

ARTS2852

Qualitative Research for Political and Social Problems

Term 2, 2022



Course Overview

Staff Contact Details

Convenors

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School Contact Information

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Acknowledgement of Country

UNSW Arts, Design and Architecture Kensington and Paddington campuses are built on Aboriginal Lands. We pay our respects to the Bidjigal and Gadigal peoples who are the Custodians of these lands. We acknowledge the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, the First Australians, whose lands, winds and waters we all now share, and pay respect to their unique values, and their continuing and enduring cultures which deepen and enrich the life of our nation and communities.



Image courtesy of the Office of the Pro Vice-Chancellor Indigenous [UNSW's Indigenous strategy](#)

Course Details

Units of Credit 6

Summary of the Course

What is qualitative research and how is it carried out to address questions concerning political and social life? What are the methods and methodologies that have been developed in and across Politics and International Relations to allow researchers to ask questions, and make claims, about the 'political' and the 'social' world? Through the analysis of key scholarly texts centred on pressing global issues, you will be introduced to a range of qualitative methods deployed in political science, and often adapted from other disciplinary contexts. You will ask how these inform and shape research practice in and across Politics and International Relations, using particular examples of qualitative research to think through philosophical, political and economic dilemmas, such as peace and conflict, economic crisis, global social justice and environmental protection. You will be challenged to evaluate the strengths and limitations of particular qualitative methods for certain tasks, and to reflect on the appropriateness of particular methods for the investigation of pressing political and social problems. You will design a qualitative research project with the knowledge learned from the course and discuss the challenges and solutions of the research during weekly seminars.

Course Learning Outcomes

1. Explain the circumstances under which the deployment of qualitative methods is useful and appropriate in social and political science research.
2. Distinguish between and evaluate the utility of various qualitative methods for the investigation of pressing political, economic and social problems.
3. Compare appropriate qualitative methods to address a clear research question.
4. Explain the purpose of human research ethics approval procedures and complete relevant forms according to the specific research topic and needs.

Teaching Strategies

The course is taught through a two-hour lecture plus a one-hour tutorial per week. The course is project-based, exposing you to various qualitative methods in order for you to prepare and design a research question and research project. Preparation for classes consists of independent research by reading print materials, including peer-reviewed scholarly texts such as books and journal articles. You must also complete all essential readings every week in preparation for your lecture and tutorial.

Assessment

1. What if I go over the word limit?

A +/- 10% leeway is applied to all written assessments. For example, for a 2000-word essay can be anywhere between 1800 and 2200. Essays that are shorter or longer than the allowed range will be penalised at 3% for every 100 words (or part thereof).

2. What is included in the word count?

Everything except your reference list is included in the word count. That means that footnotes, sub-headings and in-text references **are** included in the word count.

3. What referencing style should I use?

Political science and international relations do not have a standard referencing style like some other disciplines (e.g. psychology and law). You can use any referencing style you want, provided that:

1. You use just one style consistently
2. You use the style correctly
3. You use an actually existing style (i.e. you don't just make something up).

Poor referencing and attribution of sources will result in a lower grade and may even constitute academic misconduct. There is a lot of assistance available to you to help you learn about referencing, attribution and avoiding plagiarism. If you are not sure just ask! See <https://student.unsw.edu.au/support-referencing-assignments>.

If you submit work for this course that you have already submitted for assessment in another course at this University or any other institution, in whole or in part, or if you copy material from another source and do not attribute that material to its original author, your work will be referred to the School Student Ethics Officer for an investigation into a possible charge of academic misconduct. See <https://student.unsw.edu.au/plagiarism>.

4. There is something I do not understand about the assessment, what should I do?

Please make sure you have read the assessment instructions closely. Also have a look at the marking rubric, which explains what we will be looking for when we mark your assessment. If you still have questions, you can ask the convenor or your tutor.

Because I will often field similar questions from multiple students, I ask that you raise your questions in the lecture/tutorial/seminar, if possible.

