

**UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE
FALL 2023**

**POL 352HF
INTRODUCTION TO QUALITATIVE RESEARCH METHODS**

MONDAYS 3 – 5 pm EST

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Office hours: Mondays 1:00-2:30 pm EST; or by appointment

Office: Sidney Smith Hall Room 3061

Telephone: 416-978-2857

Course website: Quercus

Tutorials: Monday 5-6 pm; Tuesday 1-2 pm; Tuesday 2-3 pm – see scheduled weeks under “evaluation”

COURSE OVERVIEW AND OBJECTIVES

The aim of the course is to inspire students to learn about and conduct political science research using qualitative methods. The course introduces students to the varied way researchers pursue understanding and explanation in the field of political science from a variety of methodological traditions (qualitative and quantitative). Students examine what qualitative social science research entails and how and why qualitative research is conducted. They develop a sense of what comprises good quality qualitative research and how to evaluate it. The course then examines the range of qualitative research methods used in political science (e.g. archival methods, political ethnography, interviews, and focus groups), and gives students some hands-on experience using qualitative research methods. Throughout the course, we examine some core ideas related to why we do what we do in studying political science: how methodologies align (or not) with research goals, what assumptions we bring to research based on what we know about the world, how to conduct research ethically, and how we can become aware of our own position as researchers. The hope is that students will build on this foundation as they pursue other courses in political science and their own independent research.

Note: POL352H1 cannot be used as a substitute for POL 222H1 for POL major/specialist program or POL 232H1 for the POL specialist program. Please also note that ENV 223H, GGR 271H, POL 252H1, and SOC 204H are exclusions.

By the end of this course students will:

- Gain a broader and deeper understanding of the goals of qualitative research in political science
- Develop knowledge of a range of qualitative research methods commonly used in political science
- Critically analyze and evaluate a variety of qualitative research methods
- Have a stronger sense of the ethical challenges in conducting qualitative research
- Reflect on and apply some qualitative research techniques (e.g. interviews, participant observation)

This course is designed to be an introduction to the topic of qualitative research in Political Science. It cannot cover everything related to these topics – we can merely scratch the surface on these issues. I hope students are inspired to go beyond the course material and continue their learning well beyond this 12-week introductory course. I am happy to suggest books and articles if you are interested.

COMMUNICATION

Quercus will be used for sharing other important information and announcements. It is your responsibility to log on to Quercus regularly and obtain relevant information for the course. I suggest changing your settings to receive emails of any announcements and updates.

I am available for weekly office hours as specified above or “as needed” by appointment – just email me at linda.white@utoronto.ca and we can set up a mutually convenient time. I check my email regularly during working hours (weekdays from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. EST) and I will try my best to respond within 24 hours. Response times will be longer on evenings and weekends.

Note that other email addresses (e.g. gmail) can end up in email spam. It is thus important for all students to use a valid UTOR email address for communication.

For anything other than straightforward questions which can be answered in a sentence or two via email, I encourage students to speak with me about any of the material covered in the course and the assignments. If the response requires more than one sentence, email is not the appropriate medium for discussion of course materials.

COURSE FORMAT AND DELIVERY MODE

The course will be delivered in person only in the Fall 2023 semester. In-person classes begin at 10 past the hour and end on the hour. I do not plan to record the seminars. However, unfortunately, we are still experiencing waves of the COVID-19 virus which may at some point in the semester disrupt in-person learning. If circumstances arise where we need to switch to some form of hybrid or remote learning, we will do so. In that instance, the course, including your participation, will be recorded on video and will be available to students in the course for viewing remotely and after each session.

REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS

The required readings provide the foundation for the learning in the course. They comprise a mix of academic journal articles, book chapters, and shorter pieces. All the readings and other relevant course information are available on Quercus or as otherwise indicated. Students should complete all the required readings **before** class each week as that will better facilitate your learning.

