EDUC 3104 - Introduction to Qualitative Methods

University of Pittsburgh - School of Education | Syllabus - Spring 2025

Navigating the Syllabus

Welcome to EDUC 3104! This syllabus provides a general overview of the course. Specifics will be posted on Canvas. The contents of the syllabus are divided into tabs, and each tab contains subsections with corresponding headings. You can view these categories by selecting the icon titled, "show tabs and outlines" on the left-hand side of this Google Doc. Click on each tab on the left to expand it and read details about major aspects of the course (tabs also linked below):

- Course Overview
- Weekly Schedule
- Assignment Summaries
- Major Writing Assignments
- University Policies

The syllabus will be updated periodically to meet class needs. Therefore, revisiting this Google Doc (rather than downloading it as a file) will ensure you have the most accurate information.

Contact Information

- Instructor: Dr. Mariko Yoshisato Cavey (she/her)
- Teaching Assistant: Sierra Stern (she/her)

Course Description

This course introduces students to qualitative research design and methods in the social sciences from a justice-centered, critical perspective. In small-scale projects, students will gain experience with various aspects of the research process and familiarity with the implementation of research methods characteristic of qualitative research. We explore differing assumptions about how knowledge is generated and the nature of truth claims.

Rationale

This course serves an essential need for graduate students to understand and apply some of the approaches that fall under the umbrella of "qualitative research." Students will gain an understanding of the basic mechanics of qualitative research, and how different forms of qualitative research are grounded in theories of knowledge (epistemologies), theories of the social world (paradigms or theoretical perspectives), and traditions of practice (methods, genres, or discourse communities).

Learning Objectives

The goals of this course are to support students in developing the knowledge and skills to:

- Apply qualitative methods as part of the research process, using practical examples.
- Analyze different approaches to qualitative research, and describe the epistemological and ontological assumptions associated with these approaches.
- Practice strategies and techniques to support thesis and dissertation research.
- Gauge interest in exploring specific methods further to conduct, with ongoing guidance, a qualitative dissertation or other study.

Required Materials

You may purchase a copy of these books for yourself, or rent them through the Pitt Library. Additional assigned and optional readings will be uploaded to Canvas as PDFs or online links.

Emerson, Robert M., Fetz, Rachel I., & Shaw, Linda L. (2011). Writing ethnographic fieldnotes, 2nd ed. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press. (1st edition is also acceptable)

Lareau, Annette (2021). Listening to people: A practical guide to interviewing, participant observation, data analysis, and writing it all up. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Saldaña, Johnny (2021). The coding manual for qualitative researchers, 4th ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. (any other edition is also acceptable, e.g. 2013/2nd ed.)

Acknowledgements

Previous versions of this course were designed and taught by Dr. Lori Delale-O'Connor and Dr. Mike Gunzenhauser. The primary readings and research assignments for this semester are informed by their foundational structure. Dr. Amanda Datnow and Dr. Clarissa Reese provided models for teaching qualitative research that shaped my approach to the weekly assignments, course pacing, student feedback, and grading. Dr. Hayley Weddle offered thoughtful input on course objectives and strategies for supporting students' learning. Colleagues in our scholarly community at the University of Pittsburgh, including Dr. Leigh Patel and Dr. Shanyce Campbell, have emphasized the importance of acknowledging those who have influenced my pedagogy.

Course Structure and Engagement

The course content is divided into three modules. We will spend several weeks on each module's topics while building towards synthesis. The expectations for readings and assignments will be posted on Canvas weekly, and the syllabus will be updated accordingly. Please complete all preparatory readings and assignments by the time we meet for each class.

Overall, everyone's engagement and participation sets the tone and foundation for our learning. Engagement and participation look different from person to person. Some students may have

different comfort levels with the activities expected of the class. As a learning community, it is important for us to trust that individuals know how they can be most present with the group. My hope is that our weekly sessions will offer a supportive environment in which everyone can contribute and have their strengths recognized, while creating space for uncertainty and growth. If you would like to discuss anything with me, please reach out via email or schedule a meeting.

Attendance and Absences

In accordance with your graduate program design, in-person class attendance is required. Absences will be addressed on a case-by-case basis. If you are unable to attend a session, please inform me ahead of time via email. To catch up on missed material, I encourage you to utilize the learning community resources provided by peers and the TA, such as class notes.

Grading Overview

I approach this course with hopes that you will feel pushed to your learning edge, find value in the concepts presented and discussed, make connections to your work and future research, and grow as a student, by engaging with curiosity and humility in critical thought, self-reflection, collaborative experiences, peer and instructor input, and support from the learning community.

Coursework is graded for full credit on a "satisfactory/unsatisfactory" basis. Assuming all of your assignments are "satisfactory," you can expect to earn an overall "A" grade in the course. If your assignment does not meet the requirements for "satisfactory" credit, you will be offered the opportunity to incorporate feedback, make improvements, and resubmit it to meet expectations.

The listed due dates are intended to help everyone stay "on track" with overall course pacing, and allow ample time for feedback to be offered as needed before class sessions. If you find it challenging to meet a due date, you may still submit the assignment later (and earn full credit, as long as it is complete). If I see missing assignments from you, I might reach out to check in about your plan and timeline for submission. However, I encourage you to proactively inform me if you will need an extension so that I can support you to the best of my ability.

Assignments, Points, and Workload At-A-Glance

Assignment	Points (of 100 points total)	Anticipated Workload
Module 1: Situating Qualitative Research		
Community-Building Activity Facilitation	10 points	Low Workload
Discussion Board Post (Introduction)	2 points	Low Workload
CITI Certifications and Optional IRB Approval	3 points	Low Workload
Draft Positionality Statement	2 points	Medium Workload
Final Positionality Statement	3 points	Medium Workload

Module 2: Design and Methods		
Draft Annotated Bibliography	2 points	Medium Workload
Final Annotated Bibliography	3 points	Medium Workload
Draft Research Proposal	4 points	High Workload
Final Research Proposal	6 points	High Workload
Draft Interview Protocol	4 points	High Workload
Final Interview Protocol	6 points	High Workload
Module 3: Analysis and Representation		
Mid-Semester Check-In	5 points	Low Workload
Draft Interview Transcripts	4 points	Medium Workload
Final Interview Transcripts	6 points	Medium Workload
Draft Observational Field Notes	2 points	Medium Workload
Final Observational Field Notes	3 points	Medium Workload
Draft Codebook	2 points	Medium Workload
Final Codebook	3 points	Medium Workload
Memo Prep Packet	6 points	High Workload
Draft Analytic Memo	7 points	High Workload
Final Analytic Memo	10 points	High Workload
Reflection Synthesis	7 points	Low Workload

Weekly Schedule At-A-Glance

Week (Mon)	Module Topics/Activities	Assignments Due by Class (Weds)	Assignments Due by End of Week (Sun)	Load
Module 1:Situating Qualitative Research				
1: Jan 6	Course Overview and Introduction	None	Recommended: Familiarize yourself with the syllabus and reach out with questions	Low
2: Jan 13	Purposes, Principles, and Traditions of Qual Research	Discussion Board Post (Introduction) Recommended: Access CITI Profile	Required: CITI Certifications Optional: IRB Approval (extend if needed)	Low
3: Jan 20	Relationships, Reciprocity, Ethics, and Positionality	Draft Positionality Statement	Final Positionality Statement	Medium

Module 2: Design and Methods				
4: Jan 27	Relationship Between Research Questions and Study Design	Draft Annotated Bibliography	Final Annotated Bibliography	Medium
5: Feb 3	WRITING WORKSHOP: Research Design	Draft Research Proposal	Final Research Proposal	High
6: Feb 10	Interviewing	Draft Interview Protocol	Final Interview Protocol	High
7: Feb 17	Observations	Recommended: Schedule interviews this week, or refine protocol	Recommended: Draft interview transcript(s) if applicable, continue participant outreach	Medium
8: Feb 24	Field Notes	Recommended: Schedule interviews and/or observations this week	Recommended: Draft interview transcript(s) and/or draft observational field notes	Medium
NA: Mar 3	NO CLASS	None - Spring Break!	Reminder: Last chance to submit or improve assignments from Modules 1-2!	Low
Module 3: Analysis and Representation				
9: Mar 10	Event: Register Here	Mid-Semester Check-In Recommended: Draft transcripts/notes	Reminder: Last chance to gather data (interviews and field notes) before coding!	Low
10: Mar 17	WRITING WORKSHOP: Coding Data: Part 1	Draft Interview Transcripts Draft Observational Field Notes	Final Interview Transcripts Final Observational Field Notes	Medium
11: Mar 24	Coding Data: Part 2	Draft Codebook	Final Codebook	Medium
12: Mar 31	WRITING WORKSHOP: Analytic Memos: Part 1	Memo Prep Packet	Recommended: Work on writing a strong draft analytic memo for class next week	High
13: Apr 7	Analytic Memos: Part 2	Draft Analytic Memo	Recommended: Communicate findings	High
14: Apr 14	Qualitative Futures	Final Analytic Memo	Reflection Synthesis Reminder: Last chance to submit any work!	Medium
15: Apr 21	NO CLASS	Optional: Individual Student Meetings	Optional: Attend Qual Sessions at AERA	Low

