

Section I: Project Description

Nature of the Innovation

Technology resources for use in instruction in qualitative methods have expanded and become more accessible and user-friendly in recent years, but technology has rarely been incorporated into the teaching of qualitative methods, especially at the undergraduate level. Digital tape recording, which reduces time and labor for transcription of voice data, and qualitative software packages can expand the scope of projects that undergraduate students can complete in a semester qualitative methods course. Few, if any, colleges and universities incorporate technology into qualitative undergraduate methods courses. We believe there is a unique opportunity at UGA to integrate technology into the teaching of undergraduate qualitative methods in Sociology and in Women's Studies and to develop a series of instructional exercises that can be elsewhere on and off campus to improve the teaching of qualitative methods. Although our primary focus will be undergraduate teaching, graduate students in courses and independent work will benefit from the project. This proposal seeks funds to (1) purchase digital recorders and qualitative software and (2) gain access to consultant and on-site expertise in applying these technologies in courses, most explicitly in undergraduate methods courses in Sociology and in Women's Studies. A number of recent developments have made this a needed and timely project. These include:

1. *Improvements in available technology.* Digital voice recorders and qualitative software have improved markedly in recent years and now are more affordable for instructional use. Software is more user-friendly and easier to learn and permits analysis of many forms of qualitative evidence, including observational field notes, intensive interview transcripts, and documentary and textual materials.

2. *Increases in the popularity of qualitative methods classes, especially at the undergraduate level.* Twenty years ago UGA's Sociology department offered no qualitative methods courses. Now the department offers five sections annually of SOCI 3590, qualitative methods. The course, along with a quantitative course SOCI 3600, can be used to satisfy the undergraduate major methods requirement. The graduate qualitative methods seminar, SOCI 6750, is likewise popular with students and fills to capacity whenever offered. Although students in quantitative methods course have access to state-of-the-art software and other equipment for their course work, there are no comparable resources. All methods courses are taught in small 15 student sections, so that all students can design and complete an original research project. Patricia Richards, an assistant professor cross-appointed between Sociology and Women's Studies, teaches WS 4000, Methods of Feminist Research, that typically enrolls an additional 15-20 students per year. All these students are significantly disadvantaged by lack of access to contemporary technology to assist with collection and analysis of qualitative evidence.

3. *Upgraded hardware in the Baldwin Hall undergraduate computer lab.* Baldwin Hall maintains an instructional computer laboratory (room 219) used by graduate students, majors, and students in methods courses. In the past, hardware limitations and older

programs requiring extensive disk space to run prevented allowing students to use qualitative technology on a regular basis. Older programs that generated multiple internal files clashed with Deep Freeze software, and portable diskettes were not sufficient to store students' work. Instructors used older software for single-session demonstrations but could not provide hands-on access to qualitative software. We also lack digital tape recorders. This fall Baldwin computer lab was upgraded with 15 Dell OptiPlex GX520 machines with 2.66 GHz and 1 GB RAM and 80 GB Hard Drives, plus CDR/DVD Combo Drives. This new hardware, plus more space-efficient analytical programs and memory sticks, will overcome past limitations on qualitative software use by students.

4. *Inclusion of discussions of technology in popular texts.* Texts and curriculum materials for undergraduate methods students increasingly cover use of technology in qualitative research. Students would benefit from opportunities to use these technologies themselves and to assess their advantages and limitations.

5. *Hiring of a Franklin Fellow with expertise in qualitative technology instruction.* The Department of Sociology has just hired Dr. Belisa Gonzalez on a three-year Franklin Teaching Fellowship. A recent Ph.D. graduate in Sociology from Emory University with a graduate certificate in Women's Studies, Dr. Gonzalez is a qualitative researcher with substantial experience with qualitative research technology. She offered numerous workshops for faculty, staff, and students at Emory University and was a consultant with a qualitative software company. She joins a growing number of faculty in the UGA Sociology department who use qualitative methods in some or all of their research (Cooney, Coverdill, J. Dowd, Finlay, Grant, Richards, and Smilde). Her expertise will be invaluable to the successful implementation of the project.

Need/Rationale for the Project

Undergraduate students in Sociology at UGA must take one of two methods courses to graduate. Although students enrolled in quantitative methods courses in the Sociology at UGA use state-of-the art software and other technology, qualitative methods course students do not. Women's Studies majors and students seeking the Undergraduate Certificate in Women's Studies typically take WM 4011. These students also lack access to qualitative data collection and analysis technology and there is no space in the current Women's Studies Building (Benson) to add such technology.

Although some Sociology and Women's Studies faculty use various qualitative technology in their work, the Sociology department has not had the resources to acquire state-of-the art technology for qualitative analysis. Some instructors have developed instructional programs that incorporate qualitative analysis technology in limited ways (see M. Stalp and L. Grant . 2001. A Teaching Qualitative Coding in Undergraduate Field Methods Classes: An Exercise Based on Personal Ads. @ *Teaching Sociology* 29: 209-18), they have been unable to engage undergraduate students in qualitative technology-depend projects because of resource and technological limitations. Graduate students could make even greater use of these technologies. Increasing numbers of students each year write qualitative theses and dissertations.

Our surveys of undergraduate alumni show that they regard methods courses as among the most valuable they take. Alumni believe these courses prepare them for graduate work and for the job market. We therefore believe it is important to keep these courses innovative and updated. Instructors have on the drawing boards a number of innovative and creative projects that would benefit from students' greater access to qualitative instructional technology. For example, Dr. Richards had discussed having students conduct oral histories of early Women's Studies-involved faculty at UGA in her WS4000 course. Drs. J. Dowd, Grant, and Hermanowicz typically involve students in substantively-focused courses in design and conduct of intensive interviews. With technological resources sought in this proposal, students in these courses could conduct more interviews and develop more sophisticated projects within a semester.

Undergraduate students in particular have little access to qualitative software. It is not available in UGA undergraduate computer labs. A lab