Course materials belong to your instructor, the University, and/or other source depending on the specific facts of each situation and are protected by copyright. In this course, you are permitted to download materials from Quercus for your own academic use, but you should not copy, share, or use them for any other purpose without the explicit permission of the instructor.

CLASS AND TUTORIAL ATTENDANCE

Students are expected to attend every class and scheduled tutorial. Students who are absent from academic participation for any reason (e.g., COVID, cold, flu and other illness or injury, family situation) and who require consideration for missed academic work should **report their absence through the online absence declaration**. The declaration is available to students through ACORN under the Profile and Settings menu. Starting in the 2023-2024 school year, students may use the ACORN Absence Declaration Tool to declare an absence once per academic term (e.g., the fall term) for a maximum period of seven (7) consecutive calendar days. The seven-day declaration period can be retroactive for up to six (6) days in the past, or proactive, up to six (6) days in the future.

Students should also advise their instructor and/or TA of their absence. Instructors and TAs will not be automatically alerted when a student declares an absence. It is a student's responsibility to let instructors know that they have used the Absence Declaration so that you can discuss any needed consideration, where appropriate.

EVALUATION

The final course grade reflects your level of demonstrated achievement of the course learning objectives listed above. Evaluations provide feedback on your progress towards the final course grade. **Ouriginal will be used in this course** and can be used via Quercus. You do not need to sign in to Ouriginal separately.

Your final grade will be determined by your performance in these areas:

Component	Weight/Value	Due Date
Tutorial attendance and participation	20%	Tutorials will be held on Weeks 3 (Sept 25 or 26), 4 (Oct 2 or 3), 5 (Oct 16 or 17), 6 (Oct 23 or 24), Week 8 (Nov 13 or 14), and 11 (Dec 4 or 5).
Assignment 1: Positionality/reflexivity statement	10%	1 October 11:59 pm
Assignment 2: Concept analysis	10%	15 October 11:59 pm

Assignment 3: Causality and causal mechanisms	10%	22 October 11:59 pm
Assignment 4: Mock ethics submission	10%	29 October 11:59 pm
Assignment 5: Archive tour and reflection	10%	12 November 11:59 pm
Assignment 6: Ethnography exercise and reflection	10%	19 November 11:59 pm
Assignment 7: Interview exercise and reflection	10%	26 November 11:59 pm
Assignment 8: Building rapport with research participants and reporting results reflection	10%	3 December 11:59 pm
Assignment 9: Content analysis and reflection	10%	7 December 11:59 pm
BONUS ASSIGNMENT: Communicating your research		7 December 11:59 pm

Tutorials are designed to help you with the course assignments. They are well worth attending!

There are no exams in this course. Instead, numerous **assignments** are designed to give you practice applying the tools examined in class each week. Details regarding each exercise are provided below, including tasks, word length, and due dates. **You are required to complete EIGHT of the NINE assignments.**

The last assignment is a bonus assignment. It is not mandatory but can be completed for credit at the end of the course to substitute for the lowest of your **graded** assignments (except, of course, the tutorial attendance and participation). In other words, it can be used to improve your grade BUT NOT make up for missed work. It cannot replace a missed assignment.

GENERAL RULES FOR ASSIGNMENTS

Submissions:

The writing assignments are designed to integrate your learning while also demonstrating your knowledge of the course material. Each assignment submission, therefore, must be supported with evidence drawn directly from ALL of the week's required course material. You must paraphrase and directly quote the readings in meaningful ways that support your analysis/reflections.

Grading criteria:

The following criteria will be used to assess each assignment.

- Clear definitions – Does the assignment clearly define and accurately utilize terms found in the readings and discussed in class?

- Does the assignment connect course readings to the specific assignment exercise in relevant and thoughtful ways?
- Evidence Base - Is there good marshalling of evidence from the requisite number of sources including articles, chapters, and relevant data?
- Argumentation/analysis - Is the analysis reasonable, coherent, and convincing and does it engage with the literature in adequate depth and detail?
- Thesis – is there a clear statement of the goal of the assignment and summary of the argument in the first sentence/paragraph with the subsequent material built logically around that thesis?
- Organization and quality of writing – is the assignment well-organized with good flow from one idea to the next?

