Qualitative Research in Nursing and Health
NUR 990 Special Topics (3 credits)
Tuesdays, 10am-4pm
Room 500 West Fee Hall
Summer 2008

Course Description
This course introduces students to the epistemology, research design, participant recruitment, and data analysis strategies of health research using the major qualitative research approaches (phenomenology, grounded theory and ethnography). Students will gain hand-on data analysis practice using qualitative software. Students will develop skills for analyzing the quality of research reports and plans. Finally, students will conceptualize a research plan from a qualitative perspective in their area of interest. Ethical, gender and power issues will be explored throughout the course.

Course Objectives
1. Compare and contrast the qualitative and quantitative research paradigms, and develop a position regarding the strengths, weakness and complementarities of these research methodologies.

2. Describe the philosophy, aims, sampling methods, data collection procedures and analysis strategies of the three major types of qualitative methods used in nursing research.

3. Critique published qualitative research papers, presentations and/or qualitative research grant applications according to the NIH guidelines.

4. Use the appropriate strategies to analyze and report the findings from a small amount of qualitative data individually or as part of a team.

5. Demonstrate beginning level facility with one qualitative research method by conceptualizing a question, sampling plan, interview protocol, and analysis plan.

Prerequisites
Open to masters and doctoral students in health related disciplines or approval of college.
Course Faculty

Denise Saint Arnault, Ph.D., RN
Associate Professor
B 510B West Fee Hall
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Instruction

1. Methodology. This interactive course will meet six class hours weekly for seven weeks. The course incorporates seminar, class discussion, demonstration, hand-on practice, student lead presentations and discussion of outside of class activities.

2. Required Textbooks.
   d. Other readings as assigned

3. Optional (Recommended) Textbooks.

4. Required learning activities
   a. Two page report analysis. Students will find a nursing research article published in a peer reviewed journal that is carried out using the research design under study. Students should select an article relevant to their area of interest if possible. Articles selected require faculty approval. The report will examine the article from the perspective of the content covered in the class, including research question, design, sampling plan, analysis plan, findings and discussion of the importance of the findings to the advancement of nursing science (three reports due, each worth 10% of the final grade).
   b. Research article critique. Using the guidelines presented in the readings, students will evaluate the quality of any qualitative research report. Students should select a report from a peer reviewed journal on a topic relevant to their research (20% of final grade).
   c. Independent research plan. Students will develop a research plan that includes a clinical problem, qualitative research question, a design statement, sampling plan, data gathering and analysis plan and Human Subjects considerations. This activity includes two evaluation components: students will present this plan to the class
(worth 20% of final grade) and submit the project as either an IRB or research proposal format (worth 30% of final grade).

**Course Grading Scale**
The Michigan State University 4.0 grading system will be used to calculate final course grades.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage Range</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100-94%</td>
<td>4.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>93-89%</td>
<td>3.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>84-88%</td>
<td>3.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>83-79%</td>
<td>2.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>75-78%</td>
<td>2.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>74-70%</td>
<td>1.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>65-69%</td>
<td>1.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>≤64%</td>
<td>0</td>
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Points will be rounded to the nearest whole numbers using the “0.5 rule.” Points at the ≥ 0.5 will be rounded up while those ≤ 0.5 will be rounded down to the nearest whole number.
### Class activities and Evaluation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings and Due dates</th>
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| One May 13 | Foundations  
  - Research paradigms for qualitative  
  - Strengths and limitations  
  - Evaluating the appropriate approach for the research question  
  - Issues in qualitative and quantitative research  
    - truth value: credibility and internal validity  
    - applicability: transferability and external validity  
    - consistency: dependability and reliability  
    - neutrality: conformability and objectivity  
    - power  
  - Researching individual research questions  
  - Analysis techniques and software: Atlas ti  | Holloway (H): Ch. 1, 2, 3 and 6  
Speziale and Carpenter (S&C): Ch. 1 |
| Two May 20 | Phenomenenology  
  - Design  
  - Interview construction  
  - Participant recruitment  
  - Data collection and analysis  
  - Issues and strategies | Readings TBA  
2 page analysis of a Phenomenology article in your research area due |
| Three May 27 | Grounded theory  
  - Design  
  - Interview construction  
  - Participant recruitment  
  - Data collection and analysis  
  - Issues and strategies | H: Ch. 9  
S&C: Ch. 7-8  
2 page analysis of a grounded theory article in your research area due |
| Four June 3 | Ethnography and field methods  
  - Design  
  - Interview construction  
  - Participant recruitment  
  - Data collection and analysis  
  - Issues and strategies | H: Ch. 5 & 10  
S&C: Ch. 9-10  
2 page analysis of an ethnographic article in your research area due |
| Five June 10 | Application  
  - Defining a clinical problem and research question, developing a sampling strategy  
  - Developing interview, data collection and management plan and ethical issues | H: Ch. 15  
S&C: Ch. 2, 3 |
**Students work in teams to analyze data**

- Students work in teams to analyze data
- Critiquing qualitative research for dissemination and funding
- Dissemination—finding the findings
- NIH qualitative research report

**Writing Requirements**

The College of Nursing requires that students refer to a style manual when writing required papers and bibliographies. The reference format adopted by the College of Nursing is the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (most recent edition).

