

CARLETON UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY & ANTHROPOLOGY
SOCI 2001B: INTRODUCTION TO QUALITATIVE RESEARCH METHODS
WINTER TERM 2026

PREREQUISITES: SOCI 1001 [0.5] **AND** SOCI 1002 [0.5] **OR** SOCI 1003 [1.0]

METHOD OF DELIVERY: Weekly two-hour lecture + one-hour tutorial (both in-person)

Meeting times: Fridays 11:35 am – 1:25 pm

COURSE INSTRUCTOR

Dr. Michael Mopas
Office: 787D Loeb Building
Office hours: Fridays 10:00 – 11:00 am or by appointment
Email: michael_mopas@carleton.ca (this is the best way to get a hold of me, but please allow 24 to 48 hours for a response)

ABOUT THE COURSE

Description

Most students are familiar with quantitative approaches to sociological research. These often involve posing a number of closed survey questions, drawing on large, scientifically representative samples, and employing statistical methods to describe and analyse general patterns found within a certain population. In contrast, qualitative methods take a more open approach to data collection and typically use non-numerical forms of analysis. Thus, instead of focusing on large statistical trends, qualitative researchers engage in empirical studies that draw on much smaller samples in order to generate insights into the *meanings* underlying these generally observable patterns. However, while quantitative and qualitative methods have different epistemological underpinnings, they are not necessarily mutually exclusive.

This course is designed to help students gain a deeper understanding of qualitative research methodology. As students in this course, you will: 1) be introduced to the epistemological underpinnings of qualitative research; 2) develop your knowledge of a variety of methods of qualitative data collection and analysis; and 3) gain practical experience in qualitative research that will enable you to design and undertake your own independent projects in the future.

Learning objectives:

- To introduce students to the basic principles of qualitative research.
- To give students an awareness of a broad array of qualitative research techniques.
- To give students practical experience in qualitative data collection and analysis.
- To encourage students to make connections between the empirical, methodological, and epistemological issues involved in conducting qualitative research.

- To make students critical consumers of research studies using qualitative methodology.
- To further develop students' oral and written skills.

Learning outcomes:

Students who perform well in this course will...

Demonstrate **knowledge** of:

- The basic epistemological underpinnings of qualitative research.
- The practical challenges of undertaking fieldwork.
- Various methods for the collection, analysis, and presentation of qualitative data.

Have developed the following **skills**:

- The ability to make an informed choice about the appropriate use of qualitative research methods.
- The ability to read, recognize and critique a range of qualitative approaches used in sociological research.
- The competence to collect, analyse and present qualitative data.
- The capacity to critically reflect on both the content and process of a research project and to identify potential ethical issues.
- The proficiency to write about qualitative research in a clear and concise manner.

Approach to teaching and learning

I am a firm believer that good teachers 'facilitate' learning. Good teachers not only communicate information and knowledge to their students, but also enable and encourage students to become responsible for their own learning. As such, it is my job to get you excited about this field by providing interesting and interactive course lectures, assigning thought-provoking reading material, and giving challenging (but fair) assignments, so that you can become actively involved in your own learning experience.

COURSE MATERIALS AND RESOURCES

Required textbook:

van den Hoonaard, D.K. and L.J. van den Scott (2022) *Qualitative Research in Action: A Canadian Primer* (4th edition). Toronto: Oxford University Press.

You can purchase or rent a digital copy of the textbook through VitalSource. The link can be found here: <https://www.vitalsource.com/en-ca/products/qualitative-research-in-action-deborah-k-van-den-hoonaard-v9780190165987?term=9780190165970>

180-day rental: \$38.99
 One-year rental: \$44.99
 Lifetime: \$59.98

Online resources

A course website (using Brightspace) has been designed and placed online. Access to the website is password protected and restricted to students enrolled in this course. The website will be used by the instructor as an additional means of distributing course material and information (e.g., lecture notes, class announcements, class marks, links to course-related Internet sites, etc.). Students are expected to check the website on a regular basis.

