



**HIED 696 01W: Qualitative Research Methods**  
**COURSE SYLLABUS: SPRING 2025**

**INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION**

**Instructor:** Dimitra Smith, PhD; Professor

**Department:** Department of Higher Education and Learning Technologies

**Office Hours:** Available by appointment on Tuesdays (10:00 -12:00 noon CST on campus); and on Wednesdays (10:00 am-1:00 pm CST via distance communication). By appointment.

**University Email Address:** [Dimitra.Smith@tamuc.edu](mailto:Dimitra.Smith@tamuc.edu)

**Preferred Form of Communication:** Email

**Communication Response Time:** Email is the best way to reach me as I check it daily. A reply will be sent within 48 hours, depending upon the time your message was received.

**COURSE INFORMATION**

**My Commitment to You:**

“I am committed to being as flexible as possible to support all students in our class as we navigate life and learning amid a pandemic. I will prioritize your humanity, physical and mental health, and well - being over intellectual growth while also trying to provide a worthy learning environment. Collectively, I hope we can build a community that maintains social connections and academic engagement yet recognizes that personal accommodations may be necessary to foster that environment.”

– Geneva Sarcedo (@evergeneva)

**Materials – Textbooks, Readings, Supplementary Readings**

Textbook(s) Required:

Creswell, J., & Poth C. N. (2018). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.

*The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.*

## Course Description

Introduce students to qualitative research methods, which includes ethnography, case study, phenomenology, grounded theory, biographical research, program assessment, hermeneutics and critical social science. By the end students will have an understanding of naturalistic fieldwork and develop skills in how to formulate appropriate qualitative research questions and collect qualitative data using five data gathering techniques, including observation, interviewing, document collection, participation, and artifact collection. Students will learn the basic steps of qualitative data analysis and reporting. This is an approved doctoral research tools course. Prerequisites: Completion of HIED 695.

### Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, the student will be able to

1. Demonstrate an understanding of the systematic process of research. Specifically, the student will be able to:
  - a. Describe educational research as a systematic process of constructive inquiry.
  - b. Discuss the fundamental procedures of conducting systematic inquiry.
2. Demonstrate an understanding of the foundations of interpretive inquiry in education. Specifically, the student will be able to:
  - a. Describe qualitative educational research.
  - b. Identify, compare, and contrast naturalistic and rationalistic designs.
  - c. Describe the value of qualitative methodology in educational research.
3. Develop in-depth skills for interpretive research design. Specifically, the student will be able to:
  - a. Identify and demonstrate ethnography.
  - b. Identify and demonstrate case study.
  - c. Identify and demonstrate phenomenology.
  - d. Identify and demonstrate grounded theory.
  - e. Identify and demonstrate biographical research.
  - f. Identify and demonstrate program assessment.

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

### Minimal Technical Skills Needed

Students should be able to use the learning management system, Microsoft Word, and presentation and graphics programs.

### Instructional Methods

**Class Participation (40 points):** Learning is a process of co-constructing knowledge within a discourse community; as a result, a portion of your grade is tied to your participation in various class activities.

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- Discussion Board Posts (10 posts x 2 points each = 20 points)
- Plus/Delta Form (10 points)
- Peer Review Activity (10 points)

**Please Note:**

All the class participation activities must be fully complete in order to receive full credits (answer all of the parts, meet length requirements, deadlines).

**Research Project (60 points – total):** This course requires that students complete a research project that is broken down into smaller sections. This assignment provides an opportunity to apply the skills learned in this course in a project that can be used for funding, a conference, or your dissertation. In the project, you will make the case for your study, citing relevant literature, theoretical constructs for the work you propose, a methodological plan of action, a discussion of positionality, and a discussion of trustworthiness concerns with the study. You will also conduct an original research pilot study and report findings, create a discussion of those findings, and provide implications for research, practice, and policy.

Part 1: Introduction, Literature Review, and Theoretical Framework (20 points)

Part 2: Methodology and Trustworthiness (20 points)

Part 3: Final Research Project Write-Up (including findings, discussion, and implications) (20 points)

**Please Note:**

- 20 pages maximum (not including tables, references, appendices, and etcetera).
- More information on the elements of the research project is available within the online course.
- **Late Submissions Will Not Be Accepted.** All papers must be thoroughly edited before submission and must conform to the APA Style Manual (7th ed.) for writing style accuracy.

**GRADING**

Grading Items	Assignment	Points
<b>Class Participation</b>	Discussion Board Posts	20 points
	PLUS/DELTA Form	10 points
	Peer Review Activity	10 points
<b>Research Project</b>	Part 1: Introduction, Literature Review, and Theoretical Framework	20 points
	Part 2: Methodology and Trustworthiness	20 points

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	Part 3: Final Research Project Write-Up and Virtual Final Research Presentation (including findings, discussion, and implications)	20 points
	<b>TOTAL</b>	100 points

Final grades in this course will be based on the following scale:

A = 90-100 pts.

