

San José State University
Department of Justice Studies
JS 117, Qualitative Research Methods, Section 01, Spring 2021

Course and Contact Information

Instructor:	Michael Vallerga, M.A.
Office Location:	Zoom
Telephone:	N/A
Email:	michael.vallerga@sjsu.edu
Office Hours:	Monday 2:00-3:00PM and Friday, 12:00-1:00PM
Class Days/Time:	Monday and Wednesday, 3:00-4:15PM
Classroom:	Zoom

Faculty Web Page and MYSJSU Messaging

Course materials such as syllabus, handouts, notes, assignment instructions, etc. can be found on the Canvas learning management system course website. Students are responsible for regularly checking the Canvas system to learn of any updates.

Course Description

Introduction to statistical applications, particularly statistical inference, including central tendency, variation, normal distributions, probability, estimation, hypothesis testing, measures of association, correlation, linear regression and the analysis of variance.

Prerequisites: Satisfaction of the ELM requirement. Since JS 15 meets the mathematical concepts G.E. requirement (Area B4), students must have passed the E.L.M. placement test – or have been exempted from it -- before enrolling in the course. Instructor cannot waive this requirement. Failure to meet this prerequisite will result in University canceling your enrollment in the course and denying credit regardless of any grade earned.

GE Category: Core G.E. Area B4 Mathematical Concepts. Please note that only a C or better in the course satisfies the G.E. requirement. Grades of C-and below do not. Semester grades of C- to D- are passing and earn three units credit, but they do not satisfy the Area B4 Mathematical Concepts requirement.

Course Learning Objectives (CLO)

CLO 1. Apply qualitative data gathering techniques.

CLO 2. Analyze the strengths and limitations of various data gathering techniques (e.g., interviews, observations, content analysis, focus groups, narrative analysis, and ethnography).

CLO 3. Identify and explain the range and significance of ethical issues in qualitative research.

CLO 4. Describe epistemologies behind qualitative research methods.

CLO 5. Apply reflectivity in qualitative research.

CLO 6. Apply literature to analyze qualitative data.

Texts/Readings

Textbook (Required)

Carol A. Bailey (2017). *A Guide to Qualitative Field Research*, 3rd Edition. SAGE Publications. ISBN: 9781506306995

There will also be two or three supplementary chapters assigned and available as .pdfs on the canvas site.

Course Requirements and Assignments

SJSU classes are designed such that in order to be successful, it is expected that students will spend a minimum of forty-five hours for each unit of credit (normally three hours per unit per week), including preparing for class, participating in course activities, completing assignments, and so on. More details about student workload can be found in [University Policy S12-3](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S12-3.pdf) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S12-3.pdf>.

In-Class Assignments (24 Points)

In-Class Assignments are intended to give students a practice activity to make sure that students are following along, to help them remember important parts of what was covered, and to give students a chance to put course material into action. There will be 24 of these over the course of the semester. Each is worth 1 Point. Credit is received for completion, regardless of accuracy. I recommend you use them as a tool for reinforcing learning.

Homework Assignments (24 Points)

There will be a homework component once every few weeks. They will be comprised of 2 to 4 questions that come from recent textbook chapters or supplemental readings. The goal is to push students to read textbook chapters to gain additional information and perspectives beyond those in lecture. Students should answer questions thoroughly, but not exhaustively (don't over-think them!). There will be a total of 6 Homework Assignments over the course of the semester. Each Homework assignment is worth 4 points.

Mini-Papers (28 Points)

This course requires you to complete a total of four mini-papers. Each mini-paper will have a specific prompt that you must follow. Each will be about 2-3 pages long. There will be a total of six possible mini-papers that you can choose from (please only complete four). Each Mini-Paper is worth 7 points. Here are the mini-papers and their due dates (again, only complete 4):

- Qualitative Methods and Epistemology (2/22)
- Research Design and Ethical Considerations (3/3)
- Interviewing and Focus Groups (3/17)
- Methods Paper - Grounded Theory and Ethnography (4/7)
- Methods Paper – Content Analysis and Thematic Analysis (4/19)
- Methods Paper – Narrative Analysis (4/26)

Final Qualitative Research Paper (24 Points)

The Final Paper will be a qualitative research paper. It will include an introduction, a literature review, a methods section, a results section, and a discussion section. It will be worth 20 Points.

