

The University of Akron
College of Education
Department of Educational Foundations & Leadership
5100:590:401 - Introduction to Q Methodology Workshop
3.0 Credits



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Office Hours	By appointment only including online	Dates:	5/14-6/1/2012

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

This Introduction to Q Methodology Workshop is a 3 credit, graduate level workshop designed for masters and doctoral students as well as the greater university community. The workshop will introduce participants to the ideas of subjectivity, grouping of people, and Q methodology.

II. RATIONALE

The purpose of the workshop is to familiarize participants with measuring subjectivity using Q methodology, a mixed methods research technique, including research design, analyses, and interpretation of results.

III. REQUIRED READING / Videos

- McKeown, B., & Thomas, D. (1988) Q Methodology. Volume 66 Quantitative Applications in the Social Sciences Series. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Chapter 1, Introduction to Operant Subjectivity. In Brown, S. R. (1980). Political Subjectivity: Applications of Q methodology in political science (pp. 1-6). New Haven: Yale University Press. (other chapters as needed, all are available online - Available as FREE PDF: <http://qmethod.org/papers/Brown-1980-PoliticalSubjectivity.pdf> (96 MB)
- Brown, S. R. (1993). A primer on Q methodology. Operant Subjectivity, 16(3/4), 91-138. available online at <http://facstaff.uww.edu/cottlec/QArchive/Primer1.html>
- Schmolck, P. (2002). PQMethod 2.10 Manual. [on-line]. Available at <http://www.rz.unibw-muenchen.de/~p41bsmk/qmethod/>
- Required video – Videos 1, 2 & 3 at minimum: <http://qmethod.org/howto> (Video tab)
- Helpful articles available here: <http://qmethod.org/howto>
- Other selected readings TBA / posted on Springboard.
- Join Q List-serve & read recent posts - <http://qmethod.org/issss>

IV. COURSE GOALS/OBJECTIVES

Objectives	UA Conceptual Framework Proficiencies	Assignments/Assessments
Students will be able to demonstrate knowledge of Q methodology & its application in research	K1, K2, K4, T1, T2, D2, E1, E2, E3	Online quizzes; online discussions; writing assignments; creation of Q sample; use of PQ Method software for data entry & analyses; students' ePosters.
Students will perform the steps of analyzing Q sorts including interpretation of the factors (views of the groups of people).	K1, K2, K4, T1, T2, D1, D2, E1, E2, E3	Students will use PQ Method software for Q sort entry & analyses; Students will create presentations (video – recommend Jing) that uses the analyses of these Q sorts and results, conclusions, and recommendations that relate to the findings of the study.

V. COURSE OUTLINE & SCHEDULE

Date	Topic*	Assignments with due dates*
Week 1	Introduction, review of syllabus, basic terms, Q sort by participants, theoretical framework of Q, Q as a mixed method Resources / bibliography for Q; Application of Q to various fields; download of Q methodology software.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Class introductions via Springboard • 1st journal article summary • Participation online – ongoing • Summary from Steve Brown videos (1-3), Fri • Online Quiz 1
Week 2	Students create a Q sample; Entry of Q sort data into software & subsequent analyses Online discussions related to Q methodology; entry & analyses of data; creation of your own Q sample.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2nd journal article summary • Data entry of Q sorts with analyses, Tues • Online Quiz 2
Week 3	Interpretation of results; Online discussions related to presentations Discussion about potential presentations at International Society for the Scientific Study of Subjectivity conference in Pittsburgh, fall 2012. Wrap up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of Q sample – upload to Springboard • Share preliminary interpretations of results, Tues • Presentation uploaded to Springboard - Friday

* All schedules are subject to change by the instructor

VI. INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES/ACTIVITIES/TECHNOLOGY

This course is designed to provide the learner with the opportunity to link the theoretical issues presented in the readings and discussed in class with the practical aspects of performing a Q methodology study. To facilitate linkages among the theoretical issues explored in class, the readings, and learners' own experiences, learners will:

- Read the required materials prior to scheduled discussions online.

