

California State University, Sacramento

Qualitative Research in Psychology: Psyc 122 Course Outline and Syllabus for Fall, 2018

How can I get in touch with my professor?

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Contact: *I check my email on most weekdays, and you are welcome to email me at any time.* I should get back to you with a response relatively soon, likely within 24-48 hours. If you email on weekends, my response time may be a bit longer. You may also call me or leave a message by phone on my campus voice mail.

On Mondays and Wednesdays, 1:30 – 3:00 pm, I hold student appointment hours in my office. Please feel free to stop by during those hours, or reserve a specific appointment time during those hours. We can also make appointments for other times with some advance notice.

Class Meetings: Mondays, Wednesdays, & Fridays, 11:00 – 11:50 am, Douglass Hall 105

What will we really do in this course?

This course is meant to be helpful! In this class you'll learn about a way of conducting research that you've probably not encountered before – we'll perform qualitative research and in doing so, try to understand what people really "mean" when they talk. No matter what your career goals are, I think you'll find this course helpful; many of the techniques we talk about are used commonly in business and clinical settings. Also, this class will provide you with an opportunity to practice and fine-tune your interpersonal skills. Some of you may be familiar with certain research techniques we use in this class; some may be more familiar with other techniques. We all have things we can learn from each other. Let's enjoy ourselves!

The official course description is as follows: Examines the philosophy underpinning the use of qualitative research and the methods and analyses strategies used in qualitative research. Methods may include interviews, focus groups, participant observation, and behavioral observation. Analyses strategies may include grounded theorizing, negative case analyses, developing case studies, and content coding. Issues pertaining to data accuracy and consistency will be examined, and the researcher's role in interpreting results. Students will complete research projects involving the collection and/or analyses of qualitative data. Pre-requisites: Psyc 121 (3 units).

What will I be able to do after successfully completing this class?

If you apply yourself fully and successfully to the course materials and assignments, you should be able to:

- Understand the philosophy driving the use of qualitative research.
- Understand how prior research literature is integrated into the development of qualitative research questions and the interpretation of results.
- Understand how to choose methods of research based on the question being asked.
- Understand the techniques involved in various analyses strategies associated with qualitative research.
- Demonstrate the ability to contribute to the collection of qualitative research, implement appropriate data analyses, and interpret results.
- Demonstrate the ability to communicate that information effectively via written form.
- Develop appreciation for the diversity of communities that make up Sacramento.¹
- Develop an understanding of the local social problems facing our community.²
- Understand how qualitative research can be used to assess those needs.
- Feel connected to the course content, the major, and the field of study.³
- Develop skills at working with others effectively.⁴
- Develop new social connections at the university.

What materials do I need for this class?

✓ **The Textbook!**

The **book** for this class is as follows:

Hennink, M., Hutter, I., & Bailey, A. (2015). *Qualitative research methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.



Also, we will use **selected readings**, that will be accessible to you as pdf files on Canvas:

Benjamin, A. (2001). *The helping interview: With case illustrations*. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Co.

Wenger, G. C. (2003). Interviewing older people. In J. Holstein & J. Gubrium (Eds.) *Inside interviewing: New lenses, new concerns* (pp. 111-130). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

✓ **Our Canvas Site:**

You will find many materials on Canvas, including assignment directions, supplemental materials, a space for grades, and course announcements. Please consult Canvas regularly to stay up to date.

- ✓ You will also be loaned a **Digital Voice Recorder** for a portion of the semester, as part of your training and the service learning experience in this course.

Outcomes related to service learning are also linked (see asterisks) to the following Sacramento State Baccalaureate Learning Goals:

¹ Personal and Social Responsibility

² Personal and Social Responsibility

³ Competence in the Discipline

⁴ Intellectual and Practical Skills

What is something special and exciting that I should know about this course?

This course is a Service Learning course! Service Learning is a teaching method that faculty use to help students deepen their understanding of course material. Students in Service Learning courses participate in on or off-campus activities and experiences at a business, non-profit, or governmental setting (also known as community partners). They participate in these activities in order to respond to social problems. In Service Learning, students are asked to articulate how the service experience affirms, expands, integrates, or calls into question the academic content of the course. Students consider these issues through the process of structured reflections. This form of experiential learning or learning by doing is mutually beneficial to the student and the community partner.

