

New York University
Department of Applied Statistics, Social Science, and Humanities
International Education Program

**INTE.GE.2007: Qualitative Methods in International Education
Spring 2022**

Lecture (in person): Tue, 4:55 – 6:35pm
25 West 4th Street, Room C-06

Recitation 002 (remote): Tue, 7:10 – 8pm
Recitation 003 (remote): Tue, 8:10 – 9pm
Zoom [link](#)

Professor: Sophia Boutilier

Email: smb538@nyu.edu

Office Hours: By Appointment. Please feel free to book a time to discuss issues of professional development or to check in about the course.

Teaching Assistant: João M. Souto Maior

Email: jms1738@nyu.edu

Office hours: By Appointment.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course provides an introduction to qualitative methods that scholars and practitioners use in international and comparative education and the social sciences more broadly. It is intended to provide an overview of research design, data collection, and data analysis and presentation most commonly associated with qualitative research.

Part One includes an introduction to qualitative methods. We will begin with an overview of key perspectives on research, different types of studies, and the main differences between qualitative and quantitative traditions.

Part Two focuses on research design and data collection. We will read “how-to” methods books and you will employ these methods. We will also read examples from experienced researchers that illustrate how these researchers employ these methods and to what effect. We will debrief your experiences, discuss issues that arise, and answer questions you have about hands-on practice. Key methods include individual interviews, focus groups, observation, document review, and visual methodologies.

Part Three focuses on data analysis, writing-up research and presenting it. Understanding how to think, write, critique, and argue about social science research is an important piece of this section.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Upon completing this course, you should be able to:

- (1) understand and critically evaluate qualitative studies that you read;
- (2) understand and demonstrate research ethics;
- (3) design qualitative research;
- (4) use key qualitative research skills such as interviews, focus groups, observations, etc.;
- (5) code and analyse qualitative data;
- (6) develop an evidence-based argument.

I am also hopeful that you will leave the course with enthusiasm for the possibility of reading and conducting qualitative research in your future work in IE!

REQUIRED READINGS

All required readings are available on Brightspace or via links from this syllabus.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND EVALUATION

ASSIGNMENTS SUMMARY TABLE

Description:	Percentage of grade:	Date due:
Attendance and participation (individual)	20%	All classes and recitations
Academic integrity (individual)	P/F *note you cannot pass the class without a pass on this assignment	Feb 1 st , 4:55pm
Human subjects (individual)	P/F *note you cannot pass the class without a pass on this assignment. You cannot begin Mini-Assignment B without a pass on this assignment.	Feb 8 th , 4:55pm
Spotlight on International Education qualitative research (individual)	5%	To be assigned individually
Mini-Assignment A: Reviewing the Literature (group)	5%	Friday Feb 11 th , midnight
Mini-Assignment B: Interview transcript + reflection (individual)	10%	March 1 st , 4:55pm
Mini-Assignment C: Doc Review (group)	5%	Friday March 25 th , midnight
Qualitative Research Challenge #1 (group)	25%	April 12 th , 4:55pm
Questions for Prof. Severine Autesserre (individual)	1% bonus	April 12 th , 4:55pm
Mini-Assignment D: Coding interview data (group)	10%	April 26 th , 4:55pm
Qualitative Research Challenge #2 (tbd)	20%	May 3 rd , 4:55pm
TOTAL	100% (+1)	

Specific requirements are as follows:

ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION (20%)

Attendance (lectures and recitations) and regular participation is required for this course. The success of the class depends in large part on the active participation of all class members through strong preparation, active listening, hands-on experiential activities, group work, and class discussion. Please prepare for each session by carefully reading the assigned readings, highlighting key concepts and arguments, and noting questions and contentious issues. The readings and lectures are complementary, but they will not duplicate one another. Each class will proceed on the basis that students have read the required readings for that week and prior weeks and are up to date on assignment completion.

If you must miss a class for any reason, please let your TA and I know in advance.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND RESEARCH ETHICS ASSIGNMENTS

Academic Integrity Wagner Oath (P/F): I take academic integrity very seriously. All assignments must adhere to standards of academic ethics. Your work must reflect your own writing and ideas. According to the Steinhardt School of Culture, Education, and Human Development Statement on Academic Integrity, you violate the principle of academic integrity by turning in work that does not reflect your own ideas or includes text that is not your own; when you submit the same work for two different courses without prior permission from the instructor; when you receive help on a take-home examination when you are expected to work independently; when you cheat on exams; and when you plagiarize material. Please note that we will use Turnitin for this class.

