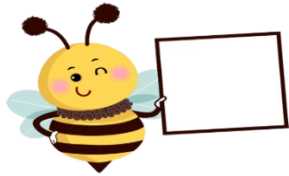




Qualitative Research Design (POLS 7436 A)
Spring 2025

Professor: Dr. Nalanda Roy

Class Hours: Fully online (asynchronous)



Office Hours: Monday- 8:30 am- 10:00; Zoom (please email for appointments; Zoom link will be provided)

Preferred option: Please email me to set up appointments for virtual office hours. Simple questions can be sent by email; I will do my best to respond within 48 hours. Questions emailed during weekends will be taken care of during working days (within 72 hours). Please be patient.

E-mail: nroy@georgiasouthern.edu

Phone: (912) 344-3608

Dream Big & Push Hard



Why celebrate YOU?

Remember: You are awesome!

START HERE: Read the syllabus carefully for this course to understand the course objectives, requirements, policies, and schedules. Any other additional readings will be either posted in Folio or e-mailed to you via Folio. Please follow the written directions either mentioned in the syllabus or emailed to you via Folio.

Important to Remember

Please follow the assignments submission dates and times carefully. All assignments are due by 10:30 pm on the due date. Any last-minute submission to Dropbox can cause problems. BE THERE EARLY! No email submissions or requests for emailing the assignment will be accepted. Failure to submit assignments on time will lead to a straight F.

Course Overview

Qualitative Research Design will introduce students to some of the hands-on and practical skills in research methods and analysis used by social scientists. In this course, students will learn terms, concepts, and research design through systematic analysis. This course will focus on applied research skills and include a semester-long research design project with the instructor. Topics include participant observation, ethnographic methods, interviews, content analysis, and other innovative techniques.

Students will learn to understand the relevance of political analysis and the empirical approach to political science and focus on how to set up the research question and substantiate it with proper data and analysis. This course will also introduce students to the different qualitative methods used in political science. Students will reach out to the GSU Writing Center for support and consultation with Dr. Michael A. Pemberton: michaelp@georgiasouthern.edu

The syllabus serves as a general outline and is subject to revision. Students will be notified of any modifications. Please pay attention.

Course Objectives and Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- ✚ Understand the value of qualitative research methods.
- ✚ Learn philosophical assumptions that inform qualitative research methods.
- ✚ Become adept at in-depth interviewing, and familiar with participant observation, focus group approaches, and content analysis of documents.
- ✚ Design and conduct a qualitative research project of one's own.
- ✚ Practice and become comfortable with several ways to analyze qualitative data.

This course will cover the following student learning objectives (SLO) from the MA in Social Science program at GSU:

SLO 1	SLO 2	SLO 3
Theoretical Mastery	Research Design and Analysis	Professional Communication
According to the prevailing standards of their disciplinary emphasis of Anthropology, Political Science or Sociology, all students graduating from the Master of Arts in Social Science program apply theoretical concepts to real world data.	According to the prevailing standards of their disciplinary emphasis of Anthropology, Political Science or Sociology, all students graduating from the Master of Arts in Social Science program will identify and describe research methods/tools (e.g., survey, ethnography, physical tools) appropriate to answer research questions/hypotheses and will properly analyze and interpret data.	According to the prevailing standards of their disciplinary emphasis of Anthropology, Political Science or Sociology, all students graduating from the Master of Arts in Social Science program will clearly synthesize previous research on a substantive or theoretical question and articulate complex information by writing in the appropriate format for the intended audience.

Required Readings & Resources

- ✚ Creswell, John. W., & Poth, Cheryl. N. 2018. Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing among Five Approaches, 4th edition. Sage publications.
- ✚ Supplemental materials will also be posted on Folio. Please have a Folio account.
- ✚ Please access the One-Stop-Shop Library guide to complete assignments for this course:
<https://georgiasouthern.libguides.com/c.php?g=1346092&p=9937386>

Course Format

The readings will be drawn from the textbook as well as outside resources. Outside of the assigned class readings, I strongly recommend that you devote time to working on the library guides designed for this course. Please make it a habit to read at least one major newspaper such as BBC News, New York Times, Washington Post to stay up to date with current affairs. Each module will be informative and engaging, and we will engage in a variety of activities including research design papers, chapters book project, discussions, exams, etc. I value your feedback, so always reach out to me for suggestions and improvements. I will do my best to incorporate those ideas in the course modules.