Course Assignments

This section provides an overview of all course assignments. Detailed expectations are posted on Canvas, where you will submit your work and receive feedback throughout the semester.

Community-Building Activity

Each week, one student (or multiple students working as a pair or small group) will support the learning community by facilitating a brief "icebreaker" community-building activity at the start of

class (15-20 mins). Activities might include fun group exercises, get-to-know-you, team-building, grounding practices, etc. Sign up for a facilitation date on the table in our class notes doc.

Discussion Board Post (Introduction)

Share an informal introduction of yourself to the learning community. Consider what you would like your peers, TA, and instructor to know about your current or aspirational professional role, graduate program, research area, qualitative methods experience, approach to learning, etc.

CITI Certifications and Optional IRB Approval

As soon as possible, submit your certificate of completion for human subjects certification modules. While requirements may vary for your department, for this course, you will need to complete at least the Responsible Code of Research and Social-Behavioral-Educational Courses. Details on the CITI training modules and access to complete them can be found here: https://www.orp.pitt.edu/training. As noted by the University's Office of Research protection, "The purpose of this training is not only to satisfy government and University of Pittsburgh policy requirements, but to enhance research activities at all stages."

Human subjects certification is required to submit any studies for IRB approval. For this course, you also have the option of completing an application to the University of Pittsburgh Institutional Review Board for approval of your study, likely in the "exempt" or "expedited" categories. Use the Pitt PRO system to create a study, indicating your advisor as the mentor for the project.

While IRB approval is optional, please note publication or presentation of data collected during the course cannot happen without receiving prior IRB approval. As we will discuss in class, it is not a disadvantage to pursue data collection in this course without IRB approval. If you pursue IRB approval, decide which methods required for the class will be part of your approved study.

Positionality Statement (Draft)

This assignment requires you to synthesize the readings as well as our discussions about your epistemological stance. It asks you to engage with reflexive questions that many scholars wrestle with in their work, and write about them succinctly, as might be required for a journal publication. This requires deep engagement with your position in the world and understanding how that affects access to information, knowledge, and power, as well as questioning how your power and privilege influence the way your knowledge is perceived by others. This is not meant

to simply be an exploration of your identities, but a connection of those identities and associated power structure with your research.

Positionality Statement (Final)

Consider how you have built upon your understanding of this week's theme through readings, discussions, class activities, etc. which might help further develop your work on this assignment. Make any desired revisions to the draft of your assignment and submit your final version.

Annotated Bibliography (Draft)

This assignment will help shape your proposed research summary, as you gather and analyze sources relevant to the topic you plan to explore throughout the semester.

Part 1: Possible Research Topics

Which topic might you focus on in your research project for this course? You are welcome to build upon work you already have underway, or explore something new. Briefly explain why you are considering the topic.

At this point in the process, your research interests might be broad, so you can consider a *general research topic* for the annotated bibliography assignment. You do not need to have a *specific research question* driving your project right now. You will develop a research question later, through the research summary assignment. However, if you already have a research question, you may conduct a more specific literature search for your annotated bibliography.

Part 2: Guiding Sources

First, find 8-10 guiding sources that might inform the direction of your research project. Include a minimum of 3 peer-reviewed journal articles. If you wish to use other kinds of sources as well, you might consider book chapters, practitioner-facing publications, policy briefs, etc. These initial sources will provide a starting point for literature you might use to write an annotated bibliography related to your research topic, but you do not need to ultimately use all of them.

