

Department of Geography and Environmental Studies
GEOG 5003 F – Critical Approaches to Qualitative Inquiry

Professor: Roseann (Rosie) Kerr, BSc, MEd, PhD

Office Hours: By appointment.

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Seminar: Tuesdays 11:30 am-2:30 pm

Location: Loeb A220 [[Link to course Brightspace page](#)]

Format: Seminar, three hours per week

Course description: Development of critical skills and exploration of critical issues in qualitative research by considering the relationship between theory and method. Engaged scholarship and participatory, community-based, action research. Practical experience with interviews, narrative vignettes, focus groups, observation, visual methods, discourse analysis, coding and thematic analysis.

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

Learning Outcomes:

- ⇒ 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
- ⇒ 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, Indigenous and feminist literature on qualitative methodologies

Texts: Required readings are detailed in the course outline and on the course page on Brightspace. Several weeks include chapters from the required text, below. A copy of this text has been placed on reserve at MacOdrum Library. The text is also available for purchase at the Carleton University Bookstore. For the remainder (and bulk) of the readings, URLs have been provided for open access journal articles that can be publicly retrieved online. Otherwise, you can access readings through MacOdrum Library (you

will either be advised of a physical holding on reserve, or you will be provided with a link to an electronic holding for which we have copyright).

Required text:

Hay, Iain (ed.) (2021). *Qualitative Research Methods in Human Geography*. 5th Edition. Don Mills, Ontario: Oxford University Press.

Course calendar: [*Draft: subject to change*]

September 12: Introduction: Practicing Qualitative Research

September 19: Research Design/ Developing Qualitative Research Questions

September 26: Ethical Considerations

October 3: Power and Performativity

October 10: Decolonizing Research, Participatory and Action Research

October 24: Fall Break: **NO CLASS**

October 31: Case Study and Discourse Analysis

November 7: Interviews and Focus Groups

November 14: Personal Narratives

November 21: Visual Analysis

November 28: Participant Observation and Critical Ethnography

December 5: Analysis of Qualitative Data & Addressing Research Questions

Assignments and Evaluation:

<p>Assignment 1 & 2: <i>Article Review and Discussant</i></p>	<p>20%</p> <p>During the first two weeks of term, each student will be assigned three designated readings for which they will act as discussant.</p>	<p>This assignment will be completed three times during the term. Feedback will be given for all three, but only the top two will count towards your grade. The discussant will guide the class through the reading, aiming to take ~ 25 minutes, engaging with and responding to the content. <u>Circulate discussion questions by e-mail to your peers and instructor at least two days in advance of class.</u> Your role is: -discuss key contributions, identify poignant passages, make connections to class content, generate</p>
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		interdisciplinary insights, clarify jargon, and contest/discuss assertions.
Assignment 3: <i>Methods Primer</i>	<p>25%</p> <p>Due: <u>Nov 14th</u> <u>Present to Class</u> <u>November 21st</u></p> <p>Word document 2 pages minimum 5 pages maximum, single- spaced, 12-point font.</p> <p>Submit electronically to rosiekerr@cunet.carleton.ca</p>	<p>Explore in-depth one qualitative method and develop a primer that will be compiled alongside other student submissions, for distribution to the class. Briefly present the method to class on November 21st. Choice of selected methods will be given to students in class so each student explores a different method.</p> <p>Your role is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain what the method entails. • Cite examples where this method has been particularly effective. • Explain possibilities and constraints associated with this method. • Summarize key considerations for successful adoption. • Reflect on other methods that might complement the method selected. • Identify key resources consulted. • Identify relevant online resources.
Major Project: <i>Paper and Presentation</i>	<p>35%</p> <p>Word document 10-20 pages 12-point font, double-spaced, 1-inch margins Citations in consistent format</p> <p>Submit electronically to rosiekerr@cunet.carleton.ca</p>	<p>Final projects will be individually negotiated to serve the student's best interests – to meet specific learning objectives. The project will have a written paper and will also be presented to the class.</p> <p>Important Dates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>October 17 - November 7</u>: Initial discussions with instructor to determine parameters of final project. • <u>December 5</u>: Projects will be formally presented to the class. • <u>December 8</u>: Final projects are due in my inbox by midnight! • <u>December 22</u>: Last date to post final grades.

