

Degree	Type	Year	Semester
4313784 Interdisciplinary Studies in Environmental, Economic and Social Sustainability	OT	0	1

## Contact

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## Teachers

Louis Lemkow Zetterling

## Use of languages

Principal working language: english (eng)

## External teachers

Isabel Ruiz Mallen

## Prerequisites

There are no prerequisite.

## Objectives and Contextualisation

This course develops core skills in research design, guides students through the logic of the research enterprise, and provides them with the analytical, methodological, technological tools necessary to conduct qualitative research in the social sciences. Throughout the course, we move from the conceptual and epistemological aspects of research design (including research question and literature review), the development of research methods, ethics, data collection techniques and skills, to data processing and analysis, and writing and presentation of research results.

Students will be able to explain the purpose of their research, design a qualitative study, gain access to the data, prepare field work select the most appropriate sources of information (interviews, observations, participant observation, ethnography, visual records, biographical and autobiographical material, texts from the Internet), take detailed field notes, reflect on and monitor one's research, learn qualitative software (Nvivo), perform different types of data analysis using different techniques, and write analytical memos, reports, or articles. By the end of the course, students should also be able to critique and evaluate the research conducted by other researchers.

The class will be organized and led as a research seminar with weekly readings, discussions, field exercises, in-class exercises, students reports on field exercises, end-of-semester project, and student presentations. Students are expected to come prepared to class with readings completed and assignments written and to participate actively in class discussion.

Training objectives of the course:

1. To train students in sound research design, in asking good research questions, and select appropriate methods for qualitative research

2. To train students to gain the necessary knowledge to understand what it means to do research with qualitative data, how it differs from traditional quantitative research and how both sets of methods are complementary to assist in the advancement of knowledge.
3. To help students develop an adequate knowledge of the main methods of qualitative research and of preparing for field work, accessing data, collecting data, and analyzing data.
4. To introduce students to the methodological and ethical implications related to qualitative research methods.
5. To introduce students to software and other non digital tools designed to help sort, organize, process, and analyse qualitative data
6. To help students learn how to synthesize and write-up results into memos, reports, and articles.

More specific objectives include:

- B06 (Basic) - Use acquired knowledge as a basis for originality in the application of ideas, often in a research context.
- B08 (Basic) - Integrate knowledge and use it to make judgements in complex situations, with incomplete information, while keeping in mind social and ethical responsibilities.
- B09 (Basic) - Communicate and justify conclusions clearly and unambiguously to both specialised and non-specialised audiences.
- B10 (Basic) - Continue the learning process, to a large extent autonomously
- E01 (Specific) - Apply knowledge of environmental and ecological economics to the analysis and interpretation of environmental problem areas.
- T01 (Transverse) - Apply specific methodologies, techniques and resources to conduct research and produce innovative results in the area of Environmental Studies.
- T03 (Transverse) - Communicate orally and in writing in English.

## Skills

- Apply knowledge of environmental and ecological economics to the analysis and interpretation of environmental problem areas.
- Apply specific methodologies, techniques and resources to conduct research and produce innovative results in the area of Environmental Studies.
- Communicate and justify conclusions clearly and unambiguously to both specialised and non-specialised audiences.
- Communicate orally and in writing in English.
- Continue the learning process, to a large extent autonomously
- Integrate knowledge and use it to make judgements in complex situations, with incomplete information, while keeping in mind social and ethical responsibilities.
- Use acquired knowledge as a basis for originality in the application of ideas, often in a research context.

## Learning outcomes

1. Apply specific methodologies, techniques and resources to conduct research and produce innovative results in the area of Environmental Studies.
2. Communicate and justify conclusions clearly and unambiguously to both specialised and non-specialised audiences.
3. Communicate orally and in writing in English.
4. Continue the learning process, to a large extent autonomously
5. Design a good research project, by asking good research questions and choosing the appropriate methods for qualitative research.
6. Recognise the different ethical and methodological implications of decisions that must be taken when designing and conducting qualitative research.
7. Use acquired knowledge as a basis for originality in the application of ideas, often in a research context.

