This course is designed as an introductory course in qualitative research methods, it provides a general overview of the ways sociologists collect qualitative information about social phenomena, focusing on how to collect and analyze data that are reliable and applicable to our research questions. We will begin by constructing a research question that will drive our work for the entire semester. In this course, you will learn three of the main ways that qualitative data are used in sociological research: analysis of written material, participant observation, and open ended semi-structured interviews.

Requirements and Grading:
1. Paper Assignments (20% each for total of 60%)
2. Class participation and fulfilling weekly assignments (25%)
3. Final Presentation (15%)

Required Books at the University Book Center:


Fisher, Dana. 2006. *Activism, inc.: how the outsourcing of grassroots campaigns is strangling progressive politics in America*. Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press.


Additional Readings are available online.

**Weekly Syllabus: Schedule of Topics and Readings**

**Week 1 (24 January): Introductions and Overview**

**Readings:**


**Assignment:**
In pairs meet your “partner” and, based on the data that you observe, write a narrative summary.

**Week 2 (31 January): Constructing a Research Question**

**Readings:**


**Assignment:**
Develop a general research question that will direct your research for the semester and identify sources that you will use for the three components of the class: analysis of written text, participant observation, and open ended semi-structured interviews.

**Week 3 (7 February): Qualitative analysis of Written Text**

**Readings:**

**Assignment:**
Refine research question for this methodological approach—submit this research question. Class discussion will determine how much data must be collected and analyzed for the
written text assignment. Enter data into database (excel), identify THREE theoretically driven codes that will be used to code your data and provide clear operationalizations of these codes and start coding.

**Week 4 (14 February): Written Text II**
**Readings:**

**Assignment:** Complete Coding and prepare summary of analysis for class.

**Week 5 (21 February): Written Text III**
**Readings:**

**Assignment:** Submit Paper 1 on findings from analysis of written text.

**Week 6 (28 February): Participant Observation**
**Readings:**


**Assignment:**
Refine research question for this methodological approach and submit. Set-up your field research: gain access, and set up a sampling frame and plan for data collection.

**Week 7 (7 March): Participant Observation II**
**Readings:**


**Assignments:** Collect 7 hours of data, take field notes on your time in the field. Type up field notes.

**Week 8 (14 March): Participant Observation III**
**Readings:**
SPRING BREAK week of 21 March

Week 9 (28 March): Participant Observation IV

**Readings:**


**Assignment:** Submit Paper 2 on findings from analysis of field research.

Week 10 (4 April): Open Ended Semi-Structured Interviews

**Readings:**

**Assignment:** Refine research question for this methodological approach and submit. Set-up your field research: gain access, and set up a sampling frame and plan for data collection. Develop Interview Protocol (3 interview questions plus follow-ups).

Week 11 (11 April): Interviews II

**Readings:**
Fisher, Dana. 2006. *Activism, inc.: how the outsourcing of grassroots campaigns is strangling progressive politics in America.* Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press.

**Assignment:** Conduct your interviews (5) and write fieldnotes of each meeting. Transcribe data and come up with 3 codes for analysis.

CATCH-UP Week of 18 April

Week 12 (25 April): Interviews III

**Readings:**

**Assignment:** Manually code transcripts (stage 1 of analysis—discuss additional stages that one would do).

Week 13 (2 May): Interviews IV

**Readings:**

**Assignments:** Submit Paper 3 on findings from analysis of interview data.
Week 14 (9 May): Final Presentations Synthesizing Findings from Three Projects