Any student who submits work violates academic integrity will be subject to disciplinary sanctions, which range from failure of the course to dismissal from the school.

By **Tuesday, February 1st, prior to class**, please complete the NYU Wagner Academic Oath form located at: <https://wagner.nyu.edu/portal/students/policies/academic-oath>. Post the acknowledgement that the form has been completed on Classes under the “Assignments” tab. You will receive a “Pass” for this assignment if you complete the oath. If you do not complete this oath, you will fail the class.

Protection of Human Subjects Tutorial and Approval (P/F): All students must take and pass the University Committee on Activities Involving Human Subjects online Tutorial by **Tuesday, February 8th, prior to class** to receive a “P” for this assignment. Please go to www.citiprogram.org, and on the upper right hand corner of the screen, click on “Register”. Work through the registration process. On your Courses homepage, select “View Courses”. Select “Add a Course” and add the Social and Behavioral Research Investigators under Human Subjects Research, and complete the basic course that consists of 16 learning modules. To save an electronic copy of the completion certificate, click on “Print Report”. The report will open up as a PDF document which then can be saved (or printed for your records). Students must upload a copy of their certificate under the “Assignments” tab. You will receive a “Pass” for this assignment if you successfully complete the basic course. If you do not complete the course, you will fail the class.

SPOTLIGHT ON INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION QUALITATIVE RESEARCH (5%)

Each student is required to prepare and present a brief oral presentation (3-5 minutes; 5 minutes maximum) that summarizes and reviews a recent peer-reviewed journal article in the field of International Education that employs qualitative research methods. Students choose their own original articles -- different from other students (please coordinate by using the dedicated *google spreadsheet*) -- and must post PDFs to the NYU Classes forum. Especially good sources include *Comparative Education Review*, *Compare*, *International Journal of Education and Development*, and *the Journal on Education in Emergencies*. In the oral presentation, students will present five slides:

1. Motivation (scholarly and/or practical)
2. Research question(s)
3. Research design and qualitative methods (detail + highlight anything missing)
4. Key findings/argument (very brief)
5. How this relates to the course/readings (very brief)

Students will gain exposure to many examples of qualitative research in international education, hone their presentation skills, and learn from one another.

We will randomly assign dates in the first recitation. As possible, tie your choice of article to the topic of the day. (For instance, if you are presenting when we focus on interviews, your article should include interviews among its methods).

If you need to switch dates, please arrange a switch with another student and let Amanda know, for our records. We cannot arrange switches for you. If you are unable to present due to extenuating circumstances, and cannot switch dates, you are required to notify the instructor prior to the class. If you miss your presentation without taking appropriate steps, you will receive 0 on this assignment.

MINI-ASSIGNMENTS (30%)

- A. Annotated Bibliography (5%, group): *due Feb 11th*
- B. Interview + Verbatim Transcript of the Interview (10%, individual): *due March 1st*
- C. Document Review: (5%, group): *due March 25th*
- D. Coding our interview data (10%, group): *due April 26th*

Basic details are provided below and additional details will be provided in class.

*****If you miss any of these mini-assignments in class, it is your responsibility to complete them outside of class INDIVIDUALLY by the deadline, unless otherwise arranged with Professor Boutilier. Absences will also affect your participation grade.*****

QUALITATIVE RESEARCH CHALLENGE #1 (25%): due April 12th

In *Diversity, Violence, and Recognition*, Elisabeth King and Cyrus Samii find that education is one of the domains where “ethnic recognition” in post-conflict contexts is most prevalent. We want to know why. With a small group of colleagues (approx 4 students), design a qualitative research project that allows us to answer the “Why” question. Imagine that we have a few months to conduct the research and that COVID does not place restrictions on our mobility.

Write us a 3-4 pages double-spaced memo (+ appendix), that covers the following: What qualitative research design do you recommend? What data collection strategies should we use (interviews, focus groups, observations, visual methodology, or document analysis techniques)? Please also explain why you choose one or more particular method(s) over the others. Provide a description and rationale for each instrument you will use. Explain your sampling strategy and how you will protect human subjects. What are the limitations of your approach? Each group must also submit the protocols you will use to collect your data.

