

UNIVERSITY OF  
CALGARY

Department of Psychology

**Psychology 415 (L01) – Nonexperimental Research Methods in Psychology****Fall Session 2006****Instructor: L. Radtke****Phone: 220-5223****Email: [radtke@ucalgary.ca](mailto:radtke@ucalgary.ca)****Office: Admin 255B****Office Hours: TR/3:30-4:30 pm (or by appointment)****Lecture Location: SH 280****Lecture Days/Time: TR/2:00-3:15 pm****Teaching Assistant: Susan Chisholm****Phone: 220-5910****Email: [slchisho@ucalgary.ca](mailto:slchisho@ucalgary.ca)****Office: Admin 67****Office Hours: T/12:00-1:00 pm  
F/12:00-1:00 pm****Lab Location: Admin 248****Lab Days/Times: T/4:00-5:50 pm****F/10:00-11:50 am****Course Description and Goals**

An introduction to qualitative research methods in psychology. We will discuss the origins of qualitative approaches to psychology, the theories informing these approaches, and how to put some of these approaches into practice. The specific approaches to be included are phenomenology, grounded theory, narrative psychology, conversation analysis, discourse analysis and cooperative inquiry. Students will develop skills related to conducting research interviews and analysing textual data. Lectures will focus on theory and analysis; labs will provide an opportunity to practice analysis. Through course projects, students will also develop their writing skills.

**[NOTE: This course is under development. Consequently, there may be some changes to aspects of the course, such as the lecture schedule. Any changes will be posted on Blackboard.]**

**Required Text**

Smith, J.A. (2003). *Qualitative psychology: A practical guide to research methods*. London: Sage Publications. [Available at the University of Calgary bookstore.]

Additional articles: A reference list and links will be provided on Blackboard. You must download these for yourself.

## Evaluation

Final course grades will be based on three course components - (1) Exams (35% of final grade), (2) a Paper (25% of final grade), and (3) Lab assignments (40% of final grade). Details are provided below (also see the attached lecture and lab schedules):

(1) Exams (35% of final grade): There will be three quizzes with short answer format:

Date	Course Component	Weighting
October 17, 2006	Quiz 1 (Lectures 1-10 and assigned readings)	15%
November 9, 2006	Quiz 2 (Lectures 11-16 and assigned readings)	10%
December 7, 2006	Quiz 3 (Lectures 17-22 and assigned readings)	10%

(2) Paper (25% of final grade): Due no later than Monday, December 11, 2006 at 4:30 pm (students are encouraged to hand it in earlier in the term). Until December 7, 2006, students may turn assignments in during class. Between December 7, 2006 and December 11, 2006, they may be put in the green box outside Admin 275. Late assignments will be penalized one letter grade per day, e.g., an A paper handed in on December 12 will have the grade reduced to A-, etc. Students must provide a printed copy of their paper; emailed papers will not be graded.

Students will choose one of the qualitative approaches covered in the course and independently analyze a sample from one of the data sets generated in the lab (either 5 individual cases or 2 focus groups). Prior to embarking on the assignment, students must meet with the instructor to explain what they plan to do and to gain access to the sample. It is each student's responsibility to arrange this meeting, either in regular office hours or at another convenient time. The **deadline** for this meeting is **Friday, November 17, 2006**. The written paper will follow this outline:

- Introduction: Provide a research question appropriate to the chosen approach and explain why the approach fits the question. This will likely include some description of the theoretical underpinnings of the approach.
- Method:
  - Sample
  - Procedure
  - Analysis - describe how you conducted your analysis
- Analysis
- Discussion and conclusions: What did you learn from your analysis (i.e., what can you say about your research question based on your analysis)? Why should anyone take your analysis seriously (i.e., does it measure up to "quality" standards)? What are the limitations of your analysis? If you were to conduct this study from beginning to end, what would you do differently and why?

(3) Lab (40% of final grade): **Please note that students must pass the lab component in order to pass this course.**

The labs will involve a substantial amount of group work and discussion, although students will be graded individually. Hence, attendance in labs is very important-for yourself and for the members of your group. Also, you must attend the lab in which you are registered to ensure continuity of the group work.

