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INTRODUCTION

Course Overview

This course introduces students to the fundamentals of qualitative scientific inquiry. The course covers the theoretical underpinnings and basic techniques of qualitative methodology, geared towards enabling students to develop competencies in practitioner research. Students will be provided with a well-balanced overview of conducting qualitative research and how qualitative research may provide a rich source of data within the social sciences.

Prerequisites

AP4001: Introduction to Psychological Applications & Ethical Practice
AP4002: Developmental Psychology in Practice

Aims & Objectives

The course aims to develop the Graduate competencies associated with the Scientist-Practitioner Model, which forms the basis for the training of Psychologists in Singapore and internationally. Graduate competencies describe the generic and specific knowledge, skills and abilities that Graduate students should acquire.

Generic Graduate competencies include:

a. Critical-thinking & reflection
b. Effective & professional communication
c. An appreciation of evidence-based empirical research
d. Ethical conduct

Specific competencies students should acquire from this course include:

a. The application of theory & research to real-world issues
b. The basic knowledge and understanding of the major concepts, theoretical perspectives, empirical findings, and historical trends in qualitative research
c. The ability to understand, apply and evaluate basic qualitative research methods

The above competencies will be developed through lectures & tutorials and assessed via a variety of assessments.
# Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this course, students should achieve the following Learning Outcomes

| 1. Knowledge and understanding of Qualitative Research with regards to: | a. Understanding the major concepts and theories that may be of interest to Researchers  
b. Defining the characteristics of Qualitative Research and its difference from Quantitative Research  
c. Understanding the basic steps required to research a topic of interest |
|---|---|
| 2. Knowledge and understanding of the application of Qualitative Research, enabling students to: | a. Define the primary ways to collect Qualitative data  
b. Understand when interviewing is an effective tool to collect research data  
c. Understand when to utilise focus group interviewing  
d. Develop a critical understanding of the various strategies for taking effective field notes |
| 3. Develop and apply critical-thinking skills within the domain of Qualitative Research, enabling students to: | a. Demonstrate an ability to utilise critical-thinking that includes open-mindedness and the scientific process  
b. Demonstrate an attitude of receptivity to new knowledge and intellectual engagement  
c. Critically evaluate claims about human behaviour that arise from myths, pseudo-science, or unproven hypothesis |
| 4. Develop an understanding of ethical values in Qualitative Research, enabling students to: | a. Understand and outline the steps required for attaining an Ethics Approval for research  
b. Use information ethically (e.g. acknowledge and respect the work and intellectual property rights of others through appropriate |
5. Understanding how the knowledge of Qualitative Research may interact with broader frameworks, enabling students to:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>c. Prioritise evidence-based approaches to understanding and explaining issues</th>
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a. Understand how the concepts, theories and application of Qualitative research may be used to analyse and form better structures for public policy and practice

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**Administrative Support**

You may contact your Course Coordinator at opsmanager@asasedu.com for administrative and technical support (if necessary). Please highlight your name, Student Number, Course Code and contact number in all correspondences.
Lecturer Details

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lecturer Name:</th>
<th>TBC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contact Details:</td>
<td>TBC</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TBC
## Course Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Lesson</th>
<th>Date / Time</th>
<th>Topic(s)</th>
<th>Reading Chapter(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>TBC</td>
<td>Introduction and Overview : What is Qualitative Research?</td>
<td>1 - 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>TBC</td>
<td>The Research Question : Proposals, Hypotheses and Ethics</td>
<td>4 &amp; 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>TBC</td>
<td>The Interview</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>TBC</td>
<td>What are Focus Group Discussions?</td>
<td>7 - 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>TBC</td>
<td>Ethnography / Participant Observations Research</td>
<td>10 &amp; 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>TBC</td>
<td>Data Analysis I</td>
<td>15 &amp; 16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>TBC</td>
<td>Data Analysis II and How to Incorporate Field Data in Writing</td>
<td>13 &amp; 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>TBC</td>
<td>Presentations</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
RESOURCES

Course Materials

To undertake study in this course, you will need:

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**Essential textbook**

| Title: Qualitative Research Methods for the Social Sciences |
| Edition: 3rd Edition |
| Author: Berg, B. L. (2009) |
| Publisher: Boston, Allyn & Bacon |

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**Online resources**

TBA

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**Library resources**

National Library

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The following will be provided during the teaching period:

- Lecture slides
- Hardcopy of the Course Information Booklet

Additional Readings:

1) *Discourse Studies: An Interdisciplinary Journal for the Study of Text and Talk*

2) *Ethnography*

3) *Field Methods*

4) *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*

5) *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*
ASSESSMENT

Assessment Policy

Assessment for this course is conducted in accordance with the Assessment Policy of the school. Those who fail to meet the passing requirements for one or more of the assessment components are to check with the Course Coordinator on the appropriate remedial procedures (if applicable).

