RDG 790 Qualitative Research Methods in Literacy Education  

RDG 790 is a required course for the Doctorate in Education in Reading

College of Education  

Department of Language, Literacy & Special Populations  
Summer 2008

Through programs dedicated to collaboration in instruction, field experience, and research, the candidates in Sam Houston State University's Educator Preparation Programs acquire the knowledge, dispositions, and skills necessary to create a positive learning environment. Employing a variety of technologies, these candidates learn to plan, implement, assess, and modify instruction to meet the needs of our communities' diverse learners.

Instructor: Dr. Mary E. Robbins  
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Summer 2008 office hours: Mondays 1:30-4:30; Wednesdays 1:30-4:30


Additional readings will be required and will either be self-selected by students or provided by the instructor.

Course Description: This course provides both theoretical and practical dimensions of qualitative research. Various paradigms of qualitative research, such as case study analysis, naturalistic inquiry, discourse analysis, ethnography, and narrative analysis are addressed in this course. Candidates will engage in data collection, analysis, and reports of individualized research projects. The research project will enable students to summarize evidence related to psychological, sociological, and linguistic foundations of reading and writing processes and instruction. 3 credit hours. Prerequisite: RDG 730 and permission of the instructor.

Standards Matrix/Course Content: Candidates will meet the following IRA standards for teacher educators upon completion of RDG 790.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning Outcomes</th>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Performance Assessment</th>
<th>IRA Standards COE Conceptual Framework</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>The candidate will:</strong></td>
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| Demonstrate an understanding of the philosophical underpinnings of qualitative research in literacy education. | • Engages in discussion groups comparing and contrasting various processes and instructional formats.  
• Book review  
• Final project presentation | • Discussion group rubric.  
• Book review  
• Presentation rubric | 1.1 CF1 |
| Investigate and summarize qualitative research methodologies related to literacy. | • Book review  
• Participates in discussion groups over weekly readings.  
• Practices data collection in the field  
• Final project presentation | • Discussion group rubric  
• Practicum observation  
• Final project Rubric | 5.2 CF1 |
| Design a qualitative research study. | • Qualitative design paper | • Paper rubric | 5.2 CF1, CF3 |
| Collect and analyze qualitative data. | • Guided practicum  
• Data "Set" activity | • Practicum observation  
• Data "Set" rubric | |
| Report findings both orally and in writing. | • Presentation on mini-research study | • Presentation rubric | |

Web address for specialty organization standards: [www.reading.org/advocacy/standards/introduction.html](http://www.reading.org/advocacy/standards/introduction.html)  
COE Conceptual Framework: [http://www.shsu.edu/~ncate/concept.html](http://www.shsu.edu/~ncate/concept.html)

Course Format:
Course content is delivered through face-to-face lecture in a class setting, self-study, and workshop. During class sessions literacy concepts, theories, and strategies dealing with the collection, analysis, and writing of qualitative research are discussed and practiced. The professor's instructional focus is to assist candidates in becoming reflective researchers, knowledgeable about qualitative reading research and methodology. To facilitate this, classes are supplemented with PowerPoint presentations and Blackboard, online discussion forums, and Internet links.

**Course Requirements:**

1. **Book Review** – The candidate will read and review a book that is a published account of a particular type of qualitative methodology from a list the professor will provide. The candidate will make an oral presentation of the book review and will create a handout for the class to accompany the oral review. Possible books for review include:
   

2. **Article Reviews** – The candidate will complete an article review for each research methodology discussed in class. The review will be brought to class and used to enrich class discussions.

3. **Class Discussions** – The candidate will thoughtfully contribute to each class discussion, having read the assigned material.

4. **Data Collection and Analysis Guided Practicum** – The candidate will participate in a data collection practicum and will subsequently analyze the data using a variety of techniques including computerized software packages.

5. **Qualitative Research Design** – The candidate will design a qualitative research study. The design will include an issue or problem, a brief examination of the literature, the posing of questions, a succinct description of the participants and setting, data collection, data coding and analysis plans, a section devoted to research rigor (trustworthiness), a timeline, a statement concerning the researcher's perspective, and references.
6. The Data "Set"--Data Collection, Data Coding and Data Analysis – The candidate will collect data in a particular location in the community in order to practice data collection techniques in a “real world” setting.

7. Final Project presentation – The candidate will present the highlights of his/her own mini research study.

**Evaluation**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Book Review</td>
<td>50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Article Reviews</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(10 points for each of 5 articles)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discussion Rubric</td>
<td>50</td>
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<tr>
<td>(5 points for each of 10 class discussions)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Data Guided Practicum</td>
<td>25</td>
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<tr>
<td>Qualitative Research Design</td>
<td>50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Data &quot;Set&quot;</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Project presentation</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>375</td>
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A = 94% and above
B = 88-92%
C = 82-97%

**Expectations:**

1. Regular and punctual attendance is expected. This is a “hands-on” course in which many of the instructional techniques are demonstrated in class and debriefed in large and small group discussions. For these reasons it is important that you be here and be on time.

2. Candidates are expected to turn off all cell phones prior to class.

3. Be prepared for class.

4. Academic honesty is expected. Doctoral students are governed by the Sam Houston State University student code of conduct. Any student with questions about grievances, ethical behavior, etc. should review the Graduate Catalog and Student Code of Conduct. Particular attention should be paid to the sections on plagiarism and theft of library materials.

**STUDENT ABSENCES ON RELIGIOUS HOLY DAYS POLICY**

Section 51.911(b) of the Texas Education Code requires that an institution of higher education excuse a student from attending classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day, including travel for that purpose. A student whose absence is excused under this subsection may not be penalized for that absence and shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment from which the student is excused within a reasonable time after the absence.

University policy 861001 provides the procedures to be followed by the student and instructor. A student desiring to absent himself/herself from a scheduled class in order to observe a religious holy day(s) shall present to each instructor involved a written statement concerning the religious holy day(s). This request must be made in the first fifteen days of the semester or the first seven days of a summer session in which the absence(s) will occur. The instructor will complete a form notifying the student of a reasonable timeframe in which the missed assignments and/or examinations are to be completed.

**STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES POLICY**

It is the policy of Sam Houston State University that no otherwise qualified individual with disabilities shall, solely by reason of his/her handicap, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any academic or Student Life program or activity. Students with disabilities may request help with academically related problems stemming from individual disabilities from their instructors, school/department chair, or by contacting the Chair of the Committee for Continuing Assistance for Disabled Students and Director of the Counseling Center, Lee Drain Annex, or by calling (936) 294-1720.

**AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT**

SHSU adheres to all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. Students with disabilities that may affect
adversely their work in this class should register with the SHSU Counseling Center and talk with their University supervisor and classroom mentor teachers about how they can help. All disclosures of disabilities will be kept strictly confidential. NOTE: no accommodation can be made until registration with the Counseling Center is complete.

Selected Bibliography: