San José State University  
Department of Sociology and Interdisciplinary Social Sciences  
Sociology 105, Qualitative Research Methods  
Section 2, Spring 2016

Course and Contact Information

Instructor: Dr. Natalie Boero
Office Location: DMH 211
Telephone: (408) (924-5345)
Email: natalie.boero@sjsu.edu or via Canvas message
Office Hours: Mondays: 9:30-11:30am and 3:45-5:45pm  
Wednesdays: 1:30-3:30pm

Class Days/Time: Wednesday 6:00-8:45pm
Classroom: DMH 231
Prerequisites: SOCI 1, SOCI 100W, SOCI 101, Upper Division Standing

Canvas and Course Email

Course materials such as syllabus, handouts, notes, assignment instructions, etc. can be found on the Canvas learning management system course website. You are responsible for regularly checking email and Canvas to learn of any updates.

Course Description

In this course, we will focus on the philosophy and design of qualitative research. Unlike quantitative research methods, which focus on the measurement of social phenomena, qualitative research methods focus on questions of meaning and experience, which often do not lend themselves to quantification. For example, if you were interested in how many women have babies each year, you would use quantitative methods. If you want to know what it feels like to have a baby and the experience of being pregnant, you would use qualitative methods. In this course you will learn about various qualitative research methods and read and analyze examples of qualitative research. Most important, you will gather and analyze your own data through participant observation and in-depth interviewing on a topic of your own choosing. This course will give you the opportunity to gain hands-on experience with various qualitative methods. You will learn to read and evaluate qualitative research and gain important analytic and practical skills.

Learning Outcomes

Required Texts/Readings

Other Readings

I will post additional readings on the course Canvas page in PDF format. They will always be posted at least a week before they are due. In the course schedule below, these readings are designated with a (PDF).

Course Requirements and Assignments

SJSU classes are designed such that in order to be successful, it is expected that students will spend a minimum of forty-five hours for each unit of credit (normally three hours per unit per week), including preparing for class, participating in course activities, completing assignments, and so on. More details about student workload can be found in University Policy S12-3 at http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S12-3.pdf.

NOTE that University policy F69-24 at http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/F69-24.pdf states that “Students should attend all meetings of their classes, not only because they are responsible for material discussed therein, but because active participation is frequently essential to insure maximum benefit for all members of the class. Attendance per se shall not be used as a criterion for grading.”

Classroom Protocol

I expect that you will have each week’s readings completed by class on Monday of each week. I have tried to make the reading interesting and manageable so that we can all participate in active discussions. Please bring your readings to class each day so that we can refer to them in discussions.

Participation is important and it helps make discussions livelier as well as to clarify materials. Coming to class is important as I will be lecturing on materials not included in the readings.

If you cannot come to class, it is your responsibility to get notes from one of your peers. If you miss any handouts or are not in class the day I return an assignment or an exam, I will have them available for you to pick up during my office hours. When you are in class, I expect all cell phones and electronic devices to be turned off and put away. Students may use laptops in class, but, to avoid distracting other students I ask that students using laptops please sit in the back rows of the classroom.

Office Hours, email and Canvas

I encourage all of you to come by my office hours (listed above). Even if you don’t have a specific question, office hours are a great chance for me to get to know you better and for you to give me feedback on the course. If you are having any problems that could impact your success in the course, come see me as soon as possible. It is much easier to deal with problems early on. Please note that I do not give incompletes except in the most extreme situations, and even then only if a student has already completed a majority of the work for the course.

I am also available by email at the address above or through the Canvas site. However, given the large number of students in my classes, I may take a day or two to respond to emails. It is also important that you check your email as well as the “news” section of Canvas for any course updates. I will email the class of any changes in the schedule. If you do email me, please include your name and the course number and section in the subject line.

Assignments and Grading Policy

The assignments for this course are designed to give you some experience designing and conducting a qualitative research project. We will spend a lot of time in class working on and talking about your projects and I will post detailed assignment sheets on Canvas well in advance of the due date.
Late assignments will be penalized one third of a grade for each day late (for example, a “B” paper turned in one day late would be given a “B-”). No assignments will be accepted if they are more than one week late.

I will further detail my expectations on your assignment sheets, but in general I require that all assignments (with the exception of in-class exercises) be typed, double-spaced, 12-point font, with standard 1” margins, stapled, with page numbers, and in black ink.

The assignments and activities for this course are designed to enhance understanding of course material. Your final grade in this class will be based on the following:

1. **Two In-depth Observations**: This represents your first opportunity to independently conduct qualitative research. You will make two separate observations in a classroom setting at SJSU and take extensive field notes.

2. **Interview Project**: This is the central course project that we will work on for the majority of the semester. It allows you the opportunity to design and conduct a mini in-depth qualitative research project from start to finish and gain interviewing experience. You will choose a topic/research question, design an interview guide, recruit and interview two people, and write a final reflection paper.

