

Fall 2019

GEOG 3001/Doing Qualitative Research
CDNS 3000/ Producing Knowledge

Instructor: Sophie Tamas
Office: Loeb A331
Email: sophie.tamas@carleton.ca
Phone: 613 520 2600 ext. 3578
Office hours: By appointment.

I. Course Description

How do we produce ethical, useful knowledge? This small seminar course investigates the theory and methods used in qualitative inquiry, offering students both hands-on experience as knowledge producers and rigorous discussion of the beliefs and claims that shape what counts as knowledge and who counts as knowledge-holders. We will wrestle with the ethical and practical dilemmas confronting researchers, and develop our skills in gathering, interpreting, and presenting knowledge, with a particular focus on the (mis)use of stories, especially in inquiries that aim to 'help.'

The course content will include a mix of engaging and challenging experiential activities, small group discussions, readings, and writing tasks, designed to help students learn about qualitative methods and put them to work. You will learn a lot about research, and possibly a few things about yourself.

Learning Objectives:

- to help students identify and critically analyse the theory and methods used in knowledge production
- to examine the links between knowledge and power and the ethical challenges associated with conducting research
- to experiment with a range of ways to produce and consume knowledge, including experiential, playful, and creative methods
- to develop skills and confidence as researchers and writers
- to practice reflexivity.

II. Preclusions

You cannot take both GEOG 3001 and CDNS 3000.

III. Texts

Unless otherwise noted all readings will be available on the course CULearn page or electronically through the library website. Reading is a key element of success in this course.

Please note that all the course materials used, including notes, handouts, activities, rubrics, assignment sheets, and the course outline, are my own intellectual property and are protected by copyright. They are for your educational use only and **may not be distributed, reproduced, or posted for commercial or other purposes without my express written consent.**

IV. Course Calendar

This course consists of one 3-hour weekly seminar, to be held Tuesdays from 11:35-2:25 in 2010 Dunton Tower.

Mandatory weekly readings will include course notes written by the Instructor as well as one or two articles, drawing on both academic and literary work. The reading list will be finalized in September based on the interests and needs of the class. The most up-to-date reading list will be posted on the course page in CULearn. Optional supplemental readings may also be provided.

1. 10 Sept: Qualitative, interdisciplinary research: How we got here

2. 17 Sept: Post-realities and partial truths

3. 24 Sept: Selves and others

4. 1 Oct: Feminist inquiries

5. 8 Oct: Anti-colonial inquiries

6. 15 Oct: Collaborative, critical, and activist inquiries

(Fall break; no class October 22)

7. 29 Oct: Affective, embodied, and performative inquiries

8. 5 Nov: Learning from people

9. 12 Nov: Learning from things

10. 19 Nov: Learning from creative practices

11. 26 Nov: Writing realities

12. 3 Dec: Journal review & wrap up

V. Evaluation

Success in this course depends on attending and participating every week, reading and posting timely responses to the assigned materials, participating in discussions and activities, and working both in small groups and independently on an autoethnographic research project. Grades are based on small, weekly tasks and a culminating project.

This course is in the process of being redesigned so it is subject to change until the last day of registration for the semester. However, any changes made once the course is in progress will not increase the total amount of work expected. Any proposed changes will be fully discussed with students and will only be implemented if we arrive at a consensus decision.

Grading Scheme

1. Reading responses – 30%

I am experimenting in this course with writing up and posting weekly notes in order to reduce the amount of in-class lecturing and free up time for more interactive learning. In addition to these notes, one or two short articles will be assigned per week. Every reading will come with a few questions or prompts. Students will be assigned to reading groups in CULearn and asked to post responses from week 2 to week 11 by 24 hours before class (Mondays at 11:30). These responses serve to demonstrate engagement rather than mastery and to direct subsequent conversations. Each week's reading response is worth 3% of the final grade and late posts will get half marks. The criteria for a strong reading response will be discussed in class and posted on CULearn; responses will be evaluated at mid-term and at the end of the semester.

2. Reading group facilitation – 10%

Each reading group will have a rotating facilitator who takes responsibility for reading all the posts in their group on the day before class, finding common themes or concerns, leading the group's weekly reading discussion, and acting as group spokesperson in the subsequent class conversation. Facilitators will be peer-evaluated. A sign-up sheet for facilitation dates will be passed around at the first class and posted on the CULearn page. The number of times each student acts as facilitator will depend on enrollment. Students who need to miss their facilitation date must arrange to trade dates with someone else in their group or forfeit this part of their grade.

3. Course Journal Synthesis – 20%

Every week we will engage in activities, games, or other forms of experiential learning in class. Students will be given a journal that they are expected to bring to class, which will be used in these activities. At the end of every class students will be given some time to add their thoughts and impressions from that week to their journals. Journals will remain private and are not handed in. However, students will be asked to bring in and work with the contents of their own journals in the final in-class activity, the results of which will be handed in and evaluated. The quality of the journal synthesis will depend on the quality and quantity of journal entries, which depends on whether or not students participated in our weekly activities. Attendance is key to success; content missed cannot be made up.

4. Research Project – 40%

In order to connect theory to practice, students will be asked to conduct an inquiry during the semester. Their task is to explore something they genuinely want to know about themselves. They will choose their own focus and methods, but they must be willing to discuss the project with their classmates during in-class activities. Project proposals will be due in week four, and worth 10%.

