

Department of Geography and Environmental Studies
GEOG 5003 – *Critical Approaches to Qualitative Inquiry*
[Cross-listed as CDNS 5002—*Interdisciplinary Methods*]
Fall Term 2017

Professor: Patricia Ballamingie, BAH, MES, PhD
Office: Loeb Building, B Tower, Room 440
Office Hours: By appointment.
Phone: 520-2600, ext. 8566
E-mail: Patricia.Ballamingie@carleton.ca
Web site: <http://www2.carleton.ca/geography/staff-faculty/ballamingie-patricia/>
Seminar: Mondays, 2:35 p.m.-5:25 p.m.
Location: Loeb A220



GEOG 5003 [0.5 credit] – *Critical Approaches to Qualitative Inquiry*

Calendar description: Development of critical skills in qualitative research by considering the relationship between theory and method. Focus on engaged scholarship and participatory, community-based, action research. Practical experience with select methods, including: interviews, personal narratives, focus groups, participant observation, archival research, discourse analysis, and visual methodologies.

Prerequisite: Graduate student standing, or permission of the Department of Geography & Environmental Studies. **Open to students from all disciplines.**

Format: Seminar, three hours per week.

Core Objectives

- To hone the critical skills necessary to conduct rigorous, ethical, qualitative research in the social sciences.
- To develop a methodological approach that remains sensitive to the construction of knowledge in the research process.
- To understand the merits and constraints associated with various qualitative methods (including surveys, semi-structured interviews, personal narratives, ethnography, focus groups, participant observation, archival research, visual methodologies, discourse analysis and participatory research).
- To appreciate the need for engaged scholarship, and community-based research.
- To explore themes such as: relationship between power, knowledge, and discourse; theorization of identity, involving multiple axes of social differentiation (e.g., gender, race, class, etc.); relationship between theory and method; and adoption of mixed methods.
- To understand power dynamics in the research relationship, and to mitigate imbalances through strategies of reflexivity, situation, transparency, accountability and reciprocity.
- To survey critical insights from the poststructural, postcolonial and feminist literature on qualitative methodologies.

Tentative Outline

1. Introduction: Practicing Qualitative Research
2. Research Design
3. The Politics of Constructing Knowledge I: Ethical Considerations
4. The Politics of Constructing Knowledge II: Power and Performativity
5. The Politics of Constructing Knowledge III: Decolonizing Research
6. Methods I: Case Study and Discourse Analysis
7. Methods II: Interviews and Focus Groups
8. Methods III: Personal Narratives
9. Methods IV: Visual Analysis
10. Methods V: Participant Observation and Critical Ethnography
11. Engaged Scholarship: Participatory and Action Research
12. Conclusions: Working with Qualitative Data