School of Public Health
Syllabus and Course Information

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
Driven to Discover℠

PubH 6636-001
Qualitative Research Methods in Public Health Practice
Spring 2018

Credits:	**2**
Meeting Days:	**Mondays**
Meeting Time:	**2:30-4:30**
Meeting Place:	**Mayo A110**
Instructor:	**Melissa Laska, PhD, RD, Associate Professor**
	Megan Winkler, PhD, Post-doctoral Fellow
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	EMAIL IS THE BEST WAY OF REACHING THE INSTRUCTORS*
Office Hours:	**By appointment**

I.   Course Description

This is a 2-credit course in applied qualitative research methods in public health practice. The course introduces students to: paradigms of qualitative research and inquiry; selected data collection, management, and analysis methods for qualitative research in public health; and standards for reporting qualitative findings. The course is an introductory course, to begin, but not develop full mastery in, various relevant qualitative methods relevant for public health. The course emphasizes practical skills of qualitative research design, data collection (i.e., interviewing, focus group facilitation) and analysis. The class involves one, two-hour class session per week that consist of didactic lectures, discussion, small group work, and practical, hands-on learning.

II.   Course Prerequisites

Graduate student status.

III.   Course Goals and Objectives

1. Understand the paradigms and principles of qualitative research methods
2. Determine when qualitative methods are appropriate and how to employ qualitative methods in relevant settings
3. Understand and apply best practices of qualitative research study design, including sampling and data collection method(s)

4. Design data collection protocols, including interview guides
5. Develop skills to facilitate qualitative interview and focus group data collection
6. Use interviewing skills to gather qualitative data
7. Articulate paradigms and approaches for qualitative data collection
8. Build expertise with basic data analysis approaches
9. Communicate findings from qualitative data analyses, including implications for public health practice

IV. Methods of Instruction and Work Expectations

The class will include lectures, group discussions, and individual and small group exercises. Active participation in class discussions is expected and completion of readings prior to class is required. Students should come to class prepared to engage in class discussions and with clearly articulated positions on the topics covered in the readings.

V. Course Text and Readings

The primary, required readings will come from a course textbook: Clarke, V. and Braun, V. (2013) Successful qualitative research: A practical guide for beginners. London: Sage. ISBN 9781847875815

Additional recommended readings will be posted to Moodle as appropriate throughout the semester.

VI. Course Outline/Weekly Schedule

#	Date	Topic	In-Class Activity	Readings	Assignment Due
				Due at beginning of class, unless otherwise specified	
1	1/22	Introduction to Qualitative Methods and Research Ethics		Ch. 1	
2	1/29	Zobeida Bonilla, PhD: Theory and Epistemology	Group Work - Generating qualitative Research Questions	Ch. 2	
3	2/5	Qualitative Study Design	Group Work – Refining Qualitative Research Questions	Ch. 3	Submit via email: -Confirmation of completion of human subjects/research ethics training
4	2/12	Developing a Research Protocol and Interview Guide	Group Work – Protocol and interview guide development	Ch. 4	Submit via email: -Draft research question (group assignment) -Draft of scientific justification including 3-5 relevant citations (individual assignment)
5	2/19	Interview Skills	Group Work - Practice Interviewing		
	2/22, by noon				Submit via email: -Research protocol (group assignment)
6	2/26	Focus Groups	Focus group practice/ demonstration	Ch. 5	
7	3/5	Interview Transcription Rachel Widome, PhD: Qualitative research on	---	Ch. 7 TBD	Submit via email: -Revised research protocol (group assignment), if needed

