

**APPLICATION FOR NEW COURSE**

1. Submitted by College of Public Health Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Department/Division offering course Gerontology

2. Proposed designation and Bulletin description of this course Qualitative Gerontology

a. Prefix and Number GRN 651 b. Title\* Qualitative Gerontology  
\*NOTE: If the title is longer than 24 characters (including spaces), write  
A sensible title (not exceeding 24 characters) for use on transcripts \_\_\_\_\_

c. Lecture/Discussion hours per week 3 d. Laboratory hours per week 0

e. Studio hours per week 0 f. Credits 3

g. Course description  
This course (1) critically evaluates different qualitative epistemologies including biography, phenomenology, grounded theory, ethnography and the case study; (2) assesses the value of alternative qualitative methodologies for gaining deeper understanding of the experience of elders; (3) explores practical issues in employing such methodologies; and (4) provides opportunities for participants to engage in different styles of qualitative research.

h. Prerequisites (if any)  
Graduate Standing

i. May be repeated to a maximum of \_\_\_\_\_ (if applicable)

4. To be cross-listed as  
\_\_\_\_\_ Prefix and Number \_\_\_\_\_ Signature, Chairman, cross-listing department

5. Effective Date Spring 2008 (semester and year)

6. Course to be offered Fall  Spring  Summer

7. Will the course be offered each year?  Yes  No  
(Explain if not annually)  
Because this is a graduate course with a targeted audience and is an option within a required curriculum, it will be offered at least once every two years

8. Why is this course needed?  
As part of the process of enriching its curriculum in parallel with the development of this field, Gerontology will be making this qualitative methods course one of the options for doctoral students who will be required to take two out of three advanced methodology courses.

9. a. By whom will the course be taught? Dr. Graham D. Rowles; Dr. John F. Watkins

- b. Are facilities for teaching the course now available?  Yes  No  
If not, what plans have been made for providing them?
- 
- 

### APPLICATION FOR NEW COURSE

10. What enrollment may be reasonably anticipated? 10-15
- 
11. Will this course serve students in the Department primarily?  Yes  No  
Will it be of service to a significant number of students outside the Department?  Yes  No  
If so, explain.  
This course is likely to attract students in a gerontology track that is being developed in the MPH in Public Health as well as students from graduate programs throughout the University with an interest in learning about and undertaking qualitative research. In addition, it will be an option for students completing the Graduate Certificate in Gerontology
- 
- Will the course serve as a University Studies Program course?  Yes  No  
If yes, under what Area? \_\_\_\_\_
12. Check the category most applicable to this course  
 traditional; offered in corresponding departments elsewhere;  
 relatively new, now being widely established  
 not yet to be found in many (or any) other universities
13. Is this course applicable to the requirements for at least one degree or certificate at the University of Kentucky?  Yes  No
14. Is this course part of a proposed new program:  Yes  No  
If yes, which? \_\_\_\_\_
- 
15. Will adding this course change the degree requirements in one or more programs? \*  Yes  No  
If yes, explain the change(s) below  
As part of the process of refining the requirements for the Ph.D in Gerontology, this course will become one of three advanced methodology courses from which students will be required to complete two.
- 
16. Attach a list of the major teaching objectives of the proposed course and outline and/or reference list to be used.
17. If the course is a 100-200 level course, please submit evidence (e.g., correspondence) that the Community College System has been consulted.
18. Within the Department, who should be contacted for further information about the proposed course?

Name      Graham D. Rowles or John F. Watkins

---

Phone

257-1450 ext. 80145  
or 80240

---

\*NOTE: Approval of this course will constitute approval of the program change unless other program modifications are proposed.