All assignments will be submitted directly through Quercus. All written work should be submitted in Word format (permitted extensions .doc, .docx, .rtf).

Citations:

All written work and presentations must be properly referenced with clear source citations. If you are quoting directly from a source, indicate as such with quotation marks; otherwise, be sure to paraphrase appropriately and **always** provide sources for your information even when paraphrasing. Please use a social science in-text citation system (Author, year of publication, page number) – please do not use footnote/endnote style for source citations – and provide a works cited page at the end of the assignment.

Please note that Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools such as ChatGPT are proliferating. There are now hundreds of these systems that are readily available that can be used for a variety of purposes including language translation, article summarization, and thematic analysis. Students may choose to use generative artificial tools as they work through course assignments. BUT use must be documented in an appendix for each assignment. The documentation should include what tool(s) were used, how they were used (e.g. what prompts were used to generate content), and how the results from the AI were incorporated into the submitted work. Many organizations that publish standard citation formats are now providing information on citing generative AI (e.g., MLA: <https://style.mla.org/citing-generative-ai/>).

Students are strongly advised to keep rough and draft work and hard copies of their assignments. These should be kept until the marked assignments have been returned. All graded assignments are to be kept by students until the grades have been posted on ACORN.

Late Penalties:

I expect students to turn in assignments on time and to present on the dates scheduled. No exceptions are made except in the case of an appropriately documented emergency.

If you do miss an assignment deadline, your grade for this component will be reduced by **1 per cent per day**, including weekends. Late assignments will not be accepted after 7 days.

Grade Appeals:

The teaching assistant and I are happy to discuss evaluation criteria on any assignment as well as strategies for improvement. If you judge a received grade to be inaccurate (with respect to the grading guidelines outlined by the Faculty of Arts and Science and the assignment instructions given) and would like your assignment to be re-graded, you may appeal the assigned grade. The process by which to appeal the grade is to submit in writing (via email within one week of receiving the graded assignment to the person who graded the assignment) a paragraph explaining the basis of the appeal, as well as the original graded assignment. Please note decisions on appeals are ultimately at the instructor's discretion. Once an appeal is submitted, the entire assignment (and not specific questions/parts) will be examined. Please note that your grade may go down, go up or remain unchanged after this process.

Academic Integrity:

Academic integrity is essential to the pursuit of learning and scholarship in the university. The university treats cases of cheating and plagiarism very seriously. Assignments and all other deliverables must be original work, giving credit to the work of others where appropriate. This applies to individual and group deliverables. You are encouraged to consult the following websites to ensure that you follow the appropriate rules. Ignorance of these rules is not a defense in cases of violations, which can result in very serious academic sanctions. Please visit the [University of Toronto Academic Integrity](#) and the [UofT Writing Centre Resources](#) websites for further detail and help on the proper use of citations.

Plagiarism and other academic offences: “are in direct opposition to the University’s mission to foster internationally significant research and excellent programs—a mission that can be realized only if members of the University appropriately acknowledge sources of information and ideas, present independent work on assignments and examinations, and complete and submit group projects in accordance with the standards of the discipline being studied.”

Examples of academic offences include (but are not limited to):

- Representing someone else’s work or words as your own
- Falsifying documents such as a medical note
- Purchasing an essay or other assignment
- Submitting someone else’s work – in whole or in part - as your own
- Submitting the same assignment in more than one course (without permission)
- Making up sources or facts for an essay or report.

Plagiarism – presenting others’ thoughts, ideas, or other material without properly acknowledging the source - is a serious academic offence and will be dealt with accordingly.

If you are unclear about what constitutes plagiarism or how to properly acknowledge sources, please visit the [University of Toronto Academic Integrity](#) and the [UofT Writing Centre Resources](#) websites for further detail and help on the proper use of citations.