		low-income multi-unit housing tobacco policy			
	3/11	Have a Good Spring Break			
8	3/19	Data analysis	Group Work – Data analysis	Ch. 9 and TBD	Submit via email: -Interview transcript and reflection memo (individual assignment)
9	3/26	Data analysis	Group Work – Data analysis	Ch. 10	
	3/29, by noon				Submit by email: -Group draft of the analysis plan and codebook to date (expected to be a work in progress)
10	4/2	Zobeida Bonilla, PhD: Overview of other qualitative methods, including participant observation	Group Work – Data analysis	Ch. 6 and 12	
11	4/9	Rigor, Results Write-ups and Dissemination	Group Work – Final project	Ch. 13	
12	4/16	Guest lectures: Katie Loth, PhD, MPH, RD: A qualitative exploration into the parent-child feeding relationship: How do parents of preschoolers divide the responsibilities of feeding with their children? Aida Miles, MS, RD: Through the Eye of the Beholder: Exploring Participant's Lived Experiences Using Phenomenology	---	TBD	
	4/19, by noon				Post to Moodle: -Final paper, including justification, research question, methods, results (group assignment) Submit via email: -Write-up of interpretation and discussion (individual assignment)
13	4/23	Final Presentations	Final Presentations	Group papers on Moodle	

| 14 | 4/30 | Course Wrap-up | Final Presentations | Group papers on Moodle | Submit via email:
-Individual assignment: peer evaluation of other group members and course reflection. |

Assignments:

Most of the grading for this course is based on students' performance in a semester-long qualitative project. This project includes numerous sequential components that are outlined below and is designed to involve both group work and individual activities and reflection.

- **Individual Training in Research Ethics:** If you have not completed PubH 6742 (Ethics in Public Health Research & Policy) or CITI (Collaborative Institutional Research Training Initiative) Human Subjects Research training online within the past 2 years, you will need to complete the CITI training by 2/5. Detailed instructions on how to the CITI training will be posted on Moodle. By 2/5, you will need to email the course instructors providing either (a) verification of completion of CITI training (certificate of completion or screen shot of completion notification) or (b) confirmation that you have completed PubH 6724 with a passing grade (including which semester you completed the course).
- **Initial Group Research Question & Individual Rationale/Justification, due 2/12:** This will be a group's initial research question that will guide the planned study design and data collection throughout the semester. The research question may evolve after the draft is completed. The research question will be developed collectively through group work, and all students in a given group will share the same research question. In addition, 1-2 paragraphs of scientific rationale with 3-5 relevant citations of relevant literature will be prepared; at this point in the semester, each student will write his/her own rationale independently and turn in this draft as an individual assignment.
- **Group Research Protocol, due 2/22 (one per group):** The planned study design will be proposed in the format similar to an IRB protocol. This will include the revised research question, sampling and recruitment plan, types of qualitative methods chosen and their justification, the data collection protocols (e.g., focus group guide, interview guide). The format of the IRB protocol also includes plans to protect human subjects and their confidentiality in qualitative research.
- **Individual Interview using Group Interview Guide**: Students will each conduct a 30-60 minute semi-structured one-on-one interview using an interview guide developed with their group, based on the group's research question. All group members will use the same interview guide for their interview.
- **Individual Interview Transcript and Reflection Memo, due 3/19:** Each group member will audiotape their interview, transcribe it, proof it, and make copies for your group members. Additionally, each group member will complete a thoughtful individual self-reflection on the interview experience (e.g., were you nervous?, what did you learn about your interviewing style?, how could you improve in future interviews?).
- **Draft of Group Analysis Plan, due 3/29 (one per group):** Groups will submit a draft of their qualitative data analysis plan (.5-1 page) and their codebook (to date) for review.
- **Group Data Analysis:** Groups will be expected to generate a group codebook and to code the transcripts using the agreed upon codes and definitions. Groups will then present the findings by providing codes and exemplar quotes from the transcripts to support the codes. For the final group paper, groups will write this section together.
- **Final Group Paper, due 4/19 (one per group):** Written document (expected to be approximately 5-6 pages) of revised versions of the semester's materials, namely: research question, rationale, methods, analysis and findings. One write-up will be turned in per group along with their codebook and coded transcripts.
- **Individual Interpretation and Discussion, due 4/19**: This write-up will be individually completed by each group member. This section should address: the overall idea or "theme" from the interviews (e.g., what was learned); how this compares to findings in the literature (use the relevant articles you and your group members identified for the Introduction/Justification); and the challenges and limitations, including

whether and how you would change your approach or interview guide based on the interview data that was collected. Groups will then use these individually-developed interpretation and discussion sections to inform how they present this section together in the final group project.

