



PADM 5125

Qualitative Methods for Public Policy

Winter 2021

Carleton University acknowledges the location of its campus on the traditional, unceded territories of the Algonquin nation.

Course Information

Instructor: Dr. Jerald Sabin
Office: Room 5142 Richcraft Building
Telephone: 613 520-2600 ext. 8544
Email: gerald.sabin@carleton.ca

Class times: Mondays, 5:35-6:35 OR 6:45-7:45 PM
Course Website: cuLearn
Office Hours: Appointment by Zoom or phone
Appointments: <https://calendly.com/geraldsabin>

Calendar Course Description

Qualitative methods and dimensions of policy research. Topics may include the formulation of research problems, research design and techniques for collecting and managing evidence, and the role of qualitative research in the analysis of public policies and programs.

Course Overview

In this course, we will develop skills for qualitative research *literacy*. We will explore research design, knowledge production, and common theoretical approaches to qualitative research. Through in-class discussion, we will also explore the uses of research by decision makers working within settler and Indigenous institutions, including governmental, private sector, and nongovernmental organizations. The course is divided into three modules: 1) qualitative research design; 2) theoretical approaches to qualitative research; and, 3) qualitative methods. Assessments are designed to measure research literacy in policy contexts.

Course Objectives

This course explores important ontological, epistemological, and practical issues in the conduct of qualitative research in public policy contexts. You will develop a working knowledge of Western and Indigenous approaches to qualitative research. We will examine the development of ethical and culturally appropriate methodologies, explore the strengths and weaknesses of different approaches to research design, and consider a range of theoretical approaches and research tools. You will be equipped to understand, analyze, and critique qualitative research and develop strategies for participating in production and consumption of knowledge.

By the end of the course, you will be able to:

- Define, assess, and critique theoretical approaches to qualitative research, including Indigenous research methods;
- Understand the role of human judgement in qualitative research;
- Evaluate qualitative research, its design, and presentation for use in public policy contexts;
- Demonstrate steps involved in research design using qualitative methods; and,
- Recognize and evaluate research ethics within community, university, and state-based processes.

Course Format

This course has both synchronous and asynchronous elements. There are four components:

1. *Readings*: This course has two required textbooks. They can be ordered through the Carleton University Bookstore or through online retailers. [Asynchronous]
 - a. van den Hoonaard, Deborah K. 2019. *Qualitative Research in Action: A Canadian Primer*. Third Edition. Don Mills: Oxford University Press Canada.
 - b. Lowndes, Vivien, David Marsh, and Gerry Stoker. 2018. *Theory and Methods in Political Science*, 4th Edition. London: Palgrave.

All other readings will be available through cuLearn under their assigned weeks. Readings have been capped at three academic chapters and/or articles per week. One popular press article has been assigned per policy issue.

2. *Capsule Lectures*: Several capsule lectures (approximately 30-45 minutes per class) will be posted to our cuLearn page and YouTube. These lectures will introduce that week's topic, provide an overview of learning objectives, and present key concepts with examples. These lectures will be available every Tuesday. [Asynchronous]
3. *Discussions*: Students will be divided into two groups of 10 students. These groups will meet weekly to discuss that week's topic and readings. The first 30 minutes will be directed by me, while the second 30 minutes or so will be directed by a student discussion leader. See Course Requirements for more information on discussions. [Synchronous]
4. *Assignments*: There are six types of assessment in this course: participation; a journal article literacy exercise; an infographic and reflection paper; a discussion presentation; a completion grade for obtaining TCPS 2 CORE training; and, a take-home exam. [Synchronous and asynchronous]

Course Requirements

Weight	Due Date	Element
15%	Ongoing	Participation
20%	Ongoing	Discussion presentation
20%	February 22	Journal article literacy exercise
5%	March 8	TCPS 2 CORE – Completion certificate
20%	April 12	Infographic and reflection paper
20%	April 27	Take Home Exam

15% Participation in classroom discussion

This is an advanced, reading-intensive seminar. I expect you to come to class prepared to contribute to discussions on readings and topics. I am basing my evaluation of your participation on your preparedness for class, being attentive during class, and raising thoughtful comments and questions. Assessment will be holistic. See *Appendix A* for participation rubric.

Keep in mind the following questions when preparing for class:

1. What are the central points or arguments being made in the readings?
2. How do this week's readings relate to each other?
3. How do you evaluate the author's positions?
4. What examples of qualitative research can you draw from these readings?