- Engage in dialogue with peers on questions and topics generated by the instructor & other workshop participants
- Lead discussions or present to peers on topics related to Q methodology & its application to research
- Actively engage in large and small group discussions, problem-solving activities, and inquiry exercises
- Complete quizzes, data entry & analyses on time.
- Integrate the use of technology with presenting findings & conclusions from Q-sort analyses.

VII. EVALUATION/STUDENT ASSESSMENT

Students will be assessed as follows:

<i>Description</i>	<i>Total Points for Assignment</i>
Writing Assignments	10 (2 at 5 points each)
Quizzes	10 (2 at 5 points each)
Creation of your Q sample (includes brief synopsis on how you created your sample)	15
Data entry of class' Q sorts	5
Data analyses (producing LIS printout)	15
Participation – online	10
ePoster including Q overview, results, conclusions, and recommendations that relate to the findings of the study	35

Grading (NOTE: Workshops are Credit / Non-Credit; you must earn at least 83% to earn Credit.

Letter Grade	Percentage (total points)
A	100-93%
A-	92-90%
B+	89-86%
B	85-83%
B-	82-80%
C+	79-76%
C	75-73%
C-	72-70%
D+	69-66%
D	65-63%
D-	62-60%
F	Below 60%

Students must obtain a B average or better in order to obtain a passing grade/ credit.

Writing Assignments

Participants will have readings and videos assigned and are expected to write one-page (double spaced, 12 point Times New Roman) related to these.

1. Two journal articles that used Q methodology (to be selected by participant) – First one an “introduction” type article (possibilities available on Springboard) and second related to your area of interest ([one due week 1; 2nd due week 2](#)).
2. Summary of watching 3 hours of videos (Steve Brown’s presentation on Q methodology) available on <http://www.qmethod.org/howto.php> - [due week 1](#).

Creation of Q sample

Each participant will select a research purpose that is appropriate for a Q methodology study. Based upon this purpose, the participant will assemble a minimum of 20 items (for sorting as part of the study) that can be part of a Q sample to address this research purpose. Items must meet the criteria for concourse / Q samples discussed within the readings (e.g. they are subjective, not objective, statements). Students will reveal how they developed these items (personal experience, review of the literature, interview(s), focus groups, etc). Copies to be distributed in class for discussion - [Due week 2.](#)

Data entry & analyses

Students will be given a set of completed Q sorts to enter into PQ Method (download is free at <http://www.qmethod.org/links.php>). Students will also perform analysis of the data which will be discussed in class and be presented in the ePoster assignment. - [Due week 2.](#)

Participation (online)

Active and thoughtful participation in class & online discussions are very important and expected. The assigned readings & video viewing should be done in advance. Attend each class ready to contribute your ideas and questions in large and small group discussions; be prepared to respond knowledgeably to the ideas and questions of others. It is your responsibility to actively contribute to discussions whether online or in-class. – **ON GOING**

Quizzes

Students will complete two (2) online quizzes via Springboard. The quizzes will be setup such that you can take them multiple times within a specific timeframe. More information will be given via Springboard – [Due week 1 and week 2.](#)

Presentation

Students will compile and present (via a medium such as Power Point with audio which can be done using a free screen capture like Jing) on the results of the class's Q sort analyses. Presentations should last no more than 10 minutes and should include the following aspects: an overview of Q methodology, the sorting process, the results, conclusions, and recommendations that relate to the findings of the study. Interpretation of the factors will be considered a key component of this presentation. - [Due by Friday of week 3.](#)

VIII. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK PROFICIENCIES

The University of Akron, College of Education has identified **Educator as Decision Maker** as the theme of our conceptual framework, which has been developed around the core components of professional practice and scholarship identified in the mission statement of the college: **Knowledge, Technology, Diversity, and Ethics**. The theme and components provide direction for programs, courses, teaching, candidate performance, scholarship, service, and unit accountability. It is our goal to provide opportunities to candidates to develop a solid foundation in the identified proficiencies for each of the core components through well-planned coursework. This foundation then

transfers into knowledge-based decision making as it applies to **Standards Setting Programs, Research and Inquiry, and Outreach**. Descriptions of the proficiencies are provided at <http://www.uakron.edu/colleges/educ/COE/cf-proficiencies.php>

As you progress through your program, you will find the **conceptual framework** aligned with course objectives. You will also find the **conceptual framework** theme and core components reflected throughout the College of Education. This reflects our commitment to these central tenets and our vision that all of our graduates will be effective **decision makers** throughout their professional careers.

IX. STUDENT ETHICS AND OTHER POLICY INFORMATION

For further information about The University of Akron's policies regarding student ethics and conduct, please consult the following sources: <http://www.uakron.edu/gradsch/docs/Gradbulletin.pdf>, then select "General Information" (academic honesty); or <http://www.uakron.edu/studentlife/sja/codecon.php> (Student Code of Conduct). Any student who feels she/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability please consult <http://www.uakron.edu/access> and the Office of Accessibility at (330) 972-7928.

X. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Texts including book chapters

- Block, J. (2008). *The Q-sort in character appraisal: Encoding subjective impressions of persons quantitatively*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- Brown, S.R. (1972). A fundamental incommensurability between objectivity and subjectivity. In S.R. Brown & D.J. Brenner (Eds.), *Science, psychology, and communication* (pp. 57-94). New York: Teachers College Press.
- Brown, S.R. (1980). *Political subjectivity: Applications of Q methodology in political science*. New Haven: Yale University Press. (Available electronically)
- Brown, S. R. (1986). Q technique and method: Principles and procedures. In W. D. Berry, & M. S. Lewis-Beck (Eds.), *New tools for social scientist: Advances and applications in research methods* (pp. 57-76). Beverly Hills: Sage Publications.
- Brown, S. R. (2008). Q methodology. In L. M. Given (Ed.), *The Sage encyclopedia of qualitative research methods* (pp. 700-704). Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage Publications.
- Brown, S.R. & Brenner, D.J. (Eds.) (1972). *Science, psychology, and communication: Essays honoring William Stephenson*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Febbraro, A.R. (1995). On the epistemology, metatheory, and ideology of Q methodology: A critical analysis. In I. Lubek, R. van Hezewijk, G. Pheterson, & C.W. Tolman (Eds.), *Trends and issues in theoretical psychology* (pp. 144-150). New York: Springer.
- Gallivan, J. (1994). Subjectivity and the psychology of gender: Q as a feminist methodology. In J. Gallivan, S.D. Crozier & V.M. Lalande (Eds.), *Women, girls, and achievement* (pp. 29-36). Toronto: Captus University Publications.
- McKeown, B.F. & Thomas, D.B. (1988). *Q methodology* (Quantitative Applications in the Social Sciences series, Vol. 66). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Newman, I. & Ramlo, S. (2010 / in press). Using Q Methodology and Q Factor Analysis in Mixed Methods Research. In A. Tashakkori, & C. Teddlie (Eds.), *Handbook of mixed methods in social & behavioral research* (Second ed., pp. TBD). Thousand Oaks, Calif.: SAGE Publications.
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- Stephenson, W. (1967). *The play theory of mass communication*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Stephenson, W. (1980). Consciring: A general theory for subjective communicability. In D. Nimmo (Ed.), *Communication yearbook 4* (pp. 7-36). New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction.
- Stephenson, W. (1994). *Quantum theory of advertising*. Columbia: Stephenson Research Center, School of Journalism, University of Missouri.

Electronic references

- Brown, S.R. (1993). A primer on Q methodology. *Operant Subjectivity*, 16, 91-138. (Cf. Q methodological tutorial. QArchive: <http://facstaff.uww.edu/cottlec/QArchive/qindex.htm>)
- Brown, S.R. (1994-1995). Q methodology as the foundation for a science of subjectivity. *Operant Subjectivity*, 18, 1-16. (QArchive: <http://facstaff.uww.edu/cottlec/QArchive/qindex.htm>)
- Brown, S.R. (1997). *The history and principles of Q methodology in psychology and the social sciences*. British Psychological Society symposium on "A Quest for a Science of Subjectivity: The Lifework of William Stephenson," University of London; and conference on "A Celebration of the Life and Work of William Stephenson (1902-1989)," University of Durham, England. (QArchive: <http://facstaff.uww.edu/cottlec/QArchive/qindex.htm>)

Journal articles

On Representativeness and Q-sample (and P-set) Structure

- Brown, S.R. (1970). On the use of variance designs in Q methodology. *Psychological Record*, 20, 179-189.
- Kinsey, D. & Kelly, T.C. (1989). Mixing methodologies: An aid in developing Q samples. *Operant Subjectivity*, 12, 98-102.

