

Evaluation of GLODE303 spring semester 2018

Draft for comments

The course started on 5th March, and ended on 20th April with the submission of a home exam (4.5 days). The course included seven double lectures and seven seminars/workshops (including a 3.5 hour seminar where the students presented their project ideas).

The organization of the evaluation

The evaluation was done orally on 10th April. Students were given the choice of having the course leader leave the room and have the students' representatives organize the evaluation and report back, or to do the evaluation with the course leader present to take notes. The students preferred the latter option. It was agreed that the teacher would write up a summary and distribute to the students for comments. None of the students provided feedback or comments to the draft.

Main findings

Content of the course: The students were overall satisfied with the content of the course. There was general agreement that it is a good idea to have a lecture and seminar on each of the three main qualitative methodologies (ethnographic methods, interviews, and Focus Group Discussions). One student emphasised that she had enjoyed the practical exercises very much and learned a lot from them, while another student questioned why they needed to be obligatory.

Several students argued that there should be one or more lectures on different research designs and the philosophical background for different research designs. Although this was covered in 302, there was a sense that the 302 course provided an introduction to research design, while it would be useful to have a repetition and more in-depth information about this in 303. The same argument was brought forward for skills and knowledge about analysis. The lecture on analysis had main emphasis on Thematic Network Analysis, while it would be useful to learn about other forms of analysis as well. The students recommended that care should be taken to avoid overlap between the lectures and seminars. This was the case with the lecture on coding and analysis, and the seminar on coding. Preferably, the seminar should demonstrate the use of the software Nvivo, which the UiB now has a full license to (rather than Open Code), and since there is a lecture on coding and analysis beforehand, the seminar should be practical from start to end. Some students see the need for a refresher course in using coding software after they have completed their fieldwork. The course leader recommended online tutorials for Nvivo.

Literature: Approximately half of the students had bought the main book for the course (Skovdal & Cornish). One person commented that this book is written for applied/NGO work rather than for research. One student suggested that the book by Silverman (2014), *Interpreting qualitative data* and Neumann (2011) *Social Research Methods. Qualitative and quantitative approaches* (which was used in 302), is more useful.

Practicalities: During the course, one person suggested that we should remove the one hour break between the two hours lectures and the two hours seminar. The majority of the students wanted to keep the system as it is today.

Some of the teachers have delayed uploading their slides at My UiB. This should be done as soon as possible after the lecture.

Several students mentioned that the exercise on Focus Group Discussions would have been far more realistic if they had had strangers as participants. It was suggested that we do an exchange with students from other qualitative methodology courses next time. Some felt that the seminar on ethics was too long, considering that there had been a lecture on ethics right before, while others felt that it was very useful to be taken through the NSD system and get started on the procedure in class.

Examination form: students proposed that the exam should be pass/fail rather than graded, particularly because the course has been practical in orientation. Several would prefer us to go back to the old system where the research proposal is the exam form. The question of time pressure on the proposal could be solved by having the course in March/April (as now), but still let the deadline for the proposal be in June.

Siri Lange, kursansvarlig