THE EDUCATION UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG

Course Outline

Part I

Programme Title	:	Bachelor of Social Sciences (Honours) in Sociology and Community Studies; All Undergraduate programmes
Programme QF Level	:	5
Course Title	:	Qualitative Research Methods
Course Code	:	SSC3310
Department	:	Social Sciences and Policy Studies
Credit Points	:	3
Contact Hours	:	39
Pre-requisite(s)	:	Nil
Medium of Instruction	:	English
Course Level	:	3

Part II

The University's Graduate Attributes and seven Generic Intended Learning Outcomes (GILOs) represent the attributes of ideal EdUHK graduates and their expected qualities respectively. Learning outcomes work coherently at the University (GILOs), programme (Programme Intended Learning Outcomes) and course (Course Intended Learning Outcomes) levels to achieve the goal of nurturing students with important graduate attributes.

In gist, the Graduate Attributes for Sub-degree, Undergraduate, Taught Postgraduate, Professional Doctorate and Research Postgraduate students consist of the following three domains (i.e. in short "PEER & I"):
- **P**rofessional **E**xcellence;
- **E**thical **R**esponsibility; **&**
- **I**nnovation.

The descriptors under these three domains are different for the three groups of students in order to reflect the respective level of Graduate Attributes.

The seven GILOs are:
1. Problem Solving Skills
2. Critical Thinking Skills
3. Creative Thinking Skills
4a. Oral Communication Skills
4b. Written Communication Skills
5. Social Interaction Skills
6. Ethical Decision Making
7. Global Perspectives

1. **Course Synopsis**

Qualitative research methods are designed to achieve a deeper understanding of the meanings behind experiences, situations, events, and actions as perceived by those involved, as well as the contexts in which these actions occur and how such contexts influence individuals' thinking and actions. Qualitative methods are essential for exploring the nature and complexities of the social and cultural challenges faced by societies and communities at various levels and scales. Furthermore, the direct interactions between researchers and participants make qualitative research vital for facilitating knowledge transfer activities between the university and the community. This course offers a focused introduction to qualitative research methods, addressing the nature and purposes of qualitative research methods, the integration of sociological concepts with empirical research questions, techniques for collecting and analysing qualitative data, and considerations of research quality. Assessment tasks are designed to encourage active student participation and critical reflection on qualitative research design through hands-on experiences, practical skills, and creative presentation of the research processes and results.

2. **Course Intended Learning Outcomes** (CILO$_s$)

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

CILO$_1$ Discuss the purposes for which qualitative research methods are particularly appropriate, the types of research questions that qualitative research is most suited for answering, and the nature of qualitative research design;

CILO$_2$ Construct appropriate empirical qualitative research questions derived from concepts from sociology and community studies;

CILO$_3$ Design and undertake the collection of qualitative data using participant observation and qualitative interviews;

CILO$_4$ Analyze qualitative data;

CILO$_5$ Present the results of small-scale qualitative research projects.

3. **Content, CILOs mapping and Teaching & Learning Activities**

Course Content	CILOs	Suggested Teaching & Learning Activities
The nature, features and purposes of qualitative research methods	*CILO$_1$*	• Lecture • Class discussions
Qualitative research design: research goals, research problem and research questions	*CILO$_{1, 2}$*	• Lecture • Small-group discussions • Workshop

Literature review	$CILO_{1, 2}$	- Lecture - Workshop - Small-group discussions
Qualitative data collection: Key considerations	$CILO_{2, 3}$	- Lecture - Workshop - Small-group discussion
Data collection: Participant observation	$CILO_3$	- Lecture - Workshop - Small-group discussions
Data collection: Qualitative interviewing	$CILO_3$	- Lecture - Workshop - Peer discussion and evaluation
Qualitative data analysis	$CILO_4$	- Lecture - Workshop - Student presentation - Peer discussion and evaluation
Presenting qualitative research	$CILO_{4, 5}$	- Student presentation - Peer discussion and evaluation

4. Assessment

Assessment Tasks	Weighting (%)	CILO
(a) Individual Research Journal	40%	$CILO_{1, 2, 3, 4, 5}$
(b) Group Presentation and Report	50%	$CILO_{2, 3, 4, 5}$
(c) Class Participation	10%	$CILO_{2, 3, 4, 5}$

5. Use of Generative AI in Course Assessments
Please select one option only that applies to this course:

☐ *Not Permitted*: In this course, the use of generative AI tools is not allowed for any assessment tasks.

☑ *Permitted*: In this course, generative AI tools may be used in some or all assessment tasks. Instructors will provide specific instructions, including any restrictions or additional requirements (e.g., proper acknowledgment, reflective reports), during the first lesson and in relevant assessment briefs.

6. **Required Text(s)**
Saldana, J., and Omasta, M. (2022) *Qualitative research: Analyzing life*. London: Sage Publications.

7. **Recommended Readings**

Angrosino, M. (Ed.). (2007). *Doing ethnographic and observational research*. London: Sage Publications. https://julac.hosted.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/f/r4sr92/EDUHK_IZ51328492220003410

Barbour, R. (2008). *Introducing qualitative research*. London: Sage Publications. https://julac.hosted.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/f/4lock/EDUHK_IZ51328489520003410

Gibbs, G. R. (2007). *Analyzing qualitative data*. London: Sage Publications. https://julac.hosted.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/f/4lock/EDUHK_IZ51328508830003410

Kvale, S. (2007). *Doing interviews*. London: Sage Publications. https://julac.hosted.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/f/4lock/EDUHK_IZ51328511480003410

Maxwell, J. A. (2013). Qualitative research design: An interactive approach (3rd Edition). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications. http://www.lib.eduhk.hk/permalink/record?21259853460003410

Merriam, S. & Tisdell, E. (2016). *Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation (4th Edition)*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass. http://www.lib.eduhk.hk/permalink/record?51345843850003410

Seale, C., Gobo, G., Gubrium, J. F. & Silverman, D. (Eds.). (2004). *Qualitative research practice*. London: Sage Publications. https://julac.hosted.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/f/r4sr92/EDUHK_IZ51328485230003410

8. **Related Web Resources**

- Qual Page: Resources for Qualitative Research
    http://www.qualitativeresearch.uga.edu/QualPage/

- E-Resources for Qualitative Research Methods (SSC, EdUHK)
    https://sscqrm.wixsite.com/qualitativeresearch

- Everyday Sociology Blog
    https://www.everydaysociologyblog.com/

9. Related Journals

Qualitative Sociology
https://link-springer-com.ezproxy.eduhk.hk/journal/11133
Qualitative Research Journal
https://www-emerald-com.ezproxy.eduhk.hk/insight/publication/acronym/qrj
Journal of Contemporary Ethnography
https://journals-sagepub-com.ezproxy.eduhk.hk/loi/jce
Forum: Qualitative Social Research
https://www.qualitative-research.net/index.php/fqs
The Qualitative Report
https://nsuworks.nova.edu/tqr/
Qualitative Inquiry
https://journals-sagepub-com.ezproxy.eduhk.hk/loi/qix
Qualitative Sociology Review
http://www.qualitativesociologyreview.org/ENG/index_eng.php

10. Academic Honesty

The University upholds the principles of honesty in all areas of academic work. We expect our students to carry out all academic activities honestly and in good faith. Please refer to the *Policy on Academic Honesty, Responsibility and Integrity* (https://www.eduhk.hk/re/uploads/docs/000000000016336798924548BbN5). Students should familiarize themselves with the Policy.

11. Other

Nil

Updated January 2026