

Course Syllabus
GS/NURS 5200 3.0 - Qualitative Research Methods in Nursing
Section A, Fall 2014

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Course Description

This on-line course focuses on the conceptual, ethical, methodological, and interpretive dimensions of qualitative nursing research. Emphasis is on the ontological-methodological link in the research process. Qualitative nursing research methods are analyzed and critiqued and practiced at a novice level.

Expanded Course Description

This course provides students with an opportunity to gain an understanding of the philosophical underpinnings of qualitative approaches to research. The conceptual, ethical, methodological, and interpretive dimensions of nursing knowledge development and nursing research methods are explored. Selected qualitative research designs are discussed, compared, and contrasted with respect to philosophical underpinnings, and specific data collection and analysis methods. This course also provides an opportunity for students to write a research proposal and to explore ways that qualitative nursing research can contribute to the enhancement of practice.

Learning Outcomes

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

1. Synthesize and articulate major points of critique and debate concerning nursing research paradigms.
2. Understand the common elements inherent in qualitative research methodologies and explore the chief elements of qualitative research methodologies commonly used in nursing.
3. Identify and begin to explore the core beliefs of the philosophical foundation related to selected qualitative methodologies.
4. Articulate and organize personal beliefs in relation to selected qualitative research methods.
5. Critically evaluate qualitative research papers in relation to appropriateness of approach, design, and rigor.
6. Discuss the process of using qualitative research findings for knowledge-based practice.
7. Explore development of a research project proposal based on qualitative research methods.
8. Develop research skills at a novice level.

Required Texts

Streubert, H. J. & Carpenter, D. R. (2011). *Qualitative research in nursing: Advancing the humanistic imperative*. Lippincott Williams & Wilkins, CA: Sage. ISBN 978-0-7817-9600-2 (available at the York Bookstore)

American Psychological Association. (2010). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.). Washington, DC: Author.

Recommended Texts:

Munhall, P. L. (2012). *Nursing research: A qualitative perspective* (5th ed.). Sudbury, MA: Jones & Bartlett Learning.

Polit, D. F., & Beck, C. T. (2008). *Nursing research: Generating and assessing evidence for nursing practice*. New York: Wolters Kluwer/Lippincott Williams & Wilkins.

Helpful tutorial: "The Basics of APA"

<http://www.apastyle.org/learn/tutorials/basics-tutorial.aspx>

Quick Answers: Formatting

<http://www.apastyle.org/index.aspx>

Writing in the Health Sciences

<http://hswriting.library.utoronto.ca/index.php/hswriting/index>

Other Readings

Articles/chapters posted on our course Moodle site each week by fellow students and professor. **Please do not post pdf files** of the article/chapters but rather provide the URL link to the article preferably through the YorkU library.

METHODS OF EVALUATIONS

1. Online Attendance and Contributions - 25%
2. Proposal Presentation - 15%
3. Qualitative Research Proposal - 60% in total, and consists of two (2) parts:
 - A) Introduction - 25% (due week 6)
 - B) Final proposal including research design and methods - 35% (due week 12)

DESCRIPTION OF EVALUATION METHODS

1) On-Line Attendance and Contributions: **Due December 7th (25%)**

- Students are required to log on to the course discussion website (Moodle discussion forums) and post a substantive contribution to the weekly discussion questions, which is supported with references to assigned or other relevant readings.
- The quality of discussion facilitation, participation in group discussions, and participation in learning activities will be weighted equally in assigning the participation mark.
- Participation in on-line, weekly discussions will be graded according to the following criteria:
 - regularity and quality of participation (e.g. issues/questions raised, close readings of texts)
 - critical analysis skills
 - clarity of articulation
 - depth of reflection
- **The course begins on September 8th, 2014 and each week will begin on a Monday (12.01am EST) and end on a Friday (11.59pm EST).**

This course is based in **complexity pedagogy** where learners and groups of learners are believed to be self-organizing. Thus, you will be given the opportunity to learn and seek information to enhance your learning in your own way, while sharing these resources and this learning with your fellow classmates. This approach also fosters concept-based learning while honouring the idea that learning is emergent (see as examples, Al-Quatwneh, 2009; Doll, 1993, Erickson, 2002, 2008; Giddens et al., 2008, in the references list).

