

FMED 530: Communicating Qualitative Health Research for Diverse Audiences (3 Credit)

Instructor: Dr. Kathleen (Kate) Rice, Assistant Professor,
Department of Family Medicine

Dates: Jan 10th 2022-April 10th 2024

Time: Wednesdays 13:30-16:30

Location: 5858 Chemin de la Cote-des-Neiges

Office Hours: By appointment

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Course Description:

This 3-credit course focuses on communicating qualitative health research for diverse audiences. Students will be invited to think critically about the relationship between discipline-specific conventions of scholarly writing and communication, and the forms of knowledge that are sustained and (re)produced through research dissemination practices. The course will begin by examining some of the personal, epistemological, and pragmatic challenges inherent in producing and disseminating qualitative research for a clinical and policy-oriented audience. This foundation is intended to guide student thinking throughout the duration of the course.

Because qualitative research methods originate in the social sciences and humanities and are most established and developed in those domains, writing qualitative research for clinical and policy-oriented audiences entails successfully bridging disciplinary conventions that are often incommensurate. To better understand how researchers effectively achieve this feat, the second segment of the course will be devoted to reading and analyzing the work of scholars who have published their research in both clinician/policy-oriented and health-oriented social science and medical humanities journals. In so doing, participants will reflect on what is produced and obscured through their efforts to produce peer-reviewed research that meets the standards of scholarly rigour across disciplines. The primary objective is not to critique the topics and content of the studies that we will read (although we will certainly do this), but rather to reflect on how the authors strategically “package” their research according to their target audience. Additionally, we will read/listen to and analyze examples of forms of dissemination besides peer-reviewed articles, including Commentary, Editorial, podcast, graphic medicine, ethnographic monograph, and arts-based approaches. Students will be invited to think critically about how these various forms of communication shape both how research findings are framed, and who they reach. The final portion of the course will be focusing on developing, framing, and disseminating students’ own research for three different audiences: 1) clinical and/or policy-making audiences; 2) social science/global health/medical humanities audiences 3) popular audiences.

As an advanced graduate seminar, the course is structured around seminar-style discussion. While the professor may lecture for a portion of each session on an ad hoc basis, students are expected to come to class having prepared to fully participate.

Learning outcomes:

By the end of the course students will have assembled toolkit of strategies to guide their own writing, alongside a deeper understanding of the practical, ethical, and conceptual challenges that qualitative writing for diverse audiences entails.

Required Texts:

The Logic of Care: Health and the Problem of Patient Choice by Annemarie Mol.

Lissa: a story about medical promise, friendship, and revolution, by Sherine Hamdy & Coleman Nye (writers), Sarula Bao & Caroline Brewer (art), Marc Parenteau (lettering).

All other course materials will be provided through MyCourses.

Assignments and evaluation:

Evaluation will be based on two assignments, class participation, and the facilitation of class discussion. There is no exam. Assignments are due at the *beginning* of the class on the due date. Late assignments will be penalized by 10% per day unless an extension has been granted by the instructor or in the case of an emergency.

Evaluation Measure	Grade %
Final Assignment (written and oral component)	30%
Podcast	20%
Facilitation of discussion (X2):	30% (15% + 15%)
Class attendance and participation	20%

Final Assignment

Part 1 (15%): In-Class Research Presentation (approx. 20mins)

You have two options for this assignment. If you have your own qualitative data, you are strongly encouraged to use it. If you do not have your own data, you must choose a peer-reviewed study (journal article, book chapter, or book) that is relevant to a healthcare audience (primary care, public health, global health etc.) but is written for a social science or humanities-oriented audience. If you choose this latter option, check with the professor to ensure that your chosen publication is suitable.

- Briefly summarize the research, and explain its relevance to healthcare
- Explain two potential venues for dissemination of that research; at least one venue must be a clinical or policy-oriented journal
- Explain the publication requirements and disciplinary conventions of those venue (you may want to peruse a few examples of qualitative publications from your chosen journal(s) to get a sense of what they publish), reflect on the challenges that meeting those standards would entail for your chosen research study, and explain what you will need to emphasize and (potentially) obscure in order to successfully publish or disseminate there. You may choose an alternative method of dissemination (e.g. graphic medicine, arts-based method) if you wish.

Final two weeks of Class: Sign-up sheet will circulate in class on Week 1.

Part 2: (15%): Write-Up and Reflection (8-10 pages, double-spaced)

Part 2 entails writing up the content of your presentation. If space permits, you are welcome to go more in-depth in the written component.

Due Date: Final class

Facilitation of Discussion (30%):

Each student is responsible for leading discussion on at least one course reading (sign-up sheet will circulate in class on Week 1. Total number of assigned readings will depend on course enrollment). As the facilitator, you should explain what you see as the main points/contribution/purpose of the reading and bring several questions to stimulate discussion. These questions can focus on both content and writing. If your reading is part of a pair (as in, two articles by the same author(s), published in social science journals and biomedical journals respectively), each presenter will provide their summary and then be invited to pose questions that relate to both readings. If you like, you may work with a partner on this.

