

**University at Buffalo**  
**Department of Urban and Regional Planning**  
**URP 509: Qualitative Methods for Planning**  
**URP 675: Advanced Qualitative Research**  
**Spring 2022**

**Lecture:** Tuesdays 2:00pm – 4:40pm, Hayes 327<sup>1</sup>  
**Instructor:** Robert Silverman  
**Office:** Hayes 329  
**Office Hours:** Tuesdays 1:00pm – 1:30pm on Zoom / in Hayes 329 (and by appointment) <sup>2</sup>  
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**The Course:**

This course introduces students to qualitative methods used in urban research. The methods covered during the semester can be applied to projects related to urban planning, public health, social work, other applied research settings, and thesis and dissertation research. Topics will include: field notes and field observations, semi-structured interviewing, content-analysis, and focus groups. Students will apply the skills they learn to research practicum during the semester.

We are scheduled to meet on in-person during the semester. If we are required to pivot to remote meetings, Zoom links will be posted on the UBLearns site.

During each class session we will discuss the required readings and their relevance to the assignments you will be working on during the semester. Everyone should be prepared to discuss the readings and participate in class exercises. Regular and punctual attendance is required.

If you have any questions during the semester, please bring them to my attention. I will be available during my office hours and by appointment. Also, you may contact me by phone or e-mail. This syllabus is subject to change during the semester.

**Course Objectives:**

The course objectives for URP509 / URP 675 are listed below. The course assignments will be used to assess student learning of the course objectives. Course assignments that assess specific course objectives are identified in the course requirements section of this syllabus.

- **Course Objective 1:** learn methods for collecting, analyzing and reporting results from qualitative field analysis.
- **Course Objective 2:** learn methods for collecting, analyzing and reporting results from qualitative interviewing.
- **Course Objective 3:** learn methods for collecting, analyzing and reporting results using content analysis techniques.
- **Course Objective 4:** learn methods for collecting, analyzing and reporting results from focus group analysis.
- **Course Objective 5:** apply computer aided qualitative data analysis to qualitative research.
- **Course Objective 6:** work on an experience-base group project(s) to develop collaborative skills in the collection, analysis and presentation of qualitative data.

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<sup>1</sup> **If in-person lectures are moved to Zoom meetings, links will be posted on UBLearns and an announcement will be sent to students on their UB email accounts.**

<sup>2</sup> **The best way to contact the professor outside of scheduled office hours is via email.**

**Required Text and Required Reserve Readings:** The required texts are available at the UB Bookstore.

1) Silverman, R.M. and Patterson, K.L. (2021). *Qualitative research methods for community development, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition*. New York: Rutledge.

2) Required Reserve Readings and web-based tutorials are available on UBLearns.

Note: In addition to the required readings it is suggested that students use the current APA style manual as a reference when writing papers and other assignments during the semester.

### **Other Materials:**

Students will use Taguette, a free open source tool for qualitative research to code data collected for assignments during the semester. The software can be downloaded from the Taguette website at: [www.taguette.org](http://www.taguette.org).

Students who want to use ATLAS.ti 22 can purchase the software package from the ATLAS.ti website: [atlasti.com](http://atlasti.com). This is optional and not required for the course.

Students will need a digital recorder for the interviewing assignment and the focus group assignment. A suitable recorder can be purchased at an office supply store or online for \$25-\$30.

Students will need access to a digital camera for the field observation assignment (and potentially the focus group assignment).

Note: as an alternative, many smartphones have adequate audio recorders and digital cameras to complete assignments during the semester. You will need to determine if your devices will meet your course needs. Similarly, meeting interfaces like Zoom have applications for recording interviews and focus groups done online.

### **Course Requirements:**

**Field Observation Assignment:** In this assignment students will make field observations, photograph a field setting, take full field notes, and prepare a report. This is a group assignment for master's students and an individual assignment for PhD students. On **February 22**, the assignment will be discussed in more detail. The field notes and the report based on the field observations are due by noon on **March 8**. [master's students, course objectives 1, 5 & 6; PhD students, course objectives 1 & 5]

**Interviewing Assignment:** In this assignment students will: create a semi-structured interview guide, conduct interviews, prepare verbatim transcripts, and write a report based on the data collected in the interviews. This is a group assignment for master's students and an individual assignment for PhD students. On **March 8**, the assignment will be discussed in more detail. The interview guide, verbatim transcripts, and the report based on the data collected in the interviews are due by noon on **March 29**. [master's students, course objectives 2, 5 & 6; PhD students, course objectives 2 & 5]