20. Signatures to report approvals:

2-20-08  
DATE of Approval by Department Faculty

GRAHAM D. ROWLES / Graham D Rowles  
printed name Reported by Department Chair signature

2-20-08  
DATE of Approval by College Faculty

Linda A. Alexander / Linda A Alexander  
printed name Reported by College Dean signature  
Assoc Dean for Academic Affairs

\* DATE of Approval by Undergraduate Council

\_\_\_\_\_  
printed name Reported by Undergraduate Council Chair signature

\* DATE of Approval by Graduate Council

\_\_\_\_\_  
printed name Reported by Graduate Council Chair signature

2/21/08  
\* DATE of Approval by Health Care Colleges Council (HCCC)

Heidi Anderson / Heidi M Anderson  
printed name Reported by Health Care Colleges Council Chair signature

\* DATE of Approval by Senate Council

\_\_\_\_\_  
Reported by Office of the Senate Council

\* DATE of Approval by University Senate

\_\_\_\_\_  
Reported by Office of the Senate Council

\*If applicable, as provided by the *University Senate Rules*. (<http://www.uky.edu/USC/New/RulesandRegulationsMain.htm>)

# GERONTOLOGY 651

## QUALITATIVE GERONTOLOGY

(Taught as Pilot Special Topics Course GRN 770 in SPRING 2006 )

Class Meetings: Tuesdays: 1:00-3:45 PM (HSB 304E)

Instructor: Graham D. Rowles, Ph.D.

Office: Graduate Center for Gerontology  
303B Health Sciences Building  
Tel: 257-1450 Ext. 80145  
E-mail: [growl2@uky.edu](mailto:growl2@uky.edu)

Office Hours: By appointment at almost any time during business hours (call or e-mail me to confirm that I am available or to schedule a meeting).

### **OUTLINE**

The value of qualitative approaches to research is now widely accepted. This three credit course will critically evaluate a variety of qualitative methodologies and provide a context for participants to explore their own potential use of such methodologies. Particular emphasis will be placed on: (1) appraising different qualitative epistemologies including biography, phenomenology, grounded theory, ethnography and the case study; (2) assessing the value of alternative qualitative methodologies for gaining deeper understanding of the experience of elders; (3) exploring practical issues in employing such methodologies; and (4) providing opportunities to engage in different styles of qualitative research. At the outset, it should be emphasized that there is no correct way to undertake qualitative research. Rather, qualitative research is an attitude and a perspective on the nature of experience and the manner in which it is revealed to us. Emphasis throughout the course will be on learning through a blending of critical reading and experiential exercises in a manner that will allow participants to assess the potential value of using such approaches as a component of their own methodological repertoire.

### **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

The objectives of this course are:

- (1) To provide an introduction to basic premises and philosophical foundations of qualitative research focusing on five traditions: biography, phenomenology, grounded theory, ethnography and the case study;

- (2) To critically assess the uses, strengths and weaknesses of selected qualitative research methods including various forms of participant observation, different types of life history/life course analysis; alternative in-depth interviewing strategies; and diverse modes of interpretive research using secondary sources (e.g. personal journals, diaries, literature, photography, and the media);
- (3) To provide participants with hands on experience at conducting different forms of qualitative research;
- (4) To assess the role of qualitative methods as a component of mixed method research;
- (5) To develop an understanding of contemporary philosophical, pragmatic and ethical dilemmas in conducting qualitative research, placing particular emphasis on the use of qualitative research with elders; and
- (6) To provide a context for participants to explore the potential use of qualitative research in their own research and in thesis and dissertation projects.

## **REQUIREMENTS**

### 1. **Issue Statements** (30% of Grade)

You are required to prepare a series of typed issue statements. These will involve a few paragraphs—**and no more than 2 pages!**—that identify 2-3 key issues or questions provoked by your critical assessment of each week's readings. **Please spend some time pondering the issues you wish to have us discuss.** Superficial questions suggesting that you have barely skimmed the readings are not acceptable. I am expecting a high level of discourse to result from these statements. You should bring your typed statement to the class each week and be prepared to discuss it with the group as a component of our critical assessment of the readings. You are expected to present your own perspective on each issue you present. Each issue statement will be collected at the end of the class, reviewed by the instructor, and returned to you. Issue statements, a total of six (6) in all, will be due on January 24, January 31, February 7, February 14, February 21, and March 7. Each issue statement is worth 5 points.

### 2. **Out of Class Assignments** (30% of Grade)

There will be two out-of-class assignments.

- (a) **Participant Observation Exercise** (15 points)
- (b) **In-depth Interview Exercise** (15 points)

### 3. **Resource Paper** (30% of Grade)

As a major focus of the course, you are required to undertake an in-depth study and critical assessment of the literature and current status of research on a specific qualitative methodology or issue. Options here might include: conducting focus groups; the use of key informants; interviewing older people; case study research; personal journals; participatory action research; ethical dilemmas in qualitative research; reflexivity in qualitative research. Each member of the class is expected to select a different methodology, topical theme or issue and must gain approval for his or her selection from me prior to proceeding. The method or issue must be one not covered in the class sessions that are scheduled prior to spring break (see below).

You are asked to:

- (a) draft a 10 page resource paper that:
  - (i) describes the method or issue,
  - (ii) considers the strengths and weaknesses of the method or presents different facets of the issue,
  - (iii) provides examples of the use of the method or manifestations of the qualitative issue,
  - (iv) critically assesses the value of the method as an approach to inquiry in gerontology or, in the case of a specific issue, its potential for resolution (15 points);
- (b) compile a bibliography (with brief—no more than one or two sentences—annotation) comprising what you consider to be the most important works on the use of the method or discussion of the issue (1-3 pages) to be attached to the resource paper (5 points);
- (c) lead a class session on your chosen methodology or issue (10 points). In preparation for this session, one week prior to the session, you are required to provide each participant with two or three key readings on your topic (to be discussed during the class) as well as a draft copy of your resource paper; and
- (d) submit a final revised version of your resource paper, incorporating insights from your class session, to me by Friday April 28, 2006.

### 4. **Participation** (10% of Grade)

Expectations of participants are high. I presume that you have a genuine interest in exploring the domain of qualitative research and are attuned to the need to maximize what you obtain from the course. It is assumed that you will complete the following activities as a component of your participation in the course.

- (a) Attend and fully participate in class.

(b) Complete all assignments in timely manner.

## **READINGS**

### 1. Texts:

Rowles, G.D. & Schoenberg, N.E. (Eds.). (2002). Qualitative Gerontology: A Contemporary Perspective (Second Edition) New York, NY: Springer Publishing Company. (You will be e-mailed copies of all relevant chapters as I own the copywrite, so there is no need to purchase this book.)

Creswell, J.W. (1998). Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Traditions Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

2. Copies of supplementary readings for the course will be made available by the instructor or by other course participants for sessions they will be leading. Additional readings may be added from time to time. A preliminary list of readings for the course is included in the schedule.

## **SCHEDULE**

**Format:** Each class session will be divided into two parts with a short break between each part. In most cases, different material will be covered in each portion of the class. For example, the first segment of the course might consist of a discussion of the literature read by participants. This might be followed by a presentation on a particular theme or issue (e.g. sampling in qualitative research) during the second segment of the session. Some of these topics will be selected by the class during preliminary meetings.

January 17     **Introduction:       The Essence of Qualitative Research**

January 24     **Contemporary Issues in Qualitative Research**

*Issues Statement 1 is Due*

### **Readings: Required**

Schoenberg, N.E. & Rowles, G.D. (2002). "Back to the Future." In G.D. Rowles & N.E. Schoenberg (Eds.). Qualitative Gerontology (Second Edition) (pp.3-28). New York, NY: Springer Publishing Company.

Fischer, L.R. (1994). Qualitative research as Art and Science. In J.F. Gubrium & A. Sankar (Eds.). Qualitative Methods in Aging Research (pp.3-14). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.



January 31     **“Being There”: Perspectives on Participant Observation**

*Participant Observation Exercise is Due*

*Issues Statement 2 is Due*

**Readings: Required**

Keith, J. (1986). “Participant observation” in C.L. Fry, & J. Keith, New Methods for Old-Age Research: Strategies for Studying Diversity (pp.1-20). Massachusetts: Bergin & Garvey Publishers, Inc.

