**Course Overview and Goals:**
This course is designed to introduce students to qualitative research methods. The course will use a combination of didactic, interactive and applied techniques to teach knowledge and skills relevant to qualitative research. Through the course, students will be expected to conduct their own qualitative study.

By the end of the course students will develop skills in how to formulate appropriate qualitative research questions, collect qualitative data using interviews and focus group discussions, and analyze qualitative data. Students will be exposed to different styles of presenting qualitative research results, and will consider different ways in which qualitative data is used in practice. The course has objectives related to both qualitative data collection as well as qualitative data analysis and writing.

**Course Expectations:**
This course will be collaborative, discussion-oriented, and predominantly based on practice. The best way to learn qualitative research is to do qualitative research. This will likely be new for you, as most people have had quantitative research methods emphasized for them. I just ask that you are open to learning new methods, and think about how they could apply in your future career path.

**Required Textbooks:**
Articles as assigned

**Course Evaluation:**

**Reading Discussions:** For most weeks, you and a reading partner are expected to meet (either in-person or via technology), discuss the empirical readings, and submit the following:
- ★ A short (2-5 sentence) summary of what you and your reading partner think the authors were arguing or demonstrating (i.e., their thesis).
- ★ A brief description (~1 paragraph) of the research methods used/advocated/introduced and how the methods supported the discovery processor argument.
- ★ Any questions both of you have about the methods or topic.

You will sort into reading partnerships on the first day of class. Reading summaries and questions are submitted in “off” weeks, and will be discussed in-class. Your lowest reading discussion grade will be dropped.

**Class Project:** The student evaluations for this course are built around an applied research project for the class. Students should work in groups these projects. Students are allowed to choose their own topic for the projects. All projects will require students to conduct interviews with others outside of the class. When choosing your topic, think carefully about who you would recruit and how much difficulty you may have recruiting the sample. Each student is responsible for conducting two in-depth interviews. Each group will select a topic of interest to them for their class project. All topics must be vetted with the instructor prior to submitting the research questions and interview guide for the topic. The topic should be one that groups can explore with students on campus, and should be conceptual enough to lead to rich data for analysis. The instructor will help students determine whether topics are likely to lead to interesting data for analysis.
Research questions and interview guide: Students will work in their group for this assignment. As a group, students will develop 3-4 primary research questions to explore through their qualitative data collection. Within each primary research question, they should identify the specific interview questions to be included on the guide they will use for the interviews. The interview guide will be designed for a 45-minute interview. The group will submit the research questions and the interview guide for evaluation.

IRB Protocol: Though you will not need to formally submit an IRB protocol as this is a class project, you will be asked to complete a protocol to gain experience in the process. While protocol procedures differ at every university and agency, it’s good practice to learn how to make an argument for your research.

CITI Training: You will need to complete the human subjects CITI training before you can begin interviewing students. To show that you’ve completed it, you will just submit your certificate to the instructor by the date listed.

In-depth interview transcript: Students will be required to submit a full transcript of their first interview for evaluation. The interviews will be audiotaped and transcribed.

Reflection and self-critique of second interview/focus group transcript: Students will be required to conduct, record and fully transcribe a second interview for analysis. Instead of a second individual interview, students may work in pairs to conduct one focus group discussion. For this assignment, students are required to submit a 2-3 page (single-spaced) reflection and self-critique of their second interview or focus group discussion. Students will submit the transcript of the interview or focus group and the reflection/self-critique.

Analytical product (Not graded, but opportunity for feedback): Groups are required to submit an analytical product. This could include a matrix that the group has created to help summarize the data across cases, reflective memos that group has written to help them in the interpretation process, or any other analytical product that shows the instructor they are reflecting on their data and trying to interpret the themes that they have uncovered. These products will not be graded, but they do offer an opportunity for groups to get feedback from the instructor on their analysis process.

Final presentation: Students will combine all of the data that their group has collected from the in-depth interviews and focus group discussions. The data will be analyzed and presented in the form of an in-class presentation. The presentation should include a very brief description of methods, but should focus primarily on the results and discussion of the results. Each group will have 30 minutes to present their work in class.

Reading Discussions: 60
Research Questions & Interview Guide: 15  
IRB Protocol: 15
CITI Training Certificate: 10
In-depth Interview & Transcript: 20
Transcript Analysis: 30
Research Presentation: 50

Grades in this class will be based on the following scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>180-200 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>160-179 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>140 - 159</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>139 or below</td>
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</tbody>
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Total: 200

Attendance and Participation:
This is considered a hybrid course, meaning that we will be meeting in person, and online. Students in this course are expected to attend class sessions and be active participants in class activities. Attendance is required. Students are expected to have completed assigned readings prior to the class period in which they will be discussed. You are also strongly encouraged to ask questions at any point during the class, as discussion
generally allows students to learn better (and tends to make the class a lot more fun, too).

Other things of note:

Policy on Children in Class:
Currently, the university does not have a formal policy on children in the classroom. The policy described here is thus a reflection of my own beliefs and commitments to student parents.

1. All exclusively breastfeeding babies are welcome in class as often as is necessary to support the breastfeeding relationship. Because not all women can pump sufficient milk, and not all babies will take a bottle reliably, I never want students to feel like they have to choose between feeding their baby and continuing their education. You and your nursing baby are welcome in class anytime.

2. For older children and babies, I understand that minor illnesses and unforeseen disruptions in child care often put parents in the position of having to choose between missing class to stay home with a child and leaving him or her with someone you or the child does not feel comfortable with. While this is not meant to be a long-term childcare solution, occasionally bringing a child to class in order to cover gaps in care is perfectly acceptable, and I prefer you do this then miss class.