Other than the exceptions noted below, lab assignments must be submitted in print form (i.e., emailed copies will not be accepted). Late lab assignments will be penalized one letter grade per day, e.g., an assignment that is one day late and awarded an A will have the grade reduced to A-, etc. More detailed information on the content of the labs will be provided during the first lab.

The lab grade will consist of six components:

<b>Due Date (Lab 01/02) and Place</b>	<b>Lab Component</b>	<b>Weighting</b>
<b>September 26/29, 2006</b> at end of lab	Project 1: Observations and field notes	10%
<b>October 2/5, 2006</b> electronic submission by 4:30 pm	Phenomenology description	5%
<b>October 10/13, 2006</b> at beginning of lab	Project 2: Phenomenology Research Report	15%
<b>October 23/26, 2006</b> electronic submission by 4:30 pm	Transcription of individual interview	10%
<b>November 7/10, 2006</b> at beginning of lab	Project 3: Grounded Theory Research Report	25%
<b>November 27/23, 2006</b> electronic submission by 4:30 pm	Transcription of focus groups	10%
<b>December 8, 2006 (Lab 02)</b> <b>December 12, 2006 (Lab 01)</b> put in green box outside Admin 275	Project 4: Discourse Analysis Research Report	25%

### Grading Scale

A+	96-100%	B+	80-84%	C+	67-71%	D+	54-58%
A	90-95%	B	76-79%	C	63-66%	D	50-53%
A-	85-89%	B-	72-75%	C-	59-62%	F	0-49%

As stated in the University Calendar, it is at the instructor's discretion to round off either upward or downward to determine a final grade when the average of term work and final examinations is between two letter grades. In this course there will be no rounding up of final grades, especially in light of the opportunities students have to increase their final grade via research credits.

## Lecture and Lab Schedules

## Lecture Schedule

DATE	TOPICS AND READINGS	EXAMS/ASSIGNMENTS
<b>Sept. 4</b>	<b>Labour Day – University closed</b>	
Sept. 5-9	Fall Session Block Week	
<b>Sept. 11</b>	<b>Lectures begin for Fall Session</b>	
Sept. 12	<b>Lecture 1:</b> Introduction	
Sept. 14	<b>Lecture 2:</b> Qualitative Psychology: Origins and Common Threads (Smith: Ch. 1, pp. 1-3; Ch. 2, pp. 4-24)	
Sept. 19	<b>Lecture 3:</b> Interviewing and Transcribing (Smith: Ch. 4, pp. 55-64; Ch. 7, pp. 136-140)	
Sept. 21	<b>Lecture 4:</b> Phenomenology (Smith: Ch. 3, pp. 25-50; Morrissey & Higgs, 2006)	
<b>Sept. 22</b>	<b>Last day for Fall registration and change of registration for Fall Session or full courses. No fee refunds for withdrawals after this date.</b>	
Sept. 26	<b>Lecture 5:</b> Phenomenology cont.	
Sept. 28	<b>Lecture 6:</b> Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (Smith: Ch. 4, pp. 51-80; Adams et al., 2005)	
Oct. 3	<b>Lecture 7:</b> Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis cont.	
Oct. 5	<b>Lecture 8:</b> Grounded Theory (Smith: Ch. 5, pp. 81-110; Timlin-Scalera et al., 2003)	
<b>Oct 9</b>	<b>Thanksgiving – University closed</b>	
Oct. 10	<b>Lecture 9:</b> Grounded Theory cont.	
Oct. 12	<b>Lecture 10:</b> Focus Groups (Smith: Ch. 9, pp. 184-204; Varas-Diaz & Serrano-Garcia, 2003)	
Oct. 17		<b>Quiz 1</b>
Oct. 19	<b>Lecture 11:</b> Conversation Analysis (Smith: Ch. 7, pp. 132-158; Strong, 2005)	
Oct. 24	<b>Lecture 12:</b> Conversation Analysis cont.	
Oct. 26	<b>Lecture 13:</b> Discourse Analysis - Theory (Smith: Ch. 8, pp. 159-183; Seymour-Smith & Wetherell, 2006; Benford & Gough, 2006)	
Oct 31	<b>Lecture 14:</b> Discourse Analysis cont.	
Nov. 2	<b>Lecture 15:</b> Discourse Analysis cont.	
Nov. 7	<b>Lecture 16:</b> Validity and Qualitative Psychology (Smith: Ch. 11, pp. 232-235)	
Nov. 9		<b>Quiz 2</b>
<b>Nov. 11-14</b>	<b>Reading days – No classes</b>	
Nov. 16	<b>Lecture 17:</b> Narrative Psychology (Smith: Ch. 6, pp. 111-131; Murray, Pullman, & Rodgers, 2003)	
Nov. 21	<b>Lecture 18:</b> Narrative Psychology cont.	
Nov. 23	<b>Lecture 19:</b> Cooperative Inquiry/Action Research - (Smith: Ch. 10, pp. 205-231; Bostock & Freeman, 2003)	
Nov. 28	<b>Lecture 20:</b> Cooperative Inquiry/Action Research cont.	
Nov. 30	<b>Lecture 21:</b> Defending qualitative research	
Dec. 5	<b>Lecture 22:</b> Back to the Common Threads	
Dec. 7	Last day to allocate Bonus Credits to Fall Session half courses.	<b>Quiz 3</b>
<b>Dec. 8</b>	<b>Fall Session lectures end Last day to withdraw from Fall Session half courses</b>	
<b>Dec. 11-20</b>	<b>Fall Session Final Examinations</b>	<b>Paper due Dec. 11</b>

