

## **ADVANCED QUALITATIVE METHODS**

<b>Course leader</b>	Dr Alena Ledeneva
<b>Credit value</b>	8 ECTS
<b>Runs</b>	Second term
<b>Teaching and Learning methods</b>	Lectures, workshops, private study
<b>Assessment:</b>	100% coursework

The course is assessed by a 5,000-word essay reflecting on the strengths and weaknesses of a particular qualitative method, the degree to which the method achieves its intended goals, a critique of the method and the exposition of alternative methodologies.

### **Rationale**

This course provides advanced introductions to a representative range of qualitative methods. Such methods include: the practice of ethnographical and anthropological observation and participant observation; the use of interviewing (both structured and semi-structured), questionnaires, focus groups, surveys and case studies; content and discourse analysis; the methodology of oral history; and the ethical application of research methods. The course provides practical, hands-on experience in using selected methods. Students gain a knowledge and understanding of issues central to the conduct of qualitative research, including issues of measurement, validity and reliability; the applicability of particular qualitative methods for particular research approaches; and how to critically appraise primary qualitative research, including the evaluation of the validity and appropriateness of other researchers' qualitative methods.

The classes in 'Advanced Qualitative Methods' are taught by specialists in different qualitative research methodologies. They share their experience of the application of qualitative methods in their respective fields and provide advice and consultation on the advanced use of cutting-edge qualitative methods.

By the end of the course, students will have acquired the knowledge and understanding necessary to undertake and evaluate the results of advanced qualitative research. Having completed the course, students are equipped for specialist courses, offered within UCL, such as 'Ethnographic Object Analysis', 'Interviews and Oral History', and 'Research Ethics' and are well placed for further qualitative analysis in MASR II.

### **Aims**

1. To develop and extend students' knowledge of qualitative methods for the social sciences through both the presentation of methodological concepts as well as practical experience
2. To offer students the opportunity to explore and practise different qualitative approaches
3. To increase students' understanding of the processes involved in doing qualitative research
4. To endow students with the knowledge and understanding necessary to undertake and evaluate the results of qualitative research

**Objectives** By the end of the course, students will:

1. Have developed an advanced working knowledge of issues central to the conduct of qualitative research including issues of measurement, validity and reliability
2. Have developed a solid understanding of the qualitative research process as a whole and the methods available to the qualitative researcher
3. Be able to understand and assess the applicability of particular qualitative methods for particular research approaches
4. Be able critically to appraise primary qualitative research
5. Have gained practical experience of various qualitative approaches including the use of Nvivo for critical discourse analysis

**Topics**

1. Introduction
2. Anthropological Fieldwork
3. Ethnography
4. Case studies
5. Comparative studies
6. Questionnaire design
7. Focus groups
8. Critical Discourse Analysis
9. Informal and semi-structured interviewing
10. Oral history and life-stories

**Core/preliminary reading**

- Berg, B. (1989) *Qualitative Research Methods for the Social Sciences*. Allyn and Bacon.
- Bryman, A. (2000) *Social Research Methods*. OUP
- Bryman, A. & Burgess, R.G. (1994) *Analysing Qualitative Data*. London, Routledge
- Burns, Robert B. (2000) *Introduction to Research Methods*. Sage
- Burton, Dawn. (2000) *Research Training for Social Scientists: A handbook for postgraduate researchers*. Sage
- Gillham, Bill. (2000) *The Research interview*. London, Continuum
- Goldstein, Kenneth. (2002) *Interview Methods in Political Science*. Political Science, Vol. XXXV, No. 4
- Legard, Robin, Keegan, Jill & Ward, Kit. (2003) *Qualitative Research Practice: A Guide for Social Science Students and Researchers*. Sage
- Lilleker, Darren G. (2003) *Interviewing the Political Elite: Navigating a Potential Minefield*. Politics, 23 (3), pp. 207-14
- Morgan, D.L. (1997) *Focus groups as qualitative research*. Sage
- Richards, David. (1996) *Elite Interviewing: Approaches and Pitfalls*. Politics, 19 (3), pp. 199-204
- Tashakkori, Abbas. (1998) *Mixed Methodology: mixing qualitative and quantitative research*. Sage
- Travers, Max. (2001) *Qualitative Research Through Case Studies*. Sage