Active participation includes initiating a topic or question; providing information or an example to clarify a point; summarizing a part of the discussion; seeking clarification (asking questions!); adding to or amending what others have said; and, respectfully offering positive or negative reactions to other’s points.

20% Discussion presentation

You will lead a 20-25 minute discussion once during the term. I have assigned a different contemporary policy topic for each week of the course that you will use to shape our discussion of research design, theories, and methods. You will present a research question and method for discussion by the class. You will work through the design of a research project with your peers to tackle that policy issue. Think of this as more of a brainstorming exercise than a completed research project. Given the assigned topic, theory, or method, what kinds of questions can we explore? How can we best approach answering those questions? What ethical or practical issues might arise? A detailed assignment guide is available on cuLearn.

20% Qualitative journal article analysis (3 pages)

You will analyze an assigned journal article, identifying key dimensions of the text (<750 words). This includes the research design (research questions, design, and method), theoretical approach, and key findings. You will reflect on the research design and selected method. A detailed assignment guide is available on cuLearn.

20% Theory + method infographic and reflection paper (1 page + 3 pages)

You will design a one-page (legal size) infographic (i.e. <https://visual.ly/community/infographic/technology/infographics-benefits-their-use-online>) exploring how one (1) research method and one (1) theory can be used together to design a research project. You will be asked to define the theory and method, present the method’s benefits and drawbacks for answering your chosen theory’s general question, and provide examples of the combination’s use. You will also write a three-page reflection paper on this exercise. Instructions and rubric will be distributed via cuLearn.

20% Take Home Exam (8-10 pages)

You will prepare a research proposal using one of two policy problems. Using primarily the course readings, your proposal will present a clear research question, theoretical approach, case selection, method (data collection and analysis), ethical considerations, and reporting/knowledge mobilization plan. *The policy problem scenarios will be distributed on April 5, 2021.* A detailed assignment guide is available on cuLearn.

Letter grade	CU grade points	Indicates that work is:	% Range	SPPA Explanation
A+	12	Outstanding	90-100	For written work, virtually publishable. Demonstrates exceptional evaluative judgment, outstanding critical thinking, and mastery of technical as well as literary aspects of writing.
A	11	Excellent	85-89	Demonstrates superior grasp of material, very strong critical thinking, and capacity to understand and extend underlying patterns.
A-	10	Very Good	80-84	Demonstrates strong grasp of material, its component parts, and capacity to analyze their relationships to each other.
B+	9	Good	77-79	Demonstrates clear understanding of material and ability to apply concepts. Written work is competent.
B	8	Satisfactory	73-76	Satisfactory, but below average. Demonstrates comprehension of material, reasonable but not strong analytical capacity, with some limitations in the ability to apply concepts.
B-	7	Barely Adequate	70-72	Clearly below average. Demonstrates comprehension and understanding, with limited capacity for application. Communication skills problematic.
C+	6	Less Than Adequate	67-69	Did not demonstrate an adequate understanding of the material or the ability to apply the concepts. Writing and/or presentations show serious problems.
C to D-			50-66	Grades in this range indicate work that is passable in some respects but does not meet the standards of graduate work.
F			Failure	Did not meet minimal requirements.

Course Policies

Assignment Submission Guidelines

All written assignments must be submitted through cuLearn. Assignments will not be accepted by email or under my office door. Please see late penalty for more information. Unless otherwise specified, all assignments must conform to the stipulated page length, and must be typed using **12 point Times New Roman font (or open-source equivalent), one inch margins, and double spacing of the lines.**

Email Policy

I will respond to emails within **48 hours** during weekdays. I will only respond sporadically to emails sent on weekends. You should note the course code ('PADM 5125') in the subject line of your email.

I'll Use Your Pronoun

It's no big deal. See www.nbdcampaign.ca. Class rosters and university data systems are provided to instructors with students' legal names and gender identifications. However, knowing that not all students use their legal names or sex/gender assigned at birth, I am happy to use the name and/or pronouns you use. We will take time during our first class together to do introductions, at which point you can share with all members of our learning community what name and pronouns you use. If these change at any point during the semester, please let me know and we can develop a way to share this information with others in a way that is comfortable and safe for you.

Late Penalties

Late assignments will be penalized **10% per day**, including weekend days. I will consider extensions requested *in advance* of the assignment due date. I will also consider extensions beyond the end of term in exceptional or emergency circumstances.

Online Code of Conduct

In this course, you will be participating in course discussions and assignments in-person and through a variety of online tools. I expect you to adhere to the same standards of behaviour and engagement that you would follow in person and on campus.