Assessment Components

You will be assessed on the basis of:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A-1</td>
<td>Group Presentation</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>TBC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-2</td>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-3</td>
<td>Research Proposal</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>TBC</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

More information regarding the assessments shall be provided at Lesson 1 (upon enrolment into the course). Marking Schemes for the assessments shall also be provided (where appropriate).

Assignment Cover Sheets

You are required to include a Cover Sheet with all submitted work, which includes a signed declaration stipulating that the content is the product of your own original work. Assignment Cover Sheets may be downloaded from: [http://www.asas.edu](http://www.asas.edu)

Assignment Submission & Extensions

It is a requirement for passing this course that students submit (but not necessarily pass) all assessment items (including the Final Exam).

Consistent with the policy of the Psychology Program, where an extension has not been granted, assignments submitted after the due date will lose 5% of the total available marks that could otherwise have been obtained, for each late day. Assignments more than seven (7) days late receive no marks. Note that, even if all available marks have been lost, assignments must still be submitted in order to complete the requirements of the course.

Submission deadlines should be strictly adhered to. Extensions will usually be granted only for medical reasons or extreme personal difficulties, and will require the sighting of a medical certificate or other appropriate documentary evidence. Pressure of work will not be regarded as a sufficient reason for granting an extension. Extensions must be applied for at least seven (7) days in advance of the submission dates, unless circumstances prevent this.
If you believe you have grounds for an extension, you should contact your Lecturer and specify:
a) the grounds you have for seeking an extension; and
b) how much extra time you are seeking.

If, after consultation with your Lecturer, you decide to proceed with your request, you should notify him / her, as well as the Course Coordinator from the school, in writing. All approvals for extension will be submitted to you in writing as well and you are required to keep documentary evidence of such approvals.

Care will be taken to keep your work secure in the assignment and return processes. Your Lecturer will only know the Student Number of the assignment he / she is marking.

Please note that Online Plagiarism Checkers are a means of checking your assignments for plagiarism. It should not be counted as an official submission for your assignments.

Students should note that hardcopies of their Assessments will not be returned to them. Only the Marking Scheme(s) will be returned, where appropriate. However, all students have the right to see their marked script(s) following publication of the grades. This request should be considered for review purposes only.

The school takes care in ensuring that marks for the assessment(s) are correct, and consequently it is highly unlikely that a review will result in an increase of the final mark given. Furthermore, students may be required to pay a non-refundable administrative fee for the review process.

**Electronic Assignment Submission**

Assignments should be submitted electronically, after submitting it through an Online Plagiarism Checker and making any necessary changes. Further details will be provided in the first lesson.

Once submitted, students may not get back their entire assignments in whole. Students may only receive a Grading Sheet with their marks and potential areas for improvement (if any).

Where assignments are submitted in Microsoft Word format, the Cover Sheet and assignment should be submitted as a single file.

So your work doesn't get mixed up with others', use a filename which follows the convention: Course Code_Assignment Number_Student Number.
*E.g: AP4006_A1_P12345A.*

If you need to submit a Cover Sheet separately (e.g. when the assignment is written in another package, such as Excel), append the Cover Sheet to the same filename, to signify that this is a Cover Sheet.
Attendance / Participation

Attendance at lectures regarding the course is compulsory; however participation will be recorded by your Lecturers. It is acknowledged that unexpected non-medical and medical events happen. In these circumstances, please ensure that you contact the Course Coordinator to be sure your issues are fully understood.

Students who achieve less than **75% of attendance** for the entire course will not be considered as having successfully graduated.

