Bagwell College of Education

Department of Secondary and Middle Grades Education

EDRS 9100 Advanced Qualitative Research Methods | Semester & Year

3 Credit Hours

INSTRUCTOR
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Office Hours: By appointment only.

CLASS MEETING
Online Course

REQUIRED TEXTS


Additional readings pertinent to the weekly topics (see course outline)—available through KSU library.

DESCRIPTION OF THE COURSE
This course is an advanced study of qualitative research methodologies including ethnography, case study, and phenomenology. Students will examine a variety of data sources (e.g., interviews, observations) and methods of analysis (e.g., memo writing, coding). Students will conduct research as they hone their research questions, collect and analyze data, and produce a research study. EDRS 8100 Qualitative research Methods I.

PREREQUISITES
Admission to the Ed.D. program.
EDRS 8100 Qualitative research Methods I.

PURPOSE/RATIONALE
This course aims to help you improve your understanding of qualitative research practices used in education. It is designed to enhance your understanding of the theoretical and practical dimensions of conducting qualitative research. To accomplish this, the course introduces you to fundamental data collection processes and practices in the qualitative research process. The process of data collection is inherently embedded within the larger context of the qualitative research process and therefore best considered holistically to consider and account for epistemological perspectives of the researcher, focus of the research, and analysis which often occurs simultaneously with data collection. Therefore, we will examine data collection from a larger frame of qualitative research. To provide an anchor for the research
processes and practices studied, you will acquire hands-on experience in data collection as well as designing a research study. We will explore different aspects of the qualitative research experience during the term as we focus on the overall qualitative research process. The focus will be on a series of research activities (as opposed to a course focused on the critique of research). The main reason for this is experiential: one does not begin to understand research until one begins doing it. While we will read research, methodology, and research practices, we will use those readings to help us do research rather than centering the course on their discussion. It is that reading, thinking, and reflection of the intersection of these components that will inform research practice. It has been said that qualitative research can only be good if it maintains a skeptical eye on itself and on others. Hence, we will embrace the checks and balances that most qualitative theories label triangulation and/or credibility; endorse multiple framings of projects and critique of method during the course of the study; and, hope for action as an outcome.

**Conceptual Framework**

Our vision as a nationally recognized Educator Preparation Provider (EPP) is to remain at the forefront of educator preparation. Informed by responsive engagement in collaborative partnerships, we advance educational excellence through innovative teaching in an ever-changing global and digital learning environment. Our mission is to prepare educators to improve student learning within a collaborative teaching and learning community through innovative teaching, purposeful research, and engaged service. The essence of our vision and mission is captured in the theme Collaborative Development of Expertise in Teaching, Learning and Leadership which was adopted in 2002 to express concisely the fundamental approach to educator preparation at KSU.

The EPP at Kennesaw State University is committed to developing expertise among candidates in initial and advanced programs as teachers, teacher leaders and school leaders who possess the capability, intent and expertise to facilitate high levels of learning in all of their students through effective, research-based practices in classroom instruction, and to enhance the structures that support all learning. To that end, the EPP fosters the development of candidates as they progress through stages of growth from novice to proficient to expert and leader. Within the EPP conceptual framework, expertise is viewed as a process of continued development, not an end-state. To be effective, teachers and educational leaders must embrace the notion that teaching and learning are entwined and that only through the implementation of validated practices can all students construct meaning and reach high levels of learning. In that way, candidates are facilitators of the teaching and learning process. Finally, the EPP recognizes, values, and demonstrates collaborative practices across the college and university and extends collaboration to the community-at-large. Through this collaboration with professionals in the university, local communities, public and private schools and school districts, parents and other professional partners, the EPP meets the ultimate goal of bringing all of Georgia’s students to high levels of learning.

**Use of Technology**

Technology Standards for Educators are required by the Professional Standards Commission. Candidates in this course will be expected to apply the use of research, productivity, Internet-based, and where applicable, multimedia applications.

D2L/Brightspace will be one of the communication tools used for emails, announcements, collaborative discussions, access to course materials, and grade results. It is a good idea to check the course D2L area daily.