B = 80-89 pts.

C = 70-79 pts.

D = 60-69 pts.

F = 59 pts or Below

### COURSE CALENDAR

Week	Readings	Assignment Due	Points	Due
Week 1: Jan. 13 – Jan. 19	There are no formal readings this week, but familiarize yourself with the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Syllabus</li> <li>• Project and deadlines</li> </ul>	Discussion Board Introduction	2 points	01/19
Week 2: Jan. 20 – Jan. 26	<b>Readings:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chapter 1: Introduction</li> <li>• Chapter 2: Philosophical Assumptions and Interpretive Frameworks</li> <li>• D2L Readings</li> </ul>	Discussion Board Philosophies and Frameworks	2 points	01/26
Week 3: Jan. 27 - Feb. 2	<b>Readings:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chapter 4: Five Qualitative Approaches to Inquiry: Narrative, Phenomenology, Grounded Theory, Ethnography, and Case Study</li> </ul>	Discussion Board Five Qualitative Approaches	2 points	02/02
Week 4: Feb 3 – Feb 9	<b>Readings:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chapter 5: Five Different Qualitative Studies</li> </ul>	*Part 1: Introduction, Literature Review, and Theoretical Framework	20 points	03/09
Week 5: Feb. 10 – Feb. 16	<b>Readings:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chapter 3: Designing a Qualitative Study</li> <li>• Chapter 6: Introducing and Focusing the Study</li> <li>• Chapter 7: Data Collection</li> </ul>	Discussion Board Final Project Progress	2 points	02/16

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Week 6: Feb. 17 – Feb. 23	<b>Readings:</b> • D2L Readings (Field Guide)	Discussion Board Conduct a 1-hour Observation	2 points	02/23
Week 7: Feb 24 – March 2	<b>Readings:</b> • D2L Reading (Field Guide)	Discussion Board Conduct a 1-hour Interview  Plus/Delta Form	2 points	03/02
			10 points	
Week 8: March 3 – March 9	<b>Readings:</b> • D2L Readings (Field Guide)	Discussion Board Conduct a 1-hour Focus Group	2 points	03/09
<b>SPRING BREAK</b>				
Week 9: March 17 – March 23	<b>Readings:</b> • Chapter 10: Standards of Validation and Evaluation	*Part 2: Methodology and Trustworthiness	20 points	03/23
Week March 24 – March 30	<b>Readings:</b> • D2L Readings	Discussion Board Peer Review	2 points	03/30
Week March 31 – April 6	<b>Readings:</b> • Chapter 9: Writing a Qualitative Study	Peer Review Activity (3 Parts: Evaluation Rubric; Peer Review Activity; Project Overview – What’s Expected)	10 points	04/06
Week 12: April 7 – April 13	<b>Readings:</b> • D2L Readings • Chapter 11: “Turning the Story” and Conclusion	No formal assignment, but reflect on what it means to you to be a practitionerscholar?	2 points	04/13
Week April 14– April 20	<b>Readings:</b> • D2L Readings	Discussion Board Continuous Development	2 points	04/20

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Week 15: April 21 – May 8th	<b>Readings:</b> • No readings	Discussion Board Final Project  *Part 3: Final Research Project Write-Up (including findings, discussion, and implications)	2 points  20 points	05/08  05/02
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**\*APA Style (7th ed.) must be used for all project content.**

**Please remember, no grade below a B may be applied to a doctoral degree.**

## TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

### LMS

All course sections offered by East Texas A&M University have a corresponding course shell in the myLeo Online Learning Management System (LMS). Below are technical requirements

LMS Requirements:

<https://community.brightspace.com/s/article/Brightspace-Platform-Requirements>

LMS Browser Support:

[https://documentation.brightspace.com/EN/brightspace/requirements/all/browser\\_support.htm](https://documentation.brightspace.com/EN/brightspace/requirements/all/browser_support.htm)

YouSeeU Virtual Classroom Requirements: <https://support.youseeu.com/hc/en-us/articles/115007031107-Basic-SystemRequirements>

## ACCESS AND NAVIGATION

You will need your campus-wide ID (CWID) and password to log into the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact the Center for IT Excellence (CITE) at 903.468.6000 or [helpdesk@tamuc.edu](mailto:helpdesk@tamuc.edu).

**Note:** Personal computer and internet connection problems do not excuse the requirement to complete all course work in a timely and satisfactory manner. Each student needs to have a backup method to deal with these inevitable problems. These methods might include the availability of a backup PC at home or work, the temporary use of a computer at a friend's home, the local library, office service companies, Starbucks, a TAMUC campus open computer lab, and etcetera.