For our Service Learning project we will collaborate with members of the Renaissance Society; through conducting in-depth interviews with their members and analyzing the resulting data, we will provide feedback to their Executive Board on members' needs. The Renaissance Society is an organization that, in partnership with Sac State, provides opportunities for older adults to participate in lifelong learning and community engagement. It promotes learning in retirement through offering seminars on topics that are chosen by and coordinated via its members. The Executive Board is always looking for better ways to serve its members' needs, and is providing us with this opportunity to help them do so.

Our main task is to collect and analyze data from members of the Renaissance Society who have volunteered to be interviewed. We will conduct in-depth interviews, transcribe the interviews, post them to a password protected database called the Sacramento State Qualitative Research Data Archive (QDAR), and conduct some preliminary analyses. Ultimately, we will provide the Renaissance Society with a report of our findings. This wave of data collection is part of an ongoing project occurring over several years.

This is an exciting opportunity to obtain hands-on experience collecting data outside of a laboratory and meet the needs of people in our community. We will exercise and fine-tune our research skills in a real-life setting (with all the complications that entails!), connect with older members of our community, and contribute to the effective operation of an agency concerned with promoting the health and well-being of older members of our society. At the end of the course, you will be asked to complete a short evaluation of our Service Learning site.

What are the assignments and activities and how much are they worth?

Grades for this class will be divided among the following activities:

Midterm	30 points
Final Exam	45 points
Homework	50 points
Completed, Transcribed & Posted Interview	20 points
Draft Technical Report	10 points
Final Technical Report	35 points
Class Participation/Attendance	<u>10 points</u>
Total:	200 points

Your final grade for the semester will depend on the percentage of total points you receive. Generally an "A" or "A-" is equivalent to approximately 90-100% (or 180 – 200 points); "B+", "B" or "B-" is equivalent to 80-89% (or 160 – 179 points); "C+", "C", or "C-" is equivalent to 70-79% (or 140 – 159 points); "D+", "D" or "D-" is equivalent to 60-69% (or 120 – 139 points); an "F" is equivalent to 59% or below (or below 120 points).

What are the details of the assignments?

Here is a bit of an overview, though there are **much more detailed instructions on Canvas**:

Midterm

The midterm exam will cover readings and materials discussed in class since the beginning of the semester up to the date of the midterm. This exam will include multiple choice and essay questions. Please bring a Scantron #882-E.

Final Exam

The final exam for this class will be cumulative, with emphasis on the material covered since the midterm. Specifically, the multiple choice questions will focus on the material discussed in class and in the readings following the midterm, but also include light coverage of topics from the early part of the semester. You are expected to display general knowledge of material covered prior to the midterm in order to write essays for the final exam. Please bring a Scantron #882-E.

Homework

A sizable portion of your grade is composed of homework assignments. This is because there are a number of technical skills you should obtain in this class, and they are best demonstrated via the homework assignments. In addition, there are a few very important activities you'll need to complete in order to engage in the service learning project. The assignments are listed toward the end of the syllabus, and will be discussed in more detail in class. A few additional assignments may be added as necessary. All assignments (except #1) will be graded according to the quality with which they are completed.

Completed, Transcribed, and Posted Interview

As part of the service-learning experience, you and a partner are expected to complete an in-person interview with a person selected as a participant for the Renaissance Service Learning project. In addition, your tasks are to transcribe that interview and post it to the Sacramento State Qualitative Research Data Archive at "qdar.psyc.csus.edu". This will provide us all with data to analyze for the technical report.

The interviews will be conducted in pairs (sometimes, one student will conduct the interview and the other will take notes and handle the recording equipment; or, you can split up tasks equally). Your pair is jointly responsible for transcribing and posting at least one interview.

Your grade for this assignment will be based on the thoroughness and depth of your interview and how well you transcribed the interview (i.e., with appropriate form, accuracy, and anonymity).

