova.edu.sss/QR/index.html>

Grading Information

1. Exam (25%) In class exam to cover text and class materials. Each examination will consist of short essays or brief exercises to ascertain basic understanding and knowledge of the subject.
2. Critique of Research Articles (15%)
Students will read and critique a qualitative research article in terms of research design, methodology and appropriate analysis. A 3-5 page analysis should address questions about the rationale (reason for conducting the study, contribution to the field, etc), sampling (who were selected for the study and how were they selected? how generalizable are results?), theory or hypothesis testing, (what question is the research trying to answer?), key variables, issues, themes (identify and address measures used), methodology (were the appropriate methods and analysis used?) and overall evaluation of the study. Articles for review will be provided.
3. Practical Skills Assignment (3 @ 10% each)
Each student will complete 3 Practical Skills in Qualitative Research Methods homework assignments. Two of these will be completed by the student alone, and one will be completed in small groups (2-3 members). All 3 assignments will involve a task related to qualitative research methods. The assignments will be written up to hand in, and presented in class for discussion.
4. Research Proposal (30%)
Each student will develop a research proposal on a topic of interest in public administration. This paper will include statement of the research problem with brief literature review, description & rationale for 1) the research method to be used, 2) sample selection, 3) data collection process, 3) the data analysis plan, 4) techniques to be used to enhance study validity and 5) issues of ethics, confidentiality. All written assignments will follow the American Psychological Association format.

Grade will be based on:

Exam	25%	A = 90-100%
Critique	15%	B = 80-89 %
Practical Skills Assignments (3)	30%	C = 70-79 %
Research Proposal	30%	F = below 70%

Course Requirements:

- It will expected that students have read the material assigned for each class prior to the class meeting.
- Each student is expected to actively participate in class discussion, to have thoroughly read all assignments, attend class punctually, and meet University of Maryland standards of integrity and conduct.

- Class lectures will highlight key points and provide an opportunity for you to ask specific questions, and for the entire group to work through particularly challenging problems and examples.

Class policy: Incompletes are only allowed for students who have had extenuating requirements and who are passing the course at the time of request. The instructor will determine if an Incomplete will be allowed, and will also determine the work required and the time approved for completion.

Academic Policies: Please refer to the UMUC Maryland in Europe Graduate Catalog, available at http://www.ed.umuc.edu/visit/pubs/catalog/grad_02-03.pdf or from your local Education Center, for information on Academic Integrity, Course Load, Exception to Policy, Grade Appeal Process, Make-up Exams, Nondiscrimination, and Students with Disabilities.

Course Schedule

Weekend 1 June 14, 15

Topics: Introduction/Orientation, Qualitative versus Quantitative Research, Steps in the Research Process: Formulating the Question, Problem Formulation, Hypothesis Development, Literature Review
Introduction to Qualitative Approaches: Case Study, Ethnography, Phenomenology, Grounded Theory, Action Research, Content analysis

Objectives Know and understand the scope of the course. Define research and recognize differing methodologies. Differentiate between research methods. Understand the background and theory of research methods..

Assignments Chapters 1, 2, 3 4 and 7 of Leedy.
Practice critique (read Saturday, due Sunday for discussion)
Distribute instructions for **Critique 1** and **Assignment 1**

Weekend 2 June 29

Topics: Steps in the Research Process: Methods, Analysis & Discussion
Case Study, Ethnography, Phenomenology in Public Administration
Qualitative Data Collection Methods: Interviews, Focus Groups

Objectives Understand research planning methods. Develop pertinent research questions. Understand and accomplish literature reviews. Critically analyze literature. Know various research data collection methods State research problems clearly. Develop research hypotheses. Formulate pertinent research questions from the research problems. Apply appropriate research methods in conducting research. Know and understand the significance and development of the literature review in research.

Assignments Ch 5 of Leedy & , Chapters 7 of Weiss
Critique due June 29 0900
Assignment #1 due June 29 0900
Instructions for **Assignment 2**

Weekend 3 July 19, 20

Topics: Data Collection, Interviews, Focus Groups, Observations, Other data collection techniques
Grounded Theory & Action Research in Public Administration

Objectives Develop understanding of data collection methods and practices. Understand sampling methods. Develop effective methods for developing questionnaires. Understand the difference between validity and reliability. Know various internal and external threats to validity. Understand rules for qualitative research.
To understand an important application of the research process – program evaluation

Assignments Read Chapter 10, 11 of Weiss
Assignment #2 due Saturday, ready for class presentation and discussion
Instructions for **Assignment #3**

Weekend 4 August 2,3

Topics: Data collection techniques. Value and Logic of Qualitative Research Relevance of Research Computer as Research Tool Writing the Research Report, APA Manual

Objectives Demonstrate understanding of the concepts and theories involved with qualitative research.
Understand the use of computers in research. Demonstrate knowledge of research proposal. Know writing rules in research reporting.

Assignments Read Leedy Chapters 6 & 12. Weiss Chapter 13.
Assignment #3 due Saturday, ready for class presentation and discussion
Proposal due and Exam Sunday August 3 0900

Dr. Carol A. Dolan received her BA in Psychology at St. Michael's College in Vermont, and her MA and PhD degrees in Psychology from the University of North Carolina. Main areas of research include studies on the relationship between personality and health, the effects of stress and coping on health, qualitative and quantitative research methods. Dr. Dolan has had extensive research experience and has taught both undergraduate and graduate courses in at least 10 countries! Interests include travel, cooking, stained glass art, and riding a Harley around Europe with her spouse!

Additional journal articles to be read for class. Select one for your critique.

Case studies

1. Poister, TH & Harris, RH (2000) Building Quality Improvement over the Long Run: Approaches, Results and Lessons Learned from the PennDOT Experience, Public Productivity and Management Review, 24, No.2, 161-176. Fernandez, S. & Fabricant, R. (2000). Methodological Pitfalls in Privatization Research: Two Cases from Florida's Child Support Enforcement Program. Public Productivity and Management Review, 24,

No. 2.133-144

3. Gonzales, O. (2000). Previous consolidation efforts in the global metropolitan area of El Paso, Texas. Public Administration Quarterly, 24(2), 246-274.

4. Ammons, D.N., Coe, C. & Lombardo, M. (2001). Performance-Comparison Projects in Local Government: Participants' Perceptions. Public Administration Review, 61, No. 1, 100-

110. **Ethnography**

5. Narotsky, S. (2000). The cultural basis of a regional economy: The Vega Baja del Segura in Spain. Ethnology, 39, No. 1, 1-14.

Nakano, L.Y. (2000). Volunteering as a Lifestyle Choice:

Negotiating Self-Identity in Japan. Ethnology, 39, No. 2, 93-107.

Action Research

7. Carnochan, S. & Austin M.J. (2001). Implementing welfare reform and guiding organizational change. Administration in Social Work, 26, 61-77

DePoy, E. & Hartman, A. (1999). Critical action research: A model for social work knowing. Social Work, 44, No. 6, 560-570.

Grounded theory

9. King, C.S., Feltey, K.M. & Susel, B.O. (1998). The question of participation: Toward authentic public participation in public administration. Public Administration Review, 58, No. 4, 317-326.