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## **COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT**

If you have any questions or are having difficulties with the course material, please contact your instructor.

### **Technical Support**

If you are having technical difficulty with any part of Brightspace, please contact Brightspace Technical Support at 1-877-325-7778. Other support options can be found here:

<https://community.brightspace.com/support/s/contactsupport>

### **Interaction with Instructor Statement**

Instructor's communication response time to emails will in most instances be within 24 hours. Grading of assignments and discussion boards will in most instances be completed within four days of the deadline date.

## **COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES**

### **Course Specific Procedures/Policies**

#### **Attendance Policy**

Students are expected to "attend class" and actively participate. The professor will monitor student participation/activity.

#### **Late Work**

Unless a student has a legitimate excuse (as determined by the instructor), late work is not accepted. There are circumstances outside one's control that might impact timely submission of assignments, such as jury duty, hospitalization, or a funeral of a family member. In these instances, the student should notify the instructor.

#### **Syllabus Change Policy**

The syllabus is a guide. Circumstances and events, such as student progress, may make it necessary for the instructor to modify the syllabus during the semester. Any changes made to the syllabus will be announced in advance.

### **University Specific Procedures**

#### **Student Conduct**

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. The Code of Student Conduct is described in detail in the [Student Guidebook](#).

<http://www.tamuc.edu/Admissions/oneStopShop/undergraduateAdmissions/studentGuidebook.aspx>

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Students should also consult the Rules of Netiquette for more information regarding how to interact with students in an online forum: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/netiquette>

### **TAMUC Attendance**

For more information about the attendance policy please visit the [Attendance](#) webpage and [Procedure 13.99.99.R0.01](#).

<http://www.tamuc.edu/admissions/registrar/generalInformation/attendance.aspx>

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/academic/13.99.99.R0.01.pdf>

### **Academic Integrity**

Students at East Texas A&M University are expected to maintain high standards of integrity and honesty in all of their scholastic work. For more details and the definition of academic dishonesty see the following procedures:

[Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.03](#)

[Undergraduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/documents/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateStudentAcademicDishonestyForm.pdf>

[Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/academics/graduateschool/faculty/GraduateStudentAcademicDishonestyFormold.pdf>

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/undergraduates/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateAcademicDishonesty.pdf>

### **Students with Disabilities-- ADA Statement**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

#### **Office of Student Disability Resources and Services**

East Texas A&M University

Velma K. Waters Library Rm 162

Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835

Fax (903) 468-8148

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Email: [studentdisabilityservices@tamuc.edu](mailto:studentdisabilityservices@tamuc.edu)

Website: [Office of Student Disability Resources and Services](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/campusLife/campusServices/studentDisabilityResourcesAndServices/>

### **Nondiscrimination Notice**

East Texas A&M University will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

### **Campus Concealed Carry Statement**

Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in East Texas A&M University buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and A&M-Commerce Rule 34.06.02.R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations.

For a list of locations, please refer to the [Carrying Concealed Handguns On Campus](#) document and/or consult your event organizer.

Web url: <http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/34SafetyOfEmployeesAndStudents/34.06.02.R1.pdf>

Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all A&MCommerce campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903886-5868 or 9-1-1.

### **A&M-Commerce Supports Students' Mental Health**

The Counseling Center at A&M-Commerce, located in the Halladay Building, Room 203, offers counseling services, educational programming, and connection to community resources for students. Students have 24/7 access to the Counseling Center's crisis assessment services by calling 903-886-5145. For more information regarding Counseling Center events and confidential services, please visit [www.tamuc.edu/counsel](http://www.tamuc.edu/counsel)

### **Mental Health and Well-Being**

The university aims to provide students with essential knowledge and tools to understand and support mental health. As part of our commitment to your well-being, we offer access to Telus Health, a service available 24/7/365 via chat, phone, or webinar. Scan the QR code to download the app and explore the resources available to you for guidance and support whenever you need it.

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<http://telusproduction.com/app/5108.html>

### **AI use policy [Draft 2, May 25, 2023]**

Texas A&M University-Commerce acknowledges that there are legitimate uses of Artificial Intelligence, ChatBots, or other software that has the capacity to generate text, or suggest replacements for text beyond individual words, as determined by the instructor of the course.

Any use of such software must be documented. Any undocumented use of such software constitutes an instance of academic dishonesty (plagiarism).

Individual instructors may disallow entirely the use of such software for individual assignments or for the entire course. Students should be aware of such requirements and follow their instructors' guidelines. If no instructions are provided the student should assume that the use of such software is disallowed.

In any case, students are fully responsible for the content of any assignment they submit, regardless of whether they used an AI, in any way. This specifically includes cases in which the AI plagiarized another text or misrepresented sources.

13.99.99.R0.03 Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty

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