## Content

<b>Date</b>	<b>Class Topic</b>	<b>Assignment handed-out</b>	<b>Assignment due (at the beginning of class Online)</b>
19 October (Isabelle, Louis)	Introduction to Social Science Inquiry and Research Design: Qualitative vs. Quantitative Research, Hypotheses, and Variables	Assignment 1 (non graded): Write a research question and bring it on large piece of paper for next class	
26 October (Isabelle)	Asking the right questions & Problematizing and designing your research	Assignment 2: Deconstructing theory and research framework	Assignment 1 (non graded) due
2 Nov (Isabelle)	Deconstructing theory and literature reviews		
9 Nov (Louis)	Secondary Data and Use of Archival Research	Assignment 3: Short presentation of possible research project with refined research question	Assignment 2
16 Nov (Isabel and Louis)	The preparation of field work and ethics in social research		
23 Nov (Isabelle)	Case Study Approaches and Measurement, Reliability, and Validity	Assignment 4: case selection	Assignment 3
30 Nov (Isabel)	Conducting interviews and observations and Writing out field notes	Assignment 5: field work preparation)	
7 December (NO CLASS)			Assignment 4 (due online but no class on that day)
14 Dec (Louis)	Preparing and conducting a Survey	Assignment 6: Practicing field work	Assignment 5

21 Dec  
(Isabelle): NOTE  
THAT THE  
CLASS WILL  
EXCEPTIONALLY  
LAST 4H TO  
ALLOW FOR THE  
TRAINING

Data Analysis :  
Grounded Theory +  
Nvivo Training

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11 January  
(Louis)  
Ethnographic Methods:  
Participant Observation  
and Focus Group  
Discussions

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18 January  
(Isabelle)  
Data Analysis: Discourse  
Analysis  
Final Assignment 7  
(Data analysis and  
writing)  
Assignment 6 due

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25 January  
(Louis/Isabelle  
with ICTA panel)  
Structuring and Writing a  
Scientific Article  
FINAL ASSIGNMENT  
DATE TO BE  
CONFIRMED

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2 February  
(optional for  
Master's students.  
Mandatory for  
registered PhD  
students)  
Data Analysis: Process  
tracing

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9 February  
(optional for  
Master's students  
Mandatory for  
registered PhD  
students)  
Writing Research  
Proposals

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Assignment 6 due  
February XXX

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## Methodology

Work in large group (classroom)

1) Discussing the assigned papers for the session (critical analysis)

2) Presenting work from the course

Student individual work

1) Preparing weekly work and readings

3) Preparing and conducting observations

- 3) Preparing, conducting, and transcribing interviews
  - 4) Writing field notes from interviews and observations
  - 5) Writing report/paper/memo from field work
  - 6) Preparation of final project (draft research project or proposal, detailed analytical memos, draft paper/article)
- Work in small groups: Workshops
- 1) Workshop for qualitative data analysis (3 hours, not part of the evaluation)

## Activities

Title	Hours	ECTS	Learning outcomes
<b>Type: Directed</b>			
Work in large group (classroom)	30	1.2	
Work in small groups: Interviews and data analysis	6	0.24	
<b>Type: Autonomous</b>			
At home short assignment(s)	10	0.4	
Conducting and Practicing field work	8	0.32	
Individual assignments	20	0.8	
Readings	40	1.6	
Transcription/analysis/writing	30	1.2	

## Evaluation

Assignment 1: Research question (Non graded) -

Assignment 2: Short presentation of proposed research project (refined research question, summary, variables) (15%) -

Assignment 3: Case selection criteria (10%) -

Assignment 4: Fieldwork preparation (interview instrument) (10%) -

Assignment 5: Practicing field work (interviews): (25%) -

Assignment 6: Data analysis and writing a research report/detailed qualitative memos based on interviews (30%) -

Assignment 7: Participation in the discussion (each session record): Attendance and active participation in class discussion, quantity and quality of participation, constructive attitude to advance knowledge (10%) -