Then, after briefly reviewing your initial sources, select the top 5 (or more, if desired) that you think will best inform your research project at this stage. Aim for at least half of your top 5+ sources to be peer-reviewed journal articles. These sources may change as you learn more about the general research topic you are considering, refine your specific research question, and make progress on your research project in the coming weeks.

Part 3: Annotations

For each of your top 5+ sources, write an annotation in approximately one strong paragraph. These should be concise, so try to address the summary, analysis of the source, and relevance to your project in a maximum of 6-7 sentences total. Provide a citations for each in APA format.

Annotated Bibliography (Final)

Consider how you have built upon your understanding of this week's theme through readings, discussions, class activities, etc. which might help further develop your work on this assignment. Make any desired revisions to the draft of your assignment and submit your final version.

Be aware that regardless of any changes you might make to your annotated bibliography right now, you will likely expand upon these initial sources to include additional references in future assignments. You are encouraged to continue consulting literature and/or other materials as you progress from the research proposal to data collection to data analysis, etc.

Research Proposal (Draft)

Succinctly summarize your proposed research project. Your proposal should include: research question(s), prior theoretical and/or empirical findings, data collection, anticipated outcomes, and references. Ideally, your project in this course should be related to your broader research interests. However, depending on many factors (stage of your program, background in the focal area, time constraints, potential access issues, etc.), it might not be EXACTLY aligned with your work for a capstone or dissertation.

Research Proposal (Final)

Consider how the writing workshop on research design, and/or other learnings from this week, helped you improve your research proposal. Additionally, you might consult with a trusted colleague about your research ideas at this stage, and incorporate their feedback. If you are not ready to share ideas with others in your field yet, think about who you could engage in the future (either as a next step for upcoming assignments, or as a hypothetical plan for future work). Make any desired revisions to the draft of your assignment and submit your final version.

Be aware that regardless of any changes you might make to your research proposal right now, you will likely expand upon these initial ideas as you progress through future assignments. While you will progress through general phases of work (e.g., research design, data collection,

data analysis, etc.), qualitative methods are not linear. Therefore, you are expected to revisit and refine your previous work throughout your project development.

Interview Protocol (Draft)

Skilled interviewers know how to ask questions, the "right" questions to ask, and in what order. Interview protocols support this skill development, help maintain consistency across interviews, and are a required aspect of IRB applications. Before conducting an interview, you will design a protocol to guide that work, including questions, prompts, and other language for facilitation.

Part 1: Participant Recruitment

At this point in your research project development, you should start thinking ahead about your timeline for the entire interview process. This will involve recruiting participants, conducting the interviews, and transcribing the interviews by hand. Data collection will occur over the next five weeks, at which point we will begin data analysis (Week 10 writing workshop on coding data).

You must conduct individual interviews, not pair interviews or focus groups. Participants must be adults (age 18 years or older, no minors) and they cannot be members of your family or very close friends (colleagues are probably ok for this project, even if you are considered "friends").

You should speak with at least two participants, and no more than four participants. Across all interviews, you must have a minimum of 120 minutes of interview time total. No single interview should last less than 30 minutes or more than 60 minutes in length.

Part 2: Interview Questions

Provide framing language to help interviewees understand what to expect before you begin.

Draft 12-20 interview questions that you think will yield an interview of 30-60 minutes in length. Write out all questions and follow-up prompts as full sentences. Interview questions should be...

- Related to your overarching research question(s).
- Grounded in the relevant literature you explored for your annotated bibliography, research proposal, or other work.
- Open-ended and non-dichotomous (avoid yes/no, agree/disagree, etc. responses).
- Structured with good progression in mind (starting with background/familiarity questions and building from that point onward).
- Flagged to be dropped if some questions are specific to certain roles, and or could be skipped if you are short on time and need to conclude the interview.

Provide concluding language to end your interview.

Part 3: Informed Consent and Outreach/Communications

Provide language addressing informed consent for interview participation and recording. This is NOT the same as an IRB-approved informed consent form, because you are not conducting an IRB-approved research study or publishing/presenting on this work. Your informed consent language should cover the following topics at minimum, and can be shared in writing and/or verbally with interview participants. We will discuss this further in class.

- Who are you, and what is your project about?
- What will participants be asked to do if they agree to be interviewed?
- How will participants' information be protected during and after this project (confidentiality)?

Draft an email that you will eventually send to potential interviewees to invite them to participate in your project, using the outreach email example from Lareau (2021) or other models. Do not begin recruiting participants yet!

Interview Protocol (Final)

Consider how you have built upon your understanding of this week's theme through readings, discussions, class activities, etc. which might help further develop your work on this assignment. Make any desired revisions to the draft of your assignment and submit your final version..

Protocol Approval and Interview Timeline

Your final interview protocol, including outreach and consent language, must be reviewed and approved BEFORE you begin recruiting participants.

- All students who are approved to begin participant outreach will be notified by class time on Wednesday, February 19 (Week 7) at the latest. If not yet approved, students will receive guidance regarding specific revisions to make prior to contacting participants.
- You may conduct interviews anytime from the approval date through March 13 (Week 9).
- When planning your data collection timeline, be aware that interview transcriptions must be completed by March 19, in time for the writing workshop on coding data (Week 10).

Interview Protocol Revisions Checklist

Consider using the checklist in the table provided to identify strengths of your interview protocol design and areas for further development. The checklist categories reflect key points from the in-class mini-lecture on types of qualitative interview formats, questions, and prompts. These general categories form the basis of much qualitative research, but are not universally applicable, so some may be more relevant to your project than others. You are not required to use the checklist or submit it as part of your final assignment unless you wish to do so, but the table might help guide your thinking about revisions (similar to our in-class activity).

Interview Transcriptions

REMINDER: It is important that you conduct individual interviews with adults, because pair interviews, focus groups, and interviews with minors have different dynamics, require specific skills, and involve different informed consent processes. Complete these steps for transcripts:

a. Select at least two people who will be appropriate informants for the phenomenon you are exploring. Do not interview a minor, a member of your family, or a close friend.
b. Conduct at least two individual interviews total, amounting to approximately 120 minutes of interview time total. Interviews may be held in-person, over a phone call, or on live video (Teams, Zoom). You must audio-record all interviews from start to finish, including introductory and concluding language. Store this data in a safe place.
c. After conducting interviews, transcribe them naturalistically. This means the audio should be written exactly word-for-word by hand, capturing all utterances with the greatest detail possible (thick description), including "umm" and "hmm," laughs, extended pauses, etc. You should not outsource this step – do not use software, pay a transcription company, or have someone else help you complete this assignment. Remember, your data must also remain confidential and anonymous. In the transcriptions, replace all identifying information, such as names of individuals, organizations, and places, with pseudonyms.
d. In preparation for the writing workshop on coding data (March 19, Week 10), closely read your interview transcripts and highlight key passages that you would like to share.

Interview Transcriptions (Final)

Your interview transcripts might not require much revision, but often, researchers will find that their first pass at transcribing could use improvement. This is normal and to be expected! If you have made improvements, submit the best version of your data. If you already completed all transcripts with sufficient attention to detail in your draft, you might not have much to change.

Either way, you are encouraged to submit your final transcripts with any highlights, comments, or edits you might have added during the Week 10 coding workshop. This step is not required for this assignment, but you might find it helpful to have these notes as you begin data analysis.

Observational Field Notes

Complete these observational field notes steps:

a. Select a setting relevant to your research question(s), where you can observe safely (in-person or online). The closer the setting is to the context where you find interviewees, the more helpful the observational data will be for answering your research questions.

b. Conduct one 45-to 60-minute observation. The length of the observation will depend on the amount of action, the richness of the setting, and your ability to record minute details. Take detailed field notes as you observe, using our readings and discussions as a guide.

c. Immediately after the observation, dedicate more time to editing, building out, reflecting upon, and finalizing your field notes. Then, create a list of comments and/or questions you might ask those you observed, to help clarify or make meaning of what you saw.

d. In preparation for the writing workshop on coding data (March 19, Week 10), closely read your field notes and highlight key sections you would like to share.

Observational Field Notes (Final)

Your final field notes might not require much revision, but often, researchers will find that their first pass at writing field notes could use improvement. This is normal and to be expected! If you have made improvements, submit the best version of your data. If you already completed all field notes with sufficient attention to detail in your draft, you might not have much to change.