*****If you miss any of the classes during which your group is working on this assignment, it is your responsibility to complete this assignment outside of class INDIVIDUALLY by the deadline, unless otherwise arranged with Professor Boutilier. Absences will also affect your participation grade*****

QUALITATIVE RESEARCH CHALLENGE #2 (20%): due May 3rd

Share your top learnings about qualitative research methods from this course (including lectures, readings, assignments, guests, etc.). You may choose to focus on “qualitative research methods” in its entirety or choose a sub-topic (i.e “learnings about interviews” or “ethics”, e.g.). Create a “top-10 list” to share your findings. Your points should be factual and represent genuine learning. You may also choose to include humor.

You may choose to present in oral or written format. Option A: Please make a short video (max 10 minutes) that we can watch as a class. Option B: You may present your top 10 points in written format (max 5 pages, double-spaced). Additional details will be provided in class.

COURSE RULES AND POLICIES

Grading

The grading scale is as follows. Additional details appear at the end of the syllabus.

A = 94-100
A- = 90-93
B+ = 87-89
B = 84-86

B- = 80-83
C+ = 77-79
C = 74-76
D+ = 67-69

D = 65-66
F = below 65

Deadlines and Policy on late assignments: Papers are due on the dates and at the times listed. NYU Classes will automatically mark your paper as late when it is submitted past the due date/time. ***Late papers will be reduced by 1/3 of a grade for each 24-hour period*** for which they are turned in after the deadline. For example, a paper turned in one day late with a grade of B would be marked down to a B-. If exceptional circumstances require you to request an extension, you must do so prior to the deadline to avoid late penalties.

NYU Classes and Email: NYU Classes and email will be used to manage and coordinate the course. The reading material and important course announcements will be posted electronically on NYU Classes. Please check your email and the course page regularly to ensure you have access to this material and announcements.

Note: While we will endeavor to answer your weekday questions within 24 hours, we do not typically check email on the weekends.

Special Accommodations: Any student attending NYU who needs an accommodation should register with the Moses Center at (212) 998-4980, www.nyu.edu/csd.

Netiquette: Your instructor and fellow students wish to foster a safe online learning environment. All opinions and experiences, no matter how different or controversial they may be perceived, must be respected in the tolerant spirit of academic discourse. You are encouraged to comment, question, or critique an idea, but you are not to attack an individual. Our differences will add richness to this learning experience. Please consider that sarcasm and humor can be misconstrued in online interactions and generate unintended disruptions. Working as a community of learners, we can build a polite and respectful course ambience. Please follow the Netiquette rules for this course:

- Do not dominate any discussion. Give other students the opportunity to join in the discussion.
- Do not use offensive language. Present ideas appropriately.
- Be cautious in using Internet language. For example, do not capitalize all letters since this suggests shouting.
- Keep an “open mind”
- Think and edit before you push the “Send” button.
- Do not hesitate to ask for feedback.

Zoom: Keep in mind, the chat feature on Zoom is not private. I believe user-to-user chat, except to me, is disabled for our class. FYI, though, whenever you are using a link that someone else has created, like the ones I create, the chats that you send, even user-to-user are available for download by the host. This doesn't mean you shouldn't use chat, in fact, it can be quite helpful for engagement, just be mindful that nothing on the internet dies.

Also remember that we are likely to record class sessions. These recordings are available upon request only to students who need to miss class for good reasons or to students who would like to fill out their notes by reviewing a segment. If you do not want to be identifiable in the recording, please be in touch with me to discuss options. If you would like to access a recording, please email me. The recordings are for class purposes only and you may not download the recordings or share the recording links or copies of recordings with anyone outside of the class.

Social media: We live in a highly connected world and no doubt, many of you are active on social media. However, part of creating a classroom environment that values growth is making sure there is space for exchange, challenge and vulnerability. With that said, I ask that class discussion and opinions not be shared on social media. You are welcome to mention the class's content, but not people within it and their working through the material. Do not screenshot nor share the material produced by your classmates without their expressed consent.