Grading Policy

The final course grade will be based on a 100-point scale. Since the grade is based on mastery of the material, it is theoretically possible for everyone to earn an A.

Late assignments will lose ~10% each day late

The grade is composed of:

In-Class Assignments	24 points
Homework	24 points
Mini-Papers	28 points
Final Paper	24 points
Total:	100 points

My grading scale is:

98 – 100 A+

92 – 97 A

90 – 91 A-

88 – 89 B+

82 – 87 B

80 – 81 B-

78 – 79 C+

72 – 77 C

70 – 71 C-

68 – 69 D+

62 – 67 D

60 – 61 D-

59 and below F

Extra Credit

There will be at least one Extra Credit assignment.

Note that “All students have the right, within a reasonable time, to know their academic scores, to review their grade-dependent work, and to be provided with explanations for the determination of their course grades.” See [University Policy F13-1](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/F13-1.pdf) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/F13-1.pdf> for more details.

Classroom Protocol

Instructor’s Note on Communication

Office hours will be conducted in person and through Blackboard Collaborate sessions via CANVAS. I will post announcements about the specific dates and times.

As you know, a university degree is a significant undertaking and requires a high level of commitment, time management, organization, and initiative. Thus, it is in your best interest to stay on top of the readings and keep in touch with the instructor. The best way to keep in touch is in-person during office hours (virtually), or at another time by appointment. If you cannot meet with me in person (virtually), I prefer that you email me. Emails will be mostly only responded to during business hours (Monday through Friday only). Please note: all communication regarding assignment grades and exam grades must be conducted in person and not via email. When you send me an email please put “JS 15 Section 1” and your full name in the subject line. Emails without this will most likely be discarded without response.

University Policies:

The Office of Graduate and Undergraduate Programs maintains university-wide policy information relevant to all courses, such as academic integrity, accommodations, etc. You may find all syllabus related University Policies and resources information listed on GUP’s Syllabus Information web page at <http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/>

Course Schedule: JS 117 / Intro Statistics in Justice, Spring 2020

(subject to change with fair notice via Class Announcement & CANVAS Note)

Week	Date	Topics	Readings / Assignments Due
1	1/27	Course Introduction	
2	2/1	What is Qualitative Research?	Chapter 1
	2/3	Epistemology 1 (How we know what we know)	
3	2/8	Epistemology 2 (Researcher as an Instrument)	HW1
	2/10	Ethics of Qualitative Research (Participants)	Chapter 2
4	2/15	Ethics of Qualitative Research (Researcher)	
	2/17	Qualitative Research Design	Chapter 3; HW2
5	2/22	Interviewing 1	Mini-Paper 1 (Epistemology)
	2/24	Interviewing 2	Chapter 8; HW3
6	3/1	Focus Groups 1	
	3/3	Focus Groups 2	Audio Recording Test Mini-Paper 2 (Qualitative Research Ethics)
7	3/8	Field Notes	Chapter 9
	3/10	Observations	Chapter 7
8	3/15	Ethnography and Grounded Theory 1	Chapter 12 / GT reading
	3/17	Ethnography and Grounded Theory 2	Mini-Paper 3 (Interviewing and Focus Groups)
9	3/22	Ethnography and Grounded Theory 3	
	3/24	Content and Thematic Analysis 1	CA reading; HW4
	3/29 & 3/31	SPRING RECESS – NO CLASS	
10	4/5	Content and Thematic Analysis 2	Chapter 13
	4/7	Content and Thematic Analysis 3	Mini-Paper 4 (Ethnography and Grounded Theory)
11	4/12	Narrative Analysis 1	narrative readings; HW5
	4/14	Narrative Analysis 2	
12	4/19	Working With Text as Data	Chapter 11 Mini-Paper 5 (Content and Thematic Analysis)
	4/21	Writing a Research Paper	Chapter 4, Chapter 15

Week	Date	Topics	Readings / Assignments Due
13	4/26	Qualitative Data Collection and the Internet	Mini-Paper 6 (Narrative Analysis)
	4/28	Participatory Action Research	Par reading;
14	5/3	Mixed Methods Research	Rough Draft Due 5/4
	5/5	Consultations	
15	5/10	Consultations	HW6
	5/12	Consultations	
16	5/17	Consultations	
	Friday, May 21 12:15- 2:30	No Final Exam, 'Culminating Experience'	FINAL PAPER DUE at midnight