If you have questions on these matters, please ask me or the teaching assistant in the course. It is the responsibility of each student to be able to demonstrate the originality of their work.

Ouriginal:

Normally, students will be required to submit their course essays to the University's plagiarism detection tool for a review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing so, students will allow their essays to be included as source documents in the tool's reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University's use of this tool are described on the Centre for Teaching Support & Innovation web site (<https://uoft.me/pdt-faq>[Links to an external site.](#)).

Students may opt out of submitting through Ouriginal. If you choose to do so, you must inform me of your intention to do so. You must also provide electronic copies of all rough notes (typed and/or handwritten), library/Google searches conducted in the course of your research, and day/time stamped electronic versions of previous saved versions of your assignment with track changes enabled.

Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters

Please read the University's [Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters](#). It applies to all your academic activities and courses. The Code prohibits all forms of academic dishonesty including, but not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, and the use of unauthorized aids. Violating the Code may lead to penalties up to and including suspension or expulsion from the University. You are expected to know the Code and inform yourself of acceptable academic practices – ignorance of the Code or the acceptable academic practices is not a valid defense if you are accused of a violation.

UNIVERSITY RESOURCES

Occasionally students will need to apply for an academic accommodation due to disability, illness, religious observance, or personal emergency.

Academic accommodations are provided when you experience disability-related barriers that prohibit demonstration of your knowledge and skills. Accommodations are provided to level the playing field upon which you can establish your success. You are encouraged to inform yourself about options in this regard at the website for [Accessibility Services](#). All requests for an academic accommodation are handled by the University of Toronto's Accessibility Services, not the instructor. For disability-related accommodations, [Accessibility Services](#) staff will determine suitable accommodations on a case-by-case basis based on recommendation from health providers and with student input.

Students should be aware of the new divisional policy on academic consideration for non-disability related requests for accommodation. Please review that information here:

<https://registrar.utoronto.ca/policies-and-guidelines/absence-declaration/>.

If a non-disability related accommodation request is made along with an absence declaration on ACORN, a resolution will be determined by the instructor. This may take the form of any

alternate deliverable, deadline extension, re-weighted course grade calculation, make-up exam, or another solution deemed appropriate by the instructor. If an accommodation request is not made along with an absence declaration, the missed or late deliverable will be subject to an academic penalty. The extent of the penalty is at the discretion of the instructor.

Mental Health and Wellness

Feeling distressed? Are you in crisis? There's help. You can access **U of T Telus Health Student Support** (formerly U of T My SSP) 24/7 by calling **1-844-451-9700**. Outside of North America, call **001-416-380-6578**. See more information at <https://mentalhealth.utoronto.ca/telus-health-student-support/>.

Are you in immediate danger? For Personal Safety – Call 911, then Campus Community Police*
UTSG Police: 416-978-2222 | U of T Mississauga Police: 905-569-4333 | U of T Scarborough
Police 416-978-2222 |

Centre for International Experience Safety Abroad 416-946-3929.

*24/7/365; Campus Community Police can direct your call to the right service.

You can also contact the [Community Safety Office](#) at 416-978-1485.

WHAT YOU NEED TO READ IN ADVANCE OF EACH WEEK'S LECTURE:

Week 1 – September 11 – Introduction and Goals of Social Science Research - Asking Interesting Questions

William Roberts Clark. 2020. "Asking Interesting Questions." In *The SAGE Handbook of Research Methods in Political Science and International Relations*. Eds. Luigi Curini and Robert Franzese. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications: 7-25.

Dani Rodrik. 2021. "How Economists and Non-Economists Can Get Along." *Project Syndicate* (March 9): 1-3. Online: <https://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/economists-other-social-scientists-and-historians-can-get-along-by-dani-rodrik-2021-03>.

IN-CLASS EXERCISE: Be prepared to discuss your own research passions and interests in class. NO TUTORIAL THIS WEEK

Week 2 – September 18 – What Is Qualitative Research and How Does It Differ from Quantitative Research?