BASIC NEEDS SECURITY

NYU Returns: NYU has curated and routinely updates information about COVID-19 and available supports for students at NYU Returns. Please learn more here:

<https://www.nyu.edu/life/safety-health-wellness/coronavirus-information/information-for-students.html#resources>

Food Security: For students in need of support with food please visit Courtesy Meals. Please learn more here: <https://www.nyu.edu/students/student-information-and-resources/courtesy-meals.html>

Health and Wellness: NYU provides a range of health and wellness services ranging from physical and mental health to pharmacy services and accessibility accommodations. Please learn more here: <https://www.nyu.edu/students/health-and-wellness.html>

Thanks to my terrific ASH Steinhardt colleague L'Heureux Lewis-McCoy for crafting much of the content in the netiquette and basic needs security sections and to his colleagues Eve L. Ewing (University of Chicago) and Alexandra Moffett-Bateau (John Jay College – CUNY) who also contributed.

These are ongoingly challenging times. Please reach out to me if you'd like to discuss any particular circumstances that require special attention to help you succeed in the course.

This course has always been a favorite for me and my students and we will work together to do everything we can to continue to make that the case!

COURSE SCHEDULE AND REQUIRED READINGS

Please note: this schedule and the assigned readings are subject to change (with advanced notice to you).

Part I: Introduction to qualitative methodology

**(1) January 25: Course introduction; syllabus review
Introduction to social science, International Education research & the qualitative paradigm**

Due before class: Please review the syllabus and prepare any questions

Readings to complete before or after* class:

Fairbrother, G.P. (2014). Quantitative and Qualitative Approaches to Comparative Education. In: M. Bray, B. Adamson, & M. Mason (Eds.), *Comparative Education Research: Approaches and Methods* (pp.71-93). Cham: Springer.

Seay, L. (2010). Blog: Texas in Africa: What Social Scientists Think: Anecdotes Aren't Evidence. Available at: <http://texasinafrica.blogspot.com/2010/10/how-social-scientists-think-anecdotes.html>

*going forward readings should be completed before class.

Recitation:

Brief meet and greet with TA João Souto Maior and random assignment of presentation dates

**(2) February 1: What is a research “design”? What is human subjects research?
How can we uphold research ethics?**

Due before class: Academic integrity oath, uploaded to Brightspace

Readings to complete before class:

Maxwell, J. A. (2019). Qualitative Research Design. In P. Atkinson, S. Delamont, A. Cernat, J.W. Sakshaug, & R.A. Williams (Eds.), *SAGE Research Methods Foundations*.

In class-presentation by: João Souto Maior

Recitation: Research ethics and CITI training

(3) February 8: Academic writing, what do you want to know and why is it important?

Due before class: Human subjects research CITI certification

Special guest: Alli Linder

Readings to complete before class:

Luker, K. (2008). *Salsa dancing into the social sciences: Research in an age of info-glut*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. Chapter 5 (Reviewing the literature)

Watch before class:

Mini-lecture by Professor King on *Reviewing the literature and beginning to develop your research question, significance and contribution*

In class-presentations by: 2 students

Recitation: Mini-Assignment A

In small groups (assigned at random), create a brief annotated bibliography with a minimum of 5 sources (at least two of which must be “academic”/peer-reviewed) that responds to the research question we chose in class. Your annotated bibliography should list sources in alphabetical order and use APA or Chicago Style citation format. Your annotated bibliography should also include the abstract of each source which may be cut and pasted (in quotation marks) into the document. Upload your annotated bibliography to NYU Classes.

Here are a few resources to help:

Purdue University Online Writing Lab APA Style Guide:

https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_style_introduction.htm

Purdue University Online Writing Lab Chicago Style Guide:

https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/chicago_manual_17th_edition/cmos_formatting_and_style_guide/chicago_manual_of_style_17th_edition.html

Based on your review of the literature, you are also required to answer three questions (each in a few lines) on the NYU Classes forum. (1) Why is answering this question important for scholarship? (2) Why is answering this question important for practice? (3) What answers already exist to this question?

Due: Friday Feb 11th at midnight

Part II: Qualitative Data Collection Methods

(4) February 15: Key Methodological Techniques: Semi-Structured and Unstructured Individual Interviews

Readings to complete before class:

Rubin, H. & Rubin, I. (2012). *Qualitative interviewing: The Art of hearing data* (3rd ed.). Los Angeles: SAGE Publications. Chapters 7 and 8

In class-presentations by: 3 students

Recitation: Interviews, informed consent and protocols

(5) February 22: Key Methodological Techniques: Focus Groups and Sampling

Readings to complete before class:

Morgan, D. L. (1997). *Qualitative Research Methods: Focus groups as qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.