**Diversity Statement**

The KSU Educator Preparation Provider (EPP) believes all learners are entitled to equitable educational opportunities. To that end, programs within the EPP consist of curricula, field experiences, and clinical practice that promote candidates’ development of knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions related to diversity identified in the unit’s conceptual framework, including the local community, Georgia, the nation, and the world. Curricula and applied experiences are based on well-developed knowledge foundations for, and conceptualizations of, diversity and inclusion so that candidates can apply them effectively in schools. Candidates learn to contextualize teaching and draw effectively on representations
from the students’ own experiences and cultures. They learn to collaborate and engage with families in ways that value the resources, understandings, and knowledge that students bring from their home lives, communities and cultures as assets to enrich learning opportunities. Candidates maintain high expectations for all students (including English learners, students with exceptionalities and other historically marginalized and underrepresented students), and support student success through research-based culturally, linguistically, and socially relevant pedagogies and curricula.

**Accessibility**
Kennesaw State University provides program accessibility and accommodations for persons defined as disabled under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 or the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. A number of services are available to support students with disabilities within their academic program. In order to make arrangements for special services, students must visit the Office of Disabled Student Support Services (ext. 6443) and develop an individual assistance plan. In some cases, certification of disability is required.

Please be aware there are other support/mentor groups on the campus of Kennesaw State University that address each of the multicultural variables outlined above.

**Statement for School-Based Activities**
While completing the graduate program at Kennesaw State University, candidates are required to be involved in a variety of leadership and school-based activities directed at the improvement of teaching and learning. Appropriate activities may include, but are not limited to, attending and presenting at professional conferences, actively serving on or chairing school-based committees, attending PTA/school board meetings, leading or presenting professional development activities at the school or district level, and participating in education-related community events. As candidates continue their educational experiences, they are encouraged to explore every opportunity to learn by doing (Dewey, 1916).

**COURSE GOALS/OBJECTIVES**
Informed pedagogical approaches arise from teachers’ critical understandings of Theoretical/Conceptual, Contextual, and Practical/Applied influences on the learner. The belief that all students can learn when the learner is the pedagogical core—promoted by Weimer (2002)—is the foundation of this program. Within this learner-centered conceptual framework, learners are embodied as P-16 students, pre-service candidates, teachers, teacher-leaders, and school and district leaders and administrators, all of whom engage in a coherent, learner-centered approach (Copland & Knapp, 2006). According to Lambert and McCombs (2000) and Alexander and Murphy (2000), the confluence of Practical, Contextual, and Conceptual Critical Understandings forms a lens for understanding Learner-Centered Psychological Principles. Within the Education and Research Core and the Teaching Field Pedagogy core courses, the candidates are introduced to key theories/concepts which are then examined according to the context of their teaching situation addressing issues of grade level, diversity, and school type, etc; the assessments of the key theories/concepts in the courses, including formal and informal, are practical, which means the candidates apply the theories/concepts in a practical situation, such as a 7th grade science classroom, etc.

Theoretical Framework for the Ed.D. & Ed.S. in Teaching Field Majors
The Educator Preparation Provider (EPP) prepares learning facilitators who understand their disciplines and principles of pedagogy, who reflect on their practice, and who apply these understandings to making instructional decisions that foster the success of all learners.

The knowledge, skills and dispositions (KSD’s) demonstrated by graduates of The Kennesaw State University Doctorate of Education program of the Bagwell College of Education reflect the unique aspects of this degree. Collaboratively developed by faculty from across the university and in consultation with community/school partners, these outcomes and proficiencies delineate the high expectations we have for graduates who will be Leaders for Learning. The proficiencies reflect the complex nature of student learning in advanced degree programs leading to a terminal degree. Consequently, many of the proficiencies listed below incorporate aspects of knowledge, skills and dispositions within a single proficiency and are clearly linked to our conceptual framework.

Course Objectives
Candidate will:
1. Understand the nature of qualitative research procedures and how they compare to more traditional quantitative procedures (i.e., relative advantages/disadvantages of each approach);
2. Identify a number of different ways to collect qualitative data (i.e., individual/group interviewing; participant-observer journaling) and compare the relative tradeoffs of each approach;
3. Utilize technology to access course materials, journal articles and related literature using WebCT and various search engines;
4. Utilize technology software for successful storage and retrieval of qualitative data;
5. Understand how to summarize, compile and report qualitative data, in both narrative and visual matrix or other graphic/tabular display formats;
6. Establish habits central to conducting responsible research in the areas of conceptualizing/theorizing, planning/managing, gathering, and analyzing/interpreting under the auspices of ethical practice;
7. Prepare a research study which employs at least two methods of collecting and analyzing qualitative data