COURSE SCHEDULE AND ASSIGNED READINGS

The readings assigned for each week will directly relate to the lecture material and expand upon many of the issues covered in class. Students will be expected to have all assigned readings completed **PRIOR** to each class.

January 9: Introduction

Required readings: None

January 16: What is Social Research?

Required readings: *Qualitative Research in Action*, Chapter 1

January 23: Research Approaches

Required readings: *Qualitative Research in Action*, Chapter 2

January 30: Developing Research Questions

Required readings: *Qualitative Research in Action*, Chapter 3

February 6: Ethical Issues

Required readings: *Qualitative Research in Action*, Chapter 4

**ASSIGNMENT #1 DUE **

February 13: Field Research

Required readings: *Qualitative Research in Action*, Chapter 5

February 20: READING WEEK (CLASS CANCELLED)

Required readings: None

February 27: Unobtrusive Research (part 1)

Required readings: *Qualitative Research in Action*, Chapter 8

March 6: Unobtrusive Research (part 2)

Required readings: *Qualitative Research in Action*, Chapter 8

March 13: Interviewing (part 1)

Required readings: *Qualitative Research in Action*, Chapter 6

** ASSIGNMENT #2 DUE **

March 20: Interviewing (part 2)

Required readings: *Qualitative Research in Action*, Chapter 7

March 27: Analysing Data

Required readings: *Qualitative Research in Action*, Chapter 9

April 8: Writing Up Data

Required readings: *Qualitative Research in Action*, Chapter 10

** ASSIGNMENT # 3 DUE **

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND METHODS OF EVALUATION

Students will be evaluated as follows:

Assignments	Grade	Due Date
Tutorial attendance and participation	10%	N/A
Assignment #1: Research article	10%	February 6, 2026
Assignment #2: Observational research	20%	March 13, 2026
Assignment #3: Interviewing	20%	April 8, 2026
Final exam	40%	TBD

Tutorial attendance and participation

Discussion and dialogue are integral to student learning. Students are expected to attend and participate in weekly tutorials. Students are expected to have carefully read all assigned materials prior to each tutorial and prepared to actively participate in class discussion. The mark you receive will be based on attendance and the overall quality (not the quantity) of your participation (e.g., how well you have understood the readings, the ability to critically engage with the materials and relate them to the overall themes of the course, etc.).

Written assignments

Students will submit three written assignments. Each assignment is designed to get students to engage with some aspect of qualitative research. More explicit instructions for each assignment will be distributed during the semester.

Final exam

The final exam is designed to test students' knowledge and understanding of the key concepts and ideas covered in the course. The final exam for this course will be held **IN-PERSON** on campus during the formally scheduled examination period in April. This is mandatory. Students who do not write the final exam in-person will not be eligible to receive credit for this course.

COURSE POLICIES REGARDING ASSIGNMENTS

Citation style

The Chicago author-date citation style (17th edition) is to be used in the assignments and papers for this course. For more information, please see:

https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide/citation-guide-2.html

Submitting assignments and late penalties

All assignments and final take-home exams must be submitted electronically through Brightspace. Subject to the extension policy outlined below, there will be a 2% per day deduction from assignments submitted late. The late penalty applies equally to Saturday and Sunday. That is, a paper due on Tuesday that is handed in on Wednesday (1 day late) will be subject to a 2% deduction from the overall assignment grade (i.e., out of 100%). The same paper handed in on the following Monday (6 days late) will be subject to a 12% deduction.

Extension Policy

Students must request an extension PRIOR to the due date of an assignment. To receive an extension for an assignment, a student must provide written documentation of his or her inability to complete the assignment on time. Written documentation will generally take the form of a self-declaration form. For non-medical notes, the instructor will accept a note from the Registrar's Office (or similar University official), social worker, clergy member, lawyer, etc. Once the student has provided the instructor with adequate documentation of their inability to complete the assignment on time, the student and the instructor will negotiate a new due date for the assignment. Assignments submitted after the negotiated deadline will be subject to the late penalty outlined above.

GENERAL COURSE POLICIES

Every student enrolled in this course is responsible for reading the following policies. It contains everything you need to know about the rules, requirements and regulations set out for this course.