## Lab Schedule

LAB	DATE	TOPIC	DEADLINES
1	Sept. 19 (T) and 22 (F)	Orientation	
2	Sept. 26 (T) and 29 (F)	<b>Project 1:</b> Description as data/Field notes	<b>Hand in lab work at end of lab</b>
3	Oct. 3 (T) and 6 (F)	<b>Project 2:</b> Using a phenomenological approach	<b>Phenomenological description due Monday, Oct. 2 for Lab 01 and Thursday, Oct. 5 for Lab 02; submitted electronically by 4:30 pm</b>
4	Oct. 10 (T) and 13 (F)	<b>Project 3:</b> Developing a semi-structured interview guide and practice interviews	<b>Phenomenology research report due at beginning of lab</b>
5	Oct. 17 (T) and 20 (F)	Individual interviews/transcribing	<b>Transcripts due Monday, Oct. 23 for Lab 01 and Thursday, Oct. 26 for Lab 02; submitted electronically by 4:30 pm</b>
6	Oct. 24 (T) and 27 (F)	Grounded theory coding	
7	Oct. 31 (T) and Nov. 3 (F)	Grounded theory coding cont.	
8	Nov. 7 (T) and 10 (F)	<b>Project 4:</b> Developing a focus group interview guide and focus group practice	<b>Grounded theory research report due at beginning of lab</b>
9	Nov. 17 (F) and 21 (T)	Focus groups/transcribing	<b>Transcripts due Monday, Nov. 27 for Lab 01 and Thursday, Nov. 23 for Lab 02; submitted electronically by 4:30 pm</b>
10	Nov. 24 (F) and 28 (T)	Discourse analysis	
11	Dec. 1 (F) and 5 (T)	Discourse analysis cont.	<b>Discourse analysis research report due Friday, Dec. 8 (Lab 02); Dec. 12 (Lab 01) put in green box outside A275 before 4:30 pm</b>

### University of Calgary Core Competencies

This course addresses the following core competencies:

- Critical and creative thinking
- Analysis of problems
- Effective oral and written communication
- Gathering and organizing information
- Abstract reasoning and its applications
- Insight and intuition in generating knowledge

- Interpretive and assessment skills

With the following course characteristics:

- Considerable class discussion; students are prompted to think critically about course material
- Emphasis is placed on discerning which qualitative research methods are most appropriate to address their research questions
- In labs and class, students will have multiple opportunities to practice their oral and written communication skills
- Laboratory assignments entail collecting qualitative data and utilizing appropriate approaches for organizing and analyzing that data
- In developing an understanding of various qualitative research methods, students will learn about their theoretical grounding and how it constrains the research process
- In learning to use qualitative research methods, students are encouraged to become comfortable with the researcher's role in generating knowledge
- Qualitative research methods entail interpretive processes; hence, students will be immersed in tasks that require them to exercise their interpretive skill

### **Curriculum Redesign Features**

This course addresses the following curriculum redesign features:

- An experiential learning component relevant to the program objectives
- Provision of broad and extended faculty-student interaction at the program level
- Integration of research

With the following course characteristics:

- Weekly laboratory assignments
- Lectures will promote discussion and student participation
- Many research examples from the current literature are drawn upon to illustrate the various methods

### **Reappraisal of Grades**

A student who feels that a piece of graded term work (term paper, essay, test, etc.) has been unfairly graded, may have the work re-graded as follows. The student shall discuss the work with the instructor within fifteen days of being notified about the mark or of the item's return to the class. If not satisfied, the student shall immediately take the matter to the Head of the department offering the course, who will arrange for a reassessment of the work within the next fifteen days. The reappraisal of term work may cause the grade to be raised, lowered, or to remain the same.

If the student is not satisfied with the decision and wishes to appeal, the student shall address a letter of appeal to the Dean of the faculty offering the course within fifteen days of the unfavourable decision. In the letter, the student must clearly and fully state the decision being appealed, the grounds for appeal, and the remedies being sought, along with any special circumstances that warrant an appeal of the reappraisal. The student should include as much written documentation as possible.

### **Plagiarism and Other Academic Misconduct**

Intellectual honesty is the cornerstone of the development and acquisition of knowledge and requires that the contribution of others be acknowledged. Consequently, plagiarism or cheating on any assignment is regarded as an extremely serious academic offense. Plagiarism involves submitting or presenting work in a course as if it were the student's own work done expressly for that particular course when, in fact, it is not. Students should examine sections of the University Calendar that present a Statement of Intellectual honesty and definitions and penalties associated with Plagiarism/Cheating/Other Academic Misconduct.

### **Academic Accommodation**

*It is the student's responsibility to request academic accommodations.* If you are a student with a documented disability who may require academic accommodation and **have not** registered with the Disability Resource Centre, please contact their office at 220-8237. Students who have not registered with the Disability Resource Centre are not eligible for formal academic accommodation. You are also required to discuss your needs with your instructor no later than fourteen (14) days after the start of this course.

### **Absence From A Test**

Make-up exams are NOT an option without an official University medical excuse (see the University Calendar). You must contact the instructor before the scheduled examination or you will have forfeited any right to make up the exam. At the instructor's discretion, a make-up exam may differ significantly (in form and/or content) from a regularly scheduled exam. Except in extenuating circumstances (documented by an official University medical excuse), a makeup exam is written within two (2) weeks of the missed exam.

A completed Physician/Counselor Statement will be required to confirm absence from a test for health reasons. The student will be required to pay any cost associated with the Physician Counselor Statement.

### **Course Credits for Research Participation**

Students in most psychology courses are eligible to participate in Departmentally approved research and earn credits toward their final grades. A maximum of two credits (2%) per course, including this course, may be applied to an individual's final grade. Students can create an account and access the Research Participation System website at <http://ucalgary.sona-systems.com>. The last day to participate in research is December 7, 2006.

### **Student Organizations**

Psychology students may wish to join the Psychology Undergraduate Students' Association (PSYCHS). They are located in the Administration building, room 170 or may be contacted at 220-5567.

**Student Union VP Academic:** Phone: 220-3911 [suvpaca@ucalgary.ca](mailto:suvpaca@ucalgary.ca)  
**Student Union Faculty Rep.:** Phone: 220-3913 [socialscirep@su.ucalgary.ca](mailto:socialscirep@su.ucalgary.ca)

### **Important Dates**

The last day to drop this course and **still receive a fee refund** is September 22, 2006. The last day to withdraw from this course is December 8, 2006.