

PAX 524
Research as Art and Transformation
Eastern Mennonite University/EMU
Center for Justice & Peacebuilding/CJP
Syllabus Spring 2012
Tuesdays 8:30-11:30 a.m. in Hartzler Library Rm 121
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INSTRUCTORS

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TEXTS

Steinar Kvale & Svend Brinkmann, , **InterViews: Learning the Craft of Qualitative Interviewing** (2nd edition, Sage, 2009).

Hugo Slim and Paul Thompson, **Listening for a Change: Oral Testimony and Development**. Panos, 1993. (course reader – printed out)

Robert S. Weiss, **Learning From Strangers: The Art and Method of Qualitative Interview Studies**.

On Reserve at Library:

Patricia Leavy, **Method Meets Art: Arts-Based Research Practice** (Guilford)

Recommended reference books:

J. Gary Knowles and Ardra L. Cole (eds.), **Handbook of the Arts in Qualitative Research: Perspectives, Methodologies, Examples and Issues** (Sage).

Herbert Rubin and Irene Rubin, **Qualitative Interviewing: The Art of Hearing Data**. This contains more extensive how-to information.

Sharelene Nagy Hesse-Biber and Patricia Leavy, **The Practice of Qualitative Research** (Sage).

Bruce Jackson, **The Story is True: The Art and Meaning of Telling Stories** (Temple)

Note: Students are encouraged to bring the following equipment if they have it: digital audio recorder, video or “flip” camera, digital still camera and laptops.

COURSE SUMMARY & OBJECTIVES

This course is an introduction to the field of qualitative research and its applications in such areas as conflict transformation, restorative justice, community organizing and organizational problem-solving. The core methodology of this course will be semi-

structured interviews or other forms of “oral testimony” but it will also draw upon the field of Arts-Based Research (ABR).

While more traditional academic research outcomes and processes will be noted, the focus will be on *practical, socially engaged projects*. The approach will be interdisciplinary, emphasizing the arts and humanities as well as social sciences. A wide spectrum of qualitative materials - visual arts, journalism, history, theater, community organizing, poetry, documentary photography as well as ethnographic monographs - may be sampled.

A key focus in this course will also be on the use of social technology in research, including photography, video, blogging and other forms of social networking. The course will be run in a participatory, experiential format. Effective communication will be emphasized, including alternate forms of presentation.

The course project may take a variety of forms including, but not limited to, written papers.

PAX 524 aims to:

- acquaint participants with theory and practice of methods and issues in the contemporary field of qualitative research;
- prepare participants to design and implement practical projects using interview and arts-based qualitative methods;
- draw upon creative and artistic “ways of knowing” and electronic media technologies of research and presentation;
- enable participants to understand both practical and philosophic connections between arts-based qualitative inquiry and community processes including the fields of conflict transformation and restorative justice.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Participants will be expected to complete *all reading assignments* and be prepared to discuss them in class. In addition to the assignments related to the course project listed below, there will be several other assignments for class activities.

Assignments and *due dates* are listed in the course schedule that will be provided.

Course project. The major course requirement is an interview-based project. This should be consistent with the values and guidelines emphasized in class. The form of the final product is very flexible. Assignments will be scheduled as steps leading to your final product as outlined in an attachment to this syllabus. These include the following:

- Project topic/idea
- Design proposal
- Multimedia and literature review
- Interview Guidelines
- First interview/progress report

- Final Project/Presentation
- Written reflections on the process and methods, including ethical issues involved.

PROJECT SPECIFICS: Based on past years, some possible media and arts-based projects include the following: photo, audio or video documentary, collage, paintings, blogs, plays, dance performance, fiction and more. *When choosing and designing an arts or media based project, be sure to consider carefully the requirements listed in the evaluation grid below (e.g. clarity about goals and audience).*

A more traditional interview-based research paper is also an option.