A welcoming classroom

In this classroom, we collectively – students, visitors, and teacher - try to make sure that everyone is safe enough to be present, learn, and share their understanding of course material. This means that talk or behavior that disrespects or demeans others is not accepted. For example, rape jokes, racist comments, the expressions “that’s retarded” or “that’s so gay” would be inappropriate. We all will refer to one another using correct names and pronouns. In some cases, we’d talk about anything that comes up on the spot, and in other cases it could be addressed outside of class. As needed in relation to the readings we do and discussion we have I will aim to provide regular and appropriate content and trigger warnings and welcome your input on what I can do to make this class workable for you.

Courtesy during lecture/seminar

Please do NOT come to lecture/seminar if you intend to sleep, surf the web, or chat with friends. This kind of behaviour annoys me and other students in the class. If you do intend on coming to lecture or tutorial, there are a couple of general rules that students must abide by:

1. Unless there is a class discussion going on, there is NO TALKING during the lecture/seminar.
2. LAPTOP COMPUTERS ARE FOR NOTE-TAKING ONLY – not e-mail, web surfing, social media, or playing online games.

Office Hours

My office hours are posted on my office door (787D Loeb Building). You are welcome to drop by during office hours or you may make an appointment if you feel you need extra time or cannot make the time I have allotted.

If my door is open, you are welcome to see me even if it is not during my office hours. If my door is shut, please do NOT knock unless it is an emergency. If my door is shut, I am either working, on the phone, or not in the office. Please do NOT drop by right before the class as I'm usually doing last-minute preparations.

E-Mail

I will do my best to respond to your e-mails as quickly as possible. However, please allow at least 24 to 48 hours for a reply. Please be patient. I do my very best to respond in a timely fashion, but sometimes it is just not possible.

REGULATIONS COMMON TO ALL COURSES AT CARLETON UNIVERSITY

In accordance with the Carleton University Undergraduate Calendar Regulations, the letter grades assigned in this course will have the following percentage equivalents:

A+ = 90-100	B+ = 77-79	C+ = 67-69	D+ = 57-59
A = 85-89	B = 73-76	C = 63-66	D = 53-56
A - = 80-84	B - = 70-72	C - = 60-62	D - = 50-52
F = Below 50	WDN = Withdrawn from the course		DEF = Deferred

Academic Regulations, Accommodations, Plagiarism, Etc.

University rules regarding registration, withdrawal, appealing marks, and most anything else you might need to know can be found on the university's website, here: <https://calendar.carleton.ca/undergrad/regulations/academicregulationsoftheuniversity/>

Academic Accommodations:

Carleton is committed to providing academic accessibility for all individuals. You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. The accommodation request processes, including information about the Academic Consideration Policy for Students in Medical and Other Extenuating Circumstances, are

outlined on the Academic Accommodations website (students.carleton.ca/course-outline).

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 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*).

*The deadline for contacting the Paul Menton Centre regarding accommodation for February/March examinations is **February 1, 2026** and **March 15, 2026** for April examinations.

For Religious Obligations:

Please contact your instructor 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, visit the Equity Services website: www.carleton.ca/equity/wp-content/uploads/Student-Guide-to-Academic-Accommodation.pdf

For Pregnancy:

Please contact your instructor 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, visit the Equity Services website: www.carleton.ca/equity/wp-content/uploads/Student-Guide-to-Academic-Accommodation.pdf

For 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: www.carleton.ca/sexual-violence-support

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 must be provided to students who compete or perform at the national or international level. Please contact your instructor 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>

Plagiarism:

Plagiarism is the passing off of someone else's work as your own and is a serious academic offence. For the details of what constitutes plagiarism, the potential penalties and the procedures refer to the section on Instructional Offences in the Undergraduate Calendar. Students are expected to familiarize themselves with and follow the Carleton University Student Academic Integrity Policy (See <https://carleton.ca/registrar/academic-integrity/>). The Policy is strictly enforced and is binding on all students. Academic dishonesty in any form will not be tolerated. Students who infringe the Policy may be subject to one of several penalties.

