

**SOSC5170**  
**Qualitative Research Methods**  
**Winter 2023**

Instructor: Prof. Wenjuan Zheng

Email: [wjzheng@ust.hk](mailto:wjzheng@ust.hk)

Office: Academic Building 2346, Division of Social Science

Office Hour: by appointment @ <https://calendly.com/wjzheng/15min>

Teaching Assistant:

Zhang Delin ([delin.zhang@connect.ust.hk](mailto:delin.zhang@connect.ust.hk))

Wang Yilin ([ywanggl@connect.ust.hk](mailto:ywanggl@connect.ust.hk))

Website: [canvas.ust.hk](https://canvas.ust.hk) (Set Your Notification to Receive Update)

Class Hour:

Days & Times	Room	Instructor	Meeting Dates
Tu 10:30AM - 12:20PM	Rm 2302, Lift 17-18 (74)	ZHENG, Wenjuan	03/01/2023 - 03/01/2023
Tu 1:30PM - 3:20PM	Rm 2302, Lift 17-18 (74)	ZHENG, Wenjuan	03/01/2023 - 03/01/2023
MoWeFr 10:30AM - 11:50AM	Rm 2302, Lift 17-18 (74)	ZHENG, Wenjuan	04/01/2023 - 30/01/2023
MoWeFr 1:30PM - 3:20PM	Rm 2302, Lift 17-18 (74)	ZHENG, Wenjuan	04/01/2023 - 30/01/2023

Location: Room 2302 near Lift 17-19

**Objectives:**

This course aims to familiarize postgraduate students with a variety of qualitative methods, including ethnography, interviews, and mixed methods. We'll also look at different approaches to help you refine your research tools and think through methods. Emphasis will be placed on both theory and practices. The chance to conduct preliminary interviews and ethnographic fieldwork will be available to students. Students are also encouraged to bring their own research projects to the class and solicit peer feedback. Guest lectures will also be offered so that students can learn more about how researchers actually conduct qualitative research in the field.

**Requirements**

1. Attend all class meetings and participate in discussion (20%)
2. Submit 2 questions for discussion (due every Sunday night) and serve as discussion leader for one week's readings (20%)
3. Conduct preliminary fieldwork for discussion (10%); 1-page project note due January 30<sup>th</sup>
4. Research proposal due end of semester (50%) due February 1<sup>th</sup>

## Readings

### Week One

*Tues, Jan 3<sup>rd</sup>, Ethnography: Why, What, and How?*

- Howard Becker, "How I Learned What a Crock Was" *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography* 22(1): 28-35.
- Colin Jerolmack and Shamus Khan, "Talk is Cheap: Ethnography and the Attitudinal Fallacy" *Sociological Methods and Research* 43(2): 178-209, 2014.

**Guest Lecture:** Tactic and Tips Before and During Fieldwork by Dr. Huang Jingyang

*Wed, Jan 4<sup>th</sup>, Speaking to the Classic: Chicago-school Urban Ethnography*

- Michael Burawoy, *Manufacturing Consent*. (Chicago, 1979). Selective Chapter (TBA)
- Forrest Stuart, *Down, Out and Under Arrest: Policing and Everyday Life in Skid Row*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2016. (Available online UST Library) Selective Chapter (TBA)

*Fri, Jan 6<sup>th</sup>, Getting Your Feet Wet*

**Field trip: Chungking Mansions by Jeffrey Andrews**

### Week Two

*Mon, Jan 9<sup>th</sup>, Alternative Ethnographic Approach*

- English version: *Self as Method: Thinking Through China and the World* by Xinagbiao and Wuqi
- Chinese version: 把自己作为方法 (项飙; 吴琦)

**Guest lecture:** Chen Wanjing, Postdoc in Max Planck Institutes, Germany & Zhu Xi, Former Program Officer at the Department of Tech for Good, Xiaomi Corp.

*Wed, Jan 11<sup>th</sup>, Extended Case Method and alternatives*

- Michael Burawoy, "The Extended Case Method" in *Ethnography Unbound*. California, 1991.
- Ching Kwan Lee and Yonghong Zhang, "The Power of Instability: Unraveling the Microfoundation of China's Bargained Authoritarianism," *American Journal of Sociology* 118: 1475-1508, 2013.

*Fri, Jan 13<sup>th</sup>, Theoretical Sampling*

- Barney Glaser and Anslem Strauss, "Theoretical Sampling" in *The Discovery of Grounded Theory*. New York: Aldine de Gruyter, 1967.
- Mario Small, "How Many Cases Do I Need?" *Ethnography* 10(1): 5-38, 2009.

### **Week Three**

*Mon, Jan 16<sup>th</sup>, Focus group and Interviews*

- Morgan, D. L. (1996). Focus groups. *Annual review of sociology*, 22(1), 129-152.

**Guest lecture:** Chung Laishan, Former Programme Manager at Oxfam HK

*Wed, Jan 18<sup>th</sup>, In-depth interviews*

- Joseph C. Hermanowicz, "The Great Interview: 25 Strategies for Studying People in Bed," *Qualitative Sociology*, 25(4), 2002.
- Elliot Mishler, "The Joint Construction of Meaning," in *Research Interviewing: Context and Narrative*. Harvard, 1986, pp. 52-65.

*Fri, Jan 20<sup>th</sup>, Online ethnography and oral history*

- Robert Emerson et al., *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes*. Chicago, 1995. Chs 2-4.
- "Robert Blauner, ""Problems of Editing 'First-Person' Sociology,"" *Qualitative Sociology* 10(1): 46-64, 1987."

### **Week Four**

*Fri, Jan 27<sup>th</sup>, Ethics in Research*

- Troy Duster et al., "Field Work and the Protection of Human Subjects," *The American Sociologist* 14: 136-142, 1979.

### **Student projects sharing**

*Mon, Jan 30<sup>th</sup>, Mixed methods*

- Mele, V., & Belardinelli, P. (2019). Mixed Methods in Public Administration Research: Selecting, Sequencing, and Connecting. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 29(2), 334–347.
- Teddlie, C., & Tashakkori, A. (2003). Major issues and controversies in the use of mixed methods in the social and behavioral sciences. *Handbook of Mixed Methods in Social and Behavioral Research*, 1, 13–50.
- Luo, W., Zheng, W., & Long, Y. (2022). Relational Work and its Pitfalls: Nonprofits' Participation in Government-Sponsored Voluntary Accreditation. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, muac010 (Selective)

\*\*The syllabus is subject to change.