On Interpretation

- Brown, S.R. (1980). *Political subjectivity*. Pp. 247-258.
- Brown, S.R. (1999). On the taking of averages: Variance and factor analyses compared. *Operant Subjectivity*, 22, 31-37.
- Goldman, I. (1999). Q methodology as process and context in interpretivism, communication, and psychoanalytic psychotherapy research. *Psychological Record*, 49, 589-604.
- McKeown, B.F. (1998). Circles: Q methodology and hermeneutical science. *Operant Subjectivity*, 21, 112-138.
- Stephenson, W. (1962). A note on the methodology of clinical explanation. *Psychological Record*, 12, 101-103.
- Stephenson, W. (1983). Against interpretation. *Operant Subjectivity*, 6, 73-103, 109-125.

Applications of Q (a small selection)

- Bidwell, C.E. (1957). Some effects of administrative behavior: A study in role theory. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 2, 162-181.
- Brewer, G.A., Selden, S.C., & Facer, R.L., II (2000). Individual conceptions of public service motivation. *Public Administration Review*, 60, 254-264.
- Brown, S.R. (1989). A feeling for the organism: Understanding and interpreting political subjectivity. *Operant Subjectivity*, 12, 81-97.
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- Fairweather, J.R., & Swaffield, S. (1996). Preferences for scenarios of land-use change in the Mackenzie/Waitaki Basin. *New Zealand Forestry*, 41(1), 17-26.
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- Ramlo, S. (2008). Student perspectives on learning physics and their relationship with learning force and motion concepts: A study using Q methodology. *Human Subjectivity*, 2, pp 73-90.
- Ramlo, S. (2008). Determining the various perspectives and consensus within a classroom using Q Methodology. *Physics Education Research Conference Proceedings*, 1064(1), pp 179-182.

- Ramlo, S. (2006 / 2007). Student Views of Learning in an Introductory College Physics Course: A study using Q methodology. *Operant Subjectivity*, 30 (1/2), pp 52-63.
- Ramlo, S. (2005). An Application of Q Methodology: Determining College Faculty Perspectives and Consensus Regarding the Creation of a School of Technology. *Journal of Research in Education*, 15 (1), 52-69.
- Ramlo, S., McConnell, D., Duan, Z., & Moore, F. (2008). Evaluating an inquiry-based bioinformatics course using Q methodology. *Journal of Science Education and Technology*, 17(3), 219-225. Available online at <http://www.springerlink.com/content/n0tq77wjg013402v/>.
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Resources

Q methodology website: <http://www.qmethod.org> where you can find:

Brown, S.R. (1996). *Workshop on Q methodology* [3 hours]. Available via streaming.

Join the Q methodology List Serve

Access the archives of the Q Method List Serve or go directly to: <http://www.qmethod.org/issss.php>

Join International Society for the Scientific Study of Subjectivity (ISSSS) which includes a subscription to *Operant Subjectivity: The International Journal of Q Methodology* (**\$10 students; \$30 regular**)

Find out about upcoming ISSSS conference

Download PQ Method (computer freeware) also available directly at <http://www.rz.unibw-muenchen.de/~p41bsmk/qmethod/>

PCQ (commercial computer software): <http://www.pcqsoft.com/>

Operant Subjectivity, quarterly journal of the International Society for the Scientific Study of Subjectivity (comes with ISSSS membership).

Journal of Human Subjectivity, semi-annual English-language journal published by the Korean Society for the Scientific Study of Subjectivity; produced and distributed by Communication Books, Seoul. \$50/year.

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Brown, S.R. (1980). *Political subjectivity: Applications of Q methodology in political science*. New Haven: Yale University

More references via Steve Brown's syllabus - <http://www.lrz-muenchen.de/~schmolck/qmethod/syllabus08.pdf>

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