UGBS 702: Advanced Qualitative Research Methods

PhD Course Syllabus, Teaching Plan and Reading List

Coordinator and Contact Information
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Lecturers/Conveners
- Dr. Thomas Buabeng, tbuabeng@ug.edu.gh
- Dr. Kobby Mensah, kobbymensah@ug.edu.gh
- Dr. Emmanuel Y. Mahama Seidu, eymseidu@ug.edu.gh
- Dr. Lily Yarney, lyarney@ug.edu.gh

LECTURE TIME: THURSDAY 3:30PM – 5:30PM | VENUE: G2

Aim and Content
The conduct of academic research can be either quantitative or qualitative. In this course the focus is on qualitative research design in which five different approaches to qualitative inquiry—narrative, phenomenology, grounded theory, ethnography, and case studies—are discussed. The procedures for conducting a qualitative study using any of these approaches are also looked at with the aim of empowering students to be able to conduct their own independent qualitative research. The course is aimed at stimulating an appreciation of the importance of conducting qualitative research and equipping research students with the techniques of conducting qualitative research. At the end of the course, students are expected to:

- Know the characteristics of qualitative research and the rules governing its conduct.
- Know and understand the various approaches to the conduct of qualitative research.
- Be able to conduct qualitative research independently.

The topics to be covered include the Meaning of Research, Research Paradigms, Qualitative Research Design, Qualitative Inquiry Process, Qualitative Data Collection, Qualitative Data Analysis, Qualitative Report Writing, Validation and Reliability, and Qualitative Research Proposal. The student will engage in a mini-research project to obtain a first-hand experience in applying the methods taught in the course.
Course Sessions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Lecturers/Conveners</th>
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| Session 1: Defining Research | Dr. Kobby Mensah  
Dr. Emmanuel Y. Mahama Seidu  
Dr. Lily Yarney |
| Session 2: Research Paradigms | Student Groups |
| Session 3: Designing A Qualitative Study | Dr. Kobby Mensah  
Dr. Emmanuel Y. Mahama Seidu  
Dr. Lily Yarney |
| Session 4: Five Qualitative Approaches to Qualitative Inquiry | Dr. Kobby Mensah  
Dr. Emmanuel Y. Mahama Seidu  
Dr. Lily Yarney |
| Session 5: The Research Problem, Purpose and Question | Dr. Kobby Mensah  
Dr. Emmanuel Y. Mahama Seidu  
Dr. Lily Yarney |
| Session 6: Qualitative Data Collection | Dr. Kobby Mensah  
Dr. Emmanuel Y. Mahama Seidu  
Dr. Lily Yarney |
| Session 7: Qualitative Data Analysis and Representation | Dr. Richard Boateng |
| Session 8: Writing Qualitative Study | Dr. Richard Boateng |
| Session 9: Standards of Validation and Evaluation | Dr. Thomas Buabeng |
| Session 10: Concluding Qualitative Research | Dr. Thomas Buabeng |
| Session 11: Qualitative Research Proposal | Student Groups |
| Session 11 - 13 | Individual Presentations |

Course Sessions Description

Session 1: Defining Research

Research plays a critical role in business and society. However, what makes a piece of exercise of asking questions a research. This session seeks to introduce readers to the purpose of qualitative research and explain the qualitative research process. The session will present an overview of the types of qualitative research and discuss their similarities and differences. The learning outcome is to also understand what is and what is not research, understand the classifications or different types of research and explain research design.

Readings

Session 2: Research Paradigms
This session seeks discuss the interrelationships between paradigms/worldview, philosophical assumptions and interpretive frameworks. The session explains the concept of research paradigm and discusses paradigms including positivism, interpretive, realism, critical realism and advocacy approaches. It also explains how to use paradigm in research projects. The session will also discuss how research paradigms embrace qualitative approaches to research.

Readings

Session 3: Designing A Qualitative Study
The objective of this session is to provide participants an overview of and introduction to qualitative research. The session will discuss the key characteristics of qualitative research and its relevance to researchers. The session will also discuss how to design qualitative research, and the types of research problems and questions to be asked in this form of research.

Readings
Session 4: Five Qualitative Approaches to Qualitative Inquiry
The session seeks to explain the five qualitative approaches to inquiry to research, namely; narrative research, phenomenology, grounded theory, ethnography, and case studies. For each approach, the session will explore its key characteristics, explain procedures involved in conducting a study and discuss the potential challenges in using the approach. The session will also review the similarities and differences among the five approaches so that participants can decide on the best approach for their particular study.