Suggestions for Topics

Political parties, human rights violations in the United States, political activism, social movements, interest groups and lobbying in the United States, international organizations, globalization, and international law. Each students' research design topic must be approved by the instructor in writing no later than Wednesday, January 21, 2025, or students will lose 15 points in their class participation grade. Students must write a research design paper that asks an original research question, provides a literature review, and proposes how their topic would be researched, including the data that would be used, and the techniques or methods to be used in the research and analysis. Students will review the literature on their selected topic, present the specific questions that will be proposed for their study, and discuss in detail the data sources that will be used in answering their question and the timeframe for the research.

How to Communicate?

Please send all communications through Folio or to my Georgia Southern email: nroy@georgiasouthern.edu. Be sure to include your course name and number (e.g., POLS 7436A) in the subject line, and use a greeting and closing (e.g., Hi, Dr. Roy & Thank you for your time). Messages that don't follow these guidelines may not receive a response.

Names/Pronouns

Knowing and applying the names and pronouns that students use is a crucial part of developing a productive learning environment that fosters safety, inclusion, personal dignity, and a sense of belonging across campus. Please let me know how to address you (what name to use) and pronoun (if you have any) anytime throughout the semester.

ADA Accommodations

Students with special needs who may need accommodation in this class are encouraged to notify the instructor by the first week of class. In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), this course will honor requests for reasonable accommodations made by individuals with disabilities or demonstrating appropriate need for learning environment adjustments. Students must self-disclose their disability to the Student Accessibility Resource Center (SARC) before academic accommodation can be implemented. For additional information, please call the SARC office at (912) 478-1566 on the Statesboro campus & (912) 344-2572 on the Armstrong campus.

Tech Support

My role as professor does not extend to providing technological or Folio support. Please be sure that you are adept at using the course management system or seek help from the appropriate offices as soon as possible. The ITS team trains students to access the e-Classroom learning modules using the Table of Contents.

Each student is **STRONGLY ADVISED** to visit the Technology, Support & Server Maintenance Schedule site because it provides links for the Minimal Technical Requirements and system requirement checks that **MUST BE COMPLETED** for you to fully access and navigate Folio. For assistance, contact: IT Help Desk: helpdesk@georgiasouthern.edu, or call 912-478-2287.

Important Note

This syllabus, including the lecture schedule, readings, and assigned work and exams, is subject to change as necessary. Changes will be announced by email and on the course website on FOLIO. It is your responsibility to keep up with all readings and assignments. Check your email inbox regularly!

Please be considerate and professional when contacting me or meeting with me. I am happy to answer legitimate questions about class materials and requirements. I would love to meet with you to discuss topics you find interesting and want to know more about. However, I am not here to answer routine questions that are available on the syllabus.

Office Hours

Please note my office hours (virtual) and contact information is set out at the start of this syllabus. Please do not hesitate to let me know if you have any questions, concerns, special circumstances, or problems. If a crisis arises, which will impact your ability to fully participate in our class, please contact me ASAP so that we can work towards a resolution. Last, but not least, please know that if you attend classes, complete your preparations, and attempt to participate in class, but still have some difficulty, I will do my utmost to help you understand and engage the material – that said, you must be sure to attend fully to your own responsibilities as part of our class.

Important FOLIO Information

For you to keep up with your grades in this course, I will use FOLIO. Every student registered for a class at Georgia Southern University will have a FOLIO account automatically generated for them. If you need assistance, please contact the FOLIO Help Desk.

The Policy of Class Conducts and Regulations



Students are strongly encouraged to engage and participate without being tardy (submitting late assignments or not responding to emails). Attendance will be taken each week and will be considered for grading. It is your responsibility to make sure you log in every week and check Folio emails and updates every day. If you have not logged in on THAT day, you cannot sign in at all. Please e-mail the professor if you cannot attend class on certain days. Failure to do so will result in an automatic 15 points reduction. You cannot have a good discussion if people start missing classes or parts of a class on a regular basis. I will dock your grade by 5 % for missing assignments, though I will excuse you for documented emergencies.

- ✚ Tardy students must email the instructor at the end of class to receive a status of attendance.
- ✚ Make-up for class exams may be arranged for students only if there is an emergency.
- ✚ Late submission of exams and assignments will automatically result in a 20 points reduction unless student's present official documentation testifying illness and emergencies.

The Policy of Academic Honesty and Integrity



Students are expected to respect the highest standards of academic honesty and integrity. All cases of cheating, improper collaboration, and plagiarism on any given exam will result in possible disciplinary action from the university. Violations of the Georgia Southern University Academic Integrity Policy (including cheating and plagiarism) are taken very seriously. Any violation of this policy will become part of the student's permanent educational record. Special guidelines might be provided for the take-home exam to avoid academic misconduct, especially plagiarism. Please visit the library guide and or contact the Writing Center *before turning in your assignment* if you are unsure of what constitutes plagiarism. I will use Turnitin to detect plagiarism and academic dishonesty.