**Focus Group Assignment:** This is a group assignment for all students. The class will: plan and conduct a focus group(s), prepare verbatim transcripts, and write a report based on the data collected in the focus group(s). On **March 29**, the assignment will be discussed in more detail. During the week of **April 19** the focus group(s) will take place. The verbatim transcript(s), and the report based on the data collected in the focus group(s) are due by noon on **May 3**. [master's and PhD students, course objectives 4, 5 & 6]

**Content Analysis Assignment:** In this assignment students will: conduct content analysis and write a report based on the data collected. This is an individual assignment for all students. On **April 26**, the assignment will be discussed in more detail. The report based on the content analysis is due on **May 10**. [master's and PhD students, course objectives 3 & 5]

**Discussion Boards:** During the semester students will be asked to contribute to discussion boards on UBLearn. Discussion boards will become active about a week before responses are to be posted. Discussion boards responses should be posted by noon on **February 28**, noon on **March 2**, and noon on **March 14**. [master's and PhD students, course objectives 1 & 2]

**Grading Policy:**

There are 100 points possible during the semester. With the exception of extreme emergencies, the grade of "I" will not be given at the end of the semester. Extra credit will not be offered in this course. Your grade will be based on the following assignments and activities:

FIELD OBSERVATION ASSIGNMENT	25 points
INTERVIEWING ASSIGNMENT	25 points
FOCUS GROUP ASSIGNMENT	25 points
CONTENT ANALYSIS ASSIGNMENT	20 points
DISCUSSION BOARDS	5 points

**Grading Scale:**

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Total Points</u>
A	96-100
A-	90-95.99
B+	87-89.99
B	84-86.99
B-	80-83.99
C+	77-79.99
C	70-76.99
D	60-69.99
F	0-59.99

**Academic Integrity:**

Students are expected to approach the course with seriousness and integrity. It is important to complete assignments on time, attend class regularly, and foster a collegial learning environment. Plagiarism and other instances of academic misconduct will result in a failing grade on a respective assignment, exam, or paper. Students should refer to the *University at Buffalo Graduate Catalog* for clarification on the University's policies and procedures. The University's graduate student academic integrity policy is at the following link: <https://www.buffalo.edu/academic-integrity.html> .

**Accommodations for Disabilities:**

If you have a disability (physical, learning, or psychological) that impacts your course work please contact the Office of Accessibility Resources (AR), 60 Capen Hall, (716) 645-2608, <http://www.buffalo.edu/studentlife/who-we-are/departments/accessibility.html> . AR will provide you with

information and review appropriate arrangements for reasonable accommodation (such as recruiting note-takers, readers, or extended time on assignments). You must bring requests for accommodations for a disability to the professor's attention within the first two weeks of class.

### **Writing Centers:**

The University at Buffalo has writing center where students can get assistance with essays, term papers, and thesis projects. Students should contact one of the following if they would like to access these campus resources:

- Graduate students can contact the Graduate Student Association (GSA) about their editing services. For information about this service, visit the following link:  
<https://ubwp.buffalo.edu/gsa/gsa-editing-services/> .
- International students can contact the English Language Institute. The English Language Institute is located at 320 Baldy Hall; (716) 645-2077; <http://www.buffalo.edu/english-language-institute.html> .

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## **SYLLABUS**

### **February 1: Introduction to the Course, the Qualitative Paradigm**

*Required Readings:*

Silverman & Patterson: Ch 1

### **February 8: Grounded Theory and Analyzing Qualitative Data**

*Required Readings:*

Silverman & Patterson: Ch 2 & 9

Emerson: Ch 15 (RESERVE)

Lofland, et al.: Ch 9 (RESERVE)

Lub, V. (2015). Validity in qualitative evaluation: Linking purposes, paradigms, and perspectives. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 14(5): 1-8. (RESERVE)

Maxwell, J.A. (2013). Validity: How might you be wrong? Pp. 121-138. In *Qualitative research design: An interactive approach*. Thousand Oaks: Sage. (RESERVE)

### **February 15: Coding Qualitative Data using Qualitative Data Analysis Software (QDAS)**

*Required Readings:*

Silverman & Patterson: Ch 3

*Software, User Guide, and Video Tutorial:*

Visit the Taguette website [www.taguette.org](http://www.taguette.org) :

- download the software,
- at the “Try it” link you can set up a password to use the online version of the software (this is where you can collaborate with other researchers and do group analysis),
- under the “Guides” link, review the getting started information,

- watch the webinar, Free Qualitative Analysis with Taguette and qcoder!, a link to this webinar can be found at the QDAS Resources link on the UBLearn site.

*Other QDAS Resources:*

For students interested in ATLAS.ti 22, materials can be found at the QDAS Resources link on the UBLearn site. ATLAS.ti is a more advanced QDAS package that students may consider using for larger projects like thesis and dissertation research.