Draft Technical Report

You will be responsible for writing a "technical report" of the service-learning project described above. Technical reports are similar to the kinds of APA papers you've written in the past, with a few exceptions. Normally, the introductory segment of a technical report describes the history and current status of the agency from which the data are collected, as well as the reason driving the need for the data. Technical reports consequently contain relatively less theoretical background literature. They do, however, contain other typical APA segments, including Method, Results, Discussion, and References.

A draft of the technical report will be due in class toward the end of the semester. You will receive feedback from your peers on the draft, and have the opportunity to implement that feedback for the final report. The points allotted to this assignment are assigned to you when bring a draft to class, and provide constructive feedback to another student on his/her draft. You will not be graded on the draft itself.

Final Technical Report

You are expected to complete your technical report and submit it in class for final grading. The report is described briefly above; there are additional detailed handouts posted on Canvas describing the various segments of this project. We will discuss it in more depth throughout the semester.

Class Participation

Attendance is required at all class sessions. While in class, you are expected to participate in large and small group discussions, and engage in any activities we do. Students generally find that they do much better in class when they are present for class and actively engaged in the lesson.

What is the timeline for the assignments? Here is a calendar to help you keep track:

Module 1: Paradigms and Beginnings

Dates	Topics	Reading Assignment
Aug. 27	Introduction and Situating Ourselves	Hennink, Chp. 1
Aug. 29	Introduction and Situating Ourselves	
Aug. 31	In Class: Online Service Learning Orientation	
Sept. 3	<i>Labor Day Holiday – campus closed</i>	
Sept. 5	Identifying and Understanding Paradigms	Hennink, Chp. 2
Sept. 7	Identifying and Understanding Paradigms	
Sept. 10	Identifying and Understanding Paradigms Homework #1 due: Complete Online SL Orientation	
Sept. 12	Identifying and Understanding Paradigms	
Sept. 14	Beginning the Process of Qualitative Research	Hennink, Chp. 3 (<i>through middle of pg. 45</i>)
Sept. 17	Beginning the Process of Qualitative Research Complete Signed Student Learning Agreement	

Module 2: Interviews: Art and Science

<i>Dates</i>	<i>Topics</i>	<i>Reading Assignment</i>
Sept. 19	In-depth Interviews: The Technical Skills	Hennink, Chps. 5 & 6
Sept. 21	In-depth Interviews: The Technical Skills Homework #2 due: Article Summary and Paradigm	
Sept. 24	In-depth Interviews: The Technical Skills	
Sept. 26	In-depth Interviews: The Technical Skills	
Sept. 28	In-depth Interviews: The Personal Skills	Benjamin, Chps. 3, 4, 5, 7 <i>(see Canvas Additional Readings – Module 2)</i>
Oct. 1	In-depth Interviews: The Personal Skills	
Oct. 3	In-depth Interviews: The Personal Skills Homework #3 due: Method Summary and Critique	

Module 3: Interviewer Training – Practice Technique & Forms

<i>Dates</i>	<i>Topics</i>	<i>Reading Assignment</i>
Oct. 5	Interviewer Training: Combining Tech. & Personal Skills Also: Make contact with possible interviewee	Wenger (2003) chapter <i>(see Canvas Additional Readings – Module 3)</i>
Oct. 8	Interviewer Training: Combining Tech. & Personal Skills	
Oct. 10	Interviewer Training: Combining Tech. & Personal Skills Homework #4 due: Main points of Wenger chapter.	
Oct. 12	Interviewer Training: Combining Tech. & Personal Skills	
Oct. 15	Focus Groups Homework #5 due: Journal Part I	Hennink, Chp. 7
Oct. 17	Focus Groups	
Oct. 19	Midterm Exam	

Module 4: Data Analysis Training

<i>Dates</i>	<i>Topics</i>	<i>Reading Assignment</i>
Oct. 22	Interpreting Data and Data Analyses Workshop Begin meeting in Computer Lab: MND 2003	Hennink, Chp. 9
Oct. 24	Interpreting Data and Data Analyses Workshop: MND 2003	
Oct. 26	Interpreting Data and Data Analyses Workshop: MND 2003	