“The Code of Student Conduct states that students found to have engaged in academic dishonesty, which encompasses such activities as cheating, plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, and misrepresentation, are subject to disciplinary sanctions.”

Please refer to your student handbook for further information on academic dishonesty.
<http://deanofstudents.georgiasouthern.edu/conduct/>

Academic Integrity

Students are expected to uphold the Student Conduct Code as upheld by Georgia Southern University. The following list of violations of the Student Conduct Code is an example of behaviors that may result in disciplinary action by the University. It is not to be regarded as all-inclusive. If there is a need for further clarification regarding what constitutes a violation of the Student Conduct Code, the Dean of Students shall make the final determination. Any student or student organization found to be responsible for misconduct is subject to university sanctions.

Cheating

- ✓ using AI to generate your research papers.
- ✓ submitting material that is not yours as part of your course performance.
- ✓ using information or devices that are not allowed by the faculty.
- ✓ obtaining and/or using unauthorized materials.
- ✓ fabricating information, research, and/or results.
- ✓ collaborating with others on assignments without the faculty's consent.
- ✓ cooperating with and/or helping another student to cheat.
- ✓ demonstrating any other forms of dishonest behavior.

Plagiarism

- ✓ directly quoting the words of others without using quotation marks or indented format to identify them.
- ✓ using sources of information (published or unpublished) without identifying them
- ✓ paraphrasing materials or ideas without identifying the source.
- ✓ unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling of term.
- ✓ papers or other academic material.

Civility, Integrity, and Commitment

Civility: All members of the community are expected to always communicate in a civil manner in their professional interaction, both in and out of the classroom. Academic discourse, including discussion and argumentation, is to be carried out in a polite, courteous, and dignified manner that is respectful of and understanding toward both peers and professors.

Integrity: Georgia Southern University, like all institutions of higher education, is fundamentally dependent upon the maintenance of proper standards of honesty. All members of the university recognize the necessity of being honest with themselves and with others. The integrity of the educational experience is diminished by cheating in class, plagiarizing, lying, and employing other methods of deceit. None of these should be used as a strategy to obtain a false sense of success. The need for honest relations among all members of the community is essential. Maintenance of those standards is the responsibility of every member of this academic community--students, instructors, and staff alike. I will not spend my time trying to find cheaters, but when confronted with clear evidence of academic impropriety, I will respond vigorously. Such impropriety in this class will result in an F for the course. I trust that this paragraph is unnecessary for those of you enrolled in this course.

Commitment: All members of the university understand that to succeed in classes, students must be active participants in their education while understanding and complying with each course syllabus. Students should plan on spending at least two hours of study for every one hour in class. For example, a 15-credit-hour schedule requires 25-30-hour commitment "outside of class" per week. Outside preparation and class attendance alone do not guarantee success or the highest grades; rather, mastery of the material and acquisition of necessary skills determine success and grades.

Disabilities

Georgia Southern University is committed to providing reasonable accommodations to students with documented disabilities as required under federal law. Disabilities may include ADD or AD/HD, autism spectrum disorder, brain injury, chronic medical conditions, communication disorders, hearing loss, learning disabilities, mobility impairment, psychological disorders, visual impairment, or temporary injuries. The purpose of disability accommodation is to provide equal access to the academic material and equal access to demonstrate mastery of the material. If you have a disability and need accommodations, please contact the Student Accessibility Resource Center (SARC). You will need to meet with a SARC staff member who can help you gather documentation of your disability or refer you to an appropriate resource for assessment. Once documentation of the disability is approved, SARC staff will provide you with an accommodation letter detailing the approved accommodation which you should present to me so we can discuss and implement your accommodation. Disability accommodations work best starting at the beginning of the semester but can be approved and started at any point in the semester. Accommodation starts at the time the accommodation letter is presented to faculty with reasonable requests. SARC on the Statesboro campus is located on the second floor of Cone Hall and the phone number is (912) 478-1566. SARC for Savannah and Liberty campuses is located on the second floor of Memorial College Center and the phone number is (912) 344-2572.

Managing Mental Health

If you experience a range of issues such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, substance use problems, lack of motivation, etc., which might hamper your learning abilities, resources within GSU are available to assist you. Remember, GSU is there for you! You are not alone!