Podcast (20%):

For this assignment, you will prepare a 20–40-minute **podcast episode** about a healthcare issue of your choice. It can be either informative, argumentative, or both.

Due Date: Week 9

Class Attendance and Participation (20%)

As an advanced graduate seminar, attendance and active participation is mandatory. I am aware of the wide range of experience and expertise in the classroom (this is a strength!); you are expected to “grow” as a scholar over the duration of the course but will be evaluated fairly. In turn, I expect all students to do their part to foster an inclusive and supportive learning environment.

As a component of class participation, each student must submit four reading reflections (1-2 pages, double-spaced; you may choose which weeks to Reflect on). These will be graded on a pass/fail basis and are due at the beginning of class.

Course Outline

WEEK	TOPIC	COURSE MATERIALS
1	Setting the Stage	Greenhalgh, T., Annandale, E., Ashcroft, R., Barlow, J., Black, N., Bleakley, A., ... & Checkland, K. (2016). An open letter to The BMJ editors on qualitative research. <i>BMJ</i> , 352(i563).
2	Debates and Challenges	Albert, M., Paradis, E., & Kuper, A. (2015). Interdisciplinary promises versus practices in medicine: The decoupled experiences of social sciences and

		<p>humanities scholars. <i>Social Science & Medicine</i>, 126, 17-25.</p> <p>Kontos, P., & Grigorovich, A. (2018). "Sleight of Hand" or "Selling Our Soul"? Surviving and Thriving as Critical Qualitative Health Researchers in a Positivist World. <i>Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung/Forum: Qualitative Social Research</i> (Vol. 19, No. 2).</p> <p>Clark, A. M., & Thompson, D. R. (2016). Five tips for writing qualitative research in high-impact journals: Moving from# BMJnoQual. <i>International Journal of Qualitative Methods</i>, 15 (1): 1-3.</p>
3	Potential Paths: Writing for Scholarly Audiences Part I	<p>Buchbinder, M., Ojo, E., Knio, L., & Brassfield, E. R. (2018). Caregivers' Experiences with Medical Aid-In-Dying in Vermont: A Qualitative Study. <i>Journal of pain and symptom management</i>, 56(6), 936-943.</p> <p>Buchbinder, M. (2018). Choreographing Death: A Social Phenomenology of Medical Aid-in-Dying in the United States. <i>Medical anthropology quarterly</i>, 32(4), 481-497.</p> <p>Mykhalovskiy, E., Eakin, J., Beagan, B., Beausoleil, N., Gibson, B. E., Macdonald, M. E., & Rock, M. J. (2018). Beyond bare bones: critical, theoretically engaged qualitative research in public health. <i>Canadian Journal of Public Health</i>, 109(5), 613-621.</p>
4	Potential Paths: Writing for Scholarly Audiences Part II	<p>Hunt, L. M., Kreiner, M., & Brody, H. (2012). The changing of chronic illness management in primary care: a qualitative study of underlying influences and unintended outcomes. <i>The Annals of Family Medicine</i>, 10 (5), 452-460.</p> <p>Kreiner, M. J., & Hunt, L. M. (2014). The pursuit of preventive care for chronic illness: turning healthy people into chronic patients. <i>Sociology of health & illness</i>, 36 (6), 870-884.</p> <p>Smith, M. J., Thompson, A., & Upshur, R. E. (2018). Is 'health equity' bad for our health? A qualitative empirical ethics study of public health policy-makers' perspectives. <i>Canadian Journal of Public Health</i>, 109, 633-642.</p>
5	Writing About Culture: Potentials and Pitfalls	<p>Kleinman, A., & Benson, P. (2006). Anthropology in the clinic: the problem of cultural competency and how to fix it. <i>PLoS medicine</i>, 3(10), e294.</p>