Module 5: Analyzing and Writing for Qualitative Technical Reports

<i>Dates</i>	<i>Topics</i>	<i>Reading Assignment</i>
Oct. 29	Interpreting Data and Data Analyses Action: MND 2003	See Canvas Additional Readings - Module 5
Oct. 31	Interpreting Data and Data Analyses Action: MND 2003	
Nov. 2	Interpreting Data and Data Analyses Action: MND 2003	
Nov. 5	Interpreting Data and Data Analyses Action: MND 2003	
Nov. 7	Interpreting Data and Data Analyses Action: MND 2003 Completed, Transcribed, and Posted Interview due	
Nov. 9	Interpreting Data and Data Analyses Action: MND 2003	
Nov. 12	<i>Veteran's Day Holiday – Campus Closed</i>	
Nov. 14	Interpreting Data and Data Analyses Action: MND 2003	
Nov. 16	Interpreting Data and Data Analyses Action: Last Computer Lab Meeting: MND 2003	

Module 6: Advanced Data Analysis Issues

Dates	Topics	Reading Assignment
Nov. 19	Advanced Strategies in Data Analysis Meet back in Douglass Hall 105 again	
Nov. 21	<i>Happy Thanksgiving! Work on your paper.</i>	
Nov. 23	<i>Thanksgiving Holiday – Campus Closed</i>	
Nov. 26	Advanced Strategies in Data Analysis	
Nov. 28	Advanced Strategies in Data Analysis Draft Technical Report due	
Nov. 30	Advanced Strategies – Validity and Reliability	Hennink, Chp. 4
Dec. 3	Advanced Strategies – Validity and Reliability	
Dec. 5	Ethical Considerations Final Technical Report due Turn in Completed Time Log	
Dec. 7	Ethical Considerations Homework #6 due: Journal Pt. II	
Dec. 10	Final Exam: 10:15 am – 12:15 pm (Douglass Hall 105)	

Are there any policies I should know about?

Student Liability for Service Learning Courses. At Sacramento State, Service Learning and other community service activities are supported by the Community Engagement Center (CEC): www.csus.edu/cec. We will talk more about Service Learning in class and you will be required to complete some on-line paperwork to ensure that you are covered by SAFECLIP, a general and professional liability for students enrolled in service-learning courses for which they receive academic credit. Once it has been decided where students will do their Service Learning, I will “place” you at the site through CECconnect found at www.csus.edu/cec and then you will log-in with your Sac Link ID so that you can:

- Review and sign off on a Code of Conduct;
- Review and sign off on “Informed Consent, Agreement, Release, Waiver of Liability and Assumption of Risk” form;
- Print out an Emergency Contact form to be given to your community partner
- Use a Time Log to keep track of your time throughout the semester. You will need to submit that time log at the end of the semester with signatures from me and your site supervisor.

Excused Absences and Make-up Work. Absences happen! The university absence policy states that verified excused absences “include exceptional circumstances such as a serious illness, death in the family, university approved events, government required activities, an employment related conflict beyond the student’s control,

or other serious or compelling reasons.” I am happy to permit make-up work under these circumstances, please accompany the absence with some sort of verification such as a written letter from a doctor, clergy, counselor, employer, or other appropriate person. Additionally, course assignments and/or due dates will be adjusted so as not to penalize students who become ill or are placed under quarantine during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Please e-mail me to alert me of these or other excused absence circumstances as soon as possible after it occurs, and provide me with the documentation via an attachment on email as soon as possible. Together we will consult to find a reasonable way by which to make up the work.

Late Work. If you turn in a late assignment unexcused, your paper will be marked down two points for each day it is late. The technical report will be marked down four points for each day it is late.

Accommodating Disabilities. I am happy to work with your accommodation needs. At Sac State we are committed to ensuring an accessible learning environment where course or instructional content are usable by all students and faculty. If you believe that you require disability-related academic adjustments for this class (including pregnancy-related disabilities), please first provide disability documentation to Services to Students with Disabilities (SSWD), Lassen Hall 1008, 916-278-6955. A current accommodation letter from SSWD will be necessary. For more information please visit the SSWD website at <https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/centers-programs/services-students-disabilities/> or email SSWD at sswd@csus.edu. Please ensure your documents are filed with SSWD as soon as possible; SSWD will notify me of approved accommodations.