Either way, you are encouraged to submit your final field notes with any highlights, comments, or edits you might have added during the Week 10 coding workshop. This step is not required for this assignment, but you might find it helpful to have these notes as you begin data analysis.

Codebook

As you collect and format your data, you will begin analyzing it through coding. A codebook allows you to have a consistent and evolving understanding and record of your codes. In this document, you will record the codes you develop from your data, what they mean, and brief but representative examples of each. Drawing from the readings and the coding workshop activities, your codebook should include the following for each code: name, description, and example.

You will start your draft codebook during the coding workshop. Between the coding workshop and the next class session, you will continue developing this draft. Then, you will receive peer and instructor feedback, and revise your codebook to submit a final version the following week.

Memo Prep Packet

You will gather the final versions of your major writing assignments and organize them into a packet of prep work that has contributed to your research project thus far. This packet will help inform your last two assignments for the semester: the analytic memo and reflection synthesis.

Analytic Memo (Draft)

By the end of the semester, you will have collected a few data records related to your research topic. You will probably not feel ready to write something definitive about your topic or the data you have collected quite yet. So, view this analytic memo as an exploration of emerging insights that could *potentially* inform your findings, and *potentially* help answer the research question(s). You will also describe your analytic approaches and evolving understanding of the research process. As a meaning-making exercise, writing this analytic memo may also help inform your thinking about how to approach a larger, more in-depth research project in the future.

Your draft memo should include the following sections, as shown on the outline discussed in the Week 12 workshop: positionality, research proposal, interview and observation protocols, codebook. Respond to at least two of the prompts provided for each of the sections.

Analytic Memo (Final)

Compose a brief narrative for each section below, based on your responses to the prompts in the draft memo. Each section should be approximately 1-2 paragraphs long, and will vary based on your research project and current progress. The final memo also includes a new section on communicating the project outcomes.

Original Sections:
- Positionality Narrative
- Research Proposal Narrative
- Interview/Observation Protocols + Transcripts/Field Notes Narrative
- Codebook Narrative

New Section: Outcomes Narrative

Make at least one claim about a **finding** AND/OR explain **other types of outcomes** discussed in class (e.g., current status of your project, proposed next steps, planned shifts, requests, etc.).

If you are making claims about findings, this section should include:
- Statement asserting a finding – full sentence(s) explicating a theme
- Illustrative example from the data (e.g., interview quotes, field notes)
- Explanation of meaning as related to your research question(s), the project context, and/or the broader field

Reflection Synthesis

To connect the modules, you will complete a reflection synthesis at the end of the course. This assignment serves to communicate some highlights from your learning journey over time, and is intended to be an open-ended opportunity to reflect on your progress.

You may deliver this assignment in one of three formats. There is not a strict length requirement, but consider these guidelines based on the format you select:

- **Written reflection** - aim for 2-3 pages (double spaced), and do not exceed 5 pages
- **Audio recording** - aim for 5-7 minutes, and do not exceed 10 minutes
- **Live oral dialogue with the prof on Zoom** - schedule a 15-minute time slot. Please email me to schedule a time.

University Policies

Source, unless otherwise noted: University Center for Teaching and Learning

Academic Integrity

Students in this course will be expected to comply with the University of Pittsburgh's Policy on Academic Integrity. Any student suspected of violating this obligation for any reason during the semester will be required to participate in the procedural process, initiated at the instructor level, as outlined in the University Guidelines on Academic Integrity. This may include, but is not limited to, the confiscation of the examination of any individual suspected of violating University Policy. Furthermore, no student may bring any unauthorized materials to an exam, including dictionaries and programmable calculators.

To learn more about Academic Integrity, visit the Academic Integrity Guide for an overview of the topic. For hands- on practice, complete the Academic Integrity Modules.

Ethical Use of Generative AI

Intellectual integrity is vital to an academic community and for my fair evaluation of your work. All work completed and/or submitted in this course must be your own, completed in accordance with the University's Guidelines on Academic Integrity.

You may choose to use AI tools to help brainstorm assignments or projects or to revise existing work you have written. However, to adhere to scholarly values, students must cite any AI-generated material that informed their work (this includes in-text citations and/or use of quotations, and in your reference list). Using an AI tool to generate content without proper attribution qualifies as academic dishonesty.