3. In all cases where babies and children come to class, I ask that you sit close to the door so that if your little one needs special attention and is disrupting learning for other students, you may step outside until their needs have been met. Non-parents in the class, please reserve seats near the door for your parenting classmates.

4. Finally, I understand that often the largest barrier to completing your coursework once you become a parent is the tiredness many parents feel in the evening once children have finally gone to sleep. I hope that you will feel comfortable disclosing your student-parent status to me. This is the first step in my being able to accommodate any special needs that arise. While I maintain the same high expectations for all students in my classes regardless of parenting status, I am happy to problem solve with you in a way that makes you feel supported as you strive for school-parenting balance.

Additional Sources Support: You are more than your grades or your ability to perform in college. Your general well-being is important to me as a faculty member, and this university as a whole. Issues such as insufficient food, safe housing, and mental health concerns may leave you struggling to complete assignments and perform to your standards. We have support on campus for students in these positions.

Food Pantry
Research shows that college students experience food insecurity at higher rates than the American household rate, and that food insecurity can negatively impact academic performance and persistence. Ram Pantry exists through the Office of Multicultural Affairs and is available 8-5, Monday through Friday to assist with food scarcity.

Counseling Services
Diminished mental health, including significant stress, mood changes, excessive worry, or problems with eating and/or sleeping can interfere with optimal academic performance. The source of symptoms might be strictly related to your course work; if so, please speak with me. However, problems with relationships, family worries, loss, or a personal struggle or crisis can also contribute to decreased academic performance.

ASU provides mental health services to support the academic success of students. Counseling Services offers free, confidential psychological services to help you manage personal challenges that may threaten your well-being. Getting help is a smart and courageous thing to do -- for yourself and for those who care about you.

Written Work:
ALL written work that contains citations and/or references should conform to the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association. Every student would benefit from having access to this manual. It is available in most bookstores (i.e., Barnes & Noble; amazon.com) and the reference for it is:


You can also access Purdue OWL APA Style Help as a source for help with citations.

Please remember that mere submission of assignments does not necessarily constitute successful completion of them. Each piece of work submitted and/or presented will be evaluated in regard to quality factors such as cogency, clarity of presentation, adherence to APA publication and other guidelines, evidence of effort, and timeliness. All of these will be factored into your grade for each assignment.

http://www.phrasebank.manchester.ac.uk/

ANGELO STATE UNIVERSITY SYLLABUS STATEMENTS

Disability Services
ASU is committed to the principle that no qualified individual with a disability shall, on the basis of disability, be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of the services, programs or activities of the university, or be subjected to discrimination by the university, as provided by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments of 2008 (ADAAA), and subsequent legislation.

The Office of Student Affairs is the designated campus department charged with the responsibility of reviewing and authorizing requests for reasonable accommodations based on a disability, and it is the student’s responsibility to initiate such a request by contacting: Ms. Dallas A. Swafford (dallas.swafford@angelo.edu)

Student Absence for Observance of Religious Holy Days
A student who intends to observe a religious holy day should make that intention known in writing to the instructor prior to the absence. See ASU Operating Policy 10.19 Student Absence for Observance of Religious Holy Day for more information.

Incomplete Grade Policy
It is policy that incomplete grades be reserved for student illness or personal misfortune. Please contact faculty if you have serious illness or a personal misfortune that would keep you from completing course work. Documentation may be required. See ASU Operating Policy 10.11 Grading Procedures for more information.

Title IX
Angelo State University is committed to the safety and security of all students. If you or someone you know experience sexual harassment, sexual assault, domestic or dating violence, stalking, or discrimination, you may contact ASU’s Title IX Coordinator: Michelle Nicole Boone (michelle.boone@angelo.edu). You may also speak with her if you need help with pregnancy accommodations.

I also want you to know that I will seek to keep any information you share with me private to the greatest extent possible, but as a professor, I have a mandatory reporting responsibilities to share information regarding sexual misconduct and crimes I learn about to make our campus safer for all. This includes in
written assignments or conversation. This is called being a “Responsible Employee” is a legal responsibility that I have to uphold. It is meant to connect you with resources and to inform you of your options in addressing the report.

**Conduct Policies**

*Academic Integrity*

Students are expected to maintain complete honesty and integrity in all work. Any student found guilty of any form of dishonesty in academic work is subject to disciplinary action and possible expulsion from ASU. The Department of Psychology, Sociology, and Social Work adheres to the academic honesty statement as set forth in the Angelo State University Student Handbook (2011-2012) [University Honor Code](#).

*Plagiarism*

Plagiarism is a serious topic covered in ASU’s [Academic Integrity policy](#) in the Student Handbook. Plagiarism is the action or practice of taking someone else’s work, idea, etc., and passing it off as one’s own. Plagiarism is literary theft.

In your discussions and/or your papers, it is unacceptable to copy word-for-word without quotation marks and the source of the quotation. It is expected that you will summarize or paraphrase ideas giving appropriate credit to the source both in the body of your paper and the reference list. Papers are subject to be evaluated for originality via Turnitin. Resources to help you understand this policy better are available at the [ASU Writing Center](#).

*Copyright Policy*

Students officially enrolled in this course should make only one printed copy of the given articles and/or chapters. You are expressly prohibited from distributing or reproducing any portion of course readings in printed or electronic form without written permission from the copyright holders or publishers.

**SYLLABUS DISCLAIMER**

This syllabus constitutes an agreement between the student and the instructor. Your continued enrollment in this course constitutes your agreement to abide by the terms of this syllabus. If changes must be made to the schedule or to any other aspect of the syllabus, all students will be notified in class and in writing as soon as possible. Any changes made to the course policies or the schedule/calendar will apply to all students.