San José State University  
Department of Sociology and Interdisciplinary Social Sciences  
SOCI 105, Qualitative Methods, Spring 2018

Course and Contact Information

Instructor: Dr. Janine Nkosi
Office Location: DMH 237A
Telephone: (408) 924-3613
Email: janine.nkosi@sjsu.edu
Office Hours: Tuesdays 4:15pm – 5:15pm and By Appointment
Class Days/Time:
- Section #27901 meets Tuesday/Thursday 9:00 – 10:15am in DHM 162
- Section #27902 meets Tuesday/Thursday 3:00 – 4:15pm in DHM 226A
Prerequisites: SOCI 101, SOCI 104, or SOCI 102, upper division standing

Course Format

Course materials such as syllabus, handouts, notes, assignment instructions, etc. can be found on Canvas. Students are responsible for regularly checking email to learn of any updates.

Course Description

Philosophy and logic of research design, interviewing techniques, field methods, issues of participant observation, theoretical perspectives, content analysis and qualitative microcomputer techniques. Required for Sociology majors. Prerequisite: SOCI 1 or equivalent, SOCI 100W, SOCI 101 and upper division standing.

Course Learning Outcomes (CLO)

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate basic proficiency using NVivo;
- Demonstrate oral and written use of research methods terminology;
- Demonstrate understanding of qualitative from quantitative methodologies in sociology;
- Demonstrate proficiency in the use of qualitative methods, including observation, interview, and content analysis;
- Demonstrate proficiency in note-taking, interviewing, and writing reports;
- Demonstrate proficiency in analyzing textual data for patterns and themes;
- Proficiency of learning outcomes will be assessed by the reading journal, midterm, observation and interview assignments, and final research paper.

Required Materials

Textbook

**Other technology requirements / material**

Students need access to the newest version of NVivo. Good news! This tool is available free of charge to all SJSU faculty and students, through eCampus.

When we begin using NVivo, students will need to bring a laptop to class. SJSU students can borrow a laptop with NVivo on it from the library ([https://library.sjsu.edu/student-computing-services/student-computing-services](https://library.sjsu.edu/student-computing-services/student-computing-services)). Supplies are limited, so it’s a good idea to reserve one in advance.

**Course Resources**

**Microsoft Office**

SALE! Hot Deal! Actually, it’s totally FREE!!! Did you know, as an SJSU student, you can download the Microsoft Office suite (which includes Word and Excel) totally FREE? Click on this link or go to this URL ([http://products.office.com/en-us/student/office-in-education](http://products.office.com/en-us/student/office-in-education)). All you need is your SJSU email address (find it here or go here [http://my.sjsu.edu/students/email/](http://my.sjsu.edu/students/email/)).

**Library Liaison**

Kathryn Blackmer Reyes  kathryn.blackmer.reyes@sjsu.edu  (408) 808-2097

I strongly encourage everyone to reach out to Kathryn, our library liaison. She is a research librarian rock star! She is friendly and very knowledgeable about sociological topics. Kathryn is a valuable resource for tips on using the library catalog, databases, or other resources.

**Peer Connections**

Peer Connections’ free tutoring and mentoring is designed to assist students in the development of their full academic potential and to inspire them to become independent learners.Peer Connections tutors are trained to provide content-based tutoring in many lower division courses (some upper division) as well as writing and study skills assistance. Small group and individual tutoring are available. Peer Connections mentors are trained to provide support and resources in navigating the college experience. This support includes assistance in learning strategies and techniques on how to be a successful student. Peer Connections has a learning commons, desktop computers, and success workshops on a wide variety of topics. For more information on services, hours, locations, or a list of current workshops, please visit Peer Connections website at [http://peerconnections.sjsu.edu](http://peerconnections.sjsu.edu) for more information.

**SJSU Writing Center**

The SJSU Writing Center is located in Room 126 in Clark Hall. Professional instructors and upper-division or graduate-level writing specialists from each of the seven SJSU colleges staff it. Their writing specialists have met a rigorous GPA requirement, and they are well trained to assist all students at all levels within all disciplines to become better writers. Use their online reservation system for appointments.

**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.

On-Campus Food Resources

Are you finding yourself struggling to afford food while attending SJSU? You are not alone. A recent Student Affairs survey found that approximately half of SJSU students are sometimes skipping meals due to cost. This website (http://www.sjsu.edu/wellness/foodresources/) provides information and resources for students dealing with food insecurity.

Community Resources

If you need assistance in the form of food, shelter, clothing, etc., call 2-1-1 and a Santa Clara County representative will connect you with resources to help you meet your essential needs. “2-1-1 is a free and confidential service that helps people across North America find local resources they need. We’re here for you 24 hours a day, seven days a week.” This will help you to focus on your coursework. For more information visit their website at http://www.211.org.