**February 22: Field Notes and Field Research**

*Required Readings:*

Silverman & Patterson: Ch 4  
Esterberg: Ch 4 (RESERVE)  
Gaber and Gaber: Ch 3 (RESERVE)  
Lofland, et al.: Ch 5 (pp. 108-115) (RESERVE)

*Other Activities:*

Field Observation Assignment Discussed  
Discussion Board #1 Opens

**March 1: Field Exercise and Examples of Field Observation Publications**

**Note:** The meeting time and location for the field exercise will be announced on February 22

*Required Readings:*

Costello, L., McDermott, M. and Wallace, R. (2017). Netnography: Range of practices, misperceptions, and missed opportunities. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 16:1-12. (RESERVE)

Nykiforuk, C.I.J., Vallianatos, H., Nieuwendyk, L.M. (2011). Photovoice as a method for revealing community perceptions of the built and social environment. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 10(2): 103-124. (RESERVE)

Pierce, J. and Lawhon, M. (2017). Walking as method: Toward a methodological forthrightness and comparability in urban geographic research. *The Professional Geographer*, 67(4): 655-662. (RESERVE)

Urbanik, M. and Roks, R.A. (2020). GangstaLife: Fusing urban ethnography with netnography in gang studies. *Qualitative Sociology*, 43: 213-233. (RESERVE)

*Other Activities:*

Discussion Board #1 - post by noon on Monday, February 28; respond to classmates by noon on Wednesday, March 2

**March 8: Semi-Structured Interviews**

*Required Readings:*

Silverman & Patterson: Ch 5 & 7  
Esterberg: Ch 5(pp, 83-108) (RESERVE)  
Lofland, et al.: Ch 5 (pp. 99-108) (RESERVE)

Janghorban, R., Roudsari, R. L. and Taghipour, A. (2014). Skype interviewing: The new generation of online synchronous interviewing in qualitative research. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Health and Well-being*, 9(1): 24152. (RESERVE)

Kazmer, M.M. and Xie, B. (2008). Qualitative interviewing in Internet studies: Playing with the media, playing with the methods. *Information, Community and Society*, 11(2): 257-278.

*Other Activities:*

Field Observation Assignment Due  
Interviewing Assignment Discussed  
Discussion Board #2 Opens

**March 15: Interviewing Simulations and Example of Semi-Structured Interview Publications**

*Required Readings:*

Ehlenz, M.M., Pfeiffer, D. and Pearthree, G. (2020). Downtown revitalization in an era of millennials: How developer perceptions of millennial market demands are shaping urban landscapes. *Urban Geography*, 41(1): 79-102. (RESERVE)

*Other Activities:*

Discussion Board #2 – post by noon on Monday, March 14

**March 22: SPRING BREAK – No Class Meeting**

**March 29: Focus Groups**

*Required Readings:*

Silverman & Patterson: Ch 6  
Esterberg: Ch 5(pp, 108-113) (RESERVE)  
Gaber and Gaber: Ch 4 (RESERVE)

Kite, J. and Phongsavan, P. (2017). Insights for conducting real-time focus groups online using a web conferencing service. *F1000 Research*, 6:122. (RESERVE)

*Other Activities:*

Interviewing Assignment Due  
Focus Group Assignment Discussed and Planned

**April 5: Question Route Development and Focus Group Preparation**

*Required Readings:*

Patterson, K.L. and Silverman, R.M. (2011). How local public administrators, nonprofit providers and elected officials perceive impediments to fair housing in the suburbs: An analysis of Erie County, New York. *Housing Policy Debate* 21(1): 165-188. (RESERVE)

**April 12: Work on Focus Group Assignment – No Class Meeting**

*Note:* This is the week of the Urban Affairs Association Conference (April 12-14), in Washington, DC

**April 19: Focus Group and Collaborative Analysis**

**April 26: Content Analysis**

*Required Readings:*

Silverman & Patterson: Ch 8  
Gaber and Gaber: Ch 5 (RESERVE)

Massey, D.M., Rugh, J.S., Steil, J.P. and Albright, L. (2016). Riding the stagecoach to hell: A qualitative analysis of racial discrimination in mortgage lending. *City & Community*, 15(2): 118-136. (RESERVE)

Natow, R.S. (2019). Online Qualitative Data Sources for Federal Regulatory Policy Studies. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 63(3): 315-332.

Silva, C.N. (2012). Research methods for urban planning in the digital age. Pp 1-16. In *Online research methods in urban and planning studies: design and outcomes*. Hershey: IGI Global. (RESERVE)

*Other Activities:*

Content Analysis Assignment Discussed

**May 3: Focus Group Assignment Due – No Class Meeting**

*Note:* This is the week of the American Planning Association Conference (April 30 – May 3), in San Diego, CA

**May 10: Content Analysis Assignment Due – No Class Meeting**