5. What if I submit an assignment late?

Unless you have an approved extension (see question 6 below), 5% is deducted from the 'total awardable mark' each calendar day you are late. For example, an assessment that received 70% but is two days late will receive a final grade of 60% - i.e. $70\% - 10\% (2 \text{ days late} \times 5\%) = 60\%$.

For work submitted more than five days after the due date a mark of **zero** will be awarded.

6. What if I need more time to finish my assessment?

You can apply for special consideration if you need more time due to illness, misadventure etc. It is highly recommended that you apply for an extension before the due date passes, if possible.

Special consideration is handled by a centralised bureaucracy. For more information, or to apply for an extension, visit <https://student.unsw.edu.au/special-consideration>.

7. I think my grade was too low, what can I do?

The process for appealing grades is available here: <https://www.unsw.edu.au/arts-design-architecture/student-life/resources-support/protocols-guidelines>

Assessment task	Weight	Due Date	Course Learning Outcomes Assessed
1. Research Question	20%	20/06/2022 11:59 PM	1
2. Literature Review	40%	18/07/2022 11:59 PM	1, 2, 3
3. Research Ethics	40%	08/08/2022 11:59 PM	1, 2, 3, 4

Assessment 1: Research Question

Assessment length: 500 words

Due date: 20/06/2022 11:59 PM

Students should identify an empirical area of interest and devise an appropriate research question. In 500 words, they should describe the rationale for choosing the question, their research aims in answering the question and how this relates to qualitative research in Politics and International Relations. Written feedback, will be provided within two weeks of submission. Students are strongly encouraged to have an individualized discussion with the instructor about their topics.

This assignment is submitted through Turnitin and students can see Turnitin similarity reports.

Additional details

Consult Moodle for additional information.

Assessment 2: Literature Review

Assessment length: 1500

Due date: 18/07/2022 11:59 PM

Students should identify at least five academic sources relevant to a proposed area of qualitative research. They should produce an literature review of 1500 words outlining the contribution that each of these sources will make to the development of their argument. Of the five sources, at least one could be used as a model for the application of qualitative method in one's own research. Written feedback, will be provided within two weeks of submission.

This assignment is submitted through Turnitin and students can see Turnitin similarity reports.

Additional details

Consult Moodle for additional information.

Assessment 3: Research Ethics

Assessment length: 2000

Due date: 08/08/2022 11:59 PM

Completion of the UNSW human research ethics form (Length 1500 to 2000 words)

Managing risk and ethics-related issues is a critical part of qualitative research in social and political sciences. Students will complete the necessary human research ethics forms and approval requirements. Different forms are required according to the level of risk. A decision on the appropriate forms to complete is part of the assessment task.

Written feedback, including a rubric and numerical grade, will be provided within two weeks of submission. Students will be provided with guidelines on assessment expectations, made available through the course's LMS.

This assignment is submitted through Turnitin and students can see Turnitin similarity reports.

Additional details

Consult Moodle for additional information.

Attendance Requirements

Students are strongly encouraged to attend all classes and review lecture recordings.

Course Schedule

[View class timetable](#)

Timetable

Date	Type	Content
Week 1: 30 May - 3 June	Lecture	Course introduction and “what is qualitative research”?
Week 2: 6 June - 10 June	Lecture	Research Ethics
Week 3: 13 June - 17 June	Lecture	Positionality, vulnerability and risk
Week 4: 20 June - 24 June	Lecture	Basic skill 1: Discourse analysis
	Assessment	Research Question
Week 5: 27 June - 1 July	Lecture	Basic skill 2: Interview, focus group, and participatory observation
Week 6: 4 July - 8 July		
Week 7: 11 July - 15 July	Lecture	Basic skill 3: Fieldwork
Week 8: 18 July - 22 July	Lecture	Advanced skill 1: Going to foreign lands
	Assessment	Literature Review
Week 9: 25 July - 29 July	Lecture	Advanced skill 2: Meeting “the unusual”
Week 10: 1 August - 5 August	Lecture	Advanced skill 3: Action research

Resources

Prescribed Resources

All resources are available via Leganto.