What are the Penalties for Plagiarism?

A student found to have plagiarized an assignment may be subject to one of several penalties including but not limited to: a grade of zero, a failure or a reduced grade for the piece of academic work; reduction of final grade in the course; completion of a remediation process; resubmission of academic work; withdrawal from course(s); suspension from a program of study; a letter of reprimand.

What are the Procedures?

All allegations of plagiarism are reported to the faculty of Dean of FASS and Management. Documentation is prepared by instructors and departmental chairs. The Dean writes to the student and the University Ombudsperson about the alleged plagiarism. The Dean reviews the allegation. If it is not resolved at this level then it is referred to a tribunal appointed by the Senate.

Assistance for Students:

Mental Health: As a 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. For more information, please consult <https://wellness.carleton.ca/>

Academic and Career Development Services: <https://carleton.ca/career/>

Writing Services: <http://www.carleton.ca/csas/writing-services/>

Peer Assisted Study Sessions (PASS): <https://carleton.ca/csas/group-support/pass/>

Artificial Intelligence:

As our understanding of the uses of AI and its relationship to student work and academic integrity continue to evolve, students are required to discuss their use of AI in any circumstance not described here with the course instructor to ensure it supports the learning goals for the course.

Important Information:

- Student or professor materials created for this course (including presentations and posted notes, labs, case studies, assignments, and exams) remain the intellectual property of the author(s). They are intended for personal use and may not be reproduced or redistributed without prior written consent of the author(s).
- Students must always retain a hard copy of all work that is submitted.
- 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.
- Carleton University is committed to protecting the privacy of those who study or work here (currently and formerly). To that end, Carleton's Privacy Office seeks to encourage the implementation of the privacy provisions of Ontario's *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (FIPPA) within the university.
- In accordance with FIPPA, please ensure all communication with staff/faculty is via your Carleton email account. To get your Carleton Email you will need to activate your [MyCarletonOne account](#) through Carleton Central. Once you have activated your MyCarletonOne account, log into the [MyCarleton Portal](#).
- Please note that you will be able to link your MyCarletonOne account to other non-MyCarletonOne accounts and receive emails from us. However, for us to respond to your emails, we need to see your full name, CU ID, and the email must be written from your valid MyCarletonOne address. Therefore, it would be easier to respond to your inquiries if you would send all email from your Carleton account. If you do not have or have yet to activate this account, you may wish to do so by visiting <https://students.carleton.ca/>.

WINTER TERM 2026 – IMPORTANT DATES AND DEADLINES

Date	Activity
WINTER TERM 2026	
December 29, 2025	Deadline for course outlines to be made available to students registered in full winter and early winter term courses.
January 5, 2026	University reopens.
	Winter term begins. Full winter and early winter classes begin.
January 9, 2026	Last day for registration and course changes (including auditing) in early winter courses.
January 16, 2026	Last day for registration and course changes (including auditing)

Date	Activity
	in full winter and late winter courses.
	Last day to withdraw from early winter courses with a full fee adjustment.
	Graduate students who have not electronically submitted their final thesis copy to Graduate Studies will not be eligible to graduate in winter 2026 and must register for the winter 2026 term.
January 23-25, January 30- February 1, 2026	Full fall and late fall term deferred final examinations will be held.
January 31, 2026	Last day to withdraw from full winter courses and the winter portion of fall/winter courses with a full fee adjustment.
February 1, 2026	Last day for academic withdrawal from early winter courses.
	Last day to request Formal Examination Accommodations for Feb/Mar final examinations from the Paul Merton Centre for Students with Disabilities. Note that it may not be possible to fulfil accommodation requests received after the specified deadlines.
February 6, 2026	Last day for summative tests or examinations, or formative tests or examinations totaling more than 15% of the final grade, in early winter undergraduate courses, before the official Feb/Mar final examination period (see examination regulations in the Academic Regulations of the University section of the Undergraduate Calendar/General Regulations of the Graduate Calendar).
February 13, 2026	Last day of early winter classes.
	Last day for final take-home examinations to be assigned in early winter courses, with the exception of those conforming to the examination regulations in the Academic Regulations of the University section of the Undergraduate Calendar/General