		<p>Olsen, L. D. (2020). "We'd Rather Be Relevant than Theoretically Accurate": The Translation and Commodification of Social Scientific Knowledge for Clinical Practice. <i>Social Problems</i>, 0: 1-17.</p> <p>Kowal, E. (2010). "Is culture the problem or the solution? Outstation health and the politics of remoteness." In, <i>Culture Crisis: Anthropology and Politics in Aboriginal Australia</i>. Edited by J. Altman and M. Hinkson, University of New South Wales Press.</p>
6	Podcast	<p>Brown, J. (2020, May 4). Narratives of Loss: Baptiste Brossard talks Alzheimer's Disease & Social Dimensions of Ageing (No. 57) [audio podcast episode]. In <i>The Familiar Strange</i>. ANU & The American Anthropological Association. https://thefamiliarstrange.com/2020/05/04/narratives-of-loss-brossard/</p> <p>Bigham, B. & Omole M. (Feb 27, 2023). Understanding parents' concerns about vaccinating their children against SARS-CoV-2 [audio podcast episode]. In <i>CMAJ Podcasts</i>. CMAJ Group. https://podcasts.apple.com/ca/podcast/understanding-parents-concerns-about-vaccinating-their/id962398118?i=1000601808835</p> <p>Van Ness, J. (2020, Jan 1). What Does Inequality Have to Do with HIV? With Dr. Celeste Watkins-Hayes, Professor of Sociology and African American Studies (No. 142) [audio podcast episode]. In <i>Getting Curious with Jonathan Van Ness</i>. Earwolf. https://www.jonathanvanness.com/gettingcurious/episode/29bb05b5/what-does-inequality-have-to-do-with-hiv-with-dr-celeste-watkins-hayes-professor-of-sociology-and-african-american-studies</p>
7	Arts	<p>"The Possibilities of Fiction-Based Research: Portraying Lives in Context" in Leavy, P. (2016). <i>Fiction as research practice: Short stories, novellas, and novels</i> (Vol. 11). Routledge, pp. 37-52.</p> <p>Mwita, J. M. (2022). Night-Time Curfew, Day-Time Masks. <i>Anthropology and Humanism</i>, 47 (2): 409-415.</p> <p>Kusserow, A. (2016). Talk Therapy for a Congolese Refugee. <i>Anthropology and Humanism</i>, 2(41), 219-220.</p> <p>Carver, R. (1989). What the doctor said. <i>A New Path to the</i></p>

		<p><i>Waterfall: Poems</i>. The Atlantic Monthly Press.</p> <p>Tran, K. (Spring 2018). Adult ADHD Screening Questionnaire. <i>Intima: A Journal of Narrative Medicine</i>. 1-4.</p>
8	Graphic Medicine	<p>Hamdy, S. F. (2008). When the state and your kidneys fail: Political etiologies in an Egyptian dialysis ward. <i>American ethnologist</i>, 35(4), 553-569.</p> <p>Hamdy, S., & Nye, C. (2017). <i>Lissa: a story about medical promise, friendship, and revolution</i>. University of Toronto Press.</p>
9	Popular and Mass Media <i>Podcast Assignment Due</i>	<p>Frakt, A. B., Carroll, A. E., Pollack, H. A., & Humphreys, K. (2018). The rewards and challenges of writing for a mass media audience. <i>Health Services Research</i>, 53(5), 3278-3283.</p> <p>Fox, M. P., Carr, K., D'Agostino McGowan, L., Murray, E. J., Hidalgo, B., & Banack, H. R. (2021). Will Podcasting and Social Media Replace Journals and Traditional Science Communication? No, but... <i>American Journal of Epidemiology</i>, 190(8), 1625-1631.</p> <p>Bank, L. (26 May 2022) <i>Covid death rate in Eastern Cape by far the highest in South Africa</i>. Lockdown Repercussions Op-Ed. <i>The Daily Maverick</i> https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2022-05-26-covid-19-has-scarred-the-economic-face-of-rural-eastern-cape-precipitating-a-cultural-crisis/</p> <p>Farmer, P. (2021, Feb 8). <i>Ebola, Covid-19 And the Elusive Quest for Global Health Equity</i> (Interview by Madhukar Pai for Forbes). https://www.forbes.com/sites/madhukarpai/2021/02/08/ebola-covid-19-and-the-elusive-quest-for-global-health-equity/?sh=7665155d578e</p>
10	Communication For Policy	<p>Donmoyer, R. (2012). Can qualitative researchers answer policymakers' What-Works Question?. <i>Qualitative Inquiry</i>, 18(8), 662-673.</p> <p>Jarman H., (Dec 17 2022). What is a policy brief and how do I write one? <i>HMP Blog</i>, Department of Health Management & Policy, University of Michigan. Available: https://www.hmpgovernancelab.org/health-politics-blog/policy-writing-skills-series-what-is-a-policy-brief-how-do-i-write-one</p>

		Forward P., with P. Raggo. (Oct 2021). Law, Culture, & Reprisals: A Qualitative Case Study of Whistleblowing and Health Canada's Drug Approval Process. The Case- an Overview. No S.1.1. <i>Whistleblowing Canada.</i> , Roberts Creek, BC.
11	Medical Ethnography for Diverse Audiences	Mol, A. (2008). <i>The logic of care: Health and the problem of patient choice</i> . London: Routledge. Mol, A. (2009). Living with diabetes: care beyond choice and control. <i>The Lancet</i> , 373(9677), 1756-1757
12	Synthesis and Wrap-Up	Final Presentations
13	Synthesis and Wrap-Up	Final Presentations

McGill Policy Statements

McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore, all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures (see www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/ for more information).

In accord with McGill University's Charter of Students' Rights, students in this course have the right to submit in English or in French any written work that is to be graded.

Accessibility Policy Statement

All students are entitled to disability-related accommodations, as required. If you know that you require accommodations in order to fully participate in the seminar, please inform the professor of your needs as early as possible.