HUN6835 Research Projects in Nutrition and Dietetics – part 2

Spring, 2026
In-person, 2 credits

Instructor

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Office Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays at 12pm or per request

Course Description

This course introduces graduate students to qualitative research methodologies in nutrition and dietetics. Students will learn how to design qualitative studies, develop research questions, construct interview and focus group guides, conduct data collection ethically, and apply major coding and analytic frameworks.

Course Learning Objectives

After completing this course, students will be able to.

1. Evaluate strengths, weaknesses, and potential bias of published studies by comparing the published work to the appropriate guidelines for reporting medical research findings.

2. Carry out a research project using appropriate research methods (i.e., consider appropriate reporting guidelines and IRB requirements), standard operating procedures and quality assurance checks.

3. Analyze and present data in appropriate format (tables, charts, graphs).

4. Communicate study results through an oral presentation.

5. Complete study closure activities (e.g., de-identify study documents, close out the study with the IRB, scan study documents, finalize regulatory binder)

Course Overview and Purpose

This course prepares graduate students to plan and execute qualitative research projects. Students will gain hands-on experience with designing studies, developing instruments, conducting mock interviews, coding sample transcripts, and preparing IRB-ready protocols.

Course Prerequisites

FOS 6915 Research Planning

Textbooks, Learning Materials, and Supply Fees

No textbooks are required. Recommended texts include:

- Creswell & Poth (2018). Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design

- Patton (2015). Qualitative Research & Evaluation Methods

- Additional readings provided on Canvas.

Technical Support

UF Computing Help Desk & Ticket Number: All technical issues require a UF Helpdesk Ticket Number. The UF Helpdesk is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. https://helpdesk.ufl.edu/ | 352-392-4357

Weekly Course Schedule

Week	Date	Topic	Assessment	Due Dates
Week 1	1/15	Introduction to Qualitative Research		
Week 2	1/22	Research Questions	Research questions & interview guide	1/29
Week 3	1/29	Sample size & sampling		
Week 4	2/5	Ethics & IRB for Qualitative Research	Discussion Lead #1 IRB / HIPAA training	2/12
Week 5	2/12	Interview Design & Techniques	Discussion Lead #2 Interview / Focus Group transcript #1	3/5
Week 6	2/19	Reviews and the Academy	Guest Speaker – Ellen Bowser Discussion Lead #3	
Week 7	2/26	Focus Group Methods	Discussion Lead #4	
Week 8	3/5	Observation & Fieldnotes		
Week 9	3/12	Data Transcription & Management	Interview / Focus Group transcript #2	4/2
Week 10	3/19	Break week		
Week 11	3/26	Coding I: Open Coding	Discussion Lead #5	
Week 12	4/2	Coding II: Axial & Thematic Analysis	Discussion Lead #6 Transcript analysis	4/16
Week 13	4/9	Introduction to Mixed Methods	Discussion Lead #7	
Week 14	4/16	Introduction to Mixed Methods / Bias	Discussion Lead #8	
Week 15	4/23	Presentations	Report	4/30
Week 16	4/30	Final week		

Grading Policy

Course grading is consistent with UF grading policies.

Course Grading Structure

Assignment Type	Point Value	Percent of Final Grade
Research Question and interview guide	5	5%
IRB / HIPAA training	5	5%

Assignment Type	Point Value	Percent of Final Grade
Transcript #1	5	5%
Transcript #2	5	5%
Transcript analysis	10	10%
Discussion Lead	15	15%
Discussion participation (5 points for each)	35	35%
Report	20	20%
Total	100	100%

Grading Scale

[scale is required; plus and minus grades may be used but are not required]

Grade	Points	Percentage
A	93–100	93–100%
A-	90–92	90–92.9%
B+	87–89	87–89.9%
B	83–86	83–86.9%
B-	80–82	80–82.9%
C+	77–79	77–79.9%
C	73–76	73–76.9%
C-	70–72	70–72.9%
D+	67–69	67–69.9%
D	63–66	63–66.9%
D-	60–62	60–62.9%
S	70+	Satisfactory

Academic Policies and Resources

Academic policies for this course are consistent with university policies. See
https://syllabus.ufl.edu/syllabus-policy/uf-syllabus-policy-links/

Campus Health and Wellness Resources

Visit https://one.uf.edu/whole-gator/topics for resources that are designed to help you thrive physically, mentally, and emotionally at UF.

Please contact UMatterWeCare for additional and immediate support.

