



The University of Georgia

University Council
Athens, Georgia 30602

March 12, 2014

UNIVERSITY CURRICULUM COMMITTEE – 2013-2014

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Dear Colleagues:

The attached proposal to offer the existing Graduate Certificate in Qualitative Studies as an online program will be an agenda item for the March 19, 2014, Full University Curriculum Committee meeting.

Sincerely,

David E. Shipley, Chair
University Curriculum Committee

cc: Provost Pamela S. Whitten
Dr. Laura D. Jolly

**Proposal for an External
Degree
The University of
Georgia**

Institution: The University of Georgia Date: 11/20/2013

College/School/Division: College of Education

Department: Lifelong Education, Administration, and Policy

Degree (please indicate whether this is a stand-alone degree): This is not a degree program but a certificate program for degree-seeking students or for non-degree students already holding a graduate degree.

Major: Qualitative Studies

CIP Code: _____

Proposed Start Date: Fall 2014

The proposal for an External Degree must include a brief narrative that addresses the following points and completion of the attached Addendum for Distance Education Delivery of New Programs.

1. Assessment

The University of Georgia's Qualitative Research Program already has a well-established graduate certificate program in qualitative studies. We request permission to begin offering an E-version of the existing Interdisciplinary Qualitative Studies Graduate Certificate beginning the fall of 2014.

Since 2001, more than 200 graduate students from doctoral programs across the university have received the Interdisciplinary Qualitative Studies Graduate Certificate. Over the years, the program chairs (Dr. Judith Preissle and Dr. Melissa Freeman) have received requests from scholars at other institutions asking us whether we offer our certificate online. We believe that there is an important untapped audience for this certificate program if it were offered fully online. The only competitor currently in the market is Nova Southeastern University, and our program has the potential to offer a much broader array of offerings than Nova Southeastern.

UGA's Qualitative Research Program has always been a key player in national and international methodological growth and innovation, and its certificate program has been used as a model by other institutions interested in starting such a program. In order to stay competitive, however, online delivery is necessary. Our competitors, especially the fully online certificate program at Nova Southeastern University (i.e., Graduate School of Humanities and Social Sciences' Graduate Certificate in Qualitative Research) are already making this move and the solicitations we get from interested students about the availability of an online version of our certificate program suggests the need is there.

Qualitative research as a field or discipline is developing in leaps and bounds. The proliferation of new methodologies, paradigms and resources means that faculty who received degrees even 5 to 10 years ago may not have been sufficiently trained to adequately advise and supervise their students' theses or dissertations. The online version of the qualitative certificate program offers training and support for non-degree students seeking this kind of professional development while expanding options to graduate students enrolled in UGA and non-UGA degree programs. There is demonstrated evidence of student interest for this certificate program here in Georgia, throughout the United States, and abroad. For example, we have consistently received inquiries from faculty and students at other institutions who would like to pursue the certificate but distance prevents this, and several of the qualitative research faculty have served as methodologists on dissertation committees for students at other institutions and have also been invited to offer workshops abroad to faculty interested in developing expertise in qualitative research. For example, Dr. deMarrais has conducted such workshops in South Africa and Malaysia, and Dr. Roulston has conducted workshops in Australia. It is, therefore, highly likely that the online version of the Interdisciplinary Qualitative Studies Graduate Certificate will mirror the success of the face-to-face version which has awarded the certificate to 212 doctoral students since 2001.

Research methods and methodology have traditionally been housed as parts of disciplines, such as sociology, family studies, educational psychology, and so forth. The Interdisciplinary Qualitative Studies Graduate Certificate, however, was originally sponsored by the College of Education, School of Social Work, College of Family and Consumer Sciences, and College of Arts and Sciences and is built on the idea that the study of methods, design, and conceptual frameworks is an interdisciplinary pursuit. Class readings draw from and cover a range of disciplinary and methodological frameworks, and students from departments and colleges across UGA take our classes, increasing cross-disciplinary exchange and dialogue. The online version of our certificate program will continue to make use of the established understanding of the value of the interdisciplinary study of the research designs and methods used to inquire about human life and meaning while expanding student access to these courses and certificate.

2. Admission Requirements

Program administration will reside in the Qualitative Research Program. Students interested in pursuing the online version of the Interdisciplinary Qualitative Studies Graduate Certificate Program can apply as non-degree seeking graduate students to the Qualitative Certificate Program through the Graduate School if they are not currently in a UGA graduate program. The Graduate School's admissions standards will be used for non-degree students. While the courses include a variety of projects, the primary assessment of the student's performance will be course grades and the successful completion of a qualitative applied project.

3. Program Content

The E-version will follow the same 15-credit course sequence already established for the existing face-to-face Interdisciplinary Qualitative Studies Graduate Certificate program. While content material and assignments will have to be adapted to better fit the online environment, we have already begun this work by offering several of our courses in a blended format. In other words, the five courses for this certificate are already being offered by the qualitative research program;

however, we will provide separate sections that have been redesigned exclusively to meet the needs of an online audience and are supported by current best practices in online delivery and design.

Table 1: Curriculum Outline

QUAL 8400e	Qualitative Research Traditions	Foundations of qualitative design: history, philosophy, nature, types, examples, and assessment. Reading and evaluating reports of qualitative research in the social sciences and identifying methodological issues.	3 Credits
QUAL 8410e	Designing Qualitative Research	Disciplinary origins and cross-disciplinary uses, variations, applications, and evaluations of methods of collecting qualitative data. Choice of methods in the overall construction of qualitative designs, practice in selecting and collecting qualitative data for social science research, and examination of the methodological literature.	3 Credits
QUAL 8420e	Analyzing Qualitative Data	Approaches to analysis in the design of qualitative research studies. Procedures are surveyed and compared from a range of social science and professional disciplines for use in studying relevant disciplinary problems and topics.	3 Credits
QUAL 8520e or QUAL 8530e	Qualitative Interviewing or Case Study Research	Conceptual framework for interviewing, approaches associated with various disciplines and schools of inquiry, forms and structures interviewing takes, the criteria developed to assess interviews, and interviewing practice across a variety of situations. Recording, analyzing, and reporting interview data, ethical and relationship issues, and research on interviewing methods. [or] Case study as a research design. Topics are types of case studies, defining the case, site and sample selection, data collection methods, within-case and cross-case analysis, and writing case reports.	3 Credits

QUAL 9400e or QUAL 8550e	Advanced Qualitative Research Seminar, or Writing Up Qualitative Research	<p>QUAL 9400e provides a scholarly environment for students to discuss issues pertinent to their individual research agendas. Topics covered in this class include teaching qualitative research methods, writing and reviewing for publication, trends and issues in the field of qualitative inquiry, and presenting research to multiple audiences.</p> <p>[or] QUAL 8550e Topics include theoretical, ethical, and practical issues involved in transforming qualitative data into a written research report. Students will write representations of data they have already collected.</p>	3 Credits
Total			15 Credits

All courses already exist and have been approved by the curriculum committee as e-courses, except for QUAL 8550e, which we will submit to the curriculum committee as an e-course.

4. Student Advising

Dr. Kathryn Roulston has been appointed as coordinator for the online certificate program and will supervise clearance of students for registration and any ongoing advising issues while students are taking coursework. Individual advisement will be conducted with students via synchronous video meetings conducted via Adobe Connect. Email and telephone will be used throughout the semester. A listserv will be developed to keep students informed of information concerning coursework, as well as information about qualitative research more generally.

5. Resident Requirements

This is a certificate program, not a degree program, so there are no residency requirements.

6. Program Management

The Interdisciplinary Qualitative Studies Graduate Certificate is housed in the Department of Lifelong Education, Administration, and Policy in the College of Education. This is where the online version will also reside, so the faculty, administrative support, and physical space are already established.

We will use existing resources to deliver the courses. We will offer one or two courses each semester based on the following schedule (this is a tentative schedule that may be modified to better meet the needs of the students):

Semester	Course
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Fall 2014	QUAL 8400e
Spring 2015	QUAL 8410e
Summer 2015	QUAL 8520e and QUAL 8530e
Fall 2015	QUAL 8420e
Spring 2016	QUAL 9400e and QUAL 8550e

- Semester/Year of Program Initiation: Fall 2014
- Semester/Year Full Implementation of Program: Fall 2014
- Semester/Year First Certificates will be awarded: Spring/Summer 2016
- Annual Number of Graduates expected (once the program is established): 10-15
- Projected Future Trends for number of students enrolled in the program: The existing Qualitative Research Certificate Program processes on average 20 certificates a year. We expect the online version to add visibility and access to this program with a steady increase of certificates awarded each year.

Finally, the e-version of the certificate program will allow the Qualitative Research Program to support students who are not able to physically travel to Athens, GA, which will allow it to disseminate its mission to a wider audience.

The mission of the Qualitative Research Program is to foster scholarship in research design and prepare qualitative research methodologists. Recipients of the Interdisciplinary Qualitative Studies Graduate Certificate have the knowledge and skills to design, critique, and implement high-quality qualitative research and evaluation studies. The program aims to:

1. Provide students with a thorough knowledge of a variety of approaches to qualitative research methods used across disciplines.
2. Provide students with an understanding of the philosophical frameworks that undergird qualitative research designs.
3. Assist students in identifying qualitative research perspectives within their own as well as in other disciplines and in critiquing prevailing theories, methods, and substantive research for their quality and ethical standards.
4. Encourage students to appreciate diversity across a variety of qualitative approaches to inquiry.
5. Engage students in developing expertise in at least one approach to qualitative research design.
6. Prepare students to engage in scholarship about the field of qualitative inquiry.
7. Prepare students to teach introductory courses in qualitative research and courses in their qualitative approach(es) of expertise.

7. Library and Laboratory Resources

Online access to some library resources will be required, but no additional library resources will be necessary to offer these courses.

We will use the current UGA online Learning Management System known as ELCNew (supported by Desire2Learn or whatever is next) to offer these courses. We anticipate making use of resources offered by the Office of Instructional Technology in the College of Education, as well as the Office of Online Learning to develop online materials.

No new or dedicated physical facilities are required to implement the program.

8. Budget

This program will use existing resources, and courses will be taught with existing faculty members. There are no start-up or additional costs associated with this program.

9. Program Costs Assessed to Students

There are no additional anticipated costs beyond those students normally would incur in the current face-to-face certificate program.

10. Accreditation

Program accreditation is not available for the Interdisciplinary Qualitative Studies Graduate Program.