NOTE ON ARTS-BASED RESEARCH

This is a qualitative research course based on interview methodology. In this course, we conceive research as both art and science. Drawing upon the emerging field of arts-based research, we also encourage the use of artistic and media-based approaches in some or all of the following stages of a research project:

Arts and media approaches can be used in at least 4 different stages of a project:

1. To gain knowledge. (For example, research “subjects” or participants might be engaged in an arts-based project as a way of soliciting information or encouraging insight.)
 2. To test knowledge. (For example, a researcher might test their findings from a more traditional research process by creating a play and testing it for resonance with their subjects.)
 3. To share findings. (For example, a play or exhibit might be created as a way to reach and engage a broad audience in the research findings.)
 4. As a form of intervention. (For example, a project might be designed to promote dialogue on a contested issue, or to advocate for a cause.)
- Unlike a traditional research paper, arts and media based products often do not specify methodologies used. Thus it will be important for projects to be accompanied by a short paper outlining audience, goals and methods used (see requirements above).
 - Patricia Leavy, in *Arts Meets Method* argues that “*Traditional concepts of validity and reliability...are inappropriate for evaluating artistic inquiry.*” (p. 15) She suggests these three criteria: trustworthiness, authenticity (resonance) and validity. Others in the qualitative research field have noted that validity has three dimensions: quality of craftsmanship, communication, pragmatic action.

EVALUATION

In general, we do expect you to follow the guidelines of the assignment and to check deviations from that with us before turning it in. In evaluating your work, quality is more important than quantity and we value creativity, clear and engaging expression of ideas, sensitivity to subjects and the larger community, and projects that are of real interest and value to you and/or others.

We will not be evaluating the artistic value of your final product so much as whether it meets the goals and audience that you specified in your project design. See the Evaluation Rubric below.

Grades will be based on an accumulation of numerical points that will be converted to a letter grade at the end of the course. Each assignment will receive a score expressed as a fraction, with the points received over the total points possible (e.g. 18/20).

EVALUATION RUBRIC FOR ARTS AND MEDIA BASED PROJECTS

CRITERIA	Excellent	Competent	Below expectations
<p>Goals & Audience <i>Are the goals of the project clear? Have they been met?</i> <i>Is the intended audience clearly specified?</i> <i>Is the project appropriate for this audience?</i> <i>Does the project communicate to the intended audience</i></p>	<p>-audience & goals clearly specified. -project clearly appropriate for, and likely to meet, its goals -project is appropriate for specified audience -project understandable to and likely to engage and/or communicate to audience</p>		
<p>Methodology <i>Is the overall methodology clear and appropriately used?</i> <i>Has the project incorporated specific methods required by the assignment?</i> <i>If intended as a form of intervention, has thought be given to how it will be implemented?</i></p>	<p>-project incorporates any inquiry methods required by the assignment -all methodologies & technologies employed have been appropriately used, with attention to ethical and methodological issues -if intended as intervention or advocacy, project has given adequate thought to implementation</p>		

	-sources & methods are adequately identified		
Analysis <i>Is there evidence of critical thinking and analysis?</i>	-shows evidence of critical thinking about methods, sources, information and analysis or editing. -uses an analysis/editing method appropriate for the project -method of analysis or editing is adequately articulated		
Craft & Coherence <i>Is the level of artistic and/or technical craft adequate for the specified goals and audience? Does the final product have coherence and "resonance?"</i>	-the level of craft is clearly adequate for the audience and to meet the project goals (whether or not it meets "artistic" standards) -the final project is coherent and is likely to resonate with the audience		
Content <i>Is the content appropriate & adequate, given the goals, audience & assignment? Is there evidence of insight, originality &/or creativity?</i>	-the information conveyed is clearly adequate for the goals, audience & assignment -shows depth & breadth of content -evidences of insight originality &/or creativity		

Supplemental information for CJP graduate course syllabi:

Approved 3/20/06; updated 12/11

Writing Guidelines:

Writing will be a factor in evaluation: EMU has adopted a set of writing guidelines for graduate programs that include four sets of criteria: content, structure, conventions and style (see below). It is expected that graduates will be able to write at least a “good” level with 60% writing at an “excellent” level.

For the course papers, please follow the APA style described in CJP’s *GUIDELINES for GRADUATE PAPERS* (see student handbook or request a copy from the Academic Program Coordinator).

