

## **ENVS 6183 QUALITATIVE METHODS: INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGICAL CHOICE IN ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES**

Course Schedule and Readings, Summer 2024

Class meets in HNE 142. Bring your lunch!

Evaluation in this course is based on class attendance and participation in seminar discussions; your presentation about a research method; and completion of your own Major Research Proposal using the EUC template.

### **Wednesday May 8, 9:30 – 1:30**

Sharing perspectives on our research topics, disciplinary backgrounds, assumptions about research and goals for our research.

What is knowledge? What is knowledge production? What is research? What is research for, and for whom?

How do different academic disciplines view knowledge, knowledge production/research, and its purposes/goals?

Bobrowsky, Peter T. and Hans Rickman (2007). Comet/asteroid impacts and human society: An interdisciplinary approach. Berlin/Heidelberg/New York: Springer. Electronic book available online: <http://www.springerlink.com.ezproxy.library.yorku.ca/content/m77368/>  
Skim the whole book, paying attention to how authors from different disciplines are implicitly answering the questions above.

Wolinetz, Carrie D. and F.S. Collins (2020). "Recognition of research participants' need for autonomy: Remembering the legacy of Henrietta Lacks." *JAMA* 324(11): 1027-1028. <https://jamanetwork-com.ezproxy.library.yorku.ca/journals/jama/article-abstract/2769506>

Nabudere, Dani W., (2002). The epistemological and methodological foundations for an all-inclusive research paradigm in the search for global knowledge (Mbale, Uganda: African Association of Political Science, occasional paper series, vol. 6 no. 1, 2002). (PDF attached.) OR: Afrikology, Philosophy and Wholeness: An Epistemology (Pretoria: Africa Institute of South Africa, 2012). <https://muse-jhu-edu.ezproxy.library.yorku.ca/book/16776>

Wilson, Shawn (2008). Research is Ceremony (Fernwood Books), "Foreword and Conclusion," pp. 6-11. Available online at: <https://fernwoodpublishing.ca/files/researchceremony.pdf>

Chen, Kuan-Hsing (2010). Asia as Method: Toward Deimperialization (Durham and London: Duke University Press), ch. 5, "Asia as method: overcoming the present conditions of knowledge production," and "Epilogue: The imperial order of things, or notes on Han Chinese racism," pp. 211-268.

AND / OR: Lee, Yoonmi (2018), "A critical dialogue with 'Asia as method': a response from Korean education", Educational Philosophy and Theory vol. 51, iss. 9, pp. 958-969.

<https://www-tandfonline-com.ezproxy.library.yorku.ca/doi/full/10.1080/00131857.2018.1427579>

» *Template for Major Research Proposal introduced.*

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### **Friday, May 10, 9:30 – 1:30**

Epistemology, qualitative research, exploratory research, hypothesis-testing, research designed to generate theories or test theories, research designed to test effectiveness of policies, research designed to test behavioural effectiveness, research refusals; the difference between correlation and causation.

Is there a way for researchers to control how “their” research will be used? Is this more important for some types of research than others?

Avis, Mark (2005). “Is there an epistemology for qualitative research?” In Immy Holloway (ed.), *Qualitative Research in Health Care*, chapter 1, pp. 3-15.  
<https://www.lsms.ac/public/uploads/088yDTJdPYq2CdggLCOXp0GpOxDbRBTRJX7hr1xArq5zatQJIC1575401043loPcbB14GXaS61brpLxhjd61QG6J8x1fwdWZ54o7vL6f01eHSQ.pdf>

Autonomous Geographies Collective (2009) "Beyond Scholar Activism: Making Strategic Interventions Inside and Outside the Neoliberal University." <http://www.paulchatterton.com/wp-content/uploads/2009/05/beyond-scholar-activism-final-version-feb-09.pdf>

Temper, L., McGarry, D., & Weber, L. (2019). From academic to political rigour: Insights from the ‘Tarot’ of transgressive research. *Ecological Economics*, 164(July), 106379.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecolecon.2019.106379>

Eizenberg, Efrat and Mor Shilon (2015) “Pedagogy for the new planner: Refining the qualitative toolbox,” *Environment and Planning B: Planning and Design*, 0265813515604477, published online September 16, 2015. Available online at:  
<http://epb.sagepub.com.ezproxy.library.yorku.ca/content/early/2015/09/15/0265813515604477.full.pdf+html>

Tuck, Eve, and K. Wayne Yang (2014). “Unbecoming Claims: Pedagogies of Refusal in Qualitative Research.” *Qualitative Inquiry* 20 (6): 811–18. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1077800414530265>.

» *Due in class or soon thereafter: A written statement of your own epistemological vision. What epistemology underlies your own research process? How do you see your research fitting into this epistemology? What would define a "good" research process for you?*

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### Wednesday May 15, 9:30 – 1:30

What is interdisciplinarity? How does it differ from transdisciplinarity?

Why is interdisciplinarity/transdisciplinarity important, especially in environmental studies and with regard to sustainability?

How can researchers from different disciplinary traditions be transparent about their assumptions and methodological paradigms and mutually respect each others’ contributions to knowledge production? Why is this important but sometimes difficult? What are the main categories of research methods / knowledge production and how do they relate to each other?

Grubert, Emily (2024). Introducing *Environmental Research: Energy* – advancing interdisciplinary understanding of energy systems during decarbonization. DOI 10.1088/2753-3751/ad3967  
<https://iopscience-iop-org.ezproxy.library.yorku.ca/article/10.1088/2753-3751/ad3967/meta>

Morss, R.E., H. Lazrus, and J.L. Demuth 2018. The “inter” within interdisciplinary research: strategies for building integration across fields. *Risk Analysis*, DOI 101111/risa.13246.

Kinzig, A. P. 2001. Bridging Disciplinary divides to Address Environmental and Intellectual Challenges. *Ecosystems* vol. 4 no. 8, pp. 709-715. Available online at <http://www.springerlink.com.ezproxy.library.yorku.ca/content/g4m515kwtrabwkdir/>

Ahmed, Manan et al. 2023. Decolonization, the disciplines, and the university. Mellon Foundation project proposal. <https://github.com/xpmethod/decolonization>

Strega, Susan. "The view from the poststructural margins: Epistemology and methodology reconsidered." In Leslie Brown and Susan Strega (eds.) Research as Resistance: critical, indigenous, and anti-oppressive approaches (Toronto: Canadian Scholars Press, 2005), pp. 199-235.

Discussion about which disciplines everyone hopes/plans to span in their own research, and why.

» "Statement of Research Topic" section of Proposal due in class.

» "Specific Research Question" section of Proposal due in class.

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## Friday May 17, 9:30 – 1:30

### A. Mixed methods and community-based research

Leavy, Patricia (2017, 2023). Research Design: Quantitative, Qualitative, Mixed Methods, Arts-Based, and Community-Based Participatory Research Approaches. Available at Scott Library and online.

Merenstein, B.F. 2014 Community-based research methods: Putting ideas into action. *Journal of Applied Social Science*, vol. 9, iss. 2. <https://journals-sagepub-com.ezproxy.library.yorku.ca/doi/full/10.1177/1936724414539948>

B. Research methods: small groups work on their presentations about particular research methods, for presentation at the next class.

Each group will choose, research, and make a presentation to the class on one or two qualitative research methods which are often used in the social sciences: what the method is, how it's done, what kind of research areas it is particularly useful for, and any drawbacks, shortcomings, or caveats. Please also include an example of research using this method, explaining how it was carried out and how the method affected the results.

Possible methods include:

- Case studies
- Interviews
- Personal narratives
- Storytelling
- Mapping
- Photography

Photo-voice  
Literature review  
Observation  
Self-observation  
Ethnography  
Participatory research  
Participatory action research  
Collaborative community research  
Mixed methods  
Etc.

[Films on research methods and new approaches to research if time allows.]

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### **Wednesday May 22, 9:30 – 1:30**

- A. Research methods presentations (small groups present methods)
  
- B. Research Design
  - Ways of approaching research, choosing methods, and getting started
  - Combining research methods / 'triangulation'
  - Background information
  - Research rationales
  - Writing proposals and explaining methodologies, methodological choice and research design

Snyder, Catherine 2012. A Case Study of a Case Study: Analysis of a robust qualitative research methodology. The Qualitative Report volume 17, article 26, 1-21.  
<https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ974849.pdf>

General resources:

Kirby, Sandra et.al. Experience Research Social Change: Methods Beyond the Mainstream. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2006.

Lapan, Stephen et al. 2012 Qualitative Research: An introduction to methods and designs.

Creswell, John and C. Poth 2016. Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design.

» *As you read and discuss research design, take notes on ideas which are relevant for your own methodology.*  
*Please begin drafting the "Theoretical Framework and Literature Review" section of your Proposal – you are invited to include a draft for the purposes of this course, and you should finalize this section in collaboration with your supervisor.*

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## Friday May 24, 9:30 – 1:30

### A. Analysis and interpretation of research results

Grounded theory  
Coding  
Writing and referencing

See the general resource books noted above, and also:

Dunne, Ciarán 2009. The place of the literature review in grounded theory research. International Journal of Social Research Methodology vol. 14, iss. 2, pp 111-124. <https://www-tandfonline-com.ezproxy.library.yorku.ca/doi/full/10.1080/13645579.2010.494930>

Dovetail 2023. A guide to coding qualitative research data. <https://dovetail.com/research/qualitative-research-coding/>

Ely, Margot, R. Vinz, M. Downing, and M. Anzul, On writing qualitative research: living by words (London/Philadelphia: Routledge/Falmer, 2001), chapter 5, “Working in interpretive modes,” pp. 223-273.

Harvey, Gordon, Writing with sources: a guide for students (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1998).

OPPI writing in plain language blog by Lisa Orchard: <https://ontarioplanners.ca/blog/planning-exchange/january-1/think-like-a-writer-in-2022>

### B. Finding supervisors, research support and advice

EUC Human Participants Review and Risk Review processes/forms and the rationale for these steps.

MES students: please see the information in the MES Program Handbook, located in the Dossier under Resources, specifically the Human Research Participants section (pp. 11-13) and Appendix 3, with links to the forms required, under Add Forms. These links are copied here:

[MES Application to Conduct Human Participants Research](#)  
[Major Research Protocol: Research Involving Human Participants](#)

For coursework and/or MES major research involving non-Indigenous participants, less than minimal risk and unfunded (not part of a faculty member’s approved research project).

[Informed Consent Form \(Template\)](#)  
[Research Involving Indigenous Peoples Checklist](#)

#### [Risk Assessment](#)

Documentation for any coursework and/or major research, thesis and dissertation involving risks must be approved by the EUC Research Committee.

[Graduate Student Research Risk Assessment Check List](#)

Other (non-MES) graduate students: please check <https://www.yorku.ca/research/research-ethics/> which leads to York University Office of Research Ethics information for graduate students. Also check information available through your graduate program office.

» “Research Design and Methodology” section of Proposal is due in class.

» “Research Timeline” and “Tentative Outline” due in class.

» Students circulate drafts of their research proposals to others in small groups for peer discussion and feedback during the next class.

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**Wednesday, May 29, 9:30 – 1:30**

A. Peer review and discussion of each others’ research proposals, in small groups.

B. Disseminating, sharing, publishing research; Knowledge Mobilization

Protecting yourself as a researcher (online harassment – Bearing Witness)

<https://academicmatters.ca/trolling-and-doxing-graduate-students-sharing-their-research-online-speak-out-about-hate/>

Making research results available and discoverable, open access publishing; writing for your audiences; sharing research results for various audiences

<https://creative.vic.gov.au/resources/audience-research-toolkit/analyse-and-report-results/how-to-share-your-research-findings>

<https://theconversation.com/scientists-must-share-research-findings-with-participants-heres-why-133454>

Chapter 6, “Negotiating, collaborating, responding,” in Ely, Margot, R. Vinz, M. Downing, and M. Anzul, On writing qualitative research: living by words (London/Philadelphia: Routledge/Falmer, 2001), pp. 274-328.

» *Draft of research ethics forms and informed consent form are due in class.*

» *Proofread your proposal; check to be sure your methodology is well-explained and you believe that it will allow you to answer your research questions, your timeline allows for enough consultation with participants and supervisor feedback, you’ve included space for learning and unexpected outcomes, etc.*

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**Friday, May 31, 9:30 – 1:30**

A. Short readings and online sources showing direct impacts of research. We will discuss the research methods, methodologies, and design of particular studies in relation to their effectiveness along various parameters: degree of participation, policy impacts, effects on social norms, support for movements, etc.

What do you want your research to accomplish? What are your own metrics for its ‘success’? (Revisit “Epistemological Vision”). What recent research studies do you want to emulate and why? Please bring/share some examples of successful research you’ve noticed.

IEN and Oil Change (2021), *Indigenous Resistance Against Carbon*, [www.ienearth.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Indigenous-Resistance-Against-Carbon-2021.pdf](http://www.ienearth.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Indigenous-Resistance-Against-Carbon-2021.pdf)

Temper, Leah et al. (2020), "Movements shaping climate futures: a systematic mapping of protests against fossil fuel and low-carbon energy projects," *Environmental Research Letters* 15(12): 123004. <https://iopscience.iop.org/ezproxy.library.yorku.ca/article/10.1088/1748-9326/abc197/meta>

"Kamloops Indian Residential School missing children findings but a fraction of investigation and work need to bring peace to families and communities" (July 15, 2021). [https://tkemlups.ca/wp-content/uploads/July15\\_Media-Release\\_Final.pdf](https://tkemlups.ca/wp-content/uploads/July15_Media-Release_Final.pdf)

B. Course wrap-up, reflections, evaluation, and final peer review meetings if needed.

» *Revised research proposal drafts are due in class.*