

LLED 7060-Qualitative Research in Literacy Studies

2012 Spring Semester

Time and Location: Wednesday, 4:40-7:25, 119 Aderhold Hall
Instructor: Dr. Bettie St.Pierre
Office: 125 Aderhold
Home Phone: (706) 353-8893
Email: stpierre@uga.edu
Office Hours: By appointment

NOTE: The course syllabus is a general plan for the course. I will announce changes in class. Remember that we teach people, not a course, so we'll go at the pace we need to.

Course Description

This course is designed to introduce masters students to qualitative research and how it can be used in literacy studies to investigate teaching and learning in their own classrooms and elsewhere. We will begin with an overview of some of the major theoretical frameworks within which scholars and researchers think and work. Students will then be introduced to the qualitative research process and to its two chief methods of data collection: interviewing and observation. Students will produce a qualitative research proposal at the end of the course.

Objectives

- To understand that theory and practice go hand in hand -- that theories of teaching and learning guide our practice in classrooms and that our experiences in classrooms enable us to reformulate our theories.
- To learn to practice "persistent critique," i.e., to be willing to look at the possibilities and limits of what we are able to hear/think/know because of our identities as multicultural subjects.
- To develop a sense of inquiry and begin to see ourselves as researchers who know how to investigate systematically and rigorously a problem that intrigues us.
- To learn how to design, implement, and represent a qualitative research project.
- To learn how to write a qualitative research proposal.

Policies and Procedures

- Absences & Tardys. Be present and be on time!
- Incompletes. There will be no incompletes.
- Late work. Assigned work turned in late will be marked down a letter grade and will receive sketchy comments. We will set due dates together.
- Written work. Written work is to be typed and double-spaced and should follow APA style.
- Reading. All reading should be completed **before** class to prepare for discussion.
- Participation. Students are expected to take an active part in class discussions. However, please don't dominate the conversations.

Required Textbook

Glesne, Corinne. (2010). *Becoming qualitative researchers: An introduction*. (4th ed.). New York: Prentice Hall

Other Required Reading (I'll put this on ELearning Commons ASAP! There may be more.)

1. Bogdan, R. C. & Biklen, S. K. (1998). *Qualitative Research for Education: An Introduction to Theory and Methods* (3rd ed.). [Chapters 1 & 4]. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
2. Seidman, I. (1998). *Interviewing as Qualitative Research* (2nd ed.) [Chapter 6, pp. 63-78]. New York: Teachers College Press.
3. Miscellaneous Handouts: (1) Paradigm Chart—Lather/St.Pierre, (2) The Research Process, (3) Literature Review, (4) Statement of the Problem (5) Research Proposal Guide, (6) Example of an Interview Guide, (7) Example of an Interview Transcript, (8) Example of Jottings & Fieldnotes (9) Example of a Researcher's Log entry, (10) Example of an Invitation Letter, etc.
4. Research Report Exemplars:
 - Johnson, T.S., Thompson, L., Smagorinsky, P. & Fry, Pamela G. (2003). Learning to teach the five-paragraph theme. *Research in the Teaching of English*, 38(2), 136-176.
 - Blackburn, M. (2003). Exploring literacy performances and power dynamics at The Loft: Queen youth reading the world and the word. *Research in the Teaching of English*, 37, 467-490.
 - *Note that I may add some others here.*

Requirements

1. **Researcher's Log**. (30 possible points). A Researcher's Log (a diary) is used to document the entire research project. Researchers begin keeping their logs when they first begin the study. I expect to see substantial work in your log. See the handout that is an example of what a student wrote in her researcher's log during her project. If you were actually doing a study during this class, you'd document your fieldwork like that in your log. *Date each entry in your log. Due February 8, March 21, and April 25.*

Here's what you should write in your researcher's log for this class:

- a. At least once a week, write at least 1 double-spaced page that explains what you're thinking about qualitative research in general based on my lectures, your reading, class discussions, and so on. This could include what you don't understand, what you like, thoughts about your own project, etc. Date each entry just as you would a diary.
 - b. Write at least a one-page dated response to each chapter in Glesne (7 chapters total—do not write about Chapter 8) and to each chapter in Bogdan and Biklen (2 chapters). *Do not write a summary or notes.* Explain your *response* to the chapter; for example, what surprised you, what seemed most important, what bothers you, and so on. Date each entry and write the name of the author and the number and title of the chapter at the beginning of each entry. For example, you'd write at the top of the page "January 30, 2012. Glesne. Chapter 1. Meeting Qualitative Inquiry." Then write your one-page response to that chapter.
 - c. Write at least a one-page dated response (same as in #2 above) to each exemplar in the list of Research Report Exemplars above. At the top of each page, write the date and the author(s) of the paper (February 2, 2012. Johnson, Thompson, Smagorinsky and Fry).
2. **Interview Project**: (20 possible points). Conduct, audiotape, and transcribe an interview with someone in this class about anything you want to talk with them about. Your write-up should be 3-4 pages long and must include each of the following: (1) a brief discussion of the context of the interview, the participant, and the topic of your interview (who did you interview, why, what were you interested in learning, what was the interview about, etc.) (2) a brief overview of what you learned about the **interview method**. Here I am not interested in what the person said but in what you learned about

do you need to work on? (4) a brief statement from your participant describing what he/she thought of the interview, (5) attach a copy of your Interview Guide, and (6) attach the transcript of the interview.

Due ----

3. Observation Project (20 possible points). You and your peer debriefer are to decide on a site where you think interesting things are happening (a bar, the mall, a street corner, etc.). Go to the site and hang out. Try to focus on something/someone to observe in detail. Each of you should jot down what you're observing. Then go home and write up your **jottings**, turning them into **fieldnotes**, elaborating, filling in details, producing rich, thick description of what you observed. Compare each other's final writeup of the observation and talk about the differences, e.g., what were the differences, why do you think you observed different things? what is the **effect** of the difference; that is, is the "meaning" of your final product significantly different? **You should turn in the following: (1) your original jottings, (2) your writeup of the fieldnotes, (3) a jointly-authored two-page discussion of how/why you think your and your peer debriefer's writeups are different and the effect of those differences on meaning-making. Due ----**
4. Research Proposal. (30 possible points). The proposal outlines the design of the proposed study in as much detail as possible. We'll discuss the proposal at length in class. **Due ----**
5. *Institutional Review Board (IRB) Application*. This is an **optional project** for those who wish to publish the results of their studies and/or to present their studies at conferences. I'll work with these students individually.

Grading Scale

90 -- 100	A	Excellent
80 -- 89	B	Good
70 -- 79	C	Satisfactory
60 -- 69	D	Passing
59 and Below	F	Failure

Schedule

I will do quite a bit of lecturing during the first weeks of class. I'll hand out a weekly schedule once I determine how much I have to teach at the beginning of the semester. The course schedule is always changing!

NOTE: Please read Chapter 1 in Bogdan and Biklen first. Then read Glesne's handbook as soon as possible.

- Chapter 1 in Bogdan & Biklen
- Glesne
- Siedman
- Chapter 4 of Bogdan & Biklen
- Miscellaneous Handouts: we'll discuss these as appropriate. Look through them to see what you've got.

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As a University of Georgia student, you have agreed to abide by the University's academic honesty policy, "A Culture of Honesty," and the Student Honor Code. All academic work must meet the standards described in "A Culture of Honesty" found at: www.uga.edu/honesty. Lack of knowledge of the academic honesty policy is not a reasonable explanation for a violation. Questions related to course assignments and the academic honesty policy should be directed to the instructor. The link to more detailed information about academic honesty can