Southern Illinois University at Carbondale  
Department of Educational Administration & Higher Education

**EAHE 587**  
**Introduction to Qualitative Research Methods**

5:00-7:40pm, Thursdays  
Pulliam 118  
**Spring 2015**

Dr. Sosanya Jones  
Assistant Professor  
smjones@siu.edu

Office Location: Pulliam Hall, Room #128C; Telephone Number: #453-6066  
Office Hours: Mondays 1-4pm, Thursdays 1-4pm & by appointment

This course is designed to introduce students to the foundations, design, methods, analyses, and presentation of qualitative research. Our course readings will include philosophical texts about the epistemologies (ways of knowing) and purposes of qualitative inquiry as well as readings that discuss and provide examples of common qualitative methodologies and application of research techniques.

**Prerequisite:** doctoral standing or consent of course instructor.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

- Develop an understanding of “what” qualitative research is and “how” it can be applied in practice
- Understand the foundations, paradigms, and various traditions of qualitative research
- Understand the claims to validity and knowledge made by qualitative methods
- Understand the researcher’s role as an instrument in qualitative inquiry
- Understand and practice selected qualitative methods and techniques
- To actively start to think like a qualitative researcher and engage in qualitative research design and analyses
COURSE TEXTS

There are two required textbooks for this course and one required film viewing. We will be drawing from the texts extensively. These books are available at the university bookstore. You are welcome to purchase them online, but please make sure to obtain this specific edition.


In addition to the textbooks, we will be reading articles and essays. These will be made available via Desire to Learn [D2L]. When available, we will also be making use of D2L for online links and to share information with each other. You will need a valid siu.edu email account, and an updated DAWG ID number. D2L can be accessed at: http://online.siu.edu. When the reading is posted, you are expected to download it and bring it with you in either hard copy or electronic form for each class session. We will spend a great deal of time reading aloud, referencing, questioning and discussing the assigned texts.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

You are expected to thoughtfully engage in class readings, discussion, and activities. You will be graded on a variety of structured in and out of classroom assignments designed to introduce you to some of the core concepts of skills of qualitative research. Your final grade will be based upon class participation, classroom assignments, and research assignments. Each of these components is described below.

a. **Class Participation (70%)**: Your class participation grade will also include your participation in a variety of in-class activities and discussions, which are listed below:
   i. In-Class Discussion (5%)
   ii. Observations (10%)
   iii. Research Question & Tradition Exercise and Revised Memo (10%):
   iv. Researcher Identity Exercise (5%)
   v. Rigor and Trustworthiness Exercise (10%):
   vi. In Class Interview Construction and Critiques (10%)
   vii. Group Document Analysis Memo & Presentation (10%)
   viii. Book Quiz (10%)

b. **Research Assignments (30%)**: 
   i. Ethics Examination (5%)
   ii. Methods Memo (10%)
   iii. Final Paper and Presentation (15%)
EVALUATION
All in class assignments for this class must be written clearly with legible handwriting. All take home memos and papers must be typed, double-spaced, and use 1 inch margins all around and 12 point font. You will be required to use APA formatting. If you receive grades on your written work that you don’t understand or are not happy with, you should visit me during office hours or schedule a time to discuss it with me. In general, the following criteria apply for all written work:

- **A level work** reflects substantial effort, is proof-read, and well thought out. Guidelines for the assignment have been followed thoroughly, and have been carried out in an organized, coherent, and thorough manner. Arguments are well-cited with appropriate sources, use supportive examples, and are written in a compelling and persuasive manner. For papers and long essays, there is an introduction, conclusion, and transition between sections. The mechanics of the paper are excellent with very few grammatical or spelling errors.

- **B level work** reflects satisfactory quality and a clear effort to complete the assignment. Most of the aspects of the assignment are covered in an adequate and organized manner. Supportive examples are given and arguments are organized and sensible. There is a clear structure to the paper. The mechanics of the paper are acceptable; however there may be some minor grammatical and/or spelling errors. However, these errors do not detract substantially from the clarity, organization, or content of the paper/essay.

- **C level work and below** is unsatisfactory. The paper reflects a lack of proof-reading, understanding of the material, and/or lack of effort to address the guidelines for the assignment. The structure, clarity, and/or mechanics of the paper are below what is expected of graduate level work.

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT & WORKGROUPS
In a graduate seminar, everyone assumes responsibility for the quality of the class. You are expected to engage in scholarly discussion, exchange of ideas, and practice collegiality. You will be expected to share your thoughts, offer evidence for your claims, and bring an open mind to what others are sharing as well.