Given a complexity pedagogical approach, students are required to engage frequently in online scholarly dialogue each week. The purpose of the online discussion is to create a learning community where students can share ideas, experiences, knowledge, and resources, thereby contributing to and supporting each other's deep and durable learning (Zorn, 2010). Leadership for the online discussion will be shared between the course professor and students. For instance, students will be required to seek out literature and resources that further *their understanding* of a concept under discussion each week beyond the course text. The resources and learning will then be shared with classmates in order to deepen the discussion and the learning. Contributions to the online discussion are expected to be substantive; that is, they should demonstrate analysis, synthesis, and critical reflection. Students are also expected to engage with the ideas under discussion by responding to and critiquing others' work. A *critique* involves expressing your judgement (i.e., what you think) about the ideas being considered.

There are two parts in the on-Line Attendance and Contributions grade:

(1) Peer-Evaluation of Proposal Presentations (5%)

Five percent of your participation grade will come from your evaluation of two student presentations. An evaluation form will be provided for you to fill out, which you will send to the professor who will collate the responses for the student being evaluated.

(2) Self Evaluation (20%)

Students are expected to complete a self-evaluation of participation using the criteria specified in the evaluation rubric. Evidence supporting the evaluation must be provided. Specifically, you are asked to submit a compilation of ten (10) postings in an Appendix, (each one, dated), with no more than one posting for any given week except for the week that you facilitated your proposal presentation where you can use up to 3 postings as examples of your participation.

Note: If the evidence provided does not adequately substantiate the self-evaluation, the course professor reserves the right to adjust the participation grade accordingly.

Suggestion: Since you will need to provide evidence to substantiate your participation, it is suggested that you begin by reviewing the evaluation rubric to get a better sense of expectations. Then, as you proceed through the course, flag examples of your postings at the end of each week, to use as "evidence" for your self-evaluation.

When you flag a posting, write yourself a note explaining the context, so that you don't have to go back and re-read all the discussions at the end of the course. This contextualization should help you in addressing the criteria for evaluation.

Note: You are expected to regularly access the Moodle course website and your yorku.ca e-mail account.

2) On-line Proposal Presentation (15%)– Weeks 8-11, Nov. 3rd- 28th

In Week 8, proposal presentations will begin, where the student presenting facilitates the discussion. You will present your proposal wherever you are at in the process of development and guide discussion related to your own questions that have arisen for you in the process of developing your proposal. Again, through the discussion new concepts may emerge that you may wish to explore.

The purpose of this assignment is to provide students with the opportunity to do a peer-reviewed research presentation on the phenomenon selected in the third assignment. You will be asked to share your presentation with your classmates, and they will be asked to provide feedback and an evaluation (which will be submitted to the professor and included in the overall evaluation).

Please note that your evaluation of classmates will also contribute to *your* participation grade – (see Attendance and Contributions grade description above).

Include the following elements in your presentation, organized in way that makes sense: identify the phenomenon of interest; indicate why this study is needed; state the purpose of the research; identify and briefly explain the guiding theoretical perspective; state the research question(s); identify and describe the qualitative research method selected; explain how the method would enable you to advance knowledge and understanding about the phenomenon of interest. Also, identify ontological-epistemological-methodological links in relation to your research plan.

Presentation Format: Be creative and use whatever artistic and/or audiovisual tools (e.g. original video) you wish to convey the essence of your proposal. If you are using PowerPoint please limit the presentation to **10 slides**, and use the Notes section to avoid cluttering the slides with words.

In addition to posting a presentation in the designated discussion forum, students are expected to facilitate dialogue and discussion about the presentations and guide further exploration into the phenomenon and concepts presented. Each student is expected to provide an evaluation of at least two presentations that you will be assigned to evaluate using a template created by professor.