In addition, Candidates who successfully complete this course will be prepared to:
- Identify and describe epistemological differences among qualitative research methods.
- Understand the basic and defining concepts and issues in qualitative research.
- Understand and be able to use common terms utilized in qualitative research.
- Determine the appropriateness of qualitative methods to address research needs in education.
- Explore a topic of interest in special education and formulate research questions to consider.
- Understand the various types of qualitative research methods.
- Consider the ethical issues inherent in qualitative research especially as they relate to students and their families
- Reflect on the intersection of personal epistemology, issues in education, and qualitative research approaches.
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EdD Performance Outcomes</th>
<th>EDRS 9100 Course Objectives</th>
<th>EPP Proficiencies</th>
<th>NCATE Standards</th>
<th>Assignments Activities</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. Candidates foster a responsive, learner-centered educational environment that promotes collaboration and democratic participation for student learning and may include co-teaching.</td>
<td>Determine the appropriateness of qualitative methods to address research needs in education. Consider the ethical issues inherent in qualitative research especially as they relate to students and their families.</td>
<td>1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6, 1.7</td>
<td>1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6, 1.7, 3.4</td>
<td>Research Project Self-reflection Journals</td>
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<td>2. Candidates demonstrate pedagogical approaches which incorporate contextual, theoretical / conceptual, and practical influences on the learner and learning.</td>
<td>Utilize technology software for successful storage and retrieval of qualitative data.</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6, 1.7</td>
<td>Self-reflection Journals A1 A2</td>
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<td>3. Candidates advance teaching and learning through the innovative use of technology based on sound educational theory and knowledge of the learner.</td>
<td>Understand the nature of qualitative research procedures and how they compare to more traditional quantitative procedures (i.e., relative advantages/disadvantages of each approach)</td>
<td>1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5</td>
<td>1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6, 1.7</td>
<td>Research Project Self-reflection Journals</td>
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<td>4. Candidates demonstrate in-depth foundational knowledge of content-based research, scholarship, and socio-political</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5</td>
<td>1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6, 1.7</td>
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| 5. Candidates demonstrate and apply various types of assessment to inform the learner’s ability to analyze, monitor, and improve their learning as well as interpret and use data to inform their own pedagogical effectiveness. | Identify a number of different ways to collect qualitative data (i.e., individual/group interviewing; participant-observer journaling) and compare the relative tradeoffs of each approach | 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6, 1.7 | Self-reflection Journals |
| 6. Candidates engage in scholarly, applied research to advance knowledge of teaching, the learner, and/or learning. | Prepare a research study which employs at least two methods of collecting and analyzing qualitative data. Understand how to summarize, compile and report qualitative data, in both narrative and visual matrix or other graphic/tabular display formats. | 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6, 1.7 | Research project Self-reflection Journals Final Oral presentation A.8 |
| 7. Candidates reflect on their professional, scholarly practice, and analyze the ways in which they have changed in their thinking, beliefs, or behaviors toward improved learner-centered practices. | Establish habits central to conducting responsible research in the areas of conceptualizing/theorizing, planning/managing, gathering, and analyzing/interpreting under the auspices of ethical practice. | 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5 | Research Project Self-reflection Journals |
| 8. Candidates support academic and linguistic needs of the learner, enhance cultural understandings, and increase global awareness of all | | 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6, 1.7 | |
9. Candidates demonstrate professional dispositions, fluency of academic language in a variety of contexts, and ethical practice expected of an engaged scholar-practitioner.

| Prepare a research study which employs at least two methods of collecting and analyzing qualitative data | Understand how to summarize, compile and report qualitative data, in both narrative and visual matrix or other graphic/tabular display formats | 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 3.1, 3.4 | 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6, 1.7 | Research Project Self-reflection Journals A.3 A.8 |

**Course Policies**

Students are expected to log in on time for the synchronous sessions, remain for the full virtual session, and be prepared to actively participate. Active participation includes being prepared for class by having completed all required reading, and taking part in class discussions and activities. Consistent with expectations for doctoral students, class participation should consist of comments that are grounded in source material and relevant to the topic at hand. Students are expected to demonstrate interpersonal and communication skills that are appropriate for professional leadership personnel.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS/ASSIGNMENTS**

**Exercises/Mini-projects/Class participation through reading**

(~45% of grade) We will work on exercises throughout the semester that push us to enact and reflect upon various research practices. Some will focus on research planning, theorizing, collecting, and interpreting practices that are typically used by qualitative researchers. Others will focus on helping other researchers with coding for their studies Initial Icebreaker (5%)

**Self-reflection Journal**

(~20% of grade) Students are required to keep a written journal on reflections of their learning process. The journal should include comments regarding your thinking, critique of readings, related articles, images, news, videos, etc. All of them with the aim of illustrating your personal journey throughout the course.

