



ALMA MATER STUDIORUM
UNIVERSITÀ DI BOLOGNA

DIPARTIMENTO
DI SCIENZE POLITICHE
E SOCIALI

Introduction to Qualitative Methods in Political and Social Sciences

Course Syllabus Spring 2025

Professor Alice Mattoni
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Course objectives

This course discusses the main features of designing qualitative research in the social and political sciences, presents some of the most common qualitative data-gathering methods and introduces some key analytical strategies and approaches to make sense of qualitative data, including the use of software to support qualitative research. Students must attend all classes, study compulsory readings in advance and be ready to discuss them with the professor.

Students will be assessed through **in-class participation** and a **final paper** in which they address and discuss a methodological topic related to qualitative research design and qualitative methods. The paper topic must be agreed in advance with the instructor and handed in by the **9th of May 2025** at the latest. The paper will be 5,000 words in length, references excluded.

Class 1 – 07 Jan 2025 10-13, Aula Romei

Designing research with qualitative approaches

Compulsory Readings

- Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2018). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches* (Fifth Edition). London; New York: SAGE. CHAPTER 9
- Blaikie, Norman (2000). *Designing Social Research. The Logic of Anticipation*. Cambridge: Polity Press, CHAPTER 5
- Maxwell, Joseph A. (2002). "Understanding Validity in Qualitative Research", in Huberman, Michael A. and Miles, Matthew B. (eds). *The Qualitative Research Companion*. Thousand Oaks: Sage, pp. 37-61.

Class 2 – 21 Jan 2025 09-13, Aula Romei

Gathering Data in Qualitative Research: Techniques and Tools

Compulsory Readings

- Blee, K. (2019). How Field Relationships Shape Theorizing. *Sociological Methods & Research*, 48(4), 739–762.
- Miller, Jody and Glassner, Barry (1997). "The 'Inside' and the 'Outside'. Finding Realities in Interviews", in Silverman, David (ed.), *Qualitative Research. Theory, Method and Practice*. London: Sage, pp. 99-112.
- Wilkinson, Sue. 1998. "Focus Group Methodology: A Review." *International Journal of Social Research Methodology* 1 (3): 181–203

Class 3 – 28 Jan 2025 09-13, Aula Romei

Grounded theory

Compulsory Readings

- Charmaz, K. (2014). *Constructing Grounded Theory*. Sage. CHAPTER 1, 5 and 6



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Class 4 – 04 Feb 2025 09-13, Aula Romei

Thematic analysis

Compulsory Readings

- Lochmiller, C. (2021). Conducting Thematic Analysis with Qualitative Data. *The Qualitative Report*, 26(6), 2029–2044.
- Nowell, L. S., Norris, J. M., White, D. E., & Moules, N. J. (2017). Thematic Analysis: Striving to Meet the Trustworthiness Criteria. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 16(1), 1609406917733847.
- Proudfoot, K. (2023). Inductive/Deductive Hybrid Thematic Analysis in Mixed Methods Research. *Journal of Mixed Methods Research*, 17(3), 308–326.

Class 5 – 11 Feb 2025 14:30-18:30, Aula Romei

Qualitative Data Analysis with MAXQDA

Compulsory Readings

For these classes there are no compulsory readings assigned, but be sure to have the latest trial version of MAXQDA installed in your computer.