

GRSC6037 Introduction to Qualitative Research Methods (The Sciences & Related Disciplines)

Aim:

The aim of this course is to introduce some fundamental and commonly-used qualitative research methods. It offers basic training in these methods, based on the rationale that all researchers should have a basic awareness of a range of methodologies. A problem-based learning approach will be used that will enable students with a range of experiences with qualitative methods to build onto what they know already.

Content:

The course will examine the value and rationale of qualitative research methods, looking at various research models and methods of data collection, together with methodological issues involved in using such means. We will also deal with how to record and analyze data.

Organization:

The course comprises twelve class hours, presented in four sessions. Attendance is compulsory and students will be required to participate actively in assigned tasks and activities. The course is offered once per year.

Enrolment:

This course or GRSC6034/6035/6036/6007 is compulsory for MPhil and 4-year PhD students registered in or after September 2013. There are no prerequisites for this course.

Assessment:

Pass/Fail: assessment of coursework, consisting of practical assignments and final submission of a reflective essay on the student's experience of qualitative research. Details of the assignments will be given in classes during the course. There is no examination.

Learning Outcomes:

On completion of the course, students will be able to:

- Explain the characteristics of qualitative research in terms of value and rationale;
- Identify the main qualitative methods, their strengths and challenges;
- Construct a sample interview and sample observation study using appropriate research tools;
- Use and critique data coding;
- Analyse data using strategies appropriate to their fields; and
- Evaluate potential qualitative methodology for their own research projects.

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