**Determination of Final Grade**

To pass this course, students must:

*Submit all written assignments, and attend the examination(s), if applicable.*

To ensure equity in assessment, it is important that students complete each of the assessments for this unit. It is unfair to those who put the effort in to do all assessments if another student can pass by doing well in only two of the assessments. Therefore, it is important that all students have to fulfil the same requirements to pass (i.e. complete all assessments even if one is late). If circumstances prevent a student from fulfilling this requirement, the Course Coordinator and Lecturer must be informed in a timely manner, and it will be at the discretion of the school as to whether that student is able to pass the course.

The final grade will be determined on the basis of course assessments.

At times, your assessments may be marked by different Tutors / Lecturers. This is to ensure equity and consistency in marking.

Moderation of marks will be undertaken before assignments are returned to students to ensure equity of marking.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Notation</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HD</td>
<td>High Distinction</td>
<td>80 – 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Distinction</td>
<td>70 – 79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Credit</td>
<td>60 – 69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P</td>
<td>Pass</td>
<td>50 – 59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NC</td>
<td>Fail</td>
<td>Below 50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DNS</td>
<td>Fail</td>
<td>Fail, the student failed to participate in assessment components that had a combined weightage of 50% or more of the final mark.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Plagiarism & Academic Integrity

What is Plagiarism?
Plagiarism is presenting someone else’s thoughts or work as your own. It can take many forms; from not having appropriate academic referencing to deliberate cheating.

The school groups plagiarism into the following four categories:

i. **Copying**: using the same or very similar words to the original text or idea without acknowledging the source or using quotation marks. This also applies to images, art and design projects, as well as presentations where someone presents another’s ideas or words without assigning credit.

ii. **Inappropriate Paraphrasing**: changing a few words and phrases while mostly retaining the original structure and information without acknowledgement. This also applies in presentations where someone paraphrases another’s ideas or words without assigning credit. It also applies to piecing together quotes and paraphrases into a new whole, without referencing, and a student’s own analysis to bring the material together.

iii. **Collusion**: working with others but passing off the work as a person’s individual work. Collusion also includes providing your work to another student before the due date, or for the purpose of them plagiarising at any time, paying another person to perform an academic task, stealing or acquiring another person’s academic work and copying it, offering to complete another person’s work or seeking payment for completing academic work.

iv. **Duplication**: submitting your own work, in whole or in part, where it has previously been prepared or submitted for another assessment or course at the school or another school or university.

Where Can I Find More Information?
In many cases plagiarism is the result of inexperience about academic conventions. The school has resources and information to assist you to avoid plagiarism.

What is an Online Plagiarism Checker?
Online Plagiarism Checkers are checking databases which review your work and compare it to an international collection of books, journals, internet pages and other student’s assignments. These databases check referencing and whether you have copied something from another student, resource, or off the internet. Sometimes students submit their work into Online Plagiarism Checkers when they hand it in, but academics can also use it to check a student’s work when they are marking it.

What if Plagiarism is Found in My Work?
If plagiarism is found in your work in your first module / unit / course, your Lecturer will offer you assistance to improve your academic skills assuming the offence was not a serious one. They may ask you to look at some online resources, attend short courses, or sometimes resubmit your work with the problem fixed.
However more serious instances, such as stealing another student’s work or paying someone to do your work, may be investigated under the Student Misconduct Procedures. Repeated plagiarism, or serious instances of plagiarism, may also be investigated under the Student Misconduct Procedures. The penalties under the procedures can include a reduction in marks, failing a course or for the most serious matters (like plagiarism in an honours thesis) even suspension from the school.

Please contact your Course Coordinator should you want to learn more about the Student Misconduct Procedures.

**Academic Conduct**

Intellectual honesty is essential to the success of the course and your studies in general. Plagiarism and any other kind of dishonesty will not be tolerated. If you have any questions about what is allowed and what is not allowed under the Academic Conduct Policy, rather than guess, please consult or check with the school.

As a student in this course, you acknowledge and affirm:

- That you have read and understood all sections in this Course Information Booklet and shall not raise, as a defense, ignorance of any of the provisions and sub-points contained herein;
- The fact that it is your responsibility for learning about, and abiding by, the Academic Conduct Policies;
- That you understand that the policies apply to both individual and group assessments; and
- That you understand the seriousness of academic dishonesty and the potential penalties for academic dishonesty.