Readings

Session 5: The Research Problem, Purpose and Question
The session seeks to explain how to identify a research gap and write a good qualitative research problem statement, purpose statement and research questions tailored to one of the five qualitative approaches discussed in previous sessions. The session will also explain the relationship between the research background, research problem, research purpose, research objectives and research questions.

Readings
Session 6: Qualitative Data Collection
The session seeks to explain the activities which enable the collection data to address a particular research purpose and question(s). These activities are locating a site (fieldwork), gaining access, justifying the section, sampling purposefully, collecting data, recording information, exploring field issues and storing data. The session will review how these activities differ in the five approaches to inquiry. The different approaches to sampling in qualitative research will also be explained.

Readings

Session 7: Qualitative Data Analysis and Representation
The session seeks to explain the procedures and strategies in data analysis in qualitative research and their application to each of five approaches to qualitative research. The session will also discuss the methods for coding data and how two qualitative analysis software, Atlas.ti and NVivo, aid the data coding and analysis process.

Readings
Session 8: Writing Qualitative Study
The session seeks to explain the procedures and strategies in writing qualitative research. Four rhetorical issues are discussed: reflexivity and representation, audience, encoding and quotes. The session will review strategies applied to writing the overall structure or organization of the report or study and the embedded structure - specific narrative devices and techniques that is used within the report. The session will also explore how the narrative structures for the five approaches to qualitative inquiry differ.

Readings

Session 9: Standards of Validation and Evaluation
The session seeks to address the questions on validity and reliability in qualitative research. The session will discuss the qualitative perspectives on validation and reliability and procedures to establish validation and reliability.

Readings
Session 10: Concluding Qualitative Research
The session seeks to explain how to conclude a qualitative research. The session will explain the sub-sections of conclusion, namely: summary of the paper and revisiting the research model, implications (research, practice and policy) and future research directions.

Readings

Session 11: Qualitative Research Proposal
This session discuss the guidelines for writing a research proposal. It also discusses the relationship between research proposal and the Chapter one of a PhD Thesis. The session will also explain the key components of research proposal, the different types of research proposals and also learn how to turn the research proposal into the Chapter One of a PhD Thesis.

Readings

Sessions 12-13: Student Presentations
Student presentation will be conducted based on course assignments.
Mode of Delivery

The course will be a combination of lecture sessions, class discussions, and group assignments/presentations. Lectures will follow the course outline (given below) and text presentation of the relevant chapters of the recommended text. The instructor may utilize additional information to supplement the text.

Students are expected to read topics in textbooks ahead of class and will use lecture sessions to clarify difficult materials. Any changes to the schedule and assignments will be given in class. If for some reason a student must miss a class, it is his/her responsibility to find out what was discussed on that day. For example, the absence from class on a particular day will not be an excuse for a late submission of an assignment.

Class Power Points Slides:
To obtain a copy of the class power point slides, consult your instructor and also the class website (which will be announced in class). Students may also visit www.emeraldinsight.com / www.onlinelibrary.wiley.com / www.search.epnet.com to read articles on qualitative research design.
Assessment – Individual Term Paper

In relation to your PhD programme, select a research topic and develop a qualitative paper covering the following sections:

A) Abstract
B) Introduction
   a. Should include the background and research gaps
C) Literature Review
D) Research Framework
E) Research Methods
F) Presentation of Findings/Case Study
G) Data Analysis
H) Conclusion
I) Future Research Directions
J) References
K) Appendices
   a. Questionnaire for Qualitative Data Collection
   b. Respondents Consent Forms Signed

Your paper should not be more than 10,000 words including references (excluding appendices) and it should single spacing, Font size 12, APA referencing and fit-for an academic journal in your discipline.

Assessment – Group Presentation

Working in teams of your choice (maximum of three members), you are required to critique a qualitative paper which is based on one of the following qualitative research methods:

1. Content Analysis
2. Phenomenology
3. Grounded Theory
4. Ethnography
5. Action Research

The presentation should cover the following:
A) Paper Title
B) Reason for Selecting the Paper
C) Overview of Qualitative Data Method Used
D) Research Methodology in the Paper
E) Critique of the Research Methodology and Analysis in the Paper
   a. Strengths and Weakness
F) Recommended Approach
G) Lessons Learnt by the Group
Assessment - Grading

The assessment for this course has been designed to help all students to maximise their individual learning opportunities. A summary of the assessment tasks is provided below.

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<th>ITEM</th>
<th>MARKS</th>
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<tr>
<td>Group Presentation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Individual Presentation</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term paper</td>
<td>50%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
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POLICIES

**Attendance:** Regular class attendance is expected.