Basic Needs Support: If you are experiencing challenges in the area of food and/or stable housing, help is just a click, email, or phone call away. Sacramento State offers basic needs support for students who are experiencing challenges in these areas. Please visit our website to learn more about your options and resources available. See the CARES Office at: <https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/crisis-assistance-resource-education-support/>

Student Health and Counseling Services. Your physical and mental health are important to your success as a college student. [Student Health and Counseling Services](#) (SHCS) in The WELL offers medical, counseling, and wellness services to help you get and stay healthy during your time at Sac State. SHCS offers: Primary Care medical services, including sexual and reproductive healthcare, transgender care, and immunizations; urgent care for acute illness, injuries, and urgent counseling needs; pharmacy for prescriptions and over-the-counter products; mental health counseling, including individual sessions, group counseling, support groups, mindfulness training, and peer counseling; athletic training for sports injury rehabilitation; wellness services, including nutrition counseling, peer-led health education and wellness workshops, and free safer sex supplies; violence and sexual assault support services. Most services are covered by the Health Services fee and available at no additional cost.

Sac State also has Many Other Resources for You to Investigate: Click for: [Martin Luther King Center](#), [Multicultural Center](#), [Dreamer Resource Center](#), [Student Success Center](#), [Academic Advising](#), [PARC](#), [Reading & Writing Center](#), [Grading Policy](#), [Academic Calendar](#), [Hornet Honor Code](#), [Student Rights and Responsibilities](#)

Cheating/Plagiarism. Any student who, upon careful evaluation, is found to have cheated or plagiarized will receive a grade of “F” for the class. All students are expected to abide by the university [Academic Honesty Policy](#)

I'm trying to understand the "big picture" for this course. What does that look like?

Here is a table of the main homework assignments for this course:

Task:	Due Date:
<p>1. Complete Online Service Learning Orientation:</p> <p>Please note: We will discuss this online activity in class, and you may have time to go through the entire orientation while in class.</p> <p>A. Find CECconnect button at www.csus.edu/cec</p> <p>B. CECconnect will provide you with a/an:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • on-line orientation about Service Learning; • code of conduct guidelines and limitations; • informed consent, agreement, release, waiver of liability, FERPA Waiver and assumption of risk form; • time logs for tracking your hours for Service Learning; • emergency contact form <p>C. You will earn full points for completing the orientation on time (<i>as this assignment is online, it is due at 11:30 pm</i>). (5 pts.)</p>	Sept. 10
<p>2. Summarize a qualitative research article and describe the paradigm used. See Canvas for full assignment. (10 pts.)</p>	Sept. 21
<p>3. Methodological summary and critique of an article which used interviews. See Canvas for full assignment. (10 pts.)</p>	Oct. 3
<p>4. Describe in summary form what you see as 5 main points of the Wegner (2003) book chapter entitled "Interviewing older people. Chapter located on Canvas. (5 pts.)</p>	Oct. 10
<p>5. Journal reflections, Part I -- preparing for interview. See Canvas for full assignment. (10 pts.)</p>	Oct. 15
<p>6. Upload completed and fully transcribed interview to QDAR. (20 pts.)</p>	Nov. 7
<p>7. Submit hard copy of Draft of Technical Report. (10 pts.)</p>	Nov. 28
<p>8. Submit hard copy of Final Technical Report. (35 pts.)</p>	Dec. 5
<p>9. Submit completed Time Log. (0 pts.)</p>	Dec. 5
<p>10. Journal reflections, Part II – experiences in the field and service-learning in general. See Canvas for full assignment. (10 pts.)</p>	Dec. 7

What if I want to directly contact my professor?

I am a big believer in practicing professional etiquette! It is an essential part of the “soft skills” we practice in this class. Having those skills will help you stand out from other job candidates and future colleagues. Utilizing professional etiquette is a key way to help advance your career, and there is no time to practice like the present. If you want to contact me (or any other person in your professional world) by email, here is a sample template:

Dear Dr. xxx,

I hope you are doing well. I am emailing to inquire about....

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Your Name

Course Number, Section Number

*Though this syllabus has been carefully prepared,
the above information is subject to change due to unforeseen circumstances.*