

San José State University
Department of Sociology and Interdisciplinary Social Sciences
Soci 105, Qualitative Research Methods: section 1

Spring 2020

Course and Contact Information

Instructor:	Dr. Natalie Boero
Office Location:	DMH 211
Telephone:	(408) 924-5345 (email or Canvas is better)
Email:	natalie.boero@sjsu.edu or via Canvas
Office Hours:	Mondays 10:15-11:30am, Wednesdays 10:15-11:30am
Class Days/Time:	Monday and Wednesday 9:00-10:15am
Classroom:	DMH 231
Prerequisites:	SOCI 1, SOCI 100W, SOCI 101, Upper Division Standing

Copies of the course materials such as the syllabus, major assignment handouts, etc. may be found on the course Canvas page. You are responsible for regularly checking the course Canvas page as well as your email for notifications relevant to the course.

*****I do not offer extra credit during the semester*****

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.

Required Texts/Readings

Warren and Karner (2015), *Discovering Qualitative Methods: Ethnography, Interviews, Documents, and Images*. Oxford University Press.

Other Readings

I will post additional readings on the course Canvas page in PDF format.

Course Requirements and Assignments

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 then only if a student has already completed a majority (at least 75%) 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.

NOTE that [University policy F69-24](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/F69-24.pdf) 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."

The assignments and activities for this course are designed to enhance understanding of course material and to allow you to use multiple qualitative methods to explore and understand a sociological topic of your choosing. 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 and take extensive field notes.
2. **Interview Project:** You will choose a topic/research question, design an interview guide, recruit and interview two people, and write a final reflection paper.
3. **Textual/Visual analysis project:** Using this increasingly popular form of qualitative data collection and analysis, this will be the third source of data on your topic. You will turn your data as well as a reflection paper.
4. **Midterm exam:** in class
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
- d. Preparation for course discussions (having completed reading, bringing readings and course materials to class).
- e. Occasional, unannounced short quizzes at the start of class (these will generally be worth 5-10 points and will be factored into your participation grade combining to count for up to 40 points of that grade).

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

University Policies (Required)

Per University Policy S16-9 (<http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf>), relevant information to all courses, such as academic integrity, accommodations, dropping and adding, consent for recording of class, etc. is available on Office of Graduate and Undergraduate Programs' [Syllabus Information web page](http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/> Make sure to review these university policies and resources with students.

***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](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S12-3.pdf) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S12-3.pdf>.

A Note to Students with Children:

This classroom is open to students' children when you have difficulty securing childcare. Please bring something age appropriate for your child to do during class, and if you can, let me know ahead that they will be joining us. My priority is for all students to attend and participate in class, so do not feel that you have to decide between class and caring for your kids. That said, please use this option only when necessary given the smaller size and limited number of seats in some classrooms.

Grading

Your grade for the course will be out of a possible **500** points broken down as follows:

Observation assignment: **15% or 75 points**

Visual/Textual analysis assignment: **15% or 75 points**

Interviews project: **15% or 75 points**

Participation: Participation in class discussions, quizzes (up to 40 points of your participation grade, I will drop the lowest quiz) reading reflections, in-class activities, etc.: **15% or 75 points**

Midterm Exam: **20% or 100 points**

Final Paper: **20% or 100 points**

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

A = 500-465 points B = 434-415 points C = 384-365 points D = 334-315 points
 A- = 464-450 points B- = 414-400 points C- = 364-350 points D- = 314-300 points
 B+ = 449-435 points C+ = 399-385 points D+ = 349-335 points F = 299 points or less

***** I DO NOT OFFER EXTRA CREDIT *****

Soci 105/ Qualitative Research Methods

Spring 2020, Course Schedule

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

Course Schedule

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
1		No Class
2	1/27- 1/29	Introduction: What is Qualitative Research? Reading: Warren and Karner, Chapt. 1 and Mancini “Strategic Storytelling” (PDF)
3	2/3-2/5	What is Qualitative Research con’t / Ethnography and Observation Reading: Warren & Karner Chapt. 3 and 4, Duneier “Sidewalk” (PDF) Film “Sidewalk”
4	2/10- 2/12	Ethical Issues in Qualitative Research Reading: Warren & Karner Ch. 2 & 5 Fetner and Heath (PDF), Blee (PDF)
5	2/17- 2/19	Discuss Observation #1, Designing Qualitative Research Bring Observation #1 to class for peer evaluation Monday 2/17 Observation Assignment due via Canvas Friday 2/21 by 10pm Reading: Warren & Karner Ch. 6, Hermanowicz, “The Great Interview”
6	2/24- 2/26	Interviews (Interview Assignment) Reading: Warren & Karner Ch. 7, Hermanowicz, “The Great Interview” (PDF)
7	3/2-3/4	Interview Guides, Issues in Interviewing

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
		Research Question Due in Class (participation credit) Wednesday, 3/4 Bring Two Hard Copies to class
8	3/9-3/11	Interview Guides Bring Draft Interview Guide to class Monday 3/9 Tuan “Neither Real Americans nor Real Asians”, Bettie “Exceptions to the Rule” (PDF),
9	3/16-3/18	Issues in Interviewing Reading: Connell Ch. 3 and Connell “Thank You for Coming Out Today” (PDF)
10	3/23-3/25	Textual and Visual Data BRING TRANSCRIPT OF INTERVIEW #1 TO CLASS Reading: Warren & Karner Ch.8
11	3/30-4/1	NO CLASS SPRING BREAK
12	4/6-4/8	Textual and Visual Data con’t. NO CLASS MONDAY 4/6 Interview Assignment due via Canvas Tuesday, 4/7 10pm
13	4/13-4/15	Textual and Visual Data, Midterm review
14	4/20-4/22	Midterm, Action Research. MIDTERM EXAM IN CLASS MONDAY, 4/20 Reading: Reading: Rios, “Navigating the Thin Line between Education and Incarceration” (PDF), TBA
15	4/27-4/29	Action Research Continued, Final Papers Textual/Visual Analysis project due via Canvas Sunday 5/3 by 10pm Reading: TBA
16	5/4-5/6	Data Analysis, Final Papers Warren and Karner Ch. 9 and 10
17	5/11	Last Day of Class, discuss papers

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
		FINAL PAPER DUE VIA CANVAS MONDAY, MAY 18th BY 10 AM no late papers will be accepted!