3) **Qualitative Research Proposal (60% in total: 2 parts)**

- Proposal “Part A: Introduction” due Week 6 (25%); “Part B: Final proposal including research design and methods due Week 12 (35%)
- Each student will develop a research proposal over the course of this term.
- The proposal will be completed in 2 parts.
- The final proposal should be revised as needed, incorporating the course professor’s feedback on the proposal Part A.
- You will be asked to submit the full proposal at the end of the course. Ontological-epistemological-methodological congruence will be a criterion for evaluation.
- Length: The final proposal should be a maximum of 12 pages (excluding title page and references), double-spaced, 1” margins, Times New Roman, 12-font size. (These are the formatting expected for all 2 parts)

Note: Several sources you can use as guides for writing your paper:

There is a paper by Heath available online about what to include in a qualitative research proposal:

Heath, A.W. (1997). The proposal in qualitative research. *The Qualitative Report*, 3(1), <http://www.nova.edu/ssss/QR/QR3-1/heath.html>

Other examples of qualitative research proposals are in Streubert Speziale and Carpenter (2007) and Polit and Beck (2008).

Alternatively, you may select a guide from another source (See **Week 12 readings for examples**).

Include the source used as an example in your reference list.

(1) Part A: Introduction: Due October 19th, 2355hrs (25%)

Select a phenomenon of interest to nursing (for example, experiences related to health-illness/quality of life and/or nursing practice) that you would like to better understand, and write the introduction to a research proposal to study this phenomenon. For guidance on selecting a phenomenon amenable to study through qualitative research, see course text, Chapters 1 & 2. For example, it could be a universal experience (e.g., suffering, hope, or grieving a loss), or something specific to living with a particular situation or disease such as quality of life for persons living with diabetes. You will have an opportunity to explore, discuss and clarify your phenomenon of interest with your classmates in a discussion forum.

The proposal introduction should include the following elements, but they do not necessarily have to be addressed in this order. They should be organized in a way that makes sense, given the qualitative design/methodology/method, using appropriate headings (See Streubert and Carpenter 2011, p. 365).

Introduction/Background

- Identify the phenomenon of interest for your study (e.g. loss, grief, quality of life)
- Rationale for research approach
- Significance of the phenomenon to nursing (Significance of the phenomenon to nursing (i.e., how will the study contribute to nursing knowledge development?))
- Statement of purpose (you may wish to create a separate heading for your purpose after the introduction)

Review of the Literature

- Review of relevant research literature: briefly overview what is known about your phenomenon of interest, what are the gaps (this section will be further refined as you move through the course, just get a sense of what is out there at this point)
- All sources should be primary references <10 years old - if there are only a few studies about the phenomenon you are researching then you may need to go beyond the 10 years.
- This literature review will not be as comprehensive as you might have for a full proposal but please provide enough literature to substantiate the need to conduct the study

Theoretical perspective:

- Name and describe the theoretical perspective of your choice. This could be a nursing human science theory, or some other relevant perspective (e.g., critical theory, feminist theory, critical hermeneutics, etc.)
- Explain how this theoretical perspective will help guide your research specifically with the phenomenon you have chosen to research.

Research question:

- Wording your research question is very important. Often funders and reviewers of qualitative research will look to see that the proposal is congruent from the introduction to the theoretical framework, design and methods to analysis - and that they all make sense in answering your research question.
- Research questions can be worded differently dependent on the method used – explore in the literature different ways in which research questions are worded using the qualitative method you have chosen.

Evaluation Criteria: Please see grade expectations for graduate students at the end of this document along with the SOLO method of evaluation.

Part A should be no more than 5-6 pages (excluding title page and references), double-spaced, 1” margins, Times New Roman, 12-font size.

(2) Part B: Final proposal including research design and methods

Due Week 12 December 7th 2355 hrs (35%)

The full proposal consists of your revised Part A and research design and methods sections of your proposal. Ontological-epistemological-methodological congruence is a criterion for evaluation.