Classroom Protocol

Attendance

Attendance is required. Why? Well, for starters you paid for the class. Can you think of any other place where a customer would pay for something and then voluntarily leave without getting what they paid for? Neither can I. I hope the first reason is that you want to learn about qualitative research. The best way to learn is to engage in dialogue with others who have an interest in the topic. Students need to be present (mind and body) to fully engage in this class. We will engage in small and large group discussion and engage in helpful activities to apply what we’re learning. Besides all of that, given the current political climate, I cannot think of a more important reason to deepen your understanding of social research.

Workload

SJSU classes are designed such that, in order to be successful, it is expected that students will spend a minimum of forty-five hours per semester for each unit of credit (usually three hours per week per unit of credit) on preparing for class, participating in course activities, completing assignments, and so on.

Course Expectations

Course learning outcomes can only be achieved if each of us commits to the following:

- **Attend class and be an attentive.** It is your responsibility to arrive on time and actively engage in our discussions. Please respect the learning experience of others: Laptops, cell phones and other electronic devices must be turned off and stowed away during our class time.

- **Read the assigned materials and be prepared to contribute to class discussion.** The assigned readings provide us with a foundation and are the basis of our class discussions/activities. If you do not keep up with and/or do not complete the readings, you will have little chance of doing well in this class.

- **Complete the required assignments on time.**

- **Communicate with me.** If you have any questions or concerns about the readings and assignments, please let me know. This is particularly important if you experience a family or medical emergency that interferes with your performance in the course.
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.”

Unless specifically noted otherwise in the assignment sheet, all assignments for this course will be submitted electronically through Canvas.

Readings

Readings must be completed before class and students should be prepared to discuss the readings.

Weekly Reading/Discussion Notes

To ensure students are keeping up with the readings and to assess understanding of course material, each week after students read they will write a weekly reading reflection. The reading journal is intended to help student gain a deeper understanding of qualitative research methodologies by applying what they learn in Warren and Karner to what they’re reading in Desmond, etc. In part one, students will summarize the main research methods, concepts and ideas from the texts and articles (500 word min). In part two, students will apply 2-3 key terms/ideas from Warren and Karner text to deepen their understanding of the qualitative methods used in Desmond’s text and/or the assigned scholarly journal articles (250 word min). Reading journal is worth 100 points.

Literature Review using NVivo

To begin learning NVivo and to conduct a literature for your research project, students will write a 2-3-page literature review. The literature review is designed to help you gather background information for your research project. NVivo will assist with the sorting, categorizing and grouping of the literature, which are essential to writing a literature review. Students will submit an Nvivo report (10 points) along with their literature review (20 points). This assignment is worth 30 points total.

Midterm Exam

The midterm will be a mix of multiple-choice and short answer. The midterm is worth 100 points.

Two In-depth Observations

This represents your first opportunity to independently conduct qualitative research. You will engage in two separate observations and take extensive fieldnotes. We will discuss the setting for the observations in greater detail in class. The assignment is worth 30 points.

Two Semi-structured Interviews

Students will conduct two semi-structured interviews with two different participants. Interviews will be related to your research topic. An interview guide (5 points) will be developed prior to conducting interviews. Interviews will be digitally recorded and transcribed (10 points each). Transcripts will be analyzed for themes
using NVivo (25 points). This assignment is a central project for the course. We will work on the project for the majority of the semester. This assignment is worth 50 points total.

**Research Paper & Presentation**

This assignment allows you the opportunity to design and conduct a mini in-depth qualitative research project from start to finish and gain observation and interviewing experience. You will choose a topic/research question related to housing, conduct two field observations, design an interview guide, recruit and interview two people, write a final paper and present your project. The research paper will be based on your analysis of the data from the observations and interviews. The final paper and presentation will provide a summary of the methodological work you did during the semester and a qualitative analysis of the data that was collected. The research paper is worth 100 points and presentation is worth 25 points.

**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:

- Completion of weekly reading journal
- Participation in course discussions
- Successful completion of various in-class activities (i.e. interview & coding exercises, writing exercises, small group activities, and peer review work)
- Please note: You cannot make up in-class activities and exercises.

**Grading Information**

**Grade Scale**

All assignments will be given point scores. These scores will be totaled and divided by points possible. The course percentages will then be assigned a letter grade as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Distribution</th>
<th>Points Possible</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+ 98% of the points or higher</td>
<td>100 pts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A  97.9-92%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-  91.9-90%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+  88-89.9%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B   87.9-82%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-  81.9-80%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+  78-79.9%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C   77.9-72%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-  71.9-70%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+ 68%-69.9%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D   67.9-62%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D- 61.9-60%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F Less than 60%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A total of **400 points** is possible for this course:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Points Possible</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading Journal</td>
<td>100 pts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observation Assignment</td>
<td>30 pts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literature Review</td>
<td>30 pts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview Assignment</td>
<td>50 pts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Paper</td>
<td>100 pts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation</td>
<td>25 pts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midterm Exam</td>
<td>100 pts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>435 pts.</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Late Work**

All assignments for this course will be submitted electronically through Canvas unless otherwise instructed. Assignments must be submitted by the given deadline. Late assignments are not accepted except under extreme
circumstances. Your instructor reserves the right to determine if a late assignment will be accepted under extenuating circumstances. Late work will be accepted without penalty if you have a documented illness/injury/emergency.

