Qualitative Inquiry and Physical Cultural Studies  
Winter 2012

Instructor: Michael Atkinson  
Office: 40 Sussex, 3rd floor  
Class Location: BN320  
Class Time: Wednesdays, 10am-12pm  
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Course Biography

This course is intended to prepare students interested in physical culture and health research to engage various forms of fieldwork, interviewing and visual methods, whilst highlighting the centrality of theory in research efforts. Through in and out-of-classroom learning, and assigned readings, students gain an awareness of the appropriate qualitative procedures associated with particular research questions, how to interpret and represent qualitative data in a variety of ways, how to critically assess and employ qualitative data, and how to articulate a theoretical point of view through oral/written reports. Students will obtain skills in reading, comparing, critically examining, evaluating, and summarizing the research of others in the context of their work. Throughout the course, emphasis is given to understanding the role of qualitative inquiry in the study of diverse physical cultures and health issues, the importance of policy-driven qualitative research and the cultural politics of conducting qualitative inquiry.

Required Reading

Journal articles and chapters are assigned each week. There are no required textbooks for this course, primarily because methodology is about ‘doing’ rather than reading. However, I would suggest purchasing and becoming familiar with at least one of the three following textbooks if you want to review the basic (and even advanced) concepts in qualitative methodologies:


Assessments

There are three assessments in this course, and we will discuss them extensively in class. Each involves the collection and/or representation of data during the semester.

* Fieldwork and interviewing assignment (40%)
* In-class presentation (20%)
* Visual methods assignment (40%)

Schedule of Content

[Week One] - Qualitative lines of sight, modalities and syntheses
   * Task: Observation exercise

[Weeks Two, Three and Four] - Ethnography

[Week Five and Six] - The long (and winding) interview


[Week Seven] - Narrative and discourse


Carless, D. and Douglas, K. 2009. ‘We haven't got a seat on the bus for you’ or ‘all the seats are mine’: narratives and career transition in professional golf. Qualitative Research in Sport and Exercise 1: 51-66.


[Week Eight] - Interpretative phenomenological analysis


[Week Nine] - Netnography and CMC methods


* Task: Ethnography in a ‘computer lab’

[Week Ten] - Visual methods, Photo-voice and photo elicitation


Azzarito, L. and Sterling J. 2010. ‘What it was in my eyes’: Picturing youths’ embodiment in ‘real’ spaces. Qualitative Research in Sport and Exercise 2: 209-228.


* Task: Photography of urban physical culture

[Week Eleven] - Arts-based research


[Week Twelve] - Qualitative meta-synthesis


NOTE: Adherence to the Code of Student Conduct and the Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters will be strictly enforced in this course. For more information, please refer to:
http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/students.htm
http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm

POLICY ON LATE ASSIGNMENTS AND MISSED TESTS/EXAMINATIONS:
Please note that NO late assignments/labs/exams will be accepted without appropriate medical documentation. Any student failing to submit an assignment by the due date will automatically receive a zero for that course component.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY: Academic dishonesty is not qualitatively different from other types of dishonesty. It consists of misrepresentation by deception or by other fraudulent means. In an academic setting this may include any number of forms such as: copying or the use of unauthorized aids in tests, examinations and laboratory reports; plagiarism, i.e., the submission of work that is not one's own or for which previous credit has been obtained, unless the previously submitted work was presented as such to the instructor of the second course and has been acceptable for credit by the instructor of that course; aiding and abetting another student's dishonesty giving false information for the purposes of gaining admission or credit; giving false information for the purposes of obtaining deferred examinations or extension of deadlines; and or forging or falsifying University of Toronto documents. Academic dishonesty can result in serious consequences, e.g., the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: "Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty"), and or suspension or expulsion from the university. It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty.

ACADEMIC SUPPORT:

Writing Centre (www.hswriting.ca)
The Health Sciences Writing Centre, which is housed in the FPEH, provides free instruction to help you develop your writing skills. Trained instructors work to help you improve your capacity to plan, organize, write and revise academic papers in any subject. They also help ESL students with language issues.

Academic Success Centre (www.asc.utoronto.ca)
The Academic Success Centre offers group workshops and individual counselling on a wide range of learning issues, including time management, stress and anxiety, exams, textbook reading, note-taking, concentration, memory and other aspects of study. They also have a drop-in centre with extensive hours.

Accessibility Services (http://disability.ca/atrc)
Accessibility Services provides services and programs for students with a documented disability, be it physical, sensory, a learning disability or a mental disorder. Students with a temporary disability (e.g. broken arm or leg) also qualify. Services include test and exam arrangements, note-taking services, on-campus transportation, etc.