- The final proposal should be a maximum of **12** pages (excluding title page and references), double-spaced, 1” margins, Times New Roman, 12-font size.
- In the final section of the proposal, describe the research design and methodology. It should include **the following elements**:
 - Introduction of the research methodology and rationale for selecting it (i.e., how will it help you answer the research question?)
 - Participant selection-inclusion and exclusion criteria
 - Protection of participants and ethical considerations (How will you gain access to, and recruit, potential participants? How will their rights as research participants be protected? Include a consent form in an appendix.)
 - Data gathering (how will data be collected?)
 - Data management and analysis
 - Criteria and measures to ensure rigor in qualitative research
 - Plans for dissemination of findings
 - Potential implications for future research, teaching-learning, practice, and leadership
 - References (15-20 with a maximum of **25**)
 - Appendices
 - Consent form
 - Demographic form
 - Other supporting information/documents

For further information please see the website

http://www.yorku.ca/grads/policies_procedures/faculty_regulations.php?id=5

Lastly, please be sure to attend to the highest standards of academic integrity. There is a tutorial we recommend on academic integrity or you can ask questions on line—to me or a librarian. Please see the website http://www.yorku.ca/grads/policies_procedures/academic_honesty.html

The availability of scholarly material on the web means we must all take great care to reference others' ideas and never cut and paste a quote without a full reference (url) and page number. Please adhere to APA, 6th edition requirements for crediting resources.

If you have any questions, please ask first before using material.

As a *resource* for the assignment, see Chapter 16: *Writing a Qualitative Research Proposal*, in the course text, *as well as other chapters and/or articles related to the qualitative design/methodology you have selected*. It is important to note that you can choose other resources that make sense to you when writing up the qualitative proposal.

References

- Al-Qatawneh, K. (2009). Concept-Based Instruction and Teacher Planning and Student Achievement in Persuasive Writing. *International Journal of Education in Science* 1(1), 45-51
- Erickson, L.H. (2002). *Concept-based curriculum and instruction: Teaching beyond the facts*. Corwin Press: Thousand Oaks, CA.
- Erickson, L.H. (2008). *Stirring the head, heart and soul: Redefining curriculum, instruction and concept-based learning*. Corwin Press: Thousand Oaks, CA.
- Giddens, J., Brady, D., Brown, P., Wright, D., Smith, D., Harris, J. (2008). A New Curriculum and a NEW ERA of Nursing Education. *Nursing Education Perspectives*, 29, (4), 200-204.
- Zorn, D. (2010). *Enactive approach to education* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). Ontario Institute for Studies in Education/University of Toronto: Toronto, Canada. Manuscript in preparation.

Grading for Graduate Courses

Grades will be reported in accordance with the Faculty of Graduate Studies regulations (see below). Percentage equivalents of letter grades are those used in this program.

A+	90% and over	(Exceptional)
A	85-89%	(Excellent)
A-	80 – 84%	(High)
B+	75-79%	(Highly Satisfactory)
B	70-74%	(Satisfactory)
C	65-69%	(Conditional)
F	<65%	(Failure)
I		(Incomplete)

Expectations about Grading Levels in MScN Program

A description of general expectations related to grading levels follows (developed by Dr. Rose Steele and used with her permission).

A+ (Exceptional): Thorough knowledge of concepts and/or techniques and exceptional skill and/or originality in the use of those concepts/techniques in satisfying the requirements of an assignment.

Outstanding; work of exceptional quality. Content is complete, accurate, and at a high level; consistently strong in structure, expression, mechanics (grammar, punctuation, and spelling), and presentation. Well organized, linkages evident, and logical conclusions/proposals. Excellent comprehension of the subject; sound critical and analytical thinking; innovative ideas on the subject. Contains original and credible argument or presentation of the assigned topic with attention to many details and perspectives; excellent use of the literature, and draws on a wide range of current and/or relevant sources that serve as the foundation of arguments/proposals. Evidence of much effort and personal involvement with the topic. Writing style is clear and succinct with correct use of grammar, punctuation, spelling, and referencing format. Errors of expression are infrequent and do not detract from the assignment's effectiveness.

A- to A (High to Excellent): Thorough knowledge of concepts and/or techniques together with a high degree of skill and/or some elements of originality in satisfying the requirements of an assignment.

The principle difference between an 'A+' and an 'A' or 'A-' assignment is that the grader can find very few or no areas for improvement in an 'A+' assignment.

B to B+ (Satisfactory to Highly Satisfactory): Good to thorough knowledge of concepts and/or techniques together with a fairly high degree of skill in the use of those concepts/techniques in satisfying the requirements of an assignment. Good to very good quality work with no major weaknesses. Well focused on the topic; clear; explicit; discussion shows more than adequate

comprehension of the subject. Some degree of critical and analytical thinking; some use of the literature; most details and perspectives are discussed, but considerations of additional ones would have improved the assignment. Some evidence of personal involvement with the topic. In most cases, writing style is clear and succinct with correct paragraph and sentence structure, grammar, punctuation, spelling, and correct use of referencing format. Errors of expression are occasional rather than repeated and do not obscure meaning.