3. **Midterm exam**: in class

4. **Annotated bibliography**: This assignment is designed to help you gather background information for your interview projects.

5. **Class Participation/Class Activities**: Because this is a workshop-style course, student participation is vital for the success of the class. I will evaluate your class participation based on the following:
   - a. Participation in course discussions
   - b. Successful completion of various in-class activities (i.e. interview & coding exercises, writing exercises, small group activities, and peer review work).
   - c. Occasional reading reflections to be announced the week prior

**Please note**: You cannot make up in-class activities and exercises.

**Grading**

Your grade for the course will be broken down as follows:

- Observation assignment: **20%**
- Research question: **10%**
- Interviews and research paper: **25%**
- Annotated Bibliography: **15%**
- Midterm Exam: **15%**
- Participation: (Participation in class discussions, reading reflections, and in-class activities): **15%**

Final letter grades for the course will be assigned based on the following scale:

- **A** = 93 – 100%
- **B** = 83 – 86%
- **C** = 73 – 76%
- **D** = 63 – 68%
- **A-** = 90 – 92%
- **B-** = 80 – 82%
- **C-** = 70 – 72%
- **D-** = 60 – 62%
- **B+** = 87 – 89%
- **C+** = 77 – 79%
- **D+** = 67 – 69%
- **F** = 59% or less
University Policies

General Expectations, Rights and Responsibilities of the Student

As members of the academic community, students accept both the rights and responsibilities incumbent upon all members of the institution. Students are encouraged to familiarize themselves with SJSU’s policies and practices pertaining to the procedures to follow if and when questions or concerns about a class arises. See University Policy S90–5 at http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S90-5.pdf. More detailed information on a variety of related topics is available in the SJSU catalog, at http://info.sjsu.edu/web-dbgen/narr/catalog/rec-12234.12506.html. In general, it is recommended that students begin by seeking clarification or discussing concerns with their instructor. If such conversation is not possible, or if it does not serve to address the issue, it is recommended that the student contact the Department Chair as a next step.

Dropping and Adding

Students are responsible for understanding the policies and procedures about add/drop, grade forgiveness, etc. Refer to the current semester’s Catalog Policies section at http://info.sjsu.edu/static/catalog/policies.html. Add/drop deadlines can be found on the current academic year calendars document on the Academic Calendars webpage at http://www.sjsu.edu/provost/services/academic_calendars/. The Late Drop Policy is available at http://www.sjsu.edu/aars/policies/latedrops/policy/. Students should be aware of the current deadlines and penalties for dropping classes.

Information about the latest changes and news is available at the Advising Hub at http://www.sjsu.edu/advising/.

Consent for Recording of Class and Public Sharing of Instructor Material

University Policy S12-7, http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S12-7.pdf, requires students to obtain instructor’s permission to record the course and the following items to be included in the syllabus:

- “Common courtesy and professional behavior dictate that you notify someone when you are recording him/her. You must obtain the instructor’s permission to make audio or video recordings in this class. Such permission allows the recordings to be used for your private, study purposes only. The recordings are the intellectual property of the instructor; you have not been given any rights to reproduce or distribute the material.”
  - It is suggested that the greensheet include the instructor’s process for granting permission, whether in writing or orally and whether for the whole semester or on a class by class basis.
  - In classes where active participation of students or guests may be on the recording, permission of those students or guests should be obtained as well.
- “Course material developed by the instructor is the intellectual property of the instructor and cannot be shared publicly without his/her approval. You may not publicly share or upload instructor generated material for this course such as exam questions, lecture notes, or homework solutions without instructor consent.”

Academic integrity

Your commitment, as a student, to learning is evidenced by your enrollment at San Jose State University. The University Academic Integrity Policy S07-2 at http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S07-2.pdf requires you to be honest in all your academic course work. Faculty members are required to report all infractions to the office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development. The Student Conduct and Ethical Development website is available at http://www.sjsu.edu/studentconduct/.
Campus Policy in Compliance with the American Disabilities Act

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, or if you need to make special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible, or see me during office hours. Presidential Directive 97-03 at http://www.sjsu.edu/president/docs/directives/PD_1997-03.pdf requires that students with disabilities requesting accommodations must register with the Accessible Education Center (AEC) at http://www.sjsu.edu/aec to establish a record of their disability.

Student Technology Resources

Computer labs for student use are available in the Academic Success Center at http://www.sjsu.edu/at/asc/ located on the 1st floor of Clark Hall and in the Associated Students Lab on the 2nd floor of the Student Union. Additional computer labs may be available in your department/college. Computers are also available in the Martin Luther King Library. A wide variety of audio-visual equipment is available for student checkout from Media Services located in IRC 112. These items include DV and HD digital camcorders; digital still cameras; video, slide and overhead projectors; DVD, CD, and audiotape players; sound systems, wireless microphones, projection screens and monitors.