Software Use

All faculty, staff and students of the university are required and expected to obey the laws and legal agreements governing software use. Failure to do so can lead to monetary damages and/or criminal penalties for the individual violator. Because such violations are also against university policies and rules, disciplinary action will be taken as appropriate.

Privacy and Accessibility Policies

[required for online courses, list all technology used]

- Instructure (Canvas)
  - Instructure Privacy Policy
  - Instructure Accessibility
- Zoom
  - Zoom Privacy Policy
  - Zoom Accessibility

Additional Information

Elaboration on Assignments: Assignments are designed to assess students' ability to plan, conduct, analyze, and communicate research using appropriate ethical, methodological, and reporting standards. Rubrics emphasize quality of reasoning, methodological rigor, and professional judgment rather than procedural compliance.

1. Research Question & Interview Guide
Points: 5; **Course Objectives:** 1, 2
Assignment Description
Students will develop a clear, researchable qualitative research question and a semi-structured interview guide aligned with the question. The focus is on conceptual clarity, alignment, and appropriateness for the proposed population and research aim.

Evaluation Criteria (5 points)

Criterion	Exemplary (Full Credit)	Adequate	Needs Improvement
Research question	Clearly articulated, focused, and conceptually grounded	Generally clear but may lack focus or refinement	Vague, unfocused, or misaligned
Alignment	Interview questions logically align with research question	Partial alignment	Little or no alignment
Methodological appropriateness	Questions suitable for qualitative inquiry and population	Some questions weakly constructed	Questions inappropriate or leading
Clarity & professionalism	Clear, concise, and well-structured	Minor clarity issues	Disorganized or unclear

2. IRB / HIPAA Training Completion
Points: 5 | **Course Objectives:** 2
Assignment Description
Students must complete required IRB and HIPAA training modules and submit documentation of completion. This assignment assesses readiness to engage in human subjects research.

Evaluation Criteria (5 points)

Criterion	Full Credit	Partial Credit	No Credit
Completion	All required modules completed and documented	Incomplete or missing documentation	Not completed

3. Transcripts #1 / 2
Points: 5 for each transcript | **Course Objectives:** 2
Assignment Description
Students submit a professionally prepared transcript from an interview conducted for the course project. Emphasis is on accuracy, formatting, and ethical handling of data.
Evaluation Criteria (5 points)

Criterion	Exemplary	Adequate	Needs Improvement
Accuracy	Faithful representation of audio	Minor omissions or errors	Major inaccuracies
Formatting	Consistent, readable, professional	Minor formatting issues	Poor or inconsistent
De-identification	Fully de-identified	Minor lapses	Identifiable information present

4. Transcript Analysis
Points: 10 | **Course Objectives:** 1, 3
Assignment Description
Students will analyze interview transcripts using an appropriate qualitative approach. The emphasis is on analytic reasoning, not the use of a specific software or coding scheme.
Evaluation Criteria (10 points)

Criterion	Exemplary	Adequate	Needs Improvement
Analytic approach	Appropriate, clearly articulated	Generally appropriate	Inappropriate or unclear
Evidence use	Claims supported with transcript excerpts	Limited supporting evidence	Unsupported assertions
Rigor & reflexivity	Demonstrates thoughtful interpretation and awareness of bias	Some evidence of reflection	Little or no reflection
Organization	Clear presentation of themes/findings	Some organizational issues	Disorganized

5. Discussion Lead
Points: 15 | **Course Objectives:** 1, 4
Assignment Description
Students will lead a class discussion on assigned reading of their choosing, guiding peers through critical evaluation of study design, methods, and reporting quality.

At least 1 week prior to the discussion, the discussion lead will send the article of choice to the faculty. Beyond sending the article, the discussion lead will inform the faculty why it is of interest and why it would be important to discuss in class.

Evaluation Criteria (15 points)

Criterion	Exemplary	Adequate	Needs Improvement
Preparation	Demonstrates mastery of material	Familiar with material	Insufficient preparation
Critical analysis	Identifies strengths, weaknesses, and bias	Limited critique	Largely descriptive
Facilitation	Engages peers and guides discussion effectively	Some engagement	Minimal facilitation
Professional communication	Clear, organized, confident	Minor clarity issues	Unclear or disorganized

6. Discussion Participation
Points: 35 (5 points each) | **Course Objectives:** 1, 4
Assignment Description
Students are expected to contribute meaningfully to class discussions by asking questions, offering critiques, and engaging respectfully with peers.
Per-Discussion Evaluation (5 points each)

Criterion	Full (5)	Partial (3–4)	Minimal (1–2)
Quality of contribution	Thoughtful, analytical, advances discussion	Relevant but limited	Superficial or infrequent
Engagement	Actively listens and responds to peers	Some engagement	Minimal engagement

Attendance alone does not constitute participation.