As a new and rapidly evolving tool that will powerfully affect education and most other social and cultural domains, generative AI presents fundamental concerns about how AI tools can or ought to be used. As those concerns develop and as ways of addressing them emerge and change in turn, we will all need to pivot frequently and reassess how we use those tools. An uncritical use of generative AI tools – one that assumes that AI-generated material is always correct, accurate, fair, and unbiased, for example –can be harmful.

Source: University Center for Teaching and Learning

Disability Services

If you have a disability for which you are or may be requesting an accommodation, you are encouraged to contact both your instructor and Disability Resources and Services (DRS), 140 William Pitt Union, (412) 648-7890, drsrecep@pitt.edu, (412) 228-5347 for P3 ASL users, as early as possible in the term. DRS will verify your disability and determine reasonable accommodations for this course.

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

The University of Pittsburgh does not tolerate any form of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation based on disability, race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, genetic information, marital status, familial status, sex, age, sexual orientation, veteran status or gender identity or other factors as stated in the University's Title IX policy. The University is committed to taking prompt action to end a hostile environment that interferes with the University's mission. For more information about policies, procedures, and practices, visit the Civil Rights & Title IX Compliance web page.

I ask that everyone in the class strive to help ensure that other members of this class can learn in a supportive and respectful environment. If there are instances of the aforementioned issues, contact the Title IX Coordinator, by calling 412-648-7860, or emailing titleixcoordinator@pitt.edu. Reports can also be filed online. You may also choose to report this to a faculty/staff member; they are required to communicate this to the University's Office of Diversity and Inclusion. If you wish to maintain complete confidentiality, you may also contact the University Counseling Center (412-648-7930).

Gender Inclusive Language Statement

Language is gender-inclusive and non-sexist when we use words that affirm and respect how people describe, express, and experience their gender. Gender-inclusive/non-sexist language acknowledges people of all genders (for example, first year student versus freshman, chair versus chairman, humankind versus mankind, everyone versus ladies and gentlemen, etc.). It also affirms non-binary gender identifications, and recognizes both gender identity and expression. Identities including trans, intersex, and genderqueer reflect personal descriptions, expressions, and experiences. Just as sexist language excludes women's experiences,

gendered language excludes the experiences of individuals whose identities may not fit the gender binary, and/or who may not identify with the sex they were assigned at birth. Students, faculty, and staff have the right to control their own identity and to be referred to by the name and pronouns with which they identify. People also have the right to maintain their privacy regarding information they do not wish to share about their identities, including gender identity and pronouns.

Source: School of Social Work

Religious Observances

The observance of religious holidays (activities observed by a religious group of which a student is a member) and cultural practices are an important reflection of diversity. As your instructor, I am committed to providing equivalent educational opportunities to students of all belief systems. At the beginning of the semester, you should review the course requirements to identify foreseeable conflicts with assignments, exams, or other required attendance. If at all possible, please contact me (your course coordinator/s) within the first two weeks of the first class meeting to allow time for us to discuss and make fair and reasonable adjustments to the schedule and/or tasks.

Statement on Classroom Recording

To ensure the free and open discussion of ideas, students may not record classroom lectures, discussion, or activities without the advance written permission of the instructor, and any such recording properly approved in advance can be used solely for the student's own private use.

Your Well-Being Matters

College/Graduate school can be an exciting and challenging time for students. Taking time to maintain your well-being and seek appropriate support can help you achieve your goals and lead a fulfilling life. It can be helpful to remember that we all benefit from assistance and guidance at times, and there are many resources available to support your well-being while you are at Pitt. You are encouraged to visit Thrive@Pitt to learn more about well-being and the many campus resources available to help you thrive.

If you or anyone you know experiences overwhelming academic stress, persistent difficult feelings and/or challenging life events, you are strongly encouraged to seek support. In addition to reaching out to friends and loved ones, consider connecting with a faculty member you trust for assistance connecting to helpful resources.

The University Counseling Center is also here for you. You can call 412-648-7930 at any time to connect with a clinician. If you or someone you know is feeling suicidal, please call the University Counseling Center at any time at 412-648-7930. You can also contact the Resolve Crisis Network at 888-796-8226. If the situation is life threatening, call Pitt Police at 412-624-2121 or dial 911.