Academic Integrity Policy (AIP):

EMU faculty and staff care about the integrity of their own work and the work of their students. They create assignments that promote interpretative thinking and work intentionally with students during the learning process. Honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility are characteristics of a community that is active in loving mercy, doing justice, and walking humbly before God. EMU defines plagiarism as occurring when a person presents as one’s own someone else’s language, ideas, or other original (not common-knowledge) material without acknowledging its source. (Adapted from the Council of Writing Program Administrators). [Taken from “Academic Integrity,” 2011-12 Undergraduate Catalog.] This course will apply EMU’s AIP (see catalog, pp. 16-19) to any events of academic dishonesty. For more information see <http://www.emu.edu/academic-support/writing/academicintegritypolicy03-09.pdf> If you have doubts about what is appropriate, one useful website is <http://www.indiana.edu/~istd/>

Grading Scale & Feedback:

Grades will be based on an accumulation of numerical points that will be converted to a letter grade at the end of the course. Each assignment will receive a score expressed as a fraction, with the points received over the total points possible (e.g. 18/20). The following is the basic scale used for evaluation. *Points may be subtracted for missed deadlines.*

95-100 = A outstanding	90-94 = A- excellent
85-89 = B+ very good	80-84 = B good
75-79 = B- satisfactory	70-74 = C passing
Below 70 = F failing	

Graduate students are expected to earn A’s and B’s.

A GPA of 3.0 is the minimum requirement for graduation.

Regarding feedback on papers/projects: Students can expect to receive papers/assignments back in a class with faculty feedback before the next paper/assignment is due. This commitment from faculty assumes that the student has turned the paper in on the agreed upon due date.

Institutional Review Board:

All research conducted by or on EMU faculty, staff or students must be reviewed by the Institutional Review Board to assure participant safety:

<http://www.emu.edu/irb/>

Academic Support Center & Disability Support Services:

If you have received services in the past related to a learning disability or attention deficit disorder and/or you feel you may have such a problem in this course, please make an appointment to speak with the faculty member or with the Coordinator of Student Disability Support Services in the Academic Support Center, third floor of the Hartzler Library (432-4254).

Please take advantage of the free individual tutoring from writing tutors. Writing tutors are strong writers who hold scheduled one-on-one sessions with students and are an excellent resource for writers at any level or at any stage in the writing process. Please remember that writing tutors do not provide editing or proofreading services. They will help you put what you learn into practice and will work with you to improve your own proofreading and editing skills. To make an appointment, please visit or call the Academic Support Center on the 3rd floor of the Sadie Hartzler Library or by accessing WOnline on myEMU portal.

Class Attendance:

Students are expected to attend all class meetings. If unusual or emergency circumstances prevent class attendance, the student should notify the professor in advance if possible. Multiple absences from class will result in lower grades. The student is responsible for the material presented in classes missed. (EMU Graduate Catalog)

Students should be aware of the importance of regular class attendance, particularly in the case of CJP classes that meet weekly or over several weekends. Being absent for more than one class leads to a student missing a large portion of the class content. In addition to consistent class attendance, students should make every effort to arrive to class on time out of respect for the learning process, fellow students and faculty.

Course Extensions and Outstanding Grades:

For fall and spring semesters, all coursework is due by the end of the semester. If a student will not be able to complete a course on time, the student must submit a request one week before the end of the semester for an extension (up to 6 months) using a course extension form provided by the Academic Program Coordinator. If the request is granted the student will receive an "I (incomplete)" for the course which will later be replaced by a final grade when the work has been turned in on the agreed upon date. If the request for an extension is denied, the student will receive a grade for the work that has been completed up until the time the course was expected to have been completed. If no work has been submitted, the final grade will be an F (or W under certain circumstances).

Extensions will be given only for legitimate and unusual situations. Extensions are contracted by the student with the program for up to a maximum of 6 months after the deadline for the course work. PLEASE NOTE: If the outstanding course work is received within the first 6 weeks of the extension, no grade reduction will be imposed; after 6 weeks any outstanding coursework will be reduced by ½ letter grade. If the extension deadline is not met, the student will receive a final grade for the work completed.