7. Report
Points: 20 | **Course Objectives:** 2, 3, 4, 5
Assignment Description
Students submit a research report appropriate for an academic or professional audience. The report should demonstrate integration of methods, analysis, and reporting standards.
Evaluation Criteria (20 points)

Criterion	Exemplary	Adequate	Needs Improvement
Structure & clarity	Logical, well-organized	Minor structural issues	Disorganized
Methods & rigor	Clearly justified and appropriate	Some gaps	Major flaws
Data presentation	Appropriate tables/figures	Limited clarity	Inappropriate or missing
Interpretation	Thoughtful, evidence-based	Limited depth	Unsupported conclusions
Professional quality	Near-submission ready	Needs revision	Substantial revision needed

Readings- Full list

Week 1 Introduction to Qualitative Research

1. Swift, J. A., and Victoria Tischler. "Qualitative research in nutrition and dietetics: getting started." Journal of human nutrition and dietetics 23.6 (2010): 559-566.
2. Harris, Jeffrey E., et al. "An Introduction to Qualitative Research for Food and Nutrition Professionals." Journal of the American Dietetic Association, vol. 109, no. 1, 2009, pp. 80-90. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jada.2008.10.018
3. **Discussion:** Teng, N., Ngelayang, E., Said, N.M. et al. A qualitative study on nutrition and well-being of healthcare shift workers. Sci Rep 15, 30512 (2025). https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-025-11534-5

Week 2 Research Questions

1. Jane Agee (2009) Developing qualitative research questions: a reflective process, International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education, 22:4, 431-447, DOI:10.1080/09518390902736512
2. Barroga E, Matanguihan GJ. A Practical Guide to Writing Quantitative and Qualitative Research Questions and Hypotheses in Scholarly Articles. J Korean Med Sci. 2022 Apr 25;37(16):e121. doi: 10.3346/jkms.2022.37.e121.
3. **Discussion:** Stotz, S., Mitchell, E., Szczepaniak, M., Akin, J., Fricke, H., & Shanks, C. (2023). A Qualitative Exploration of Approaches Applied by Nutrition Educators Within Nutrition Incentive Programs. Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior, 55(3), 224-234.

Week 3 Sample size & sampling

1. Hennink, Monique, and Bonnie N. Kaiser. "Sample sizes for saturation in qualitative research: A systematic review of empirical tests." Social Science & Medicine, vol. 292, 2022, p. 114523
2. Wutich, A., Beresford, M., & Bernard, H. R. (2024). Sample Sizes for 10 Types of Qualitative Data Analysis: An Integrative Review, Empirical Guidance, and Next Steps. International Journal of Qualitative Methods, 23. https://doi.org/10.1177/16094069241296206 (Original work published 2024)
3. **Discussion:** Hazley, D., Stack, M., & Kearney, J. M. (2024). Perceptions of healthy and sustainable eating: A qualitative study of Irish adults. Appetite, 192, 1–14.

Week 4 Ethics & IRB for Qualitative Research

1. Taquette, S. R., & Borges da Matta Souza, L. M. (2022). Ethical Dilemmas in Qualitative Research: A Critical Literature Review. International Journal of Qualitative Methods, 21. https://doi.org/10.1177/16094069221078731 (Original work published 2022)
2. Sanjari, M., Bahramnezhad, F., Fomani, F.K., Shoghi, M., & Cheraghi, M.A. (2014). Ethical challenges of researchers in qualitative studies: The necessity to develop a specific guideline. *Journal of Medical Ethics and History of Medicine*, *7*, Article No. 14

Week 5 Interview Design & Techniques

1. Cormac McGrath, Per J. Palmgren & Matilda Liljedahl (2019) Twelve tips for conducting qualitative research interviews, Medical Teacher, 41:9, 1002-1006, DOI:10.1080/0142159X.2018.1497149
2. Hurst, A. 2023. Chapter 11 interviewing. Retrieved from https://open.oregonstate.education/qualresearchmethods/chapter/chapter-11-interviewing/

Week 6 Reviews and the Academy

1. García-Fernández, R., Fernandes de Oliveira, E. S., Presado, M. H., Miranda da Silva, M., Marques, F. M., & Baixinho, C. L. (2025). Qualitative Research: The Heart of Evidence-Based Practice. International Journal of Qualitative Methods, 24. https://doi.org/10.1177/16094069251374655 (Original work published 2025)
2. Gupta VA, Scott S, Tonkinson M, Jonsson P, Goodburn L, Duffield S. Quality in qualitative evidence: new best practice principles from NICE's real-world evidence framework. J Comp Eff Res. 2025 Jul;14(7):e250064. doi: 10.57264/cer-2025-0064.