Since we will spend the vast majority of our time engaged in discussion and group activities, it is very important that we work together to foster a safe, cooperative, and collegial learning community.
ACADEMIC DISHONESTY & PLAGIARISM

Academic dishonesty and plagiarism will not be tolerated. According to the SIU Plagiarism Committee (2007) plagiarism is defined as: “presenting existing work as one’s own”. Plainly speaking, any ideas or language or visual design taken from another source, including one’s own work, must be fully acknowledged unless the information is common knowledge. What is considered ‘common knowledge’ may differ from subject to subject.

To avoid plagiarizing, one must not adopt or reproduce material from existing work without acknowledging the original source. Existing work includes but is not limited to ideas, opinions, theories, formulas, graphics, and pictures.

Examples of plagiarism, subject to interpretation, include but are not limited to directly quoting another’s actual words, whether oral or written; using another’s ideas, opinions, or theories; paraphrasing the words, ideas, opinions, or theories of others, whether oral or written; borrowing facts, statistics, or illustrative material; and offering materials assembled or collected by others in the form of projects or collections without acknowledgment.” (SIU College of Education and Human Services, 2013).

Individuals suspected of academic misconduct will be handled according to established Southern Illinois University policies. In this course, if you plagiarize any aspect of any of the written assignments, you will receive a grade of F for the assignment and, as appropriate, for the class. Additionally, I reserve the right to use software to periodically scan for plagiarism, as well as the right to ask you for an electronic copy of your work for any assignment.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Southern Illinois University Carbondale is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for study and work. Because some health and safety circumstances are beyond our control, we ask that you become familiar with the SIUC Emergency Response Plan and Building Emergency Response Team (BERT) program. Emergency response information is available on posters in buildings on campus, available on the BERT’s website at <http://www.bert.siu.edu/>, Department of Public Safety’s website <http://www.dps.siu.edu/> (disaster drop down) and in the Emergency Response Guidelines pamphlet. Know how to respond to each type of emergency. Instructors will provide guidance and direction to students in the classroom in the event of an emergency affecting your location. It is important that you follow these instructions and stay with your instructor during an evacuation or sheltering emergency. The Building Emergency Response Team will provide assistance to your instructor in evacuating the building or sheltering within the facility.
ACCOMODATIONS

Students with a disability who require reasonable accommodations should discuss the matter with Disability Support Services (DSS) and the professor during the first week of this semester. DSS staff members are available to consult with students regarding appropriate academic accommodations and adaptations. Students can contact DSS at 618-453-5738, or stop by the office in Woody Hall B150. More information about Disability Support Services is available at: http://disabilityservices.siuc.edu/.
# COURSE SCHEDULE

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thursday, January 22, 2015</td>
<td>Course Overview, Introductions,</td>
<td>- Syllabus, course expectations and other activities.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday, January 29, 2015</td>
<td>Introductions, Foundations &amp; Ideologies</td>
<td>- Assignment Due: Bring in your observation notes from last class and 1-3 research questions (RQs) you would like use to develop a hypothetical research study to explore one phenomenon or area of interest in detail.</td>
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<td>Thursday, February 5, 2015</td>
<td>Qualitative Traditions &amp; New Forms of Research</td>
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<td>Thursday, February 12, 2015</td>
<td>The Researcher as an Instrument: Reflexivity and Positionality</td>
<td>- Assignment Due: Revised Research Question and Tradition Memo</td>
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Thursday, February 26, 2015  
**Ethics**

- **Assignment Due:** Ethics Examination Certificate

**Readings:**

Thursday, March 5, 2015  
**Designing a Qualitative Research Study**


Thursday, March 12, 2015  
**Spring Break**

No Class! Work on refining your interview protocol.

Thursday, March 19, 2015  
**Qualitative Data Methods**

- **Assignment Due:** Bring in a *rough draft of an interview protocol* for your hypothetical study

**Readings:**
- Chenail, R. (2011). Interviewing the Investigator: Strategies for Addressing Instrumentation and Researcher Bias Concerns in Qualitative Research. Nova Southeastern University, Fort Lauderdale, Florida USA.

Thursday, March 26, 2015  
**Film Viewing**

**Readings:**

Thursday, April 2, 2015  
**Data Analysis Part I: Coding**

- **Assignment Due:** *Methods Memo* due
- **Assignment Due:** Bring in a copy of your coding notes from your viewing of “Wall-E”. We’ll be using these in workgroups to discuss and practice coding.

Thursday, April 9, 2015  Data Analysis Part I: Dialogue & Reflection

➢ **Assignment Due:** Group Document Analysis Memo

**Readings:**

Thursday, April 16, 2015  Data Analysis Part II: Analysis, Iteration, & Reframing

**Readings:**

Thursday, April 23, 2015  Common Pitfalls and Challenges

**Readings:**

Thursday, April 30, 2015  Conclusions

**Readings:**

Thursday, May 7, 2015  Final Presentations and Paper

➢ **Assignment Due:** Final Paper and Presentation (see assignment guidelines).