

PSYC*6950, Course Outline: Fall 2025

General Information

Some courses are offered virtually and some face to face. **This course is offered using the Face-to-Face format. The course has set day, time, and location of class.**

Course Title: Qualitative Methods in Psychology

Course Description:

The purpose of this course is to provide students with foundational knowledge and skills to conduct qualitative research in psychology. Approaches that will be covered may include discursive psychology, critical discourse analysis, grounded theory, thematic analysis, ethnography, and interpretive phenomenological analysis.

Credit Weight: 0.5

Academic Department (or campus): Psychology

Semester Offering: F25

Class Schedule and Location: Thursday 8:30am-11:20am, GRHM, 2302

Instructor Information

Instructor Name: Kieran O'Doherty

Instructor Email: kieran.odoherty@uoguelph.ca

Office location and office hours: TBA

GTA Information

n/a

Course Content

Specific Learning Outcomes:

At the end of this course the successful student will be able to:

- 1. Conduct a qualitative analysis based on one chosen methodology on your topic of choice**
- 2. Describe the major qualitative approaches in psychology**
- 3. Develop research questions according to different types of qualitative approaches**
- 4. Articulate the importance of epistemological assumptions underlying knowledge production**
- 5. Differentiate between the major epistemological orientations in psychology**

Lecture Content:

This graduate level course provides students with a foundation in qualitative methodology, with a strong emphasis on qualitative data analysis. The approach to analysis will be theory driven, with primary attention given to the epistemological foundations of qualitative analysis. Students will be given an initial overview of some of the most prominent approaches to qualitative analysis in psychology, after which each student will be guided through their own process of analysis. Students are encouraged to bring their own data set to the course, which will form the basis for their experiential learning of qualitative analysis. Using their chosen data set, students will be guided through the development of an analytical approach, formulation of research questions, and conducting their analysis. Each student is encouraged to base their work for the course within the scope of their personal research interests. The course as a whole is intended to blend personalised individual learning with collegial dialogue and discussion to foster a deep understanding of the principles underlying qualitative inquiry.

There is increasing recognition in the discipline of psychology of the value offered by qualitative methods. However, most students of psychology have little or no previous exposure to qualitative data analysis. Even more critically, students often have no knowledge of the alternate epistemological foundations (relative to typical statistical methods) that can motivate systematic academic inquiry. This course will provide a foundation for students to conduct and critically evaluate qualitative analysis based on non-positivist epistemologies.

Labs:

n/a

Seminars:

n/a

Course Assignments and Tests:

Assignment or Test	Due Date	Contribution to Final Mark (%)	Learning Outcomes Assessed
Oral presentation	TBA	25	2,4
Major written paper	December 1, 2025, 5pm	50	1
Class participation	n/a	25	2,3,4,5

Final examination date and time: n/a

Final exam weighting: n/a

[Examination Regulations](#)

Course Resources

Required Texts: n/a

Cost of Texts: n/a

Recommended Texts: n/a

Lab Manual: n/a

Other Resources:

Course readings will be provided on CourseLink.

Field Trips: n/a

Additional Costs: n/a

Course Policies

Grading Policies

Written Paper Guidelines

- The purpose of the assignment is for you to develop skills in qualitative analysis using a method of your choice and based on a topic of personal interest to you
- Choose a suitable title for your assignment that reflects the issues you are addressing and the methodology you are following
- This course is about analysis, so the paper does not require a very substantial literature review. However, there should be sufficient background (based on peer-reviewed literature) to situate your analysis for the reader. Given that you are likely to write your paper on a topic with which you are already familiar this should not require a lot of work.
- The paper must demonstrate in-depth understanding of the principles underlying your chosen methodology – make sure you have a good understanding of the theory
- The paper must demonstrate in-depth understanding of the analytical process – make sure that you have read MANY papers that use the type of analysis you are using
- Please use 1.5 or double spacing and 12-point font
- Use page numbers, reasonable margins, and don't forget to include your name and student number
- Citations and references should follow the APA guidelines
- The assignment must be original
- AVOID PLAGIARISM – this means that all ideas you use in your paper that come from your readings need to be cited; where quotes are used, make sure you give page numbers; distinguish clearly between your own thinking and arguments, and what you have read somewhere else; READ the university guidelines regarding academic integrity here: <http://www.academicintegrity.uoguelph.ca/>
- Please submit a **hard-copy and an electronic version** of the assignment
- Penalties:

- Marks will be subtracted for late essays at a rate of 10% per day to a maximum of 30%. Any essay that is more than 3 days late automatically receives 0%.
- The use of AI text generators (e.g., ChatGPT) is not permitted in this course.