SJSU Peer Connections

Peer Connections, a campus-wide resource for mentoring and tutoring, strives to inspire students to develop their potential as independent learners while they learn to successfully navigate through their university experience. You are encouraged to take advantage of their services which include course-content based tutoring, enhanced study and time management skills, more effective critical thinking strategies, decision making and problem-solving abilities, and campus resource referrals.

In addition to offering small group, individual, and drop-in tutoring for a number of undergraduate courses, consultation with mentors is available on a drop-in or by appointment basis. Workshops are offered on a wide variety of topics including preparing for the Writing Skills Test (WST), improving your learning and memory, alleviating procrastination, surviving your first semester at SJSU, and other related topics. A computer lab and study space are also available for student use in Room 600 of Student Services Center (SSC).

Peer Connections is located in three locations: SSC, Room 600 (10th Street Garage on the corner of 10th and San Fernando Street), at the 1st floor entrance of Clark Hall, and in the Living Learning Center (LLC) in Campus Village Housing Building B. Visit Peer Connections website at http://peerconnections.sjsu.edu for more information.

SJSU Writing Center

The SJSU Writing Center is located in Clark Hall, Suite 126. All Writing Specialists have gone through a rigorous hiring process, and they are well trained to assist all students at all levels within all disciplines to become better writers. In addition to one-on-one tutoring services, the Writing Center also offers workshops every semester on a variety of writing topics. To make an appointment or to refer to the numerous online resources offered through the Writing Center, visit the Writing Center website at http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter. For additional resources and updated information, follow the Writing Center on Twitter and become a fan of the SJSU Writing Center on Facebook. (Note: You need to have a QR Reader to scan this code.)
SJSU Counseling Services

The SJSU Counseling Services is located on the corner of 7th Street and San Fernando Street, in Room 201, Administration Building. Professional psychologists, social workers, and counselors are available to provide consultations on issues of student mental health, campus climate or psychological and academic issues on an individual, couple, or group basis. To schedule an appointment or learn more information, visit Counseling Services website at http://www.sjsu.edu/counseling.
Sociology 105 / Qualitative Research Methods, Spring 2016, Course Schedule

* You will be notified in advance through Canvas of any changes made to the schedule

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<th>Course Schedule</th>
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<td>Week</td>
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| 1 | 2/3 | **Introduction: What is Qualitative Research?**  
Reading: Warren & Karner Ch. 1 |
| 2 | 2/10 | **Ethnography and Observation (Observation assignment)**  
Reading: Warren & Karner Ch. 3  
Reading: “Sidewalk”, “The Glass Phallus” (PDF)  
Film: “Sidewalk” |
| 3 | 2/17 | **Ethnography and Observation**  
Reading: Warren & Karner Chapt. 4 & 5  
Film “Sidewalk” |
| 4 | 2/24 | **Discuss Observation #1, Ethical Issues in Qualitative Research**  
Bring Observation #1 to class for peer evaluation Wednesday 2/24  
Reading: Warren & Karner Ch. 2, Blee (PDF) |
| 5 | 3/2 | **Designing Qualitative Research**  
Observations Assignment due via Canvas by 9am Wednesday, 3/2  
Research Question Due in Class Wednesday 3/2 Bring Two Copies  
Reading: Warren & Karner Ch. 6 |
| 6 | 3/9 | **Annotated Bibliographies/Interviews (Interview Assignment)**  
Reading: Warren & Karner Ch. 7, “The Great Interview” (PDF) |
| 7 | 3/16 | **Interviews Guides**  
No Reading |
| 8 | 3/23 | **SPRING BREAK, NO CLASS** |
| 9 | 3/30 | **Interviews continued, Reading Qualitative Research**  
Reading: Tuan “Neither Real Americans nor Real Asians”, Bettie “Exceptions t to the Rule” (PDF) |
| 10 | 4/6 | **Textual and Visual data**  
Annotated Bibliographies due via Canvas Monday, 4/4 9am  
Reading: Warren & Karner Ch. 8, “Graffiti on the Great Plains” (PDF) |
| 11 | 4/13 | **Textual and Visual data con’t**  
Guest Speaker  
Reading: To be announced |
| 12 | 4/20 | **MIDTERM EXAM Wednesday 4/20 IN CLASS** |
| 13 | 4/27 | **Action Research**  
BRING INTERVIEW #1 TO CLASS Wednesday 4/27  
Reading: Rios, “Navigating the Thin Line between Education and Incarceration” (PDF) |
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<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines</th>
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| 14   | 5/4   | Writing Up Research  
Reading: Warren & Karner Ch. 9 |
| 15   | 5/11  | Writing up Research, Wrap-up  
Bring a final paper outline to class Wednesday 5/11 |
| 16   | 5/16  | Last Day of Class  
No class- Instead I will hold extra office hours to discuss final projects. |
| Final Exam | | Interview Projects Due via Canvas Monday May 19th by 5pm NO LATE PAPERS WILL BE ACCEPTED |