- All participants in online discussions should maintain an environment that is *free of harassment* towards the teaching team and members of the class. This includes demeaning written or oral comments based on ability, age, ancestry, citizenship, colour, creed, ethnic origin, family status, gender, gender expression, gender identity, language group, marital status, place of origin, race, receipt of public assistance, record of offences, religion, religious dress, religious practice, sex, and/or sexual orientation of that individual or those individuals.
- All participants must *abide by the Carleton University Student Rights and Responsibilities Policy* (<https://carleton.ca/secretariat/wp-content/uploads/Student-Rights-Responsibilities-Policy.pdf>). Please refer to the Policy for additional information.
- All participants should *respect the views of others* and respond in a courteous manner in our discussions about the materials and issues explored in the course.
- All participants should make *valuable contributions* to online discussions. Contributions should be thoughtful and in keeping with the tone and direction of our discussions.
- All participants should respect the privacy of other members of the class by not sharing or spreading private information.

All participants should respect the integrity of Carleton University's computing systems, such as *cuLearn*.

University Policies

Academic Integrity

Please be aware that all work submitted as a requirements of PADM 5125 must be both your own work and original to this course. Academic offences are serious infractions and will not be tolerated. Students should consult [Section 14](#) of the Faculty of Graduate Studies Calendar, General Regulations concerning academic integrity and instructional offences.

Academic Accommodation

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. For an accommodation request the processes are as follows.

- **Pregnancy obligation:** write to the instructor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details visit the Equity Services website: <http://www2.carleton.ca/equity/>
- **Religious obligation:** write to the instructor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details visit the Equity Services website: <http://www2.carleton.ca/equity/>
- **Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:** The Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) provides services to students with Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/mental health disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, Autism Spectrum Disorders, chronic medical conditions, and impairments in mobility, hearing, and vision. If you have a disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact PMC at 613-520-6608 or pmc@carleton.ca for a formal evaluation. If you are already registered with the PMC, contact your PMC coordinator to send the instructor your *Letter of Accommodation* at the beginning of the term, and no later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation. After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with the instructor to ensure accommodation arrangements are made.

Intellectual Property

Classroom teaching and learning activities, including lectures, discussions, presentations, etc. – by both instructors and students – are copy protected and remain the intellectual property of their respective author(s). All course materials, including PowerPoint presentations, outlines, and other materials, are also protected by copyright and remain the intellectual property of their respective author(s).

Students registered in the course may take notes and make copies of course materials for their own educational use only. Students are not permitted to reproduce or distribute lecture notes and course materials publicly for commercial or non-commercial purposes without express written consent from the copyright holder(s).

Course Outline and Readings

At a Glance

Date	Topic	Due
January 11	Introduction	
	Unit 1: Qualitative research design	
January 18	How do we know what we know?	
January 25	Research design I: Research questions	
February 1	Research design II: Concepts, variables, and measurement	
February 8	Research ethics	
February 15	Reading Week	
	Unit 2: Theoretical approaches to qualitative research	
February 22	Traditional approaches: Behavioural analysis, rational choice, and institutionalisms	Journal article literacy assignment
March 1	Critical approaches I: Constructivism, poststructuralism, and meta-theoretical issues	
March 8	Critical approaches II: Marxism, feminist approaches, and Canadian political economy	TCPS 2 CORE
March 15	Qualitative research and Indigenous peoples	
	Unit 3: Qualitative methods	
March 22	Case studies and comparison	
March 29	Observation	
April 5	Interviews	
April 12	Content analysis	Theory + Method Infographic Due
...	Exam Period	
April 27		Take-Home Exam Due

Detailed Schedule

INTRODUCTION

January 11 – Introduction

- Readings:
 - van den Hoonaard, chapter 1
 - Lowndes, Marsh, and Stoker, chapter 1

UNIT 1: QUALITATIVE RESEARCH DESIGN

January 18 – How do we know what we know?