Date	Activity
	Regulations of the Graduate Calendar.
	Last day that can be specified by an instructor as a due date for term work for early winter courses.
	April examination schedule available online.
February 16, 2026	Statutory holiday. University closed.
	Deadline for course outlines to be made available to students registered in late winter courses.
February 16-20, 2026	Winter break, no classes.
February 21-22, February 28-March 1, 2026	Final examinations in early winter undergraduate courses will be held.
February 23, 2026	Late winter classes begin.
February 27, 2026	Last day for registration and course changes (including auditing) in late winter courses.
March 1, 2026	Last day for receipt of applications for admission to an undergraduate degree program for the fall/winter session from applicants whose documents originate outside Canada or the United States.
	Last day for receipt of applications to Bachelor of Architecture, Bachelor of Industrial Design, Bachelor of Information Technology (Interactive Multimedia and Design), Bachelor of Music, Bachelor of Science in Nursing and Bachelor of Social Work degree programs for the fall/winter session.
	Last day for receipt of applications for admission from candidates

Date	Activity
	<p>who wish to be guaranteed consideration for financial assistance (including Carleton fellowships, scholarships and teaching assistantships) administered by Carleton University. Candidates whose applications are received after the March 1 deadline may be considered for the award of a fellowship, scholarship or teaching assistantship (Graduate students only).</p>
March 6, 2026	<p>Last day to withdraw from late winter term courses with a full fee adjustment.</p>
March 13-15, 2026	<p>Early winter undergraduate deferred final examinations will be held.</p>
March 15, 2026	<p>Last day for academic withdrawal from full winter, late winter, and fall/winter courses.</p>
	<p>Last day to request Formal Examination Accommodations for April full winter, late winter, and fall/winter final examinations from the Paul Merton Centre for Students with Disabilities. Note that it may not be possible to fulfil accommodation requests received after the specified deadlines.</p>
March 25, 2026	<p>Last day for summative tests or examinations, or formative tests or examinations totaling more than 15% of the final grade, in full winter term or fall/winter undergraduate courses, before the official April final examination period (see examination regulations in the Academic Regulations of the University section of the Undergraduate Calendar/General Regulations of the Graduate Calendar).</p>
April 1, 2026	<p>Last day for graduate students to submit their supervisor-approved thesis, in examinable form to the department.</p>
	<p>Last day for receipt of applications from potential spring (June) graduates.</p>
	<p>Last day for summative tests or examinations, or formative tests or examinations totaling more than 15% of the final grade, in late</p>

Date	Activity
	winter term undergraduate courses, before the official final examination period (see examination regulations in the Academic Regulations of the University section of the Undergraduate Calendar/General Regulations of the Graduate Calendar).
April 3, 2026	Statutory holiday. University closed.
April 8, 2026	Winter term ends. Classes follow a Friday schedule.
	Last day of full winter, late winter, and fall/winter classes.
	Last day for final take-home examinations to be assigned, with the exception of those conforming to the examination regulations in the Academic Regulations of the University section of the Undergraduate Calendar/General Regulations of the Graduate Calendar.
	Last day that can be specified by an instructor as a due date for term work for full winter, late winter, and fall/winter courses.
April 9-10, 2026	No classes or examinations take place.
April 11-23, 2026	Final examinations in full winter, late winter, and fall/winter courses will be held. Examinations are normally held all seven days of the week.
April 23, 2026	All final take-home examinations are due on this day, with the exception of those conforming to the examination regulations in the Academic Regulations of the University section of the Undergraduate Calendar/General Regulations of the Graduate Calendar.
May 1, 2026	Last day for receipt of applications for undergraduate internal degree transfers to allow for registration for the summer session.

Date	Activity
May 15-27, 2026	Full winter, late winter term, and fall/winter deferred final examinations will be held.
June 1, 2026	Last day for receipt of applications for admission to an undergraduate program for the fall/winter session except for applications due March 1.
June 15, 2026	Last day for receipt of applications for undergraduate degree program transfers for the fall term.