

Kvalitativ samhällsvetenskaplig metod
Qualitative Methods in the Social Sciences
Course Responsible: Vanessa Barker
Stockholm University
HT 2024

Course Plan

1. Decision

The course plan has been approved by the Board of the Department of Sociology, Stockholm University as of February 2023.

2. General Information

The course consists of 7.5 ECTS credits and is at the Advanced Level.

3. Course Code

SO7040

4. Education requirements

Bachelor degree or 3 semesters of Sociology.

5. Course Description

This course aims to introduce advanced students to a range of qualitative methods and techniques for data processing and data analysis. We examine the underlying logic of different qualitative methods and how qualitative researchers approach questions of causality, inference, conceptualization, measurement and social meaning in social science research. Students will become familiar with a range of techniques for data collection and specific methods for interpreting and analyzing data. Students will conduct independent field research and apply a specific qualitative method and technique to data analysis on a selected topic.

6. Intended Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

- Identify and describe a range of qualitative methods for data processing
- Demonstrate knowledge of the underlying logic of different qualitative methods
- Evaluate different qualitative methods and techniques for data collection
- Evaluate different qualitative methods and techniques for data analysis
- Apply a specific type of qualitative method to data analysis

7. Teaching & Learning Activities

The course is provided at half time basis for 10 weeks. Teaching is conducted through lectures, seminars, and student-centered activities. Students are expected to do the following:

- Complete assigned reading before each class meeting;
- Participate actively in class discussion;
- Conduct independent Field Research;
- Complete written assignments

8. Assessment

Assessment is based on how well students accomplish the Intended Learning Outcomes (outlined above) as demonstrated in written work and participation. Each assignment is weighted and scaled as follows:

Final Research Paper	100
Presentation	Pass/Fail
Participation	Pass/Fail

Course Work is evaluated according to the following standard reference criteria:

A= This grade is earned when the student demonstrates his/her ability to apply a specific AQM to a particular research problem in a sophisticated, reflexive, coherent, consistent, and logical way. The student can analyze both advantages and limitations of the particular method selected. The student can accurately compare, contrast, and critically evaluate varying qualitative approaches to research design and carry out an independent research project using AQM. The student is engaged in class discussion and actively participates, demonstrating a high level of understanding of core principles of AQM.

B= This grade is earned when the student demonstrates his/her ability to apply a specific AQM to a particular research problem in a coherent and consistent way but may lack a reflexive or sophisticated understanding of the underlying principles. The student can analyze both advantages and limitations of the particular method selected but may place more emphasis on one or the other. The student can accurately compare, contrast, and critically evaluate varying qualitative approaches to research design and carry out an independent research project using AQM. The student is engaged in class discussion and participates, demonstrating a solid level of understanding of core principles of AQM.

C= This grade is earned when the student demonstrates his/her ability to apply a specific AQM to a particular research problem in a coherent way but lacks a reflexive or sophisticated understanding of the underlying principles. At a basic level, the student can explain the advantages and limitations of the particular method selected. The student can accurately compare and contrast varying qualitative approaches to research design but may show limits with critical evaluation. The student can carry out an independent research project using AQM but may need some guidance. The student is engaged in class discussion and participates, demonstrating a basic level of understanding of core principles of AQM.

D= This grade is earned when the student has some difficulty demonstrating his/her ability to apply a specific AQM to a particular research problem in a coherent way. The student can explain some of the advantages and limitations of the particular method selected but may also include inaccuracies and weak understanding. The student cannot accurately compare and contrast varying qualitative approaches to research design and cannot sufficiently critically evaluate them. The student has difficulty carrying out an independent research project using AQM without substantial guidance. The student is disengaged from class discussion and demonstrates a lower level of understanding of core principles of AQM.

E= This grade is earned when the student some difficulty demonstrating his/her ability to apply a specific AQM to a particular research problem in a coherent way. The student can explain some of the advantages and limitations of the particular method selected but may also include inaccuracies and weak understanding. The student cannot accurately compare and contrast varying qualitative approaches to research design and cannot sufficiently critically evaluate them. The student has difficulty carrying out an independent research project using AQM without substantial guidance. The student is disengaged from class discussion and demonstrates a very low level of understanding of core principles of AQM.

Fx= This grade is earned when the student cannot complete the work assigned for the course. The student cannot apply a specific AQM to a particular research problem in a coherent way. The student cannot explain the advantages and limitations of the particular method selected without inaccuracies. The student cannot accurately compare and contrast varying qualitative approaches to research design and cannot sufficiently critically evaluate them. The student cannot carry out an independent research project using AQM without substantial guidance. The student is disengaged from class discussion and demonstrates a very low level of understanding of core principles of AQM.