- **Final Group Presentation:** Each group will do a 20 minute presentation of their work using Power Point slides. Presentations will address research question, rationale, methods, data collection, analysis, findings and interpretation/discussion.
- **Individual Course Reflection and Peer Evaluation of Group Members, due 4/30:** One page written reflection on the course including: (1) your biggest takeaway, i.e., what you think you'll remember 5 years from now, (2) one to two other interesting things you learned in the course, (3) any challenges you faced in completing the course assignments and how you overcame them, and (4) advice for future students in the course. In addition, students will be asked to provide a brief evaluation of their peers in their group. Outstanding positive or negative scores from group members will be considered in final course grading.

VII. Evaluation and Grading

Assignment	Points
Class participation and completion of research ethics/human subjects training (individual)	10
Initial research rationale/justification (individual)	10
Interview protocol, including revised research question (group)	15
Interview transcript & memo (individual)	10
Data analysis plan and codebook to date	5
Final paper (group)	15
Written interpretation and discussion of project (individual)	15
Final presentation (group)	15
Course reflection and completion of peer evaluation (individual)	5
Total	**100**

Because class activities and assignments build on each other, it is essential that these be handed in on time. Late work is subject to points off, up to 5 points per day late.

The University utilizes plus and minus grading on a 4.000 cumulative grade point scale in accordance with the following:

A   4.000 - Represents achievement that is outstanding relative to the level necessary to meet course requirements

A-   3.667

B+   3.333

B   3.000 - Represents achievement that is significantly above the level necessary to meet course requirements

B-   2.667

C+   2.333

C   2.000 - Represents achievement that meets the course requirements in every respect

C-   1.667

D+   1.333

D   1.000 - Represents achievement that is worthy of credit even though it fails to meet fully the course requirements

S   Represents achievement that is satisfactory, which is equivalent to a C- or better.

For additional information, please refer to:
http://policy.umn.edu/Policies/Education/Education/GRADINGTRANSCRIPTS.html.

Course Evaluation
The SPH will collect student course evaluations electronically using a software system called CoursEval: www.sph.umn.edu/courseval. The system will send email notifications to students when they can access and complete their course evaluations. Students who complete their course evaluations promptly will be able to access their final grades just as soon as the faculty member renders the grade in SPHGrades: www.sph.umn.edu/grades. All students will have access to their final grades through OneStop two weeks after the last day of the semester regardless of whether they completed their course evaluation or not. Student feedback on course content and faculty teaching skills are an important means for improving our work. Please take the time to complete a course evaluation for each of the courses for which you are registered.

Incomplete Contracts
A grade of incomplete "I" shall be assigned at the discretion of the instructor when, due to extraordinary circumstances (e.g., documented illness or hospitalization, death in family, etc.), the student was prevented from completing the work of the course on time. The assignment of an "I" requires that a contract be initiated and completed by the student before the last official day of class, and signed by both the student and instructor. If an incomplete is deemed appropriate by the instructor, the student in consultation with the instructor, will specify the time and manner in which the student will complete course requirements. Extension for completion of the work will not exceed one year (or earlier if designated by the student's college). For more information and to initiate an incomplete contract, students should go to SPHGrades at: www.sph.umn.edu/grades.

University of Minnesota Uniform Grading and Transcript Policy
A link to the policy can be found at onestop.umn.edu.

VIII. Other Course Information and Policies

Grade Option Change (if applicable):
For full-semester courses, students may change their grade option, if applicable, through the second week of the semester. Grade option change deadlines for other terms (i.e. summer and half-semester courses) can be found at onestop.umn.edu.

Course Withdrawal:
Students should refer to the Refund and Drop/Add Deadlines for the particular term at onestop.umn.edu for information and deadlines for withdrawing from a course. As a courtesy, students should notify their instructor and, if applicable, advisor of their intent to withdraw.