- Readings:
 - Lowndes, Marsh, and Stoker, chapters 11, 14
- Policy:
 - Dog parks [*I will lead this seminar*]
 - Tanner, Adrienne. 2020. “Off-leash fenced enclosures in Vancouver might pitch dog owners against other users.” *The Globe and Mail*, January 10: <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/canada/british-columbia/article-off-leash-fenced-enclosures-in-vancouvers-parks-might-pitch-dog/>

January 25 – Research design I: Research questions

- Readings:
 - van den Hoonaard, chapters 2-3
 - Lowndes, Marsh, and Stoker, chapter 13
- Policy:
 - Diversity and arts leadership
 - O’Neill, Sean. 2020. “A crisis of whiteness in Canadian museums.” *Canadian Art*, June 23: <https://canadianart.ca/features/a-crisis-of-whiteness/>

February 1 – Research design II: Concepts, variables and measurement

- Readings:
 - van den Hoonaard, chapter 10
 - Neuman, Lawrence W. 2014. *Social Research Methods: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*. 7th International edition. Pearson, pp. 202-226. [cuLearn]
- Policy:
 - Happiness
 - Johnson, Gail. 2018. “Most Canadian happy, *Globe* survey finds.” *The Globe and Mail*: <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/life/article-most-canadians-happy-globe-survey-finds/>

February 8 – Ethics

- Readings:
 - van den Hoonaard, chapter 4
 - Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (TCPS 2) Tutorial: <https://tcps2core.ca/welcome> [5% **completion grade**; *Must be completed by March 8*]
 - Fujii, Lee Ann. “Research Ethics 101: Dilemmas and Responsibilities.” *PS: Political Science & Politics*. Vol. 45, No. 4: 717-23. [cuLearn]
- Policy:
 - Solitary confinement
 - Iftene, Adelina. 2020. “Solitary confinement continues in Canada under a different name.” *Policy Options Politiques*, November 19: <https://policyoptions.irpp.org/magazines/november-2020/solitary-confinement-continues-in-canada-under-a-different-name/>

February 15 – READING WEEK

UNIT 2: THEORETICAL APPROACHES TO QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

February 22 – Traditional approaches: Behavioural analysis, rational choice, institutionalisms

- Readings:
 - Lowndes, Marsh, and Stoker, chapters 2, 3, 4
- Policy:
 - Splitting the Ministry of Justice and Office of the Attorney General
 - Gollom, Mark. 2019. “McLellan advises against splitting roles of attorney general, justice minister.” *CBC*, August 14: <https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/trudeau-mclellan-report-ag-1.5246937>

March 1 – Critical approaches I: Constructivism, poststructuralism, and meta-theoretical issues

- Readings:
 - Lowndes, Marsh, and Stoker, chapters 5, 8, 12
- Policy:
 - Safe consumption
 - McCann, Allison. 2020. “How a man with a van is challenging U.K. drug policy.” *New York Times*, November 21: <https://nyti.ms/2IN7Yx6>

March 8 – Critical approaches II: Marxism, feminist approaches, and Canadian political economy

- Readings:
 - Lowndes, Marsh, and Stoker, chapters 6-7
 - Graefe, Peter. 2007. “Political economy and Canadian public policy.” In *Critical Policy Studies*. Michael Orsini and Miriam Smith, eds. Vancouver: UBC Press. [cuLearn]
- Policy:
 - Pornhub
 - Gira Grant, Melissa. 2020. “Nick Kristof and the holy war on Pornhub.” *The New Republic*, December 10: <https://newrepublic.com/article/160488/nick-kristof-holy-war-pornhub>

March 15 – Qualitative research and Indigenous peoples

- Readings:
 - Tuhiwai Smith, Linda. 1999. “Research through imperial eyes.” *Decolonizing methodologies: Research and Indigenous peoples*. New York: Zed Books, 44-60. [cuLearn]
 - Kovach, Margaret. 2009. “Indigenous and qualitative inquiry: A round dance?” *Indigenous methodologies: Characteristics, conversations and contexts*. Toronto: UTP, 23-38. [cuLearn]
 - Gaudry, Adam. 2015. “Researching the Resurgence: Insurgent Research and Community-Engaged Methodologies in 21st-Century Academic Inquiry.” In *Research as Resistance: Revisiting Critical, Indigenous, and Anti-Oppressive Approaches*, Second Edition. Eds. Susan Strega and Leslie Brown. Toronto: Canadian Scholars’ Press, 243-265. [cuLearn]
- Policy:
 - Moose hunting moratorium
 - Deer, Ka’nehsí:io. 2020. “Moose moratorium checkpoints come down in La Vérendrye Wildlife Reserve as hunting season ends.” *CBC*, October 20: <https://www.cbc.ca/news/indigenous/moose-moratorium-checkpoints-end-1.5769385>