Kaufman, S.R. (2002). “Introduction” In G.D. Rowles & N.E. Schoenberg (Eds.). Qualitative Gerontology (Second Edition) (pp.68-72). New York, NY: Springer Publishing Company.

Kaufman, S.R. (2002). “Ethnography of the Particular: The Individual Case and the Culture of Death in America.” In G.D. Rowles & N.E. Schoenberg (Eds.). Qualitative Gerontology (Second Edition) (pp.72-92). New York, NY: Springer Publishing Company.

Corbin, J.M. (2002). “Participant Observations of a Participant Observer.” In G.D. Rowles & N.E. Schoenberg (Eds.). Qualitative Gerontology (Second Edition) (pp.93-108). New York, NY: Springer Publishing Company.

Patterson, B.J. (1994). Reflections of a nurse researcher in a nursing home.” Geriatric Nursing 15:4, 198-200.

**Readings: Recommended Additional Sources**

Gold, R.L. (1958). Roles in sociological field observations, Social Forces. 36, 217-223.

Perkinson, M.A. (2002). “Online Ethnography: Studying Group Dynamics of a Virtual Community of Dementia Caregivers.” In G.D. Rowles & N.E. Schoenberg (Eds.). Qualitative Gerontology (Second Edition) (pp.109-128). New York, NY: Springer Publishing Company.

February 7     ***Engagement of the Self on the Participant-Observer Continuum\** and “Telling Stories”: The Study of Lives**

*Issues Statement 3 is Due*

**Guest: John F. Watkins**

**Readings: Required**

Ravdal, H. (2002). "Introduction." In G.D. Rowles & N.E. Schoenberg (Eds.). Qualitative Gerontology (Second Edition) (pp.30-36). New York, NY: Springer Publishing Company.

Kenyon, G. (2002). "Guided Autobiography: In Search of Ordinary Wisdom." In G.D. Rowles & N.E. Schoenberg (Eds.). Qualitative Gerontology (Second Edition) (pp.37-50). New York, NY: Springer Publishing Company.

Schroots, J.J.F. & Birren, J.E. (2002). "The Study of Lives in Progress: Approaches to Research on Life Stories." In G.D. Rowles & N.E. Schoenberg (Eds.). Qualitative Gerontology (Second Edition) (pp.51-65). New York, NY: Springer Publishing Company.

Watkins, J.F. (1999). Life course and spatial experience: A personal narrative approach in migration studies. In K.Pandit & S.D. Withers (Eds.) Migration and Restructuring in the United States: A Geographic Perspective. (pp. 294-312). Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

**Readings: Recommended Additional Sources**

February 14   **"Lets Talk": In-Depth Interviews and *Clinical Interviews***

***Issues Statement 4 is Due***

**Guest: Amy Hosier**

**Readings: Required**

**Readings: Recommended Additional Sources**

Schoenberg, N.E. (2002). "Introduction." In G.D. Rowles & N.E. Schoenberg (Eds.). Qualitative Gerontology (Second Edition) (pp.130-135). New York, NY: Springer Publishing Company.

Rubinstein, R.L. (2002). "The Qualitative Interview with Older Informants: Some Key Questions." In G.D. Rowles & N.E. Schoenberg (Eds.). Qualitative Gerontology (Second Edition) (pp.137-153). New York, NY: Springer Publishing Company.

Gubrium, J.F. & Holstein, J.A. (2002). The Active Subject in Qualitative Gerontology.” In G.D. Rowles & N.E. Schoenberg (Eds.). Qualitative Gerontology (Second Edition) (pp.154-171). New York, NY: Springer Publishing Company.

Gutmann, D. (1988). Qualitative research: Legitimacy and the uses of the stranger. In S. Reinharz & G.D. Rowles (Eds.) Qualitative Gerontology (pp.304-310). New York, NY: Springer Publishing Company.