Please check: <https://students.georgiasouthern.edu/counseling/>

Make-Up Policy

Students are responsible for knowing everything that is emailed, announced, discussed, or lectured upon in class. Students are also required to submit all assignments on time. Make-up exams will be given only in case of an EXTREME EMERGENCY, and I will be the judge to decide what constitutes an extreme emergency.

Course Requirements

At least once during the session, students are required to share a news item with the class. You can do that by sharing that news item on the discussion board. Class discussions may even start based on those news items and we will have fun interactive sessions. Please participate to receive credits. The final grade will be posted on the My GSU portal, and you'll have access to it after a certain date. Please do not email me and ask about your final grade. No late or email submissions will be accepted starting one week before the final exam begins. No email or late submission of the final exam will be accepted. All assignments must be submitted to Folio Dropbox.

There will be one mid-term and one final exam. Both the mid-term and the final exam will be open book. Each week you must visit the course guide and log in to Folio and keep yourself updated for your class participation and attendance. Make sure to use your book, the course guide as well as the course materials posted in Folio while working on your assignments. All communication will be done ONLY via Folio.

If there are any discrepancies with the dates regarding assignment submissions, please feel free to contact me ASAP. Additionally, make sure to follow the dates listed in the Folio assignment submission Dropbox. Do not wait until the last minute!

Thus, the requirements are:

Class participation & discussion: (20%)

- **Discussions 1-4:** This means not only actively participating in class discussion but also actively listening and responding to your colleagues, taking intellectual risks, asking questions, and contributing to the collective task of understanding the course material. This will also involve active Folio log in and participation in various course-related activities. You must respond to one or two of your fellow classmates.

Mid-Term Exam: (10%)

Final Exam: (10%)

High Impact Practices (HIPs) based Assignments Related to Strategic Pillar I: Student Success

Research Design Topic & Paper: (3+17= 20%)

- You will need to first submit the 'Research Design Topic' approval by January 21, 10:30 pm to receive full credit for the assignment.
- Research Design Topic Approval: (3%)
- Submit the Research Design Paper: (17%)

Faculty Interview and Book Project: (18%)

Analytical Summary Test I & II: (12%)

- You will write an analytical summary of any one article assigned for that week.

Extra Credit based assignments for Student Engagement

Extra Credit 5 Cs Assignment & Course Evaluations: (10%)

- Students will have the option to earn extra credit by completing all the token credit activities listed on the 5Cs assignment: (5%)
- Midterm and Final course evaluation on Folio: (5%)

Grade Scale

A: 90-100; B: 80- 89; C: 70- 79; D: 60-69; F: 0-68

Course Requirements & Grades

The basis for the course grade will be comprised of the following:

Assignments (All assignments are Turnitin Enabled)	Points	Due Dates
Research Design Topic & Paper	3+17=20	Research Design Topic Approval: January 21, 10:30 pm Research Design Paper: April 18, 10:30 pm
Analytical Summary Test I Analytical Summary Test II	6+6= 12	March 14, 10:30 pm April 7, 10:30 pm
Faculty Interview and Book Project	18	April 4, 10:30 pm
Midterm Exam	10	March 27, 10:30 pm

Class Participation & Discussions (1-4)	20	Follow the dates on Folio, all discussion posts are due, 10:30 pm D1: January 21, 10:30 pm (Module 1) D2: February 7, 10:30 pm (Module 3) D3: February 28, 10:30 pm (Module 5) D4: March 7, 10:30 pm (Module 7)
Final Exam	10	May 8, 10:30 pm
Extra Credit: Midterm class evaluation on Folio 5 Cs Assignment Final class evaluation on Folio	2.5+5+2.5= 10	March 21, 10:30 pm April 21, 10:30 pm April 25, 10:30 pm

Research Design Project Citations & Formats

Students will develop an original research design that relates to the study of political science. The writing of this research design project will be done throughout the semester, and the instructor will review this project on a regular basis. All references must be in-text references with the author, year and page number(s) clearly identified in parentheses for each reference. Papers cannot be longer than 5 pages single spaced, and the final paper is due by 10:30 pm on Friday, April 18, 2025. Please use any citations you are comfortable with. No Web-based citations will be accepted in the bibliographical citations. Please refer to the library guide especially designed for this course for further support. All references and scholarly literature in the literature review must come only from scholarly books, peer-reviewed academic journals available through GSU library's database. An alphabetical bibliography of all works cited must be included in the final research design. The grade for this project will be based upon the originality and relevance of the book or chapters selected, the thoroughness of the summary and writing of the paper, and the references/connection of material to specific assigned articles and class discussions during the semester.