Course Evaluation and Development

This course uses the university's MyExperience process to acquire and respond to feedback from students at the end of the course. You are very welcome and invited at any time to submit informal feedback specific to individual tutorials and lectures to the course convenor.

Submission of Assessment Tasks

Turnitin Submission

If you encounter a problem when attempting to submit your assignment through Turnitin, please telephone External Support on 9385 3331 or email them on externalteltsupport@unsw.edu.au . Support hours are 8:00am – 10:00pm on weekdays and 9:00am – 5:00pm on weekends (365 days a year). If you are unable to submit your assignment due to a fault with Turnitin you may apply for an extension, but you must retain your ticket number from External Support (along with any other relevant documents) to include as evidence to support your extension application. If you email External Support you will automatically receive a ticket number, but if you telephone you will need to specifically ask for one. Turnitin also provides updates on their system status on Twitter.

Generally, assessment tasks must be submitted electronically via either Turnitin or a Moodle assignment. In instances where this is not possible, it will be stated on your course's Moodle site with alternative submission details.

For information on how to submit assignments online via Moodle: <https://student.unsw.edu.au/how-submit-assignment-moodle>

Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

Plagiarism is using the words or ideas of others and presenting them as your own. It can take many forms, from deliberate cheating to accidentally copying from a source without acknowledgement.

UNSW groups plagiarism into the following categories:

Copying: Using the same or very similar words to the original text or idea without acknowledging the source or using quotation marks. This includes copying materials, ideas or concepts from a book, article, report or other written document, presentation, composition, artwork, design, drawing, circuitry, computer program or software, website, internet, other electronic resource, or another person's assignment without appropriate acknowledgement.

Inappropriate paraphrasing: Changing a few words and phrases while mostly retaining the original information, structure and/or progression of ideas of the original without acknowledgement. This also applies in presentations where someone paraphrases another's ideas or words without credit and to piecing together quotes and paraphrases into a new whole, without appropriate referencing.

Collusion: Working with others but passing off the work as a person's individual work. Collusion also includes providing your work to another student for the purpose of them plagiarising, paying another person to perform an academic task, stealing or acquiring another person's academic work and copying it, offering to complete another person's work or seeking payment for completing academic work.

Inappropriate citation: Citing sources which have not been read, without acknowledging the "secondary" source from which knowledge of them has been obtained.

Duplication ("self-plagiarism"): Submitting your own work, in whole or in part, where it has previously been prepared or submitted for another assessment or course at UNSW or another university.

Correct referencing practices

The [UNSW Academic Skills support](#) offers resources and individual consultations. Students are also reminded that careful time management is an important part of study. One of the identified causes of plagiarism is poor time management. Students should allow sufficient time for research, drafting and proper referencing of sources in preparing all assessment items.

UNSW Library has [the ELISE tool](#) available to assist you with your study at UNSW. ELISE is designed to introduce new students to studying at UNSW but it can also be a great refresher during your study. Completing the ELISE tutorial and quiz will enable you to:

- analyse topics, plan responses and organise research for academic writing and other assessment tasks
- effectively and efficiently find appropriate information sources and evaluate relevance to your needs
- use and manage information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose
- better manage your time
- understand your rights and responsibilities as a student at UNSW
- be aware of plagiarism, copyright, UNSW Student Code of Conduct and Acceptable Use of UNSW ICT Resources Policy
- be aware of the standards of behaviour expected of everyone in the UNSW community
- locate services and information about UNSW and UNSW Library

Academic Information

Due to evolving advice by NSW Health, students must check for updated information regarding online learning for all Arts, Design and Architecture courses this term (via Moodle or course information provided.)

For essential student information relating to:

- requests for extension;
- late submissions guidelines;
- review of marks;
- UNSW Health and Safety policies;
- examination procedures;
- special consideration in the event of illness or misadventure;
- student equity and disability;
- and other essential academic information, see

<https://www.unsw.edu.au/arts-design-architecture/student-life/resources-support/protocols-guidelines>

Image Credit

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