John Gerring. 2017. "Qualitative Methods." *Annual Review of Political Science* 20: 15-36.
David Marsh and Paul Furlong. 2002. "A Skin, Not a Sweater: Ontology and Epistemology in Political Science." In *Theory and Methods in Political Science*. 2nd ed. Eds. David Marsh, and Gerry Stoker. Palgrave Macmillan: 17-41.

NO TUTORIAL THIS WEEK

Week 3 – September 25 – Post-positivist, Interpretivist, and Post-colonial/Indigenous Approaches to Research

NOTE: for those observing Yom Kippur, please come speak to me re: what accommodations you require

Jasmine English and Richard A. Neilsen. 2022. "Interpretation for Positivists." Working paper: <http://www.jasmineenglish.net/research.html>.

Yann Allard-Tremblay and Elaine Coburn. 2023. "The Flying Heads of Settler Colonialism; or the Ideological Erasures of Indigenous Peoples in Political Theorizing." *Political Studies* 71, 2: 359-378.

TUTORIAL 1 AND ASSIGNMENT 1: Write a positionality/reflexivity statement

See below as guidance:

Sherry Hamby. 2018. "Know Thyself: How to Write a Reflexivity Statement." *Psychology Today* blog (22 May). Online: <https://www.psychologytoday.com/ca/blog/the-web-violence/201805/know-thyself-how-write-reflexivity-statement>

Andrew Gary Darwin Holmes. 2020. "Researcher Positionality – A Consideration of Its Influence and Place in Qualitative Research – a New Researcher Guide." *International Journal of Education* 8, 4: 1-10.

Jessica Soedirgo and Aarie Glas. 2020. "Toward Active Reflexivity: Positionality and Practice in the Production of Knowledge." *PS* (July): 527-531.

a. **Suggested length:** 500-600 words

b. **Due date:** 1 October 11:59 pm

c. **Prompts:** In writing your positionality/reflexivity statement be sure to define what you mean by positionality, with reference to the literature, and reflect on the following:

How do you think your position in the social world (i.e. social class, sexual orientation, religious views, and so on) affects your research, if at all? In picking a research topic or a field of study, what are your motivations? What are some audiences you are writing to? What are the communities that might benefit from your research? How can your research subjects/interlocutors themselves benefit from your research?

Week 4 – October 2 – Examining Good Research Design: Concept Development and Measurement

John Gerring. 1999. "What Makes a Concept Good? A Criterial Framework for Understanding Concept Formation in the Social Sciences." *Polity* 31, 3: 357-393.

Anne Applebaum. 2023. "Is Tennessee a Democracy?" *The Atlantic* (July).

TUTORIAL 2 AND ASSIGNMENT 2: Examining the importance of clear concepts in qualitative analysis

Read the following articles and op-eds, be prepared to discuss in tutorial, and write a reflection as per the prompts below:

Jonathan Powell et al. 2022. "Forum: A Coup At the Capitol? Conceptualizing Coups and Other Antidemocratic Actions." *International Studies Review* 24, 1: 1-29.

Erica De Bruin. 2020. "No, Trump Is Not Attempting a 'Coup.' Here's Why the Distinction Matters." *Washington Post* (November 11). Online: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/outlook/2020/11/11/coup-trump-election-concede-military/>.

Christopher Ingraham. 2021. "How Experts Define the Deadly Mob Attack at the U.S. Capitol." *Washington Post* (January 13). Online: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/2021/01/13/autogolpe-self-coup-capitol/>.

a. Suggested length: 500-700 words

b. Due date: 15 October 11:59 pm

c. Prompts: This week examines why concepts are useful in social science research. Focusing on the concept of "coup" and related concepts, document how these concepts are operationalized and measured (by at least one author). Sketch the concept's dimensions and specify the measures used to separate it analytically from other concepts. What is it about the concept and/or its operationalization that makes it work well? Are there any ambiguities in the concept's definition? Then reflect on what concepts do in our research projects. How would you explain your concepts to other non-academic audiences, if and when needed? Give an example from your (prior or existing) research if applicable.