**Professionalism**

All graduate students at Michigan State University should be fully familiar with the Graduate Student Rights and Responsibilities Articles (published by the Graduate School; available at [http://www.vps.msu.edu/SpLife/gradrights.htm](http://www.vps.msu.edu/SpLife/gradrights.htm)); University guidelines for ethical research (published by the University Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects [UCRIHS]; available at [http://www.msu.edu/user/ucrihs/](http://www.msu.edu/user/ucrihs/)); The MSU Guidelines for Integrity in Research and Creative Activities, [http://grad.msu.edu/all/ris04activities.pdf](http://grad.msu.edu/all/ris04activities.pdf) and specific principles for informal conflict management, in the Graduate Student Resource Guide (published by the Graduate School; available at [http://grad.msu.edu/conflict.htm](http://grad.msu.edu/conflict.htm)).

The Graduate Student Rights and Responsibilities (GSRR) Articles address professional standards for graduate students as follows: “Each department/school and college shall communicate to graduate students, at the time of their first enrollment in a degree program or course in the unit, any specific codes of professional and academic standards covering the conduct expected of them.” (Article 2.4.7). “The graduate student shares with the faculty the responsibility for maintaining the integrity of scholarship, grades, and professional standards” (Article 2.3.8).

In addition to meeting academic standards included in the Academic Progression Guidelines, students and faculty in the Doctoral Program in Nursing have shared responsibility for adherence to the professional standards referred to in the Doctoral Student Handbook of the CON.

Professional expectations are rooted in the maintenance of high quality working relationships with faculty, peers, research participants, staff, and all others with whom the graduate student interacts. Aspects of high quality working relationships that are addressed in the GSRR as shared faculty-student responsibilities include: mutual respect, understanding, and dedication to the education process (2.1.2); maintenance of a collegial atmosphere (2.3.7); and, mutual trust and civility (2.3.1.2).
Communication. Faculty can be reached through email or phone. Faculty response to email may take up to 3 days.

Policies

Academic Integrity: Article 2.3.3 of the Academic Freedom Report states that "The student shares with the faculty the responsibility for maintaining the integrity of scholarship, grades, and professional standards." In addition, the College of Nursing adheres to the policies on academic honesty as specified in General Student Regulations 1.0, Protection of Scholarship and Grades; the all-University Policy on Integrity of Scholarship and Grades; and Ordinance 17.00, Examinations. (See Spartan Life: Student Handbook and Resource Guide and/or the MSU Web site: www.msu.edu.) Therefore, unless authorized by your instructor, you are expected to complete all course assignments, including homework, lab work, quizzes, tests and exams, without assistance from any source. You are expected to develop original work for this course; therefore, you may not submit course work you completed for another course to satisfy the requirements for this course. Also, you are not authorized to use the www.allmsu.com Web site to complete any course work in NUR 901. Students who violate MSU rules may receive a penalty grade, including--but not limited to--a failing grade on the assignment or in the course. Contact your instructor if you are unsure about the appropriateness of your course work. (See also http://www.msu.edu/unit/ombud/honestylinks.html).

Students engaged in scholarly activities (e.g. dissertation, scholarly projects) should follow the guidelines of scholarly writing as outlined in the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (most recent edition). Ethical principles ensure the accuracy of scientific and scholarly knowledge and protect intellectual rights. Principles include reporting of results, plagiarism, publication credit, sharing data, and copyright.

Research Misconduct and Questionable Research Practices within the college are defined consistently with the Interim University Document on Intellectual Integrity approved by the President of Michigan State University on August 5, 1994, and revised June 29, 1995. Refer to the CON Doctoral Student Handbook.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: Students with disabilities should contact the Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities to establish reasonable accommodations. For an appointment with a disability specialist, call 353-9642 (voice), 355-1293 (TTY), or visit MyProfile.rcpd.msu.edu.

Disruptive Behavior: Article 2.3.5 of the Academic Freedom Report (AFR) for students at Michigan State University states: "The student's behavior in the classroom shall be conducive to the teaching and learning process for all concerned." Article 2.3.10 of the AFR states that "The student has a right to scholarly relationships with faculty based on mutual trust and civility." General Student Regulation 5.02 states: "No student shall . . . interfere with the functions and services of the University (for example, but not limited to, classes . . .) such that the function or service is
obstructed or disrupted. Students whose conduct adversely affects the learning environment in this classroom may be subject to disciplinary action through the Student Faculty Judiciary process.

**Attendance:** Students whose names do not appear on the official class list for this course may not attend this class. Students who fail to attend the first four class sessions or class by the fifth day of the semester, whichever occurs first, may be dropped from the course.

(Attendance policy, if different from the University attendance policy and especially when the attendance policy affects students' grades. For details, see Attendance Policy, Excused Absences and Make-up Work on the Ombudsman's Web site. This site includes discussion of student observance of major religious holidays, student-athlete participation in athletic competition, student participation in university-approved field trips, medical excuses and a dean's drop for students who fail to attend class sessions at the beginning of the semester).

College of Nursing policies regarding Professional Development Guidelines [found in CON Student Handbooks at CON website]. Students are responsible for the information found in the CON Doctoral Student Handbook

Effective conflict management/negotiation skills are essential for navigating the graduate school experience and maintaining high quality working relationships. Specific principles for conflict management/negotiation are addressed in the Graduate Student Resource Guide. Doctoral students are responsible for making concerted good faith efforts to resolve conflicts with others in a constructive and informal fashion, prior to proceeding to formal conflict resolution options, as consistent with the GSRR statement on informal conflict resolution (Article 5.3.2). Doctoral students who have specific questions or concerns about professional standards or conflict resolution issues should consult with their Major Professor, the Associate Dean for Research and Doctoral Programs, and/or the University Ombudsman for guidance, as appropriate.