F= This grade is earned when the student cannot complete the work assigned for the course. The student cannot apply a specific AQM to a particular research problem in a coherent way. The student cannot explain the advantages and limitations of the particular method selected without inaccuracies. The student cannot accurately compare and contrast varying qualitative approaches to research design and cannot sufficiently critically evaluate them. The student cannot carry out an independent research project using AQM without substantial guidance. The student has not attended at least half of the class meetings.

Note: E grade is needed to pass the course. Fx indicates that the student is offered the opportunity to upgrade his/her course work as long as the course is provided in order to achieve at least E grade. A student with E grade is not entitled to redo course work to raise his/her grade. Students who receive Fx or F on course work twice from the same instructor can request to be evaluated by another instructor. Such a request should be sent to the Director of Studies. Students can request to have course work according to this syllabus up to three semesters after it ceases to be valid. Such a request should be sent to the Director of Studies.

9. Schedule of class meetings

Time Edit

<https://cloud.timeedit.net/su/web/stud1/ri10c84Q056Z5ZQ6056207a0yn066W73h9Y68Q0Q9474QZy5xxv.html>

Schema

Day	Date	Time	Topic	Location
Monday	2 Sept	9-11	Principles, Research Design & Ethics	B800
Tuesday	3 Sept	9-11	Ethnography: Institutional approaches; Andrea Voyer	B800
Wednesday	4 Sept*	15.30-16.45	Danielle Drozdowski on research tool QualNotes *optional workshop	B800
Friday	6 Sept	9-12	Interviews and What Can they tell us: Workshop Mikaela Sundberg	B800
Wednesday	11 Sept	9-11	Interviewing: Life Histories Anna Lund	B900
Wednesday	18 Sept	9-11	Case Studies & Social Autopsy: Heat Wave	B900
Thursday	19 Sept	9-11	Global methods Object biography	B800
Monday	23 Sept	9-11	Comparative Historical: Daniel Ritter	B800
Wednesday	25 Sept	9-11	Digital Methods: Elida Ibrahim	B800
Thursday	26 Sept	9-11	Data Analysis	B800
Wednesday	16 Oct	Kl 12	Drafts Due online	Athena
Thursday	17 Oct	9-11	Peer Workshop	B800
Thursday	24 Oct	9-12	Presentations & Final Papers Due	B800

Required Literature:

Creswell, J (2017) *Qualitative Inquiry & Research Design: Choosing among Five Approaches*, 4th edition. SAGE.

Klinenberg, E (2002) *Heat Wave: A Social Autopsy of Disaster in Chicago*. University of Chicago Press.

Lareau, Annette (2021) *Listening to People: A Practical Guide to Interviewing, Participants Observation, Data Analysis and Writing it All Up*. University of Chicago Press.

Articles and Chapters listed on Course plan and posted on Athena

10. Topics and Reading assignments

Principles of Qualitative Method

Creswell, J. Chapters 1-2 in *Qualitative Inquiry*

Lareau, A (2021) Chapter 1 “The Emergent Nature of the Research Process”

Lareau, A (2021) Chapter 2 “Dreaming and Thinking”

Research Design

Creswell, Chapters 3-5

Discourse Analysis

Fairclough, Norman (2003). “Texts, Social Events and Social Practices” pp. 21-38 in *Analysing discourse: textual analysis for social research*. New York: Routledge.

Ethnography

Creswell pages 90-97;

Creswell, Appendix E

Lareau, A (2021) Chapter 6 “Learning to do Participant Observation”

Rios, V. (2011). APPENDIX: Beyond Jungle-Book Tropes. In *Punished: Policing the Lives of Black and Latino Boys* (pp. 169-174). NYU Press.

Small, M. L. (2015). De-Exoticizing Ghetto Poverty: On the Ethics of Representation in Urban Ethnography. *City & Community*, 14(4), 352–358. <https://doi-org.ezp.sub.su.se/10.1111/cico.12137>

Rankin, J. (2017). Conducting Analysis in Institutional Ethnography: Guidance and Cautions. *INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF QUALITATIVE METHODS*, 16(1). <https://doi-org.ezp.sub.su.se/10.1177/1609406917734472>

Recommended/Optional

Voyer, A. (2019) ‘If the students don’t come, or if they don’t finish, we don’t get the money.’ Principals, immigration, and the organisational logic of school choice in Sweden, *Ethnography and Education*, 14:4, 448-464, DOI: 10.1080/17457823.2018.1445540