OCTOBER 12 – THANKSGIVING – NO CLASS OR TUTORIALS; NOTE - MAKE UP SESSION IS SCHEDULED FOR DECEMBER 7

Week 5 – October 16 – Designing Research to Uncover Causality in Qualitative Research: Case Selection and Process Tracing

David Collier. 2011. "Understanding Process Tracing." *PS* (October): 823-830.

Derek Beach. 2016. "It's All About Mechanisms – What Process-Tracing Case Studies Should be Tracing." *New Political Economy* 21, 5: 463-472.

TUTORIAL 3 AND ASSIGNMENT 3: Using Qualitative Methods to Uncover Causality and Identifying Causal Mechanisms

a. Suggested length: 500-700 words

b. Due date: 22 October 11:59 pm

c. Prompts: Read: Dan Slater and Sofia Fenner. 2011. "State Power and Staying Power: Infrastructural Mechanisms and Authoritarian Durability." *Journal of International Affairs* 65, 1: 15-29. Then identify and describe: 1. the dependent variable(s); 2. The independent variable(s) and the causal theory(ies) underpinning those variables; 3. the causal mechanism(s) that link the independent and dependent variables.

Week 6 October 23 – Heading to the Field: Ethical Considerations Before You Begin to Gather Your Data

Carolyn Ellis. 2007. "Telling Secrets, Revealing Lives: Relational Ethics in Research with Intimate Others." *Qualitative Inquiry* 13, 1: 3-29.

Eleanor Knott. 2019. "Beyond the Field: Ethics after Fieldwork in Politically Dynamic Contexts." *Perspectives on Politics* 17, 1: 140-13.

Gideon Lewis-Kraus. 2016. "The Trials of Alice Goffman." *The New York Times Magazine* (17 January).

TUTORIAL 4 AND ASSIGNMENT 4: prepare a mock ethics submission for the assignment in week 9 (interviewing a family member about their earliest political experience)

a. Suggested length: Fill out U of T template and include 3 appendices: a. recruitment script; b. a written/verbal consent form; c. and a preliminary list of possible questions (5-6 questions max)

b. Due date: 29 October 11:59 pm

c. Prompts: Fill out the U of T template posted on Quercus. Attach appendices (see the templates posted on Quercus) that include a script to recruit the family member (indicate whether you plan to recruit via email, telephone, or Zoom/Factime). Include a verbal or written consent form depending on whether you will conduct the interview in person or via telephone/Zoom. Sketch out a few questions you will ask (which will be developed more by week 9).

Week 7 – October 30 – Historically Grounded Political Analysis Through Archival Work

Glenn A. Bowen. 2009. "Document Analysis as a Qualitative Research Method." *Qualitative Research Journal* 9, 2: 27-40.

Diana Kim. 2022. "Taming Abundance: Doing Digital Archival Research (as Political Scientists)." *PS* 55,3: 530-538.

Adam Michael Auerbach. 2018. "Informal Archives: Historical Narratives and the Preservation of Paper in India's Urban Slums." *Studies in Comparative International Development* 53: 343-364.

ASSIGNMENT 5: field trip during class time to Trinity College's Archives and the Graham Library Archives

Class will be divided into two groups of 25. One group will convene at 3 pm in the Trinity College Archive, located in the basement of Trinity College at 6 Hoskin Avenue (<https://discoverarchives.library.utoronto.ca/index.php/trinity-college-archives>). The other group will convene at 3 pm in the Graham Library in the Churchill Room 2nd floor at the south end at 3 Devonshire Place (<https://www.trinity.utoronto.ca/library/about/floor-plan/>). Then, at 4 pm, the groups will swap locations.

a. Suggested length: 500-700 words

b. Due date: 12 November 11:59 pm

c. Prompt: Write a reflection on our visit to the two archives, reflecting on the following questions: for which audiences are the archive materials publicly accessible? Are the subjects/topics researchable through the archive broad or narrow? What are some of the gaps/noticeable exclusions in the collection? What are some ethical considerations to be taken into consideration when conducting archival research? What are some challenges in researching (with) subjects who are no longer alive? Given the currently changing world, what are some other sites that we can think of as archives (think virtual worlds, social media, etc) and communities that we might want to preserve?