- Pages 31-45

In-class presentations by: 3 students

Recitation: Mini-Assignment B

Each student will interview one classmate and transcribe the interview verbatim. You will also author a brief reflection on your learnings from the interview. We will provide additional guidelines for your reflections in class.

(6) March 1: Key Methodological Techniques: Observation

Due before class: Mini-Assignment B

Readings to complete before class:

Wragg, E.C. (1999). *An introduction to classroom observation*. Oxford: Routledge. Chapter 1

In-class presentations by: 3 students

Recitation: Key methodological techniques

(7) March 8: Key Methodological Techniques: Visual Methodologies

Readings to complete before class:

Mitchell, C. (2011). Picturing Violence: participatory visual methodologies in working with girls to address school and domestic violence in Rwanda. In K. Mundy & S Dryden-Peterson (Eds.), *Educating children in conflict zones: Research, policy, and practice for systemic change--A tribute to Jackie Kirk*. New York: Teachers College Press.

In-class presentations by: 3 students

Recitation: Optional film night on visual methodologies (starting at 6:45), then enjoy your long weekend!

(8) March 22: Key Methodological Techniques: Document Review

Readings to complete before class:

Bowen, G. A. (2009). Document analysis as a qualitative research method. *Qualitative research journal*, 9(2), 27-40

King, E. (2017). "What framing analysis can teach us about history textbooks, peace and conflict: The case of Rwanda." In M.Bellino & J. Williams (Eds.). *(Re)Constructing Memory: Education, Identity and Conflict* (pp. 23 - 48). Rotterdam, Boston & Taipei: Sense Publishers, pp. 23-48.

In-class presentations by: 3 students (or fewer if don't need all slots).

Recitation: Mini Assignment C

In small groups (randomly assigned), students will engage in a real-time document review on an original topic in international education. Each group will submit a brief reflection on the experience.

Due: Friday March 25th at midnight

(9) March 29th: QUALITATIVE RESEARCH CHALLENGE #1 -- IN CLASS and RECITATION

Readings to complete before class:

King, Elisabeth and Cyrus Samii. 2020. *Diversity, Violence, and Recognition: How Recognizing Ethnic Identity Promotes Peace*. New York: Oxford University Press. (excerpts TBA)

Recitation: Continued work on Qualitative Research Challenge #1

Part III: Research Process and Results

(10) April 5: Key Methodological Aspects: Self-presentation, reflexivity/subjectivity and building credibility; Researcher Memos

Listen before class:

Jervis, K. 2016. Journal on Education in Emergencies A School Under Fire: The Fog of Educational Practice in War. [Podcast]. Available at: <http://www.ineesite.org/en/journal/vol2-num1>

Recommended reading, not required: Lederach, A. J. 2021. 'Each Word Is Powerful': Writing and the Ethics of Representation. In R. Mac Ginty, R. Brett, & B. Vogel (Eds.), *The Companion to Peace and Conflict Fieldwork*. Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 455–470.

In-class presentations by: 3 students

Recitation: Continued work on Qualitative Research Challenge #1

(11) April 12: Special Guest: Severine Autesserre

Due before class: Qualitative Research Challenge #1

- + please post questions for Prof. Autesserre to the NYU Classes Forum (to contribute to learning, a lively event, and bonus marks!)

Readings to complete before class:

Autesserre, Severine. 2021. *The Frontlines of Peace: An Insider's Guide to Changing the World*. New York: Oxford University Press. (excerpts)

Dr. Autesserre is a French-American author, Professor at Barnard College - Columbia University, and leading scholar on peace and conflict. Her third book, *The Frontlines of Peace: An Insider's Guide to Changing the World*, was released by Oxford University Press in March 2021.

The Frontlines of Peace covers the hopeful story of the ordinary yet extraordinary people who have figured out how to build lasting peace in their communities. It has been endorsed by two Nobel Peace Prize winners, the editor of *Foreign Affairs*, and multiple academics.

Recitation: Please note that class may run a little long today. There are no recitations.

(12) April 19: Data Coding and Analysis

Readings to complete before class:

Powell, E. & Renner, M. (2003). *Analyzing Qualitative Data*. Madison WI: University of Wisconsin-Extension.

In-class presentations by: 3 students

Recitation: Mini-Assignment D

In small groups (randomly assigned), students will engage in a real-time data coding and analysis of our earlier interviews and present an evidence-based argument. Each group will submit a brief paper, details TBA.