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.

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/.
Student Technology Resources

Students can access computers in several areas on campus, including 1) the Academic Success Center at http://www.sjsu.edu/at/asc/ located on the 1st floor of Clark Hall, 2) the Associated Students Lab on the 2nd floor of the Student Union, and 3) the Martin Luther King Library.

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.

Campus Safety

On a campus as large as San Jose State University, emergency situations arise from time to time. Our community will be better prepared and able to handle these stressful situations if we are all informed about the resources and information available to work through a crisis. The Emergency Information webpage provides information about how to stay in communication with the university and guides on what to do during an emergency.
### Course Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1/26</td>
<td>Read syllabus, purchase books, watch Matthew Desmond interview on PBS NewsHour (<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qBT8GGhh2Tg">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qBT8GGhh2Tg</a>)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 2    | 1/30-2/1 | **Introduction: What is Qualitative Research?**  
Reading: Warren & Karner Ch. 1  
Reading: Desmond prologue (pp. 1-5), Notes (pp. 343-345), About this project (pp. 315-336)  
Discuss: On Tuesday (1/30) we will discuss the reading journal  
Due: Reading journal #1 on 2/1 before class begins |
| 3    | 2/6-2/8  | **Ethnography and Observation**  
Reading: Warren & Karner Ch. 3  
Reading: Desmond Ch. 1-3 (and corresponding Notes)  
Due: Reading journal #2  
Discuss: Observation assignment |
| 4    | 2/13-2/15| **Ethnography and Observation**  
Reading: Warren & Karner Ch. 4 & 5  
Reading: Desmond Ch. 4-8 (and corresponding Notes)  
Due: Reading journal #3  
Due: Observation #1 and field notes (2/15) |
| 5    | 2/20-2/22| **Ethical Issues in Qualitative Research**  
Reading: Warren & Karner Ch. 2  
Reading: Desmond Ch. 9-11 (and corresponding Notes)  
Due: Reading journal #4  
Due: Observation #2 and field notes (2/20) |
| 6    | 2/27-3/1 | **Designing Qualitative Research**  
Reading: Warren & Karner Ch. 6  
Reading: Desmond Ch. 12-14 (and corresponding Notes)  
Due: Reading journal #5 |
| 7    | 3/6-3/8  | **Literature Review/NVivo**  
Reading: “A guide to writing a literature review” (PDF)  
Watch: “Getting started with Nvivo” (Canvas)  
Due: Bring electronic copy of one scholarly journal article and laptop to class |
| 8    | 3/13-15  | **Literature Review/NVivo, cont.**  
Watch: Nvivo tutorials (Canvas)  
Due: Bring electronic copy four journal articles and laptop to class |
| 9    | 3/20-3/22| **Interviews**  
Reading: Warren & Karner Ch. 7  
Reading: “The Great Interview” (PDF)  
Reading: Desmond Ch.15-16 (and corresponding Notes) |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Discuss: Interview Guide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Due: Reading journal #6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>3/27-3/29</td>
<td>Spring Break – No Class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>4/3-4/5</td>
<td><strong>Interviews, cont.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Reading: Desmond Ch. 17-19 (and corresponding Notes)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Reading: TBD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Due: Bring draft interview Guide to class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Due: Schedule of interviews 4/3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>4/10-4/12</td>
<td><strong>NVivo Workshop (Domain and theme analysis)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Read/watch: NVivo Tutorial on Canvas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Due: Interview #1 transcript</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>4/17-4/19</td>
<td><strong>NVivo Workshop (Coding)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Read/watch: NVivo Tutorial on Canvas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Due: Interview #2 transcript</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>4/24-4/26</td>
<td><strong>Textual and Visual Research</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Reading: Warren &amp; Karner Ch. 8 &amp; 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Reading: Desmond Ch. 20-22 (and corresponding Notes)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Due: Reading journal #9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>5/1-5/3</td>
<td><strong>Action Research</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Reading: Desmond Ch. 23-24 and Epilogue (and corresponding Notes)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Reading: TBD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Due: Reading journal #10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>5/8-5/10</td>
<td><strong>Writing up Research</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Reading: Warren and Karner Ch. 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Due: Outline of final paper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>5/17/5/22</td>
<td>Final Paper Due to Canvas by 12pm (for 3pm class) and presentation of research (in class on day of final)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Final Paper Due to Canvas by 7am (for 9am class) and presentation of research (in class on day of final)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>