Interviews and What Can they tell us Workshop

Sundberg, M. (2015) *A Sociology of the Total Organization: Atomistic Unity in the French Foreign Legion*. Routledge. Electronic resource through library. Obligatory reading: pp. 1-4, 13-18 (part of chapter 1), 211-217 (Methodological appendix A). (in total 14 p)

Sundberg, M. (2020) Differences in Secondary Adjustments among Monks and Nuns. *Current Sociology*. Online first. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0011392120905339>, pp-1-6, 9-12. (6 p in total)

Creswell, pages 70-88

Creswell, Appendices B, C, D

Creswell, Chapter 6-7

Interviewing: Life Histories

Lamont, M. & Swidler, A. (2014) Methodological Pluralism and the Possibilities and Limits of Interviewing. *Qualitative Sociology* 37, 153-171.
Lareau, A (2021) Chapter 5, "How to Conduct a Good Interview"

Recommended

Bourdieu, Pierre. 1999. "Understanding" in *The Weight of the World*. Stanford: Stanford University Press. Pp. 607-626 (on Athena)

Digital Methods

Chapter 3, "Do we need new methods?" pp 78-115. Noortje Marres, *Digital Sociology: The Re-Invention of Social Research*

Marres, N, Weltevrede, E (2015) Scraping the social? Issues in real-time research. In: Bouchard, J, Candel, É, Cardy, H (eds) *Le Médiatisation de l'Évaluation/Evaluation in the Media*. Berlin: Peter Lang.

Tidenberg, K. (2018) Ethics in Digital Research. In: Flick, U. (Ed.). (2017). *The Sage handbook of qualitative data collection*. Sage.

Resource on Doing Fieldwork during a Pandemic

Recommended:

Hine, *Ethnography for the Internet*

Light, B., Burgess, J., & Duguay, S. (2018). The walkthrough method: An approach to the study of apps. *New Media & Society*, 20(3), 881-900.

Case Studies & Social Autopsy

Flyvberg, B "Chapter 17: Case Study"

Klinenberg, E. (2002) *Heat Wave: A Social Autopsy of Disaster in Chicago* (University of Chicago Press).

Gerring John. 2007. "What is a Case Study and What is it Good for?"

Creswell, pp. 97-110

Barker, V (2018) Appendix, *Nordic Nationalism and Penal Order: Walling the Welfare State* (available as ebook at SU)

Recommended:

Gerring, John. 2007. *Case Study Research*

Goertz and Mahoney (2012) *A Tale of Two Cultures: Qualitative and Quantitative Research in the Social Sciences*

Global & decolonizing Methods

Knowles, C (2009) Shoes and Social Fabric. On Object Ethnography.

Darian-Smith and Smith (2017) *Global methods*. Selections on Athena.

Recommended:

Indigenous Methodology, selections on Athena

On decolonizing digital methods, selections from *Algorithms of Oppression* by Safiya Noble on Athena

Comparative & Historical Analysis

Ritter, Daniel P. (2014). "Comparative Historical Analysis." Pp. 97-116 in *Methodological Practices in Social Movement Research*, edited by D. della Porta. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Mahoney, James. 2004. 'Comparative-Historical Methodology'. *Annual Review of Sociology* 30: 81-101.

Mahoney, James, Erin Kimball, and Kendra L. Koivu. 2009. 'The Logic of Historical Explanation in the Social Sciences'. *Comparative Political Studies* 42(1): 114-46.

Mill, John Stuart. 1974 [1843]. *A System of Logic, Ratiocinative and Inductive: Being a Connected View of the Principles of Evidence*. Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press.

Recommended:

Skocpol, Theda. 2003. 'Doubly Engaged Social Science: The Promise of Comparative Historical Analysis'. Pp. 407-28 in *Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences*, edited by James Mahoney and Dietrich Rueschemeyer. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Skocpol, Theda, and Margaret Somers. 1980. 'The Uses of Comparative History in Macrosocial Inquiry'. *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 22(2): 174-97.

In Mahoney, James. 2003. "Strategies of Causal Assessment in Comparative Historical Analysis." *Comparative Historical Analyses in Social Science*.

Clemens, Elisabeth S. 2007. "Toward a Historicized Sociology: Theorizing Events, Processes, and Emergence." *Annu. Rev. Sociol.* 2007. 33:527-49

Lange, Matthew. 2013. *Comparative-Historical Methods*. London: Sage.

Data Analysis

Creswell, Chapters 8-10

Lareau, A (2021) Chapter 8 "Data Analysis: Thinking as you Go"

Peer Workshop

Creswell, Chapter 11

Why do Peer Review (on Athena)