**Final video-presentation**

(~10% of grade) You will record an oral presentation on findings from your research project. This should approximate a short (5-18 minutes) convention talk. Because the talk will require framing as well as evidence, we will place the presentations at the end of the semester.

**Pilot Research Project**

(~25% of grade) The objective of this project is to provide you an opportunity to engage in and develop expertise in qualitative data collection, analysis, and interpretation. You will be required to demonstrate your ability to identify an issue in education, develop a research question or questions, design and implement a process for collecting data to answer the question, analyze and interpret the data, and synthesize your findings including recommendations for future research and limitations for your study. Specifics on your research project will be discussed in class and individually designed and agreed. Your research study must include the collection of multiple forms of data from multiple source.
EVALUATION AND GRADING

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<th>GRADE</th>
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<tr>
<td>90-100%</td>
<td>A</td>
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<td>80-89 %</td>
<td>B</td>
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<td>70-79 %</td>
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<td>60-69 %</td>
<td>D</td>
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<tr>
<td>&lt;60 %</td>
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Assignments are due on date assigned. All written assignments must be typed in 12 point font with standard margins. Work that is unedited or presented with little thought or planning will not be accepted.

**Turn-Around-Time for Grades**: All graded work will be returned, at the very latest, within one week of the due date.

**E-mail response**: Every question sent to the instructor by e-mail will be responded within the next 48 hours.

**Note**: See in D2L the “Assignments & Grading policy” document for a detailed description of the weight of each assignment in the final grade.

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

Every KSU student is responsible for upholding the provisions of the Student Code of Conduct, as published in the Undergraduate and Graduate Catalogs (see https://web.kennesaw.edu/scai/content/ksu-student-code-conduct). Section II of the Student Code of Conduct addresses the University's policy on academic honesty, including provisions regarding plagiarism and cheating, unauthorized access to University materials, misrepresentation/falsification of University records or academic work, malicious removal, retention, or destruction of library materials, malicious/intentional misuse of computer facilities and/or services, and misuse of student identification cards. Incidents of alleged academic misconduct will be handled through the established procedures of the University Judiciary Program, which includes either an "informal" resolution by a faculty member, resulting in a grade adjustment, or a formal hearing procedure, which may subject a student to the Code of Conduct's minimum one semester suspension requirement.

**Disruptive Behavior**

The University has a stringent policy and procedure for dealing with behavior that disrupts the learning environment. Consistent with the belief that your behavior can interrupt the learning of others, behavior that fits the University's definition of disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. Candidates should refer to the University Catalog to review this policy.

**Human Relations**

The University has formulated a policy on human relations that is intended to provide a learning environment that recognizes individual worth. That policy is found in the University Catalog. It is expected, in this class, that no Professional should need reminding but the policy is there for your consideration. The activities of this class will be conducted in both the spirit and the letter of that policy.

**Netiquette Statement**

Our text-based communication is vital in this course since it is the primary way we will connect with each other. Please be careful and considerate in all your communications with each other and the instructors.

The online medium is poor at conveying tone. Consider what you are saying and remember that your intent might not be inferred by your readers (fellow students and instructors). Take a moment to re-read
everything you write: assume that it will be taken in the worst possible light. And extend courtesy to others: assume the most charitable light possible. Both of these will make communication easier and far more civil.

- Use complete sentences
- Use proper spelling and grammar
- Avoid slang and uncommon abbreviations
- Do not use obscene or threatening language

Use emoticons to provide the context of facial expression. A simple smile :) goes a long way in telling readers that your statement is meant in a friendly way. A wink ;-) tells us you are joking about something and prevents misunderstanding.

You can also indicate emotions and gestures with text. Some people use * or :: to indicate these, such as ::smile:: or *frustrated*

If you feel angry or frustrated, give yourself time before submitting a response, possibly even over night. If you aren't sure how something will come across, ask someone else to read it over and give you feedback. Always re-read or preview messages in the discussion board or email before sending them.