(13) April 26: Analytical validity & writing up and presenting your research

Due before class: Mini-Assignment D

Readings to complete before class:

Booth, W. C., Colomb, G.G., & Williams, J. M. (2009). Making a Claim and Supporting It. In *Chicago Guides to Writing, Editing, and Publishing : The Craft of Research* (3rd ed., pp. 105 - 118). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Maxwell, J. (2013). *Qualitative research design: An interactive approach (3rd edition)*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, pp. 121-138.

Seay, Laura. (2010). Texas in Africa: What Social Scientists Think: We're not completely sure about much. [Blog Post]. Available at:
<http://texasinafrica.blogspot.com/2010/10/how-social-scientists-think-were-not.html>

In-class presentations by: 3 students

Recitation: Qualitative Research Challenge #2

(14) May 3 CLASS AND RECITATION TOGETHER (4:55-approx 6:55)

Due before class: Qualitative Research Challenge #2

Recitation: together for all students

GRADING SCHEMA DETAILS

A: Outstanding Students who earn an A for class participation are consistently present and prepared for class, synthesize course materials, contribute insightfully and analytically, listen well to others, and generally move the discussion forward and are actively engaged each class.

For written work, an “A” applies to outstanding student writing. A grade of “A” indicates not simply a command of material and excellent presentation (spelling, grammar, organization, writing style, etc.), but also sustained intellectual engagement with the material. This engagement takes such forms as shedding original light on the material, investigating patterns and connections, posing questions, and raising issues. An “A” paper is excellent in nearly all respects:

- It is well argued and well organized, with a clear thesis
- It is well developed with content that is specific, interesting, appropriate, and convincing
- It has logical transitions that contribute to a fluent style of writing
- It has few, if any, mechanical, grammatical, spelling, or diction errors
- It demonstrates command of a mature, unpretentious diction

B: Good Students who earn a B for class participation generally contribute consistently and thoughtfully and listen well to other but may be less consistent in their participation and/or their presence in class and may be less likely to move discussion forward with their contributions.

On written assignments, a “B” is given to work of high quality that reflects a command of the material and a strong presentation but lacks sustained intellectual engagement with the material. A “B” paper shares most characteristics of an “A” paper, but

- It may have some minor weaknesses in its argumentation
- It may have some minor lapses in organization and development
- It may contain some sentence structures that are awkward or ineffective
- It may have minor mechanical, grammatical, or diction problems
- It may be less distinguished in its use of language

C: Adequate Students who earn a C for class participation do not contribute regularly and may be absent from class regularly and/or their contributions to class discussion are often tangential and unclear and they do not listen well to others.

Written work receiving a “C” is of fair overall quality but exhibits a lack of intellectual engagement as well as either deficiencies in the student’s command of the material or problems with presentation. A “C” paper is generally competent; it is the average performance. Compared to a “B” paper,

- It may have a weaker thesis and less effective development.
- It may have serious shortcomings in its argumentation
- It may contain some lapses in organization
- It may have poor or awkward transitions
- It may have less varied sentence structures that tend toward monotony
- It may have more mechanical, grammatical, and diction problems

D: Unsatisfactory Students who earn a D for class participation have spotty attendance, come to class unprepared, and make comments that are off-topic. On written work, the grade of “D” indicates significant problems with the student’s work, such as a shallow understanding of the material or poor writing.

- It presents no clear thesis
- It displays major organizational problems
- It lacks adequate support for its thesis
- It includes irrelevant details
- It includes confusing transitions or lacks transitions altogether
- It fails to fulfill the assignment
- It contains ungrammatical or poorly constructed sentences and/or demonstrates problems with spelling, punctuation, diction or syntax, which impedes understanding

F: Failed Students who earn an F for class participation also have spotty attendance, come to class unprepared, fail to participate, demonstrate lack of engagement, and might create a hostile environment in the classroom. On written work, an “F” is given when a student fails to demonstrate an adequate understanding of the material, fails to address the exact topic of a question or assignment, fails to follow the directions in an assignment, or fails to hand in an assignment.

NOTE: Pluses (e.g., B+) indicate that the paper is especially strong on some, but not all, of the criteria for that letter grade. Minuses (e.g., C-) indicate that the paper is missing some, but not all, of the criteria for that letter grade. **

This rubric is borrowed from Prof. Lisa Stulberg and adapted from those developed by Prof. Fabienne Doucet and Prof. Helen Nissenbaum, NYU Steinhardt.