## Evaluation activities

Title	Weighting	Hours	ECTS	Learning outcomes
Assignment 2	7.5%	1	0.04	5, 4, 7
Assignment 3	10%	1	0.04	5, 7
Assignment 4	10%	1	0.04	1, 6, 3, 4, 7
Assignment 5	7.5%	1	0.04	1, 6, 3, 4, 7
Assignment 6	25%	1	0.04	1, 6, 3, 2, 7
Assignment 7	30%	1	0.04	1, 6, 3, 5, 2, 4, 7

## Bibliography

The list of references below is exhaustive and includes numerous recommended suggested readings for students. A shorter and selected list of references with weekly obligatory readings will be given to the students at the beginning of the class in the Fall.

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- Bennett, Andrew and Colin Elman. "Qualitative Research: Recent Developments in Case Study Methods," *Annual Review of Political Science*, pp. 455-476, 2006.
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- Emerson, Robert *Contemporary Field Research*. Waveland Press, 2001. (CFR)
- Emerson, Robert, Rachel Fretz, and Linda Shaw. *Writing Ethnographic Field Notes*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995.
- Fetterman, David. *Ethnography Step by Step*.
- Fielding, Nigel and Raymond Lee (eds.). *Using Computers in Qualitative Research*.
- Geddes, Barbara. "How the Cases You Choose Affect the Answers You Get: Selection Bias and Related Issues." *Paradigms and Sandcastles: Theory Building and Research Design in Comparative Politics*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan. Skim pages 89-129, 2003.
- Geertz, Clifford.. "Thick Description: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture." Chapter 1 in *The Interpretation of Cultures*. New York: Basic Books, pp. 3-54, 1973
- George, Alexander L., and Andrew Bennett, *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Science*. Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press. Read pages 3-36, skim pages 73-108, 2005
- George, Alexander L., and Andrew Bennett. "Process-Tracing and Historical Explanation." Pp. 205-232 in A. L. George and A. Bennett (eds.), *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Science*. Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 2005.
- Gerring, John. "The Case Study: What it is and What it Does." In Charles Boix and Susan Stokes (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Politics*, pp 90-122, 2007.
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Yin, Robert. *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*, 4th Edition (Beverly Hills: Sage, 2008)

The Sage series in *Qualitative Research Methods* includes excellent guides. These titles are particularly relevant:

Erickson and Stull, *Doing Group Ethnography* (#42)

Schwartzman, *Ethnography in Organizations* (#27)

Feldman, *Strategies for Interpreting Qualitative Data* (#33)

Gladwin, *Ethnographic Decision Tree Modeling* (#19)

Holstein and Gubrium, *The Active Interview* (#37)

Riessman, *Narrative Analysis* (#30)

Below is a very diverse collection of published studies (into books) using qualitative methods.

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Aitheid, David. *Creating Reality*.

Andersen. Elijah. *Code of the Street*.

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Bennett, Stith. *Making Music Together*.

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Bittner, Egon, *Aspects of Police Work*.

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Brooks, Peter and Paul Gewirtz (eds.), *Law's Stories*.

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Greenhouse, Carol. *Praying for Justice.*

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Marorella, Roseann. *The Sociology of Opera.*

Moore, Joan. *Going Down to the Barrio.*

Oldenburg, Ray. *The Great Good Place: Cafes, Coffee Shops, Bookstores, Bars, Hair Salons and Other Hangouts at the Heart of the Community*

Pattillo, Mary Black on the Block: *The Politics of Race and Class in the City*

Paxson, Heather. *Making Mothers.*

Petryna, Adriana. *Life Exposed.*

Prus, Bob and C.D. Sharper. *Road Hustler.*

Rock, Paul. *Making People Pay.*

Rosenblum, Barbara. *Photographers at Work.*

Sanders, Clint. *Customizing the Body.*

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Seron, Carroll. *The Business of Practicing Law.*

Spradley, James. *You Owe Yourself a Drunk.*

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Slyomovic, Susan. *The Performance of Human Rights in Morocco.*

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