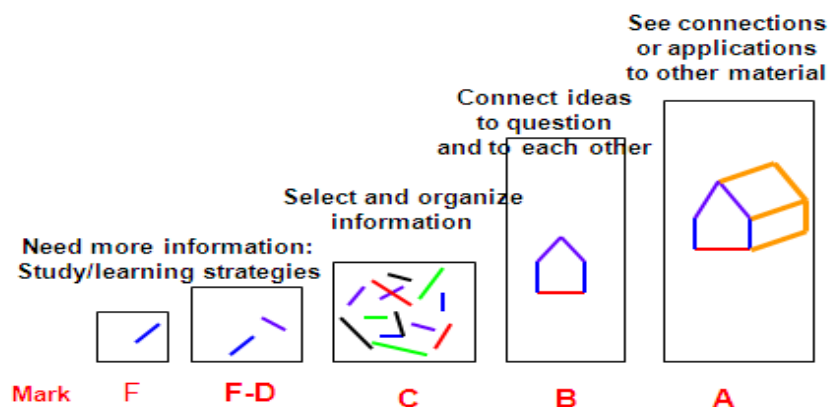
The principle difference between an “A-” assignment and a “B+” assignment is in the quality of the discussion. A “B” grade is a competent assignment of good quality with no major weaknesses; it is similar to a “B+” assignment, but with less evidence of critical and analytical thinking.

C (Conditional): Less than satisfactory level of knowledge of concepts and/or techniques together with some skill in using them to satisfy the requirements of an assignment. Overall, a less than adequate assignment. Fair comprehension of the subject, but some weaknesses in content and/or structure. Discussion is vague even though on topic; important details or perspectives are left out. Minimal use of the literature; minimal evidence of critical and analytical thinking; transitions may be inconsistent; evidence may be occasionally unconvincing or incomplete. At times lacks clarity and succinctness. Minimal evidence of personal involvement with the topic. Occasional/many errors in paragraph and sentence structure, grammar, punctuation, spelling, and referencing format, but not so serious or repetitive that they make the assignment difficult or impossible to understand.

The principle difference between a “B” assignment and a “C” assignment is in the quality of the discussion with the “C” assignment being more vague than the “B” assignment. A “C” assignment may have more errors in structure etc. than are acceptable in a “B” assignment.

Please see SOLO framework on the next page to visualize the grade expectations (for example, in a B assignment the ideas are organized but they are not as well connected to one another and synthesized as in an A assignment). The words above the images provide guidance for moving from one grade to the next.

SOLO – linked to strategic feedback



Used with permission by Ros Woodhouse (2011).

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

As a graduate student, you are expected to be aware of the importance of academic integrity and to be familiar with *York's Senate Policy on Academic Policy*. Violating academic integrity can have serious consequences. Before you begin the course, please read *Academic Integrity in Courses at York*, available: <http://www.yorku.ca/academicintegrity/students/index.htm>
Please complete the online tutorial and quiz on academic honesty if you have not already done so in a previous course (see under resources on our Moodle site).

In addition, *Turnitin* will be used to assist you with your assignments as you can submit an assignment more than once, in order to view the *originality* report prior to submitting the final version of your paper. You will receive an originality report immediately after you submit your paper the first time. The second and subsequent times you submit revised versions of your paper you will have to wait 24 hours to receive the report. You just click onto the Originality button when you are in Turnitin and you will see highlighted areas that may require further citation, quotation marks, or page numbers. I say *may require* since at times the highlighted text may be information that is commonly used phrase, your professor's name, or the name of the course etc. When you click onto the highlighted area the matched text will be identified. A separate link will be provided for each assignment submission, in the "Activities" area on our course website (top left hand corner). You do not have to set up your own account – Turnitin is embedded in Moodle. Also at York you are not required to use Turnitin. Please let me know if you choose to not use Turnitin.