

**PhD Seminar on Qualitative Methods**  
**Spring 2015**  
**26:620:660:01**

Deborah Dougherty

Professor, Management and Global Business Dept, Rutgers U, RBS

1020 WP, [doughert@business.rutgers.edu](mailto:doughert@business.rutgers.edu); home phone (732-263-1336, days only please)

**Course Description:**

This is an advanced doctoral level seminar in qualitative methods that goes beyond introductory issues (e.g., beyond how to interview, what are the epistemological differences with deductive and qualitative) to focus on analyzing data to build new theory, and on writing up qualitative work for journal publication. The course will add to all students' abilities to "be a scholar" and to "think like a researcher," and lay a foundation for those who wish to develop competence in qualitative methods. The course will cover the following:

1. Epistemological and ontological foundations for qualitative research (briefly), so we appreciate how these approaches differ fundamentally from conventional, theory-testing approaches – avoids mixed up, misconceived, and generally unpublishable studies.
2. Data analysis, especially grounded theory building approaches for discovering and developing core insights; we will use interviews developed by the professor, and students are encouraged to bring in their own text material for analysis
3. Writing up the qualitative (and in fact any) study for journal publication. If the class is as small as anticipated, and if the analyses we do in class are sharp and thorough enough, we will write a paper together, and see about submitting it
4. Only some time will focus on specific skill building for qualitative data gathering techniques: unstructured or ethnographic interviewing, observation, and documents/material culture interpretation.

PLEASE NOTE that we will devote a portion of every class to analyzing qualitative data, and will move successively through the process of sorting through the data for possible insights, articulating those insights, and developing a theory, and then to writing up our analysis into a quality journal article. This means that people wishing to audit cannot drop in and out of the class, but must instead commit to attending all of sessions. We will follow the specific discipline described by Strauss (1987; Strauss & Corbin 1998), and elaborated by Dougherty (2002): "open coding" (to surface many possible categories), "axial coding" (to hone categories and articulate properties), and "selective coding" (to articulate core categories that integrate others into a theory). Coding is the "...analytical process through which data are fractured, conceptualized, and integrated to form a theory" (Strauss & Corbin 1998:3), and is intended to surface underlying patterns by shuffling between the data and existing literature, and within the data among events and activities. Coding in this case does NOT refer to simple word counts, simple flagging of data units, or other "outside-in" content analysis techniques (content analysis is mostly used as a measurement technique for quantitative studies). The analysis spirals among open, axial, and selective coding at different levels to build more robust categories.

**Required Readings (buy books on your own; for the NSF book, I think we can get copies from them)**

1. **FOR FIRST CLASS, sent via email:** Articles by L. Bailyn, D. Dougherty, and Glazer and Strauss
2. Strauss, Anselm, and Juliet Corbin, **Basics of Qualitative Research** (2<sup>nd</sup> ed), Sage, 1998. ISBN: 0-8039-5940-0 (I am assuming there is no additional edition...)
3. Golden-Biddle, Karen and Karen D. Locke **Composing Qualitative Research**, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Sage, 2006, ISBN: 9781412905619
4. Fielding, Nigel and Jane Fielding (1986) **Linking Data**, A Sage University Paper, Qualitative Research Methods Series 4, ISBN 0-8039-2518-2 PBK.
5. Plus selected readings from:
  - a) Denzin, Norman K., and Yvonna S. Lincoln (eds) **Collecting and Interpreting Qualitative Materials**, Sage, 1998 2 chapters to be handed out, on interviewing, one on Miles and Huberman analysis approaches
  - b) Ragin, C., J. Nagel and P. White (eds) Workshop on Scientific Foundations of Qualitative Research 2004, NSF; NOTE is on their website I think?

**Grading:**

1. Weekly hand-ins: 40%: Quality and promptness of class hand-ins (interview analyses, memos of understanding, reflection on the readings). Each week students will hand in their analytic memos from the prior week's data analysis, plus a one page definition and discussion of one or two key themes developed from the readings for the current week.
2. Participation, including your management of assigned sessions – 20%. Each student will be assigned TWO (or 3?) classes to do a fuller theme summary and lead a discussion of the readings for about 20 minutes
3. Term paper, due end of the semester – 40% (details to be discussed in class).

**Tentative Weekly Course Plan**

**1. Jan 21: Introduction**

**readings (emailed to you):**

- Bailyn, L. Research as a cognitive process: Implications for data analysis. *Quality and Quantity*, 1977, 11:97-117.
- Dougherty, D. Building Grounded Theory: Some Principles and Practices, *Companion to Organizations*, Joel A. C. Baum, ed., Blackwell Publishers (2002), pp. 849-867.
- Dougherty, D., K. Chung, and M. Su (2013) chapter in IACMR methods book.
- Glaser, B. & A. Strauss. Discovery of Substantive Theory: A basic Strategy Underlying qualitative Research, *The American Behavioral Scientist*, 1965:8:5-12.

We will begin data analyses with material handed out in class, and talk about the readings. NO hand-in due this week, we start next week.

**2. Jan 28: Foundations, definitions, epistemologies of qualitative methods**

**Read:** Fielding and Fielding, chap 1, 2

Strauss and Corbin, preface thru p. 34 (chaps 1-3)

NSF stuff on differences and complementary of qual and quant

We will go over memos from last week, then review the readings, then do more analyses

Discussion questions: 1. What is qualitative research, and how does it differ from theory-testing research? Specifically what are the kinds of questions asked and how are they addressed? What are some qualitative questions you might ask for your research agenda? How can you use or leverage qualitative studies for your research? What surprised you in the readings, and why?

**3. Feb 4: Developing, finalizing research plan for class efforts:**

**Read:** Strauss and Corbin, chap 4; pp. 35-55

Golden-Biddle and Locke: preface through chap 1

NSF handouts

Discussion questions: 1) we need to articulate actual research project and questions we are working on in class, plus will discuss kinds of research questions you might have and how to address your own work; 2) if emergence is important, how can we plan research? 3) why is planning essential for qualitative work?

Continued analyses of interviews, plus reviewing memos from last week

**4. Feb 11: Interviews and Observation**

**Read:** Denzin and Lincoln, chap 2 (pp. 47-109);

find and read another how-to article on unstructured or ethnographic interviewing, summarize for class

Discussion questions: 1) how to do this stuff? Tricks, pointers; 2) in-class practice and feedback.

**5. Feb 18: Dig into coding**

**Read:** Strauss and Corbin, chap 5, 6, 7, 8, pp. 55-122. NSF handouts too

What is confusing in the readings versus what we have been doing in class? And what is wrong with what we have been doing in class versus what is in the readings?

**6. Feb 25: Still coding**

**Read:** Strauss and Corbin, chap 9, 10, 11 (p. 123-163);

code interviews, observations ahead of time to discuss in class, continue with coding from last class and coding plan (will do axial and selective coding “off line” on own, and circulate results); plus will begin to specify emerging theory

**7. Mar 4: Still coding**

**Read:** Strauss and Corbin, chap 12, 13, 14 (p. 181-242)

Denzin and Lincoln, chap 7 by Miles and Huberman , pp. 179-210

We should be zeroing in on our core categories, their properties and dimensions

**8. Mar 11: Beginning to End, questions and writing**

**Read:** Strauss and Corbin entire section on gaining closure, pp. 243-296;

**Discussion:** 1) how would you give a talk on our class project? Make an outline and be ready to give the talk. 2) How do Strauss and Corbin differ from Denzin on criteria for evaluation of the research? 4) How would you use what criteria in your paper?

**9. Mar 25: Writing it up.**

**Read:** Golden-Biddle and Locke: Chap 2, 3, 4,

We will begin to lay out our plans for a paper, and start doing some literature reviews to figure out our contribution. **Discussion:** 1) what is your story? Craft a storyline for your term paper, develop it, and characterize yourself. Bring outlines for class discussion, show and tell. Let's discuss how to write our paper, what will be our introduction, hook, conclusions? Each student will be given a writing assignment with some literature review

**10. Apr 1: Writing it up still**

We will review and discuss our drafts, and make choices about next steps

**11. Apr 8: Combining qualitative and quantitative work (and still writing)**

**Read:** rest of Fielding and Fielding, NSF handouts

**Discussion:** pros and cons of combination? How can we develop some quantitative work for our project in class? What would that add to our analysis? How about your own work?

**12. Apr 15: Re-Write it! We have been rejected!**

**Read:** Golden-Biddle and Locke: Chap5

**Discussion:** rethink our outline and writing plan.

**13. Apr 22: pulling together final draft**

**14. Apr 29: Now what?**

Summaries, discussions of your own applications