February 21 **“Let’s Discuss This”:** Focus Groups and *Sampling in Qualitative Research*

*Issue Statement 5 is Due*

**Readings: Required**

Morgan, D.L. (2002). “Seeking Diagnosis for a Cognitively Impaired Family Member: Evidence from Focus Groups.” In G.D. Rowles & N.E. Schoenberg (Eds.). Qualitative Gerontology (Second Edition) (pp.213-231). New York, NY: Springer Publishing Company.

Groger, L., Mayberry, P.S., & Straker, J.K. (1999). What we did not learn because of who would not talk to us. Qualitative Health Research 9:6, 829-835.

Sandalowski, M. (1995). Sample size in qualitative research. Research in Nursing and Health 18, 179-183.

**Readings:** Recommended Additional Sources

February 28 **“Involving the Community”:** Participatory Action Research and *The Role of Context in Qualitative Research*

**Guest:** Laura Stephenson

**Readings: Required**

**Readings:** Recommended Additional Sources

March 7 **“Looking and Seeing”:** On Art, Photography and Literature and *Drawing, Projective Techniques and Body Language.*

*Interview Exercise is Due*  
*Issue Statement 6 is Due*

**Readings: Required**

Rowles, G.D. (2002). "Introduction." In G.D. Rowles & N.E. Schoenberg (Eds.). Qualitative Gerontology (Second Edition) (pp.234-240). New York, NY: Springer Publishing Company.

Shenk, D. & Schmid, R.M. (2002). "A Picture is Worth...: The Use of Photography in Gerontological Research." In G.D. Rowles & N.E. Schoenberg (Eds.). Qualitative Gerontology (Second Edition) (pp.241-262). New York, NY: Springer Publishing Company.

Vesperi, M.D. (2002). "Seeing the Unseen: Literary Interpretation in Qualitative Gerontology." In G.D. Rowles & N.E. Schoenberg (Eds.). Qualitative Gerontology (Second Edition) (pp.263-278). New York, NY: Springer Publishing Company.

**Readings: Recommended Additional Sources**

March 14      **NO CLASS: SPRING BREAK**

March 21      **"Counting and Recounting": Perspective on Mixed Method Research and *Issues in Coding Qualitative Information***

**Readings: Required**

Schoenberg, N.E. (2002). "Introduction." In G.D. Rowles & N.E. Schoenberg (Eds.). Qualitative Gerontology (Second Edition) (pp.174-177). New York, NY: Springer Publishing Company.

Groger, L. & Straker, J.K. (2002). "Counting and Recounting: Approaches to Combining Quantitative and Qualitative Data and Methods." In G.D. Rowles & N.E. Schoenberg (Eds.). Qualitative Gerontology (Second Edition) (pp.179-199). New York, NY: Springer Publishing Company.

Eckert, J.K. & Zimmerman, S.I. (2002). "Maximizing Methods." In G.D. Rowles & N.E. Schoenberg (Eds.). Qualitative Gerontology (Second Edition) (pp.200-212). New York, NY: Springer Publishing Company.

Sandelowski, M. (2001). Real qualitative researchers do not count: The use of numbers in qualitative research. Research in Nursing and Health 24, 230-240. j

**Readings: Recommended Additional Sources**

March 28      **“Immersion”: Ethnography and Verification: How do we know it is “True”?**

**Readings: Required**

**Readings: Recommended Additional Sources**

April 4      **NO CLASS: Southern Gerontological Society**

April 11      **Presentation 1      Readings      To be assigned by class member**

April 18      **Presentation 2      Readings      To be assigned by class member**

April 25      **Presentation 3      Readings      To be assigned by class member**

**Course Summary: “Just Doing It”: Integration-- a Conversation**

*Final copy of Resource Paper is Due*

**THIS OUTLINE IS SUBJECT TO ADJUSTMENT AS THE COURSE PROCEEDS**

**Notes:** If you are disabled in any way, and/or feel that there is anything I need to know that might improve your learning environment in this class, please contact me by e-mail, telephone or in person.

*\* Topics in italics are student selected sessions.*