NO TUTORIAL THIS WEEK

READING WEEK – November 6 – NO CLASS

Week 8 – November 13 – Immersive Fieldwork: Political Ethnography and Other Forms of Participant Observation

Edward Schatz. 2009. "Introduction: Ethnographic Immersion and the Study of Politics." In *Political Ethnography: What Immersion Contributes to the Study of Power*. Ed. Edward Schatz. Chicago: University of Chicago Press: 1-22.

Harvey Bernard. 2017. "Field Notes and Database Management." In *Research Methods in Anthropology: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*. Ed. Harvey Bernard. Rowan and Littlefield Publishers: 308-322.

TUTORIAL 5 AND ASSIGNMENT 6: ethnographic exercise

In the second part of the class, students will be divided into separate groups. Each group will move to a specific site on campus (the Sidney Smith Hall lobby; the Robarts library Starbucks; the Goldring Centre) and write down their own individual observations, while trying to participate in whatever shape possible. In tutorial, students will present their observations of the activities and reflect on the experience of collecting data e.g. observation, approaching people to ask

questions, and so on. Based on tutorial discussion, reflect as well on the commonalities and differences in the challenges of observing different sites.

a. Suggested length: 500-700 words

b. Due date: 19 November 11:59 pm

c. Prompt: In your individual write-up of your observations, reflect on the process and experience of collecting data e.g. observation, approaching people to ask questions, and so on. Based on tutorial discussion, reflect as well on the commonalities and differences in the challenges of observing different sites, and how/whether fieldwork can be useful in larger research projects.

Week 9 – November 20 – Interview Techniques and Focus Groups

Beth Leech. 2002. “Asking Questions: Techniques for Semistructured Interviews.” *PS: Political Science and Politics* 35, 4: 665-68.

Lee Ann Fujii. 2018. *Interviewing in Social Science Research: A Relational Approach*. Routledge: chapters 1 (1-11) and 6 (90-92).

Mario Luis Small and Jessica McCrory Calarco. 2022. *Qualitative Literacy: A Guide to Evaluating Ethnographic and Interview Research*. University of California Press: chapter 1 (23-46).

Jennifer Cyr. 2017. “The Unique Utility of Focus Groups for Mixed-Methods Research.” *PS - Political Science and Politics* 50, 4:1038-1042.

ASSIGNMENT 7: one-on-one interview

Choose one family member with whom to conduct a semi-structured interview about their recollections of their earliest political experience. Develop a semi-structured interview guide (maximum one page). Be sure to follow ethical practices, including ensuring informed consent, anonymity, data storage, and so on, as you developed in week 6.

Submit your semi-structured interview guide and write a response paper that addresses the prompts below.

a. Suggested length: 500-700 words

b. Due date: 26 November 11:59 pm

c. Prompt: Reflect on the challenges and limitations of one-on-one interviews, especially when it comes to managing authority of the researcher. How did you manage asking and listening to your interviewee? Reflecting on the course materials you read, how did you incorporate their advice and design your questions to elicit the responses? Which questions elicited the most useful information? Why? Reflecting on relational interviewing in particular, how did you feel while you were asking the questions? How did your respondents seem to feel when they were answering them? Did you need more guiding questions, leaving more space for the interviewee to talk or not? Would a more/less structured interview be more effective in some cases? What are

your thoughts on silences during interviews? Please submit your interview questions with your response BUT NOT THE TRANSCRIPT – STORE ACCORDING TO YOUR REB!

NO TUTORIAL THIS WEEK

Week 10 – November 27 – Building Rapport with Research Participants and Analyzing Findings

Lee Ann Fujii. 2018. *Interviewing in Social Science Research: A Relational Approach*. Routledge: chapter 5 (73-89).

Mario Small and Jenna Cook. 2021. “Using Interviews to Understand Why: Challenges and Strategies in the Study of Motivated Action.” *Sociological Methods and Research* first view: 1-41.

Sveinung Sandberg. 2010. “What Can ‘Lies’ Tell Us About Life? Notes Toward a Framework of Narrative Criminology.” *Journal of Criminal Justice Education* 21, 4: 447-465.

ASSIGNMENT 8: Reflect on the challenges of having interview participants open up to researchers and analyzing their information

a. Suggested length: 500-700 words

b. Due date: 3 December 11:59 pm

c. Prompt: Drawing on your course readings and your own experience with interviewing, what are some research tools and techniques that are useful to adopt in order to elicit useful responses from your research participants that help answer your research questions? Does/how does the answer depend on your research goals? What cautions need to be taken in interpreting interview information?

NO TUTORIAL THIS WEEK

Week 11 – December 4 – Different Ways to Analyze Text

Steven L. Wilson and Yoshiko M. Herrera. 2019. “Teaching Computerized Content Analysis for Undergraduate Research Papers.” *PS* (July): 536-542.

Virginia Braun and Victoria Clarke. 2006. “Using Thematic Analysis in Psychology.” *Qualitative Research in Psychology* 3, 2: 77-101.

Michael Jones and Deserai Crow. 2018. “Narratives as Tools for Influencing Policy Change.” *Policy and Politics* 46, 2: 217-34.

Cynthia Hardy, Bill Harley, and Nelson Phillips. 2004. “Discourse Analysis and Content Analysis: Two Solitudes?” *Qualitative Methods Newsletter of the APSA*: 19-22.

TUTORIAL 6 AND ASSIGNMENT 9: Applying the analytic techniques discussed in the readings and in class, view and critically analyze these political campaign ads:

Stephen Harper. 2011 Conservative Party of Canada Ad. “Our Country.”
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8rEkFG5MNTk/>

MJ Hegar, 2018 Congressional Campaign Ad, “Doors”: <https://shortyawards.com/11th/doors>

Blake Masters 2021 Senate Campaign Ad. “Monday Gunday”: <https://twitter.com/bgmasters/status/1445208944184487937>

Alexandria Ocasio Cortez, 2018 Congressional Campaign Ad, “The Courage to Change”:
<https://www.thedrum.com/creative-works/project/the-courage-change>

a. Suggested length: 500-700 words

b. Due date: 7 December 11:59 pm

c. Prompt: What themes, narratives, discourses, and other communicative techniques do you find on display in these videos? How do the various techniques differ from each other? Reflecting on both the examples and the course readings, what would an attention to analysis of language and text add to a larger research project?

Week 12 – December 7 – LAST CLASS – Presenting Your Findings to the World

Robert Pekkanen and Erik Bleich. 2015. “Data Access, Research Transparency and Interviews.” *Qualitative and Multi-Method Research Newsletter* 13: 8-13.

Components of an abstract (from University of Wisconsin-Madison’s Writing Centre)
<https://writing.wisc.edu/handbook/assignments/writing-an-abstract-for-your-research-paper/>

Salah Ben Hammou and Elizabeth Meehan. 2022. “To Twitter or Not to Twitter?” *APSA Pre-prints*. doi: 10.33774/apsa-2022-wbmqb.

How to Write an Op-Ed or Column: see sample and guidelines [here](#) and [here](#).

BONUS ASSIGNMENT: ways to share your research to an audience

a. Suggested length: see below

b. Due date: 7 December 11:59 pm

c. Prompt: As researchers, we are always writing for different audiences. Think of your research participants, your mentors, your family and friends, and broader social circles within and beyond academia. Pick one of your assignments that you submitted in previous weeks. Write up how you would share it in these 3 ways:

i. A tweet (280 characters maximum)

- ii. An abstract (200-250 words maximum) to an academic audience
- iii. A public-facing op-ed piece (500 words maximum)