Complete drafts of the project report will be peer-reviewed in week ten; the drafts themselves are not evaluated but the quality of peer review provided is worth 10%. The final reports will be due in week twelve. Students will bring them to the final class and use them in part of the journal review culminating activity. Based on this activity, students will then add a reflective commentary to their own project reports, all of which is handed in as a take-home exam and worth 20%.

VI. Etiquette

Much of the learning in a small seminar class comes from engagement with your peers. The quality and usefulness of this course depends on each of you being present, prepared, and attentive. Web-browsing, texting, chatting, tweeting, gaming, online shopping, or otherwise causing a distraction is not permitted in class, because it harms your classmates' ability to learn. I will not pretend that I haven't noticed; if you are on your gadgets in class I will (politely) ask you to knock it off or leave. Students are expected to be punctual, as a courtesy to their classmates, and to conduct themselves in a way that fosters the open exchange of ideas and perspectives.

If something is inhibiting your participation or making you uncomfortable in class, it is your responsibility to promptly bring this issue to my attention in order to work toward a solution. Creating a safe, frank, open learning environment is a team effort and I depend on your feedback in order to provide the best possible service as your instructor.

Grading

I aim to return all assignments two weeks after their due date. Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor subject to the approval of the Faculty Dean. This means that the grades which you receive from me and which are posted on CULearn may be subject to revision. No grades are final until they have been approved by the Dean.

Students are welcome to appeal a grade if they feel that I have made a mistake or been unfair. The procedure for doing so is as follows: 1) students are asked to take a 24-hour 'cooling off' period before making their appeal. 2) Grade appeals should be made in writing, by email. Please include a summary of the grade you received and the reasons why you believe it is unfair or inaccurate. 3) I will arrange to meet with you. Please bring the assignment to the meeting (if it isn't on CULearn).

Communication

Course announcements, materials, grades, and some assignments will be communicated through CULearn. Please make sure that you check in regularly at carleton.ca/culearn. For help and support, go to Carleton.ca/culearnsupport/students or contact Computing and Communication Services (CCS) at 613-520-3700 or ccs_service_desk@carleton.ca. I will respond to email within 48 hours, excluding weekends (often sooner but no promises). In order to respect your confidentiality, I cannot send email to you at a non-Carleton address. Mutual respect is required in all verbal and written communication.

Academic Integrity

Ideas and the words that express them are the currency of the academic world. Good scholarship locates itself within its field by showing, through proper use of citations and bibliographies, whose ideas it has borrowed and built upon. Scholarship that fails to do so steals intellectual property and cannot contribute to the advancement of knowledge.

Plagiarism is defined by the Carleton University Senate as "presenting, whether intentionally or not, the ideas, expression of ideas, or work of others as one's own." This can include:

- Reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else's published or unpublished material, regardless of the source, and presenting it as your own, without proper citation or reference to the original source;
- Submitting work written, in whole or in part, by someone else;
- Using ideas, direct quotations, or paraphrased material without appropriate acknowledgement in any academic assignment.
- Using another's data or research findings without attribution;
- Using direct quotations without quotation marks;
- Handing in substantially the same piece of work for academic credit more than once without prior written permission from the instructor.

Plagiarism is a serious offence that cannot be resolved directly with the instructor. All suspected cases are sent to the Associate Dean, who conducts a rigorous investigation, including an interview with the student. Penalties are not trivial and can include failing the course.

It is the students' obligation to ensure that they are familiar with the rules for proper citation and attribution of sources. I urge you to be extremely careful in this regard, particularly if you are using on-line or other non-standard sources. The library website offers a wide range of style guides and other citation tips, and the subject specialists for your program are always happy to help.

VII. Requests for accommodations

Academic Accommodation

Some students need special arrangements to meet their academic obligations during the term. All students who are struggling with their studies or circumstances are encouraged to speak to their Instructor, and/or to get in touch with the friendly folks here:

The Student Academic Success Centre - Drop-in academic support - 302 Tory
 The Writing Tutorial Service - 4th floor Library
 International Student Services - 128 University Centre
 Office of Student Affairs - 430 Tory, www.carleton.ca/studentaffairs
 Health and Counselling Services - 2600 Carleton Tech and Training Centre
www.carleton.ca/health

Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: The Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) provides services to students with Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/mental health disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), chronic medical conditions, and impairments in mobility, hearing, and vision. If you have a disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact PMC at 613-520-6608 or pmc@carleton.ca for a formal evaluation. If you are already registered with the PMC, contact your PMC coordinator to send me your **Letter of Accommodation** at the beginning of the term, and no later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation (*if applicable*). **Requests made within two weeks will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.** After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with me to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. Please consult the PMC website (www.carleton.ca/pmc) for the deadline to request accommodations for the formally-scheduled exam (*if applicable*).

Pregnant students requiring academic accommodations are encouraged to contact an Equity Advisor in Equity Services to complete a letter of accommodation. You should then make an appointment to speak with me about your needs at least two weeks prior to the first academic event requiring accommodation.

Students requiring accommodations for religious observances should write me a formal, written request for alternate dates or means of satisfying academic requirements. Such requests should be made in the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible, and no later than two weeks before the compulsory academic event. We will work out accommodations directly and individually in a way that does not disadvantage the student. Those with questions about the eligibility of religious events or practices for academic accommodations may refer to the Equity Services website for a list of holy days and Carleton's accommodation policies, or contact an Equity Services advisor for assistance.