Midterm & Final Exams

The midterm and final exams will be online and may include short answer questions, short essay questions, and possibly some multiple choice and true or false questions. No final exam will be accepted after the due date! You will have to produce valid documents to receive an extension. No exceptions will be made!

Class Participation & Discussion

Participation will be a component of the overall grade for the semester, based in part on the number of times you are logging in to FOLIO, and student engagement in the class in the form of class discussions and asking questions and or responding to another student. Discussions will be based on assigned readings for that week or the week before.

Faculty Interview and Book Project

Students will take the initiative to reach out to a Georgia Southern University faculty to read one of their books and then to meet with them to discuss their writing and the approach they take to writing in their research. They can be a faculty member in the Department of Political Science and International Studies (POINTS) or Sociology & Anthropology or Criminal Justice and can include faculty on the Armstrong campus of Georgia Southern University. Please select a Georgia Southern University faculty member who has written a book in an area of interest to you. If you find my works interesting, please feel free to reach out to me, and I will do my best to accommodate at least a few of you. Please remember it will be a first come basis, and I reserve the right to refer you to another faculty member if my slots are full. You must read that book (ideally, the faculty book will be available through Henderson Library or, if necessary, Inter- Library Loan), and then interview that faculty member to discuss with them their approach to writing, their own routines and practices of writing, and the advice on writing that these faculty would offer to other writers.

Students will be given early-in-the-Semester deadlines for this project, including submitting the book they have decided to work on. You will read the book and set up the interview time with the faculty author. Once this interview is conducted, students must write a 2–3-page, single-spaced qualitative analytical paper and submit it to Folio Dropbox. The paper must include a discussion and quotations from the faculty member’s book as well as the insights from their interview with the student.

Syllabus Change

This syllabus is a guide for the course and is subject to change with advanced notice. All communication will happen via FOLIO.



Tentative Course and Reading Schedule with Estimation of Time Commitment for Assignments and Readings

Remember: All assignments are due by 10:30 pm on the due date. No email submissions or requests for emailing the assignment will be accepted.

Month/ Time Commitment (each week)	Readings/work to do All Assignments Due by (10:30 pm)	Readings/work to do All Assignments Due by (10:30 pm)
(2-4 hours)	Introduction to the Course: Know your instructor, read the syllabus, class policies and semester plans, assignments required to successfully complete this course. Simply relax and explore Folio.	Chapter 1: Analytical Perspectives, Analytical Controversies Pgs. 1- 27
(2-4 hours)	20 (No class) Federal Holiday	Chapter 1: Analytical Perspectives, Analytical Controversies Pgs. 27-54
(3-5 hours)	Chapter 2: What’s ‘Political’ About Political Science? Pgs. 59- 75	Chapter 2: What’s ‘Political’ About Political Science? Pgs. 75- 88

(3-5 hours)	Chapter 3: Beyond Structure versus Agency, Context versus Conduct Pgs. 89- 110	Chapter 3: Beyond Structure versus Agency, Context versus Conduct Pgs. 111- 134
(3-5 hours)	Chapter 3: Beyond Structure versus Agency, Context versus Conduct Pgs. 111- 134	Chapter 4: Continuity and Discontinuity in the Analysis of Political Change Pgs. 135- 150
(2-4 hours)	Chapter 4: Continuity and Discontinuity in the Analysis of Political Change Pgs. 151- 167	
(2-4 hours)	Chapter 5: Divided by a Common Language? Conceptualizing Power Pgs. 168- 182	
(3-6 hours)	Chapter 5: Divided by a Common Language? Conceptualizing Power Pgs. 182- 193	
(3-6 hours)	Midterm exam review week & Catch-up	Exam Cards Round Sessions
	Spring Break	Spring Break
(6-8 hours)	Midterm exam begins	Midterm exam ends
(2-4 hours)	Chapter 6: The Discursive and the Ideational in Contemporary Political Analysis: Beyond Materialism and Idealism Pgs. 194- 213	
(3-6 hours)	Chapter 7: The Challenge of Postmodernism Pgs. 216- 230	
(3-6 hours)	Chapter 7: The Challenge of Postmodernism Pgs. 231- 250	
(3-6 hours)	Conclusion: Critical–Political–Analytical Pgs. 251- 260	
(3-6 hours)	Final exam review week & Catch-up	Exam Cards Round Sessions
(6-8 hours)	May 5 Final exam	May 8 Final exam ends