Please be also careful with:
- Spelling and Grammar: Use capitalization, punctuation and properly constructed and grammatically correct sentences in the same way that you would in any other written, graduate level document. Sending an e-mail in all UPPER-CASE is the equivalent of shouting in some one's ear. ONLY use upper-case words when trying to make a point (such as I just did). I might add that typing the entire message in bold may be interpreted the same.
- Flames: What is a "flame"? Flaming is a virtual term for venting emotion online or sending inflammatory emails to a person(s) that has caused that person(s) to respond in not-so-nice words, defensively or flamingly. It's basically a verbal attack in electronic form. Flames are unproductive and injurious to the parties involved.
- Things to consider before venting electronically:
  - Would I say this to this person’s face?
  - Would I want this student’s parent(s) to read this?
  - Am I putting the reader(s) in an awkward position?
  - How would I feel if I got this email message?

Remember that KSU values diversity and encourages discourse. Be respectful of differences while engaging in online discussions. For more information about Netiquette, see The Core Rules for Netiquette in the following link: (http://www.albion.com/netiquette/corerules.html).

**COURSE OUTLINE: TOPICS & ASSIGNMENTS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module</th>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Readings &amp; Assignments</th>
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| Module 1: General Introduction to the course | • Welcome  
• Getting to know each other  
• Introduction to the course  
• Refreshing Qualitative Research basics | Welcoming Synchronous session (Blackboard collaborate)  
Icebreaker: Knowing each other  
Readings:  
Assignments:  
• A.1: Will I become a Qualitative Researcher?  
• A.2: Elaborate your own definition of Qualitative Inquiry ( |
| Module 2: Philosophical and Theoretical Frameworks: Interpretive Communities. | • Wordviews: Postpositivism; Constructivism; Transformative Worldview and; Pragmatism.  
• Interpretive communities: Post modernism; Critical theory; Feminist theory; Queer theory. | Readings:  
Assignments:  
• A.3: Describe your Worldview  
• Self-reflection journal. |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Module 3: Intro and overview of five+1 qualitative research traditions. | • Narrative Inquiry  
• Phenomenological Research | Readings:  
Assignments:  
• A.4: What makes a good story.  
• Self-reflection journal. |
| Module 4: Intro and overview of five+1 qualitative research traditions. | • Ethnographical Research  
• Grounded Theory | Readings:  
Assignments:  
• A.5: Make a critique of an Ethnographic research article (Use given template)  
• Self-reflection journal. |
| Module 5: Intro and overview of five+1 qualitative research traditions. | • Case Study Research  
• Action Research | Readings:  
| Module 6: Intro and overview of five+1 qualitative research traditions. | Practical collaborative session: 5+1 qualitative research traditions jigsaw | Assignments:  
• A.6: Generate the conceptual structure of a Case Study using Stake’s proposal. (Use given template)  
• Self-reflection journal |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Module 7: Designing and focusing qualitative studies | • Designing qualitative studies  
• Anticipated data reduction  
• Data disposition | Readings:  
Assignments:  
• A.7: Create an infography describing the 5+1 research traditions. Identify strengths, limitations and similarities with other approaches. This session will be based in a collaborative Jigsaw.  
• Self-reflection journal |
| Module 8: Data collection | • Observing  
• Interviewing  
• Doing Focus Group | Readings:  
• Yin, R. K. (2011). Qualitative research from start to finish. New York: Guilford Press. (Chapter 6)  
Assignments:  
• A.8: Design your study.  
• Self-reflection journal |
| Module 9: ICT in Data collection | • ICT to support data collection | Readings:  
Assignments:  
• A.9: Generate the protocols for an interview or Focus Group  
• Self-reflection journal |
| Module 10: Data analysis and representation | • Data analysis and representation  
• Coding | Readings:  
• Yin, R. K. (2011). Qualitative research from start to finish. New York: Guilford Press. (Chapter 9)  
Assignments:  
• A.11: Select and apply a coding strategy  
• Self-reflection journal |
| Module 11-12: | • Practical session | Readings: |
| Module 13: Writing the narrative | • Writing the final report  
• Final synthesis | Readings:  
• Yin, R. K. (2011). Qualitative research from start to finish. New York: Guilford Press. (Chapter 10) |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| Assignments:  
• A.12: Coding data using Atlas.ti  
• Self-reflection journal | | |
| Module 14: Standards of quality and verification & Ethical Issues | • Standards of quality and verification  
• Ethical considerations and guidelines | Readings:  
• Shenton, A. K. (2004). Strategies for ensuring trustworthiness in qualitative research projects. Education For Information, 22(2), 63-75  
| | | Assignments:  
• A.14: Strategies to assure credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability & Ethics Decalogue  
• Self-reflection journal |
| Module 15: Final presentation | • Final Video-presentation of a summary of your research project  
• Final research project | Assignments:  
• Final presentation  
• Final pilot Research Project |