UNIT 3: QUALITATIVE METHODS

March 22 – Case studies and comparison

- Readings:
 - Lowndes, Marsh, and Stoker, chapter 16
 - Collier, David and James Mahoney. 1996. “Insights and Pitfalls: Selection Bias in Qualitative Research,” *World Politics* 49 (October): 56-91.
- Policy:
 - Housing affordability
 - Balakrishnan, Anita. 2020. “First-time homebuyers see new opportunities, challenges in the pandemic economy.” *The Globe and Mail*, December 30: <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/real-estate/article-first-time-homebuyers-see-new-opportunities-challenges-in-pandemic/>

March 29 – Observation

- Readings:
 - van den Hoonaard, chapter 5
 - Henderson, Frances B. 2009. “‘We thought you would be white’: Race and gender in fieldwork.” *PS: Political Science and Politics*. 42(2): 291-294.
 - Valverde, Mariana. 2012. “Driving a taxi: City fathers’ myth of immigrant self-employment.” *Every day law on the street: City governance in an age of diversity*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 165-190 [esp. 178-190].
- Policy:
 - Open court principle
 - Cotnam, Hallie. 2020. “Courtroom artist draws on adaptability to keep sketching through pandemic.” *CBC*, December 18: <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/ottawa/ottawa-court-room-artist-on-dealing-with-covid-19-plexiglas-zoom-1.5833155>
- Podcast material

- Doberstein, Carey. 2016. "The homelessness puzzle in Canada." *Building a collaborative advantage: Network governance and homelessness policy-making in Canada*. Vancouver: UBC Press, 1-19.

April 5 – Interviews

- Readings:
 - van den Hoonaard, chapters 5 and 7
 - Fujii, Lee Ann. 2010. "Shades of Truth and Lies: Interpreting Testimonies of War and Violence." *Journal of Peace Research* 47.2: 231-41. [cuLearn]
- Policy:
 - Vaccine hesitancy
 - Laucius, Joanne. 2020. "Vaccine hesitancy and COVID-19: How many will stay on the fence?" *Ottawa Citizen*, December 18: <https://ottawacitizen.com/news/local-news/vaccine-hesitancy-and-covid-19-how-many-will-stay-on-the-fence>
- Take-home exam distributed. Consider using the following resource in writing your research proposal:
 - Mills, Jane and Melanie Birks. 2014. "Proposing your research." In *Qualitative Methodology: A Practical Guide*. London: SAGE Publications, 1-22. [cuLearn]

April 12 – Content analysis

- Readings:
 - van den Hoonaard, chapters 8-9
 - Nieguth, Tim and Tracey Raney. 2017. "Nation-building and Canada's national symbolic order, 1993-2015." *Nations and Nationalism*. 23(1): 87-108. [cuLearn]
- Policy:
 - Plastics ban
 - Aiello, Rachel. 2020. "Canada banning plastic bags, straws, cutlery, and other single-use items by the end of 2021." *CTV*, October 7: <https://www.ctvnews.ca/climate-and-environment/canada-banning-plastic-bags-straws-cutlery-and-other-single-use-items-by-the-end-of-2021-1.5135968>
- Podcast material:
 - Kirkup, Kyle, Lee Airton, Allison McMillan, and Jacob DesRochers. 2020. "The aftermath of human rights protections: Gender identity, gender expression, and the socio-legal regulation of school boards." *Canadian Journal of Law and Society* 35(2): 1-24. [cuLearn]

Appendix A – Participation grade rubric

<i>Criteria</i>	<i>Non-performance (0)</i>	<i>Satisfactory (1)</i>	<i>Good (2)</i>	<i>Excellent (3)</i>
Includes and applies relevant course concepts, theories, and materials correctly.	Does not explain relevant course concepts, theories, or materials.	Summarizes relevant course concepts, theories, or materials.	Applies and analyzes relevant course concepts, theories, or materials correctly.	Evaluates and synthesizes course concepts, theories, or materials correctly, using examples or supporting evidence.
Responds to fellow learners, relating the discussion to relevant course concepts and providing substantive feedback.	Does not respond to fellow learners.	Responds to fellow learners without relating discussion to the relevant course concepts. Provides feedback, but it is not substantive.	Responds to fellow learners, relating the discussion to relevant course concepts. Feedback is substantive most of the time.	Responds to fellow learners, relating the discussion to relevant course concepts, and consistently extends the discussion through provision of substantive feedback.
Applies relevant professional, personal, or other real-world experiences.	Does not contribute professional, personal, or other real-world experiences.	Contributes some professional, personal, or other real-world experiences that may or may not relate to course content.	Applies relevant professional, personal, or other real-world experiences.	Applies relevant professional, personal, or other real-world experiences and extends the discussion by responding to the examples of peers.