

**City University of Hong Kong
Course Syllabus**

**offered by Department of Media and Communication
with effect from Semester A 2024 / 25**

Part I Course Overview

Course Title: Qualitative Research Methods in Media and Communication

Course Code: COM8006

Course Duration: One semester

Credit Units: 3

Level: R8

Medium of Instruction: English

Medium of Assessment: English

Prerequisites:
(Course Code and Title) None

Precursors:
(Course Code and Title) None

Equivalent Courses:
(Course Code and Title) None

Exclusive Courses:
(Course Code and Title) None

Part II Course Details

1. Abstract

The course aims to:

introduce students to the logic, design, and pitfalls of qualitative research methods used in media and communication studies—including but not limited to in-depth interviews, ethnographic field study, participant observation, case study, historical analysis, discourse analysis, and focused group discussion.

2. Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

No.	CILOs	Weighting	Discovery-enriched curriculum related learning outcomes		
			A1	A2	A3
1.	Analyze the logic, design, and pitfalls of qualitative research in media and communication	20%	√	√	
2.	Apply the general principles of qualitative analysis to evaluate major works in media and communication	20%		√	√
3.	Relate major techniques of qualitative analysis to a research topic of interest.	20%		√	√
4.	Conduct a study by using qualitative methods, to discover new knowledge in the relevant domain through innovative domain	40%	√	√	√
		100%			

A1: *Attitude*

Develop an attitude of discovery/innovation/creativity, as demonstrated by students possessing a strong sense of curiosity, asking questions actively, challenging assumptions or engaging in inquiry together with teachers.

A2: *Ability*

Develop the ability/skill needed to discover/innovate/create, as demonstrated by students possessing critical thinking skills to assess ideas, acquiring research skills, synthesizing knowledge across disciplines or applying academic knowledge to self-life problems.

A3: *Accomplishments*

Demonstrate accomplishment of discovery/innovation/creativity through producing /constructing creative works/new artefacts, effective solutions to real-life problems or new processes.

3. Learning and Teaching Activities (LTAs)

LTAs	Brief Description	CILO No.				Hours/week
		1	2	3	4	
Lectures	Lectures and discussion on the principles and fundamentals of qualitative research in media and communication	✓				1
Analysis	Analyze major works of qualitative research in the field		✓			1
Paper	Develop a research proposal/paper in qualitative research			✓		0.5
Presentation	Present the research proposal/paper in a professional manner				✓	0.5

4. Assessment Tasks/Activities (ATs)

Assessment Tasks/Activities	CILO No.				Weighting	Remarks
	1	2	3	4		
Continuous Assessment: <u>75</u> %						
1 review essay (10 pages) analyzing selected major works in qualitative media/communication research		✓			25%	
1 full-length research proposal or paper (15-20 pages) applying appropriate qualitative research methods			✓	✓	40%	
Present the research proposal/paper			✓	✓	10%	
Examination: <u>25</u> % (duration: 2 hours)						
1 final exam (2 hours) on the principles and fundamentals of qualitative research in media and communication	✓				25%	
					100%	

5. Assessment Rubrics

Applicable to students admitted before Semester A 2022/23 and in Semester A 2024/25 & thereafter

Assessment Task	Criterion	Excellent (A+, A, A-)	Good (B+, B, B-)	Fair (C+, C, C-)	Marginal (D)	Failure (F)
Essay (10 pages) analyzing selected major works in qualitative media/communication research	Ability to analyse how one or a combination of methods are suited to a particular area of qualitative media/communication research and assess how the methods are applied in weaving together the theory and the data in selected major works.	High	Significant	Moderate	Basic	Not even reaching marginal levels
Research proposal or paper (15-20 pages)	The ability to design a research project with good research questions and appropriate qualitative research methods.	High	Significant	Moderate	Basic	Not even reaching marginal levels
Present the research proposal/paper	The ability to organize and articulate one's ideas in a paper/proposal in public in a cogent matter.	High	Significant	Moderate	Basic	Not even reaching marginal levels
Final exam	Ability to analyse how different qualitative methods are suited to different areas of qualitative media/communication research and assess how the methods are applied in weaving together the theory and the data in selected major works.	High	Significant	Moderate	Basic	Not even reaching marginal levels