Graduate Grade interpretation

Course Policy on Group Work:

Students may work together on their oral presentation. In these cases, students will be given the same grade unless it becomes clear that there was a significant discrepancy on the amount of work each student did toward the final output.

Course Policy regarding use of electronic devices and recording of lectures:

Electronic recording of classes is expressly forbidden without consent of the instructor. When recordings are permitted, they are solely for the use of the authorized student and may not be reproduced, or transmitted to others, without the express written consent of the instructor.

University Policies

Disclaimer:

Please note that a revision of the format of course offerings, changes in classroom protocols, and academic schedules is occasionally required. Any such changes will be announced via CourseLink and/or class email. This includes on-campus scheduling during the semester, mid-terms and final examination schedules.

Academic Consideration

When you find yourself unable to meet an in-course requirement because of illness or compassionate reasons, please advise the course instructor in writing, with your name, id#, and e-mail contact. See the academic calendar for information on regulations and procedures for

Academic Consideration:

[Grounds for Academic Consideration](#)

Academic Misconduct

The University of Guelph is committed to upholding the highest standards of academic integrity and it is the responsibility of all members of the University community, faculty, staff, and students to be aware of what constitutes academic misconduct and to do as much as possible to prevent academic offences from occurring.

University of Guelph students have the responsibility of abiding by the University's policy on academic misconduct regardless of their location of study; faculty, staff and students have the responsibility of supporting an environment that discourages misconduct. Students need to

remain aware that instructors have access to and the right to use electronic and other means of detection. Please note: Whether or not a student intended to commit academic misconduct is not relevant for a finding of guilt. Hurried or careless submission of assignments does not excuse students from responsibility for verifying the academic integrity of their work before submitting it. Students who are in any doubt as to whether an action on their part could be construed as an academic offence should consult with a faculty member or faculty advisor.

The Academic Misconduct Policy is detailed in the [Graduate Calendar](#):

Illness

Medical notes will not normally be required for singular instances of academic consideration, although students may be required to provide supporting documentation for multiple missed assessments or when involving a large part of a course (e.g., final exam or major assignment).

Accessibility

The University of Guelph is committed to creating a barrier-free environment. Providing services for students is a shared responsibility among students, faculty and administrators. This relationship is based on respect of individual rights, the dignity of the individual and the University community's shared commitment to an open and supportive learning environment. Students requiring service or accommodation, whether due to an identified, ongoing disability or a short-term disability should contact [Student Accessibility Services](#) as soon as possible.

For more information, contact SAS at 519-824-4120 ext. 54335 or email accessibility@uoguelph.ca or the [Student Accessibility Services Website](#)

Student Feedback Questionnaire

These questionnaires (formerly course evaluations) will be available to students during the last 2 weeks of the semester. Students will receive an email directly from the Student Feedback Administration system which will include a direct link to the questionnaire for this course. During this time, when a student goes to login to Courselink, a reminder will pop-up when a task is available to complete.

[Student Feedback Questionnaire](#)

Drop date

The last date to drop one-semester courses, without academic penalty, is Friday November 28, 2025. For regulations and procedures for Dropping Courses, see the [Schedule of Dates in the Academic Calendar](#).

Instructors must provide [meaningful and constructive feedback, at minimum 20% of the final course grade, prior to the 40th class day](#). For courses which are of shorter duration, 20% of the final grade must be provided two-thirds of the way through the course.

[Current Graduate Calendar](#)

Additional Course Information

Course instructors are allowed to use software to help in detecting plagiarism or unauthorized copying of student assignments. Plagiarism is one of the most common types of academic misconduct on our campus. Plagiarism involves students using the work, ideas and/or the exact wording of other people or sources without giving proper credit to others for the work, ideas and/or words in their papers. Students can unintentionally commit misconduct because they do not know how to reference outside sources properly or because they don't check their work carefully enough before handing it in. Whether or not a student intended to commit academic misconduct is not relevant for a finding of guilt. Hurried or careless submission of assignments does not excuse students from responsibility for verifying the academic integrity of their work before submitting it. Students who are in any doubt as to whether an action on their part could be construed as an academic offence should consult with a faculty member or faculty advisor.

In this course, your instructor will be using Turnitin.com to detect possible plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration or copying as part of the ongoing efforts to prevent plagiarism in the College of Social and Applied Human Sciences.

A major benefit of using Turnitin is that students will be able to educate and empower themselves in preventing misconduct. In this course, you may screen your own assignments through Turnitin as many times as you wish before the due date. You will be able to see and print reports that show you exactly where you have properly and improperly referenced the outside sources and materials in your assignment.