- In this graduate level course, students are expected to complete the readings and participate and contribute to class discussions. Frequent group activities will occur during class time, and dialogue and collaboration is encouraged.
- Working with a partner on an assignment is subject to approval by the instructor if it is deemed mutually beneficial.
- Please ensure that you have read your assignments and papers through thoroughly for spelling and grammar. I do not have a preference for citation/formatting style as long as it is consistent.
- Extensions will be granted on a case-by-case basis. Please contact me via email.
- Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor subject to the approval of the Faculty Dean. This means that grades submitted by the instructor may be subject to revision. No grades are final until they have been approved by the Dean.

PLAGIARISM

The University Academic Integrity Policy defines plagiarism as “*presenting, whether intentionally or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one’s own.*” This includes reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else’s published or unpublished material, regardless of the source, and presenting these as one’s own without proper citation or reference to the original source. Examples of sources from which the ideas, expressions of ideas or works of others may be drawn from include but are not limited to: books, articles, papers, literary compositions and phrases, performance compositions, chemical compounds, artworks, laboratory reports, research results, calculations and the results of calculations, diagrams, constructions, computer reports, computer code/software, material on the internet and/or conversations. Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to:

any submission prepared in whole or in part, by someone else, including the unauthorized use of generative AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT); using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, paraphrased material, algorithms, formulae, scientific or mathematical concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment; using another’s data or research findings without appropriate acknowledgement; submitting a computer program developed in whole or in part by someone else, with or without modifications, as one’s own; and failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another’s work and/or failing to use quotations marks.

Plagiarism is a serious offence that cannot be resolved directly by the course’s instructor. The Associate Dean of the Faculty conducts a rigorous investigation, including an interview with the student, when an

instructor suspects a piece of work has been plagiarized. Penalties are not trivial. They can include a final grade of “F” for the course.

Student Mental Health

As a University student you may experience a range of mental health challenges that significantly impact your academic success and overall well-being. If you need help, please speak to someone. There are numerous resources available both on- and off-campus to support you.

Emergency Resources (on and offcampus):

<https://carleton.ca/health/emergencies-and-crisis/emergency-numbers/>

Carleton Resources:

- Mental Health and Wellbeing: <https://carleton.ca/wellness/>
- Health & Counselling Services: <https://carleton.ca/health/>
- Paul Menton Centre: <https://carleton.ca/pmc/>
- Academic Advising Centre (AAC): <https://carleton.ca/academicadvising/>
- Centre for Student Academic Support (CSAS): <https://carleton.ca/csas/>
- Equity & Inclusivity Communities: <https://carleton.ca/equity/>

Off Campus Resources:

- Distress Centre of Ottawa and Region: (613) 238-3311 or TEXT: 343-306-5550, <https://www.dcottawa.on.ca/>
- Mental Health Crisis Service: (613) 722-6914, 1-866-996-0991, <http://www.crisisline.ca/>
- Empower Me: 1-844-741-6389, <https://students.carleton.ca/services/empower-me-counselling-services/>
- Good2Talk: 1-866-925-5454, <https://good2talk.ca/>
- The Walk-In Counselling Clinic: <https://walkincounselling.com>

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION: (<https://students.carleton.ca/course-outline/>)

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. For an accommodation request the processes are as follows:

Informal accommodation due to short-term incapacitation: If you are unable to complete work due to illness or some other unforeseen circumstance, please email me to let me know.

Pregnancy obligation: write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist.

Religious obligation: write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details [click here](#).

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, please request your accommodations for this course through the [Ventus Student Portal](#) 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. For final exams, the deadlines to request accommodations are published in the [University Academic Calendars](#). After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with me to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. Please consult the PMC website for the deadline to request accommodations for the formally-scheduled exam (if applicable).

Survivors of Sexual Violence

As a community, Carleton University is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working and living environment where sexual violence will not be tolerated, and where survivors are supported through academic accommodations as per Carleton's Sexual Violence Policy. For more information about the services available at the university and to obtain information about sexual violence and/or support, visit: <https://carleton.ca/equity/sexual-assault-support-services>

Accommodation for Student Activities

Carleton University recognizes the substantial benefits, both to the individual student and for the university, that result from a student participating in activities beyond the classroom experience. Reasonable accommodation will be provided to students who compete or perform at the national or international level. Write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. <https://carleton.ca/senate/wp-content/uploads/Accommodation-for-Student-Activities-1.pdf>