

Course on “Qualitative Research Methods”

Instructor:

Prof. Ericka Costa (Associate Professor in Accounting), ericka.costa@unitn.it

Venue: Lab 4 (Doctoral School of Social Sciences – ground floor) and Zoom

1. Teaching objectives and contents.

The aim of the course is to offer to PhD students an overview on qualitative research methods based on the social-constructionist paradigm. Teaching will enable the student to get confident with different perspectives from the neo-positivist to the social-constructionist in order to reflect about the production of theories and the use of different empirical settings. In details, the following tools will be offered to students: structured, semi-structured and unstructured interviews, focus groups and group interviews, content analysis, manual data analysis and software data analysis with Atals.ti.

2. Expected results.

This course is designed to familiarize students with qualitative research methods. At the end of this module, students should be able to:

1. Understand the difference between epistemic paradigms;
2. Describe advantages and disadvantages of different qualitative research methods
3. Design a semi-structured interview protocol
4. Design a focus group
5. Conduct a data analysis with Atlas.ti

3. Prerequisites:

No specific prerequisites are required

4. Teaching methods and Individual Assignments

The course adopts a number of didactic methods:

- Frontal lessons, with the Professor discussing the various topics / key concepts. The lesson provides deepening / expanding the contents contained in the selected papers, as an occasion for reflection, even critical, on the topics dealt with. Lessons will try to offer as much student involvement as possible, given the number of classrooms.
- Classroom exercises, which are instrumental in consolidating the concrete learning of qualitative research methods.
- Assignment which should be delivered at the end of each lesson. They are connected to the subject discusses in the class.
- Atlas.ti exercises in order to start to get in confidence with the adoption of the qualitative data analysis software

5. Student Evaluation

The evaluation criteria include mastery of content, clarity, accuracy and fairness of the exhibit, the appropriateness of the conclusions and the solidity / consistency of the arguments brought in support of the comments.

- a) Weekly assignments. Homework assignments will count towards 30% of the student evaluation. These assignments will be discussed in class.
- b) Individual Projects. Each student will develop a “research mythology section of a paper” which adopts qualitative methods. Students are not expected to conduct the study, but only to design it form a qualitative methodology perspective. This project will count towards 70% of the student evaluation.

6. Textbook and Readings

For each topic there is a list of suggested paper/reading at the end of the slides.

7. Class schedule – 16 hours

Lessons	hours	Topics
Lesson 1	2	Introduction to Qualitative Research
Lesson 2	3	Interviews
Lesson 3	3	Interviews
Lesson 4	3	Content Analysis
Lesson 5	3	Focus Group
Lesson 6	2	Atlas.TI