Students wishing to withdraw from a course after the noted final deadline for a particular term must contact the School of Public Health Office of Admissions and Student Resources at sph-ssc@umn.edu for further information.

Student Conduct Code:
The University seeks an environment that promotes academic achievement and integrity, that is protective of free inquiry, and that serves the educational mission of the University. Similarly, the University seeks a community that is free from violence, threats, and intimidation; that is respectful of the rights, opportunities, and welfare of students, faculty, staff, and guests of the University; and that does not threaten the physical or mental health or safety of members of the University community.

As a student at the University you are expected adhere to Board of Regents Policy: *Student Conduct Code*. To review the Student Conduct Code, please see: http://regents.umn.edu/sites/default/files/policies/Student_Conduct_Code.pdf.

Note that the conduct code specifically addresses disruptive classroom conduct, which means "engaging in behavior that substantially or repeatedly interrupts either the instructor's ability to teach or student learning. The classroom extends to any setting where a student is engaged in work toward academic credit or satisfaction of program-based requirements or related activities."

Use of Personal Electronic Devices in the Classroom:
Using personal electronic devices in the classroom setting can hinder instruction and learning, not only for the student using the device but also for other students in the class. To this end, the University establishes the right of each faculty member to determine if and how personal electronic devices are allowed to be used in the classroom. For complete information, please reference: http://policy.umn.edu/Policies/Education/Education/STUDENTRESP.html.

Scholastic Dishonesty:
You are expected to do your own academic work and cite sources as necessary. Failing to do so is scholastic dishonesty. Scholastic dishonesty means plagiarizing; cheating on assignments or examinations; engaging in unauthorized collaboration on academic work; taking, acquiring, or using test materials without faculty permission; submitting false or incomplete records of academic achievement; acting alone or in cooperation with another to falsify records or to obtain dishonestly grades, honors, awards, or professional endorsement; altering, forging, or misusing a University academic record; or fabricating or falsifying data, research procedures, or data analysis. (Student Conduct Code: http://regents.umn.edu/sites/default/files/policies/Student_Conduct_Code.pdf) If it is determined that a student has cheated, he or she may be given an "F" or an "N" for the course, and may face additional sanctions from the University. For additional information, please see: http://policy.umn.edu/Policies/Education/Education/INSTRUCTORRESP.html.

The Office for Community Standards has compiled a useful list of Frequently Asked Questions pertaining to scholastic dishonesty https://communitystandards.umn.edu. If you have additional questions, please clarify with your instructor for the course. Your instructor can respond to your specific questions regarding what would constitute scholastic dishonesty in the context of a particular class-e.g., whether collaboration on assignments is permitted, requirements and methods for citing sources, if electronic aids are permitted or prohibited during an exam.

Makeup Work for Legitimate Absences:
Students will not be penalized for absence during the semester due to unavoidable or legitimate circumstances. Such circumstances include verified illness, participation in intercollegiate athletic events, subpoenas, jury duty, military service, bereavement, and religious observances. Such circumstances do not include voting in local, state, or national elections. For complete information, please see: http://policy.umn.edu/Policies/Education/Education/MAKEUPWORK.html.

Appropriate Student Use of Class Notes and Course Materials:
Taking notes is a means of recording information but more importantly of personally absorbing and integrating the educational experience. However, broadly disseminating class notes beyond the classroom community or accepting compensation for taking and distributing classroom notes undermines instructor interests in their intellectual work product while not substantially furthering instructor and student interests in effective learning. Such actions violate shared norms and standards of the academic community. For additional information, please see: http://policy.umn.edu/Policies/Education/Education/STUDENTRESP.html.

Sexual Harassment:
"Sexual harassment" means unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and/or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or academic performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or academic environment in any University activity or program. Such behavior is not acceptable in the University setting. For additional information, please consult Board of Regents Policy: http://regents.umn.edu/sites/default/files/policies/SexHarassment.pdf

Equity, Diversity, Equal Opportunity, and Affirmative Action:

The University will provide equal access to and opportunity in its programs and facilities, without regard to race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender, age, marital status, disability, public assistance status, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. For more information, please consult Board of Regents Policy: http://regents.umn.edu/sites/default/files/policies/Equity_Diversity_EO_AA.pdf.

Disability Accommodations:
The University of Minnesota is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for all students. The Disability Resource Center Student Services is the campus office that collaborates with students who have disabilities to provide and/or arrange reasonable accommodations.

If you have, or think you may have, a disability (e.g., mental health, attentional, learning, chronic health, sensory, or physical), please contact DRC at 612-626-1333 or drc@umn.edu to arrange a confidential discussion regarding equitable access and reasonable accommodations.

If you are registered with DS and have a current letter requesting reasonable accommodations, please contact your instructor as early in the semester as possible to discuss how the accommodations will be applied in the course.

For more information, please see the DS website, https://diversity.umn.edu/disability/.

Mental Health and Stress Management:
As a student you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learning, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, feeling down, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. These mental health concerns or stressful events may lead to diminished academic performance and may reduce your ability to participate in daily activities. University of Minnesota services are available to assist you. You can learn more about the broad range of confidential mental health services available on campus via the Student Mental Health Website: http://www.mentalhealth.umn.edu.

The Office of Student Affairs at the University of Minnesota:
The Office for Student Affairs provides services, programs, and facilities that advance student success, inspire students to make life-long positive contributions to society, promote an inclusive environment, and enrich the University of Minnesota community.

Units within the Office for Student Affairs include, the Aurora Center for Advocacy & Education, Boynton Health Service, Central Career Initiatives (CCE, CDes, CFANS), Leadership Education and Development – Undergraduate Programs (LEAD-UP), the Office for Fraternity and Sorority Life, the Office for Community Standards, the Office for Student Engagement, the Parent Program, Recreational Sports, Student and Community Relations, the Student Conflict Resolution Center, the Student Parent HELP Center, Student Unions & Activities, University Counseling & Consulting Services, and University Student Legal Service.

For more information, please see the Office of Student Affairs at https://osa.umn.edu/.

Academic Freedom and Responsibility: *for courses that do <u>not</u> involve students in research:*
Academic freedom is a cornerstone of the University. Within the scope and content of the course as defined by the instructor, it includes the freedom to discuss relevant matters in the classroom. Along with this freedom comes responsibility. Students are encouraged to develop the capacity for critical judgment and to engage in a sustained and independent search for truth. Students are free to take reasoned exception to the views offered in any course of study and to reserve judgment about matters of opinion, but they are responsible for learning the content of any course of study for which they are enrolled.*

OR:

Academic Freedom and Responsibility, for courses that involve students in research

Academic freedom is a cornerstone of the University. Within the scope and content of the course as defined by the instructor, it includes the freedom to discuss relevant matters in the classroom and conduct relevant research. Along with this freedom comes responsibility. Students are encouraged to develop the capacity for critical judgment and to engage in a sustained and independent search for truth. Students are free to take reasoned exception to the views offered in any course of study and to reserve judgment about matters of opinion, but they are responsible for learning the content of any course of study for which they are enrolled.*

When conducting research, pertinent institutional approvals must be obtained and the research must be consistent with University policies.

Reports of concerns about academic freedom are taken seriously, and there are individuals and offices available for help. Contact the instructor, the Department Chair, your adviser, the associate dean of the college, (Dr Kristin Anderson, SPH Dean of Student Affairs), or the Vice Provost for Faculty and Academic Affairs in the Office of the Provost.

* Language adapted from the American Association of University Professors "Joint Statement on Rights and Freedoms of Students".

Student Academic Success Services (SASS): http://www.sass.umn.edu**:**
Students who wish to improve their academic performance may find assistance from Student Academic Support Services.   While tutoring and advising are not offered, SASS provides resources such as individual consultations, workshops, and self-help materials.

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