Week 7 Focus Group Methods
1. Hurst, A. 2023. Chapter 12 focus groups. Retrieved from https://open.oregonstate.education/qualresearchmethods/chapter/chapter-12-focus-groups/
2. Farmer N, Powell-Wiley TM,Middleton KR, Brooks AT, Mitchell V,Troncoso M, Ceasar J, Claudel SE,Andrews MR, Kazmi N, Johnson A and Wallen GR (2022) Use of a focus group-based cognitive interview methodology to validate a cooking behavior survey among African-American adults. Front. Nutr.9:1000258.doi: 10.3389/fnut.2022.1000258.

Week 8 Observation & Fieldnotes
1. Hurst, A. 2023. Chapter 13 participant observation. Retrieved from https://open.oregonstate.education/qualresearchmethods/chapter/chapter-13-participant-observation/
2. Hall E, Chai W, Albrecht JA. A Qualitative Phenomenological Exploration of Teachers' Experience With Nutrition Education. Am J Health Educ. 2016 May 3;47(3):136-148. doi: 10.1080/19325037.2016.1157532.
3. **Discussion:** van der Bend DL, Beunke TA, Shrewsbury VA, Bucher T, van Kleef E. My feed is what I eat? A qualitative study on adolescents' awareness and appreciation of food marketing on social media. J Hum Nutr Diet. 2024; 37: 1320–1335. https://doi.org/10.1111/jhn.13336

Week 9 Data Transcription & Management
1. Hurst, A. 2023. Chapter 17 content analysis. Retrieved from https://open.oregonstate.education/qualresearchmethods/chapter/chapter-17-content-analysis/
2. Eftekhari H. Transcribing in the digital age: qualitative research practice utilizing intelligent speech recognition technology. Eur J Cardiovasc Nurs. 2024 Jul 19;23(5):553-560. doi: 10.1093/eurjcn/zvae013.
3. **Discussion:** Kim DW, Park JS, Sharma K, Velazquez A, Li L, Ostrominski JW, Tran T, Seitter Peréz RH and Shin J-H (2024) Qualitative evaluation of artificial intelligence-generated weight management diet plans. Front. Nutr. 11:1374834. doi: 10.3389/fnut.2024.1374834

Week 11 Coding I: Open Coding
1. Hurst, A. 2023. Chapter 18 Data analysis and coding. Retrieved from https://open.oregonstate.education/qualresearchmethods/chapter/chapter-18-data-analysis-and-coding/
2. Coates WC, Jordan J, Clarke SO. A practical guide for conducting qualitative research in medical education: Part 2-Coding and thematic analysis. AEM Educ Train. 2021 Aug 1;5(4):e10645. doi: 10.1002/aet2.10645.

Week 12 Coding II: Axial & Thematic Analysis
1. Hurst, A. 2023. Chapter 19 Advanced codes and coding. Retrieved from https://open.oregonstate.education/qualresearchmethods/chapter/chapter-19-more-coding/

2. Scott, C., & Medaugh, M. (2017). Axial coding. In The International encyclopedia of communication research methods. Wiley.

Week 13 Introduction to mixed methods

1. Verhoef MJ, Casebeer AL. Broadening horizons: Integrating quantitative and qualitative research. Can J Infect Dis. 1997 Mar;8(2):65-6. doi: 10.1155/1997/349145.
2. Hurst, A. 2023. Chapter 15 Introduction to Mixed Methods. Retrieved from https://open.oregonstate.education/qualresearchmethods/chapter/chapter-15-mixed-methods/

Week 14 Introduction to Mixed Methods / Bias

1. Adu, J., Owusu, M. F., Martin-Yeboah, E., Pino Gavidia, L. A., & Gyamfi, S. (2022). A discussion of some controversies in mixed methods research for emerging researchers. Methodological Innovations, 15(3), 321-330. https://doi.org/10.1177/20597991221123398 (Original work published 2022)
2. Rana K, Chimoriya R. A Guide to a Mixed-Methods Approach to Healthcare Research. Encyclopedia. 2025; 5(2):51. https://doi.org/10.3390/encyclopedia5020051