Applicable to students admitted from Semester A 2022/23 to Summer Term 2024

Assessment Task	Criterion	Excellent (A+, A, A-)	Good (B+, B)	Marginal (B-, C+, C)	Failure (F)
Essay (10 pages) analyzing selected major works in qualitative media/communication research	Ability to analyse how one or a combination of methods are suited to a particular area of qualitative media/communication research and assess how the methods are applied in weaving together the theory and the data in selected major works.	High	Significant	Basic	Not even reaching marginal levels
Research proposal or paper (15-20 pages)	The ability to design a research project with good research questions and appropriate qualitative research methods.	High	Significant	Basic	Not even reaching marginal levels
Present the research proposal/paper	The ability to organize and articulate one's ideas in a paper/proposal in public in a cogent matter.	High	Significant	Basic	Not even reaching marginal levels
Final exam	Ability to analyse how different qualitative methods are suited to different areas of qualitative media/communication research and assess how the methods are applied in weaving together the theory and the data in selected major works.	High	Significant	Basic	Not even reaching marginal levels

Part III Other Information

1. Keyword Syllabus

Communication research, media research, qualitative research methods, interview, ethnographic study, case study, historical analysis, focused group interview

2. Reading List

2.1 Compulsory Readings

1.	K. B. Jensen & N. W. Jankowski (Ed.). (1991). <i>A Handbook of Qualitative Methodologies for Mass Communication Research</i> . London: Routledge.
2.	C. W. Mills (1959). <i>The Sociological Imagination</i> . New York: Oxford UP.
3.	N. J. Smelser (1977). <i>Comparative Methods in the Social Sciences</i> . New York: Prentice Hall.
4.	M. Weber (1978). <i>The Methodology of the Social Sciences</i> . In W. C. Runciman (Ed.), <i>Weber: Selections in Translation</i> (pp.65-134). London: Cambridge.
5.	N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Ed.) (2017) <i>The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Research</i> (5 th Edition). Sage Publishing.

Supplemental texts:

1.	E. Oyen (1990). <i>Comparative Methodology</i> . London: Sage.
2.	R. M. Emerson, R. I. Fretz., & L. L. Shaw (1995). <i>Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes</i> . Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
3.	C. Tilly (1984). <i>Big Structures, Large Processes, Huge Comparisons</i> . New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

Major works in media and communication for analysis:

Case Study	
1.	D. Hallin (1986). <i>The "Uncensored" War: The Media and Vietnam</i> . New York: Oxford UP.
2.	K. Lang & G. Lang (1983). <i>The Battle for Public Opinion: The President, the Press, and the Polls during Watergate</i> . New York: Columbia UP.
3.	A. Sreberny-Mohammadi, & A. Mohammadi (1994). <i>Small Media, Big Revolution: Communication, Culture, and the Iranian Revolution</i> . Minneapolis: U of Minnesota Press.
4.	C. C. Lee, J. M. Chan, Z. Pan, & C. So (2002). <i>Global Media Spectacle</i> . Albany: State U of New York Press.
Ethnographic study	
1.	G. Tuchman (1978). <i>Making News</i> . New York: Free Press.
2.	H. J. Gans (1979). <i>Deciding What's News</i> . New York: Pantheon.
3.	T. Gitlin (1980). <i>The Whole World in Watching</i> . Berkeley: U of California Press.
4.	Boczkowski, P. (2004). <i>Digitizing the news: Innovation in online newspapers</i> . MIT Press.
5.	Anderson, C. (2013). <i>Rebuilding the news: Metropolitan journalism in the digital age</i> . Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
Reception analysis	
1.	D. Morley (1992). <i>Television, Audiences and Cultural Studies</i> . London: Routledge.

Text and Context	
1.	T. Liebes & E. Katz (1993). <i>The Export of Meaning</i> . Cambridge: Harvard UP.
2.	W. Gamson (1992). <i>Talking Politics</i> . New York: Cambridge UP.
3.	J. Ettema and T. Glasser (1998). <i>Custodians of Conscience: Investigative Journalism and Public Virtue</i> . Columbia University Press.
Historical analysis	
1.	M. Schudson (1979). <i>Discovering the News</i> . New York: Basic.
2.	M. Schudson (2015). <i>The Rise of the Right to Know: Politics and the Culture of Transparency, 1945–1975</i> . Harvard University Press.
3.	L. Spigel (2009). <i>TV By Design: Modern Art and the Rise of Network TV</i> . University of Chicago Press.
Comparative system analysis	
1.	D. Hallin & P. Mancini (2011). <i>Comparing Media Systems Beyond the Western World</i> . New York: Cambridge UP.
2.	D. Hallin & P. Mancini (2004). <i>Comparative Media Systems</i> . New York: Cambridge UP.
3.	C. Sparks (1998). <i>Communication, Capitalism, and the Mass Media</i> . London: Sage
Lessons and Pitfalls: Study of China’s Media	
1.	Y. Zhao (2008). <i>Communication in China: Political Economy, Power, and Conflict</i> . Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.
2.	M. K. Whyte (1974). <i>Small Group and Political Rituals in China</i> . Cambridge: Harvard UP.

2.2 Additional Readings