Offered: Mondays, 9:00-4:30, K6/295 Clinical Sciences Center
Credits: 3
Prerequisites: Graduate standing

Faculty
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SPECIAL NEEDS: Any student having concerns or complaints specific to their experience in this course should first talk with the instructional personnel, preceptor, or teaching assistant (TA), as applicable. If the issue is not resolved at this level, the student should then go to the course professor. If resolution is still not satisfactory, the student should discuss the situation with the Academic Dean of their respective Schools.

COURSE DESCRIPTION: The purpose of this course is for you to gain a beginning familiarity with the historical/philosophical foundations of interpretive research methods, to develop the skills you will need to understand and critique health services research employing interpretive research methods, and to acquire beginning skills in conducting interpretive research in health care settings. This is a “hands-on” experience, requiring you to engage in activities that will help you experience the research methods we will be learning about.

COURSE ACTIVITIES: This course is designed to maximize student participation during class. Much of the work for this course will be carried out in group projects during class time. In order to complete these group projects, each student must complete readings prior to class. Each class builds on previous classes. This requires being up to date with readings and assignments and participating actively in class discussions and group exercises. It is also necessary to attend class regularly. The course professor will be available to groups to consult on assignments during class each week. The assignments should each be 1-2 typed pages and must be handed in on time.

Rev. 3-4-04
GRADING:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>% of Grade</th>
<th>Due Week</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assignment 1</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reflections (2)</td>
<td>30</td>
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REQUIRED READINGS: The assigned readings were selected to give you an overview of perspectives on interpretive research methods. Some readings are included because they are widely cited in research literature. It is important that you are familiar with them. Others are included because they provide good examples of specific research methods. None of the readings should be read as The Truth. The assigned readings sometimes disagree with or contradict each other or what was said in class. This simply reflects the debate and diversity among scholars and researchers. Don’t worry about inconsistency or contradiction. We will discuss these inconsistencies and debates as part of the class discussion.

NOTE: All REQUIRED readings have been scanned in .PDF format and are available online via this address:

http://academic.son.wisc.edu/courses/N701/index.html

ALL RECOMMENDED READINGS ARE AVAILABLE THROUGH THE COURSE PROFESSOR OR GUEST LECTURER.

ASSIGNMENTS: The following assignments should be typed, double-spaced, and turned in on time. Assignments are expected to reflect both the readings and the class discussions. Grading will be based on the thoughtfulness, accuracy, comprehensiveness or sophistication of your argument, as well as integration of class readings and discussions.

ASSIGNMENT 1 (due Week 6):
Identify a practice area decision/problem. Find 3-4 interpretive research studies that can inform you about the issue/problem/decision (Preferably a problem/decision you have actually been involved in):

1. How can these studies help you decide how you will approach your problem/make your decision?
2. What is left unanswered, unaddressed?
3. What other areas of research would be useful to you in solving this problem/making a decision?
4. Pick an interpretive method not represented by any of your articles. What might you have learned from using that approach that would have been useful? Explain.
5. What are the practice implications of the research you have read?

REFLECTIONS. In addition to the assignment described above, 15 points will be given for each of two short papers that reflect on any issue of your choosing that pertains to the course. These should be thoughtful reflections on what went on in class, how the course work relates to some other aspect of your life or work, ideas about research you might like to do, insights you have along the way. The only guidance you are given is that they are rather short and are thoughtful pieces. I will not accept a simple description of something you learned. These should be 1-2 pages and are worth 15 points each.
WEEK 1: March 8
COURSE INTRODUCTION

The first day of class will be spent discussing the overall purpose and organization of the course, course assignments and activities, your previous experience with research, and shared assumptions about science, knowledge and research. We will spend time exploring what we, as nurses and individuals, bring to the class and to the topic. You will also organize yourself into work groups that will continue throughout the course.

DISCUSSION TOPIC: Introduction/Overview

The first class is designed to open a discussion about the nature of science as a particular kind of knowledge/knowing. We will be thinking about and discussing the meaning of scientific knowledge and how (or whether) this differs from other ways of knowing. We will discuss how you come to know what you know, what lends certainty to knowing, how knowledge is related to the social context, (in the role of research and knowledge development), and how a researcher’s quest for knowledge, truth, and understanding is related to the metaphysical context and the tradition of the knower or the discipline. In addition, we will consider: What is the interpretive perspective on research and how it differs from the post positivist perspective? What are the implications of these perspectives for nursing, social science and health care research? What are the different types of interpretative research? What is the difference between qualitative and interpretative research?

REQUIRED READINGS:


WEEK 2: March 22 (the Monday after Spring Break)
DATA COLLECTION STRATEGIES

This class will focus on the various data collection methods used by qualitative researchers. Many of the issues discussed in your text on fieldwork are relevant across qualitative methods: access/entry, taking field notes, insider/outsider issues, interviewing, participation and observation. Think about the relationship between data collection and philosophy of science or paradigm.

REQUIRED READINGS:


*The Focus Group Interview and Other Kinds of Group Activities.*


**RECOMMENDED READINGS: Interviewing**


**WEEK 3: March 29**

**SYMBOLIC INTERACTION AND THE GROUNDED THEORY METHOD**

This class is devoted to a discussion of symbolic interaction: the theoretical foundation of the grounded theory method. As you read about symbolic interaction, think about how the world looks from this perspective. How similar or different is this perspective from the way you understand, explain, and think about your social and work lives?

Grounded theory is an interpretive research method. As you will see, it is based on notions of symbolic interactionism—how people make meaning from their interactions with other people, with the environment, and with themselves. Though symbolic interactionism may not be explicitly discussed in some of the readings on Grounded Theory, see if you can find evidence of its presence in the research using this method. There are multiple “schools” of symbolic interactionist thought, but those differences are beyond the scope of this class. As you read, think about what a symbolic interactionist has to say about the nature of reality and the source of truth about the world.
As you read, keep track of your questions. What do you think are the hallmarks of a grounded theory study? What must be presented in order to claim that something is a grounded theory as opposed to what might be common to a number of interpretive methodologies? What kind of questions can you ask (answer) with grounded theory? What kind of questions wouldn’t work with grounded theory?

**REQUIRED READINGS (Please read articles in order listed):**


**RECOMMENDED READINGS:**


WEEK 4: April 5 – Guest: Pam Ironside
HERMENEUTICS/PHENOMENOLGY

REQUIRED READINGS:


RECOMMENDED READINGS:


WEEK 5: April 12 – Guest: Lioness Ayres
NARRATIVE ANALYSIS

REQUIRED READINGS:


RECOMMENDED READINGS:


WEEK 6: April 19 – Guest: Stephen Small
RESEARCH FOR ACTION & ISSUES IN INTERPRETIVE RESEARCH

REQUIRED READINGS:


Interpretive Research
This discussion will be devoted to a discussion of issues that face all interpretive researchers. We will discuss the use of multiple methods and types of data for a single project. We will discuss writing about and reporting qualitative research studies and ethical issues commonly faced by researchers using interpretive research methods. We will look again at the differences between “qualitative” and “interpretive” methods.

REQUIRED READINGS:


Groger, L., Mayberry, P.S., & Straker, J.K. (1999). What we didn’t learn because of who would not talk to us. *Qualitative Health Research, 9*(6), 829-835.

**Policy on Student Concerns/Complaints**
Any student who has a concern or complaint specific to an experience in this course should first talk with the instructor, preceptor, or teaching assistant (TA), as applicable. If the issue is not resolved at this level, the student should then go to the course professor. If the solution is still not satisfactory, the student should discuss the situation with the Associate Dean for Academic Programs in the School of Nursing.

**Policy on Academic Integrity**
Students are responsible for the honest completion and representation of their work, for the appropriate citation of sources, and for respect of others' academic endeavors. Students who violate these standards must be confronted and must accept the consequences of their actions (UWS 14.01). If you have any questions about the interpretation of this policy, please see the course professor.

**Students with Disabilities or Special Needs**
The McBurney Disability Resource Center, 263-6393, provides academic support services to students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation should contact the Center and request assistance as early as possible, preferably at least eight weeks prior to the date of anticipated need. It is the responsibility of students to inform nursing faculty, in a timely manner, of their request for accommodation. Faculty, either directly or in coordination with McBurney, work with students to identify and provide reasonable instructional accommodation.

**School of Nursing Policies and Procedures for the Receipt, Manipulation, Storage, Dissemination, Transmission and/or Disposal of Patient Information**
Students are expected to know and abide by policies that protect the privacy of patient information. When storing or disseminating patient information as part of required course work, it must be free of any identifiers, whether transmitted orally, in writing, or electronically.

When disposing of any patient-related information, paper copies must be shredded or placed in a confidential trash bin located throughout the Health Sciences Center or other health facilities.

Electronic forms of information must reside in a location in which access is limited by a password or screensaver. Audiotapes, videotapes, floppy disks or CD-ROMs must be kept in a secure place or be erased or destroyed when the information on them is no longer needed. These guidelines apply regardless of site (e.g., home, school, or clinical location).

Students who violate these guidelines will be expected to obtain additional security and privacy training and may be denied access to patient records until repeated training is completed. Serious or repeated violations may result in penalties such as those outlined in the UWS Chapter 14 Academic Misconduct guidelines (http://www.wisc.edu/students/uws14.htm).

**Honors**
Students in the Honors Program who wish to do an Honors Project in this course should talk with the instructor or course professor. Honors work may replace one of the assignments.