

GEOGRAPHY FINAL COURSE OUTLINE: FALL 2018
Geography 340
H(3-0)

Qualitative Methods in Human-Environmental Research

Section	Days	Time	Location
LEC 01	TuTh	14:00 – 15:15	ES 443

Instructor: Dr. Gwendolyn Blue	Office: ES 322	Office hours: TuTh 12:30 – 1:30
Tel: 220 5595	Email: gblue@ucalgary.ca	
TA: Sparkler Samar	TA Office: ES 310	
TA Email: sparkler.samar@ucalgary.ca	Office hours: Wednesday 1pm-2pm Friday 1:30pm-2:30pm	

The primary emergency evacuation assembly point for all classes taught in Earth Sciences is the ICT Food Court.

Course Description and Objectives

Introduction to qualitative research methods and research design in human geography.

Course Objectives

- Outline various methodologies and methods for qualitative research including conventional and critical approaches;
- Discuss and evaluate the strengths and limitations of qualitative methods;
- Discuss practical considerations of qualitative research such as sampling, validity, and ethics.

Course Learning Outcomes:

The Department of Geography is committed to student knowledge and skill development. The table below lists the key learning outcomes for this course, the program-learning outcomes they facilitate and the expected level of achievement.

Course Learning Outcomes	PLO(s)	Level(s)
Describe core conceptual orientations and discussions related to geographic methods	1	1
Critically evaluate a work of academic research and its associated question, objectives and methods	2	2
Identify research questions, objectives, research scope, units of analysis, potential methods, and validity challenges	3	2
Outline a research proposal addressing a specific project	3	1
Define, explain and evaluate a case study in a given context	4	2
Critically engage with the ethical challenges of designing and conducting research	5	2
Demonstrate reflexivity about researcher positionality in relation to characteristics such as gender, class, nationality and ethnicity	5	2
Know how to retrieve, summarize, cite, reference and assess formal academic research as well as other literature	8	2

PLOs = Program Learning Outcomes: 1 = reflect and communicate diverse human-environment perspectives, 2 = identify and explain human-environment processes, 3 = implement sampling, data collection, analyses and communication methods, 4 = analyze spatial and temporal aspects of human-environment systems, 5 = employ knowledge, arguments, and methodologies for solving human-environment problems, 6 = evaluate geospatial data and manipulate it to create cartographic products, 7 = communicate geographic concepts using oral, written, graphic, and cartographic modes, and 8 = demonstrate literacy skills. **Levels:** (1) Introductory, (2) Intermediate, (3) Advanced.

Prerequisites

One of Geography 205, 251, 253 or Urban Studies 253, or consent of the Department.

Learning Resources

Required Text: Van den Hoonaard, D. 2015. *Qualitative research in action: A Canadian Primer*. Oxford University Press. 2nd edition. (QRA)

Additional readings as listed in syllabus. Links to readings available on D2L.

Recommended Supplementary Text: Hay, Iain and P. Giles. 2014. *Communicating in Geography and the Environmental Sciences: Canadian Edition*. Don Mills, Ontario: Oxford University Press. 2nd edition. (CGE)

Grading / Weighting

*There is no final exam scheduled for this class.

*Students do not need to achieve a passing grade on individual assignments to pass the course as a whole.

1. **Exams:** 50% of final grade

Multiple choice and short answer questions evaluate knowledge of material in assigned readings and lectures.

Exam 1 @ 25%

Oct. 9, 2018

Exam 2 @ 25%

Nov.6, 2018

2. **Group presentation:** 15%

Working in small assigned groups, students will locate, describe and evaluate a research article that employs qualitative methods. Findings will be presented in a 15 minute oral presentation.

3. **Research proposal:** 35%

Working individually or in small groups, students will prepare and present a research proposal on a research area of own choice. This assignment involves completing multiple stages of the research process including choosing a topic, formulating a research question, conducting a short literature review, identifying appropriate methods and sampling techniques. Research proposal will be presented in oral and written formats.

Research proposal presentation (5%)

Nov. 20 – Dec. 4

Written research proposal (30%)

Dec. 6

Grading system

96-100	A+	77-80.5	B	59-61.5	C-
90-95.5	A	71-76.5	B-	55-58.5	D+
86-89.5	A-	65-70.5	C+	50-54.5	D
81-85.5	B+	62-64.5	C	0-49.5	F

Human subjects

Students are not expected to participate as subjects of research or to collect primary data as researchers.

For additional detailed course information posted by the instructor, visit the course Desire2Learn page online at <https://d2l.ucalgary.ca/d2l/home>.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Writing across the Curriculum

Writing skills are not exclusive to English courses and, in fact, should cross all disciplines. The university supports the belief that throughout their university careers students should be taught how to write well, so that when they graduate their writing abilities will be far above the minimal standards required at entrance. Consistent with this belief, students are expected to do a substantial amount of writing in their university courses and, where appropriate, faculty members can and should consider quality of writing as a factor in the evaluation of student work. The services provided by Writing Support Services can be utilized by all undergraduate and graduate students who feel they require further assistance: www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing_support/overview.

Academic Accommodations

It is the student's responsibility to request academic accommodations, according to the university policies and procedures listed in the University Calendar.

The student accommodation policy can be found at: www.ucalgary.ca/access/accommodations/policy. Students needing an accommodation because of a disability or medical condition should communicate this need to Student Accessibility Services in accordance with the Procedure for Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy.pdf.

Students needing an accommodation based on a protected ground other than disability should communicate this need, preferably in writing, to the Department Head (email: geograph@ucalgary.ca).

Principles of Conduct

The University Calendar includes a statement on the principles of conduct expected of all members of the university community (including students, faculty, administrators, any category of staff, practicum supervisors, and volunteers), whether on or off university property. This statement applies in all situations where members of the university community are acting in their university capacities. All members of the university community have a responsibility to familiarize themselves with the principles of conduct statement, which is available at: www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k.html.

Plagiarism, Cheating, and Student Misconduct

The University of Calgary is committed to the highest standards of academic integrity and honesty. Students are expected to be familiar with these standards regarding academic honesty and to uphold the policies of the University in this respect.

Academic dishonesty is not an acceptable activity at the University of Calgary, and students are **strongly advised** to read the Student Misconduct section in the University Calendar at: www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k-3.html. Often, students are unaware of what constitutes academic dishonesty or plagiarism. The most common are (1) presenting another student's work as your own, (2) presenting an author's work or ideas as your own without adequate citation, and (3) using work completed for another course. Such activities will not be tolerated in this course, and students suspected of academic misconduct will be dealt with according to the procedures outlined in the calendar at: www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k-5.html.

Internet and electronic communication device information:

There is no restriction on the use of laptops and tablets in class if they are used to take notes or find information relevant to the class, and if there is no disturbance or distraction of other students or the instructor. Phones must be turned off during class, unless you have previously identified yourself to the instructor as a health care or law enforcement professional. The use of any calculators and/or devices during examinations will not be allowed.

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) legislation in Alberta disallows the practice of having students retrieve assignments from a public place, such as outside an instructor's office, the department office, etc. Term assignments will be returned to students individually, during class or during the instructor's office hours; if students are unable to pick up their assignments from the instructor, they must provide the instructor with a stamped, self-addressed envelope to be used for the return of the assignment.

Posting of Grades and Picking-up of Assignments

Graded assignments will be returned by the instructor or teaching assistant personally during schedule lecture or laboratory periods, unless they are made available electronically through the course D2L webpage. Grades and assignments will not be available at the Department of Geography's main office.

Faculty of Arts Program Advising and Student Information Resources

Have a question, but not sure where to start? The Faculty of Arts Students Centre is your information resource for everything in Arts! Drop in at SS 102, call us at 403-220-3580, or email us at ascarts@ucalgary.ca. You can also visit the Faculty of Arts website at <http://arts.ucalgary.ca/undergraduate>, which provides detailed information about common academic concerns.

For guidance on course registration (add, drop, swap), information about paying fees, and assistance with your Student Centre, contact Enrolment Services at 403-210-7625 or visit them at the MacKimmie Block.

Contact Information for Student and Faculty Representation

- SU VP Academic Phone: 220-3911 and e-mail: suvpaca@ucalgary.ca
- SU Faculty Rep. Phone: 220-3913 and e-mail: arts1@ucalgary.ca
- The students ombudsman office information can be found at: www.ucalgary.ca/ombuds/

Wellness and Mental Health Resources

The University of Calgary recognizes the pivotal role that student mental health plays in physical health, social connectedness, and academic success and aspires to create a caring and supportive campus community where individuals can freely talk about mental health and receive supports when needed. We encourage you to explore the mental health resources available throughout the university community, such as counselling, self-help resources, peer support, or skills-building available through the SU Wellness Centre (Room 370, MacEwan Student Centre, <https://www.ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/services/mental-health-services>) and the Campus Mental Health Strategy website (<http://www.ucalgary.ca/mentalhealth/>).

Campus Safewalk

Campus Security, in partnership with the Students' Union, provides the Safewalk service, 24 hours a day, to any location on Campus, including the LRT station, parking lots, bus zones, and university residences. Contact Campus Security at 220-5333 or use a help phone, and Safewalkers or a Campus Security officer will accompany you to your campus destination.

USRI Surveys

At the University of Calgary, feedback provided by students through the Universal Student Ratings of Instruction (USRI) survey provides valuable information to help with evaluating instruction, enhancing learning and teaching, and selecting courses (www.ucalgary.ca/usri). Your responses make a difference, so please participate in USRI surveys.

Schedule of Lectures *Lectures and readings subject to change

Week		Tuesday	Thursday
1	Sept. 6		Course introduction: The nature and purpose of qualitative methods in geographical inquiry Read: QRA Chapter 1
2	Sept. 11, 13	Ways of knowing and doing research Read: QRA Chapter 2 & 3	
3	Sept. 18, 20	Research Design and Ethics Read: QRA Chapter 4	
4	Sept 25, 27	Field research: Ethnography, participant observation and participatory action research Read: QRA Chapter 5 Group Presentation	
5	Oct. 2, 4	Interviews and focus groups Read: QRA Chapter 6 Group Presentation	
6	Oct. 9, 11	Exam #1	Workshop: Research proposal Read: Abdulai & Owusu-Ansah 2014
7	Oct. 16, 18	Surveys and questionnaires Read: Group Presentation	
8	Oct. 23, 25	Discourse analysis: Texts, images and archives Read: QRA Chapter 7 & 8 Group Presentation	
9	Oct.30, Nov 1	Qualitative GIS	Relational approaches: Actor network and multi-species

		Read: Group presentation	Group presentation
10	Nov.6, 8	Exam #2	Research proposal – individual consultations Read: QRA Chapter 10
11	Nov. 13, 15	Reading Break: No scheduled class	
12	Nov 20, 22	Research proposal presentations	
13	Nov. 27, 29	Research proposal presentations	
14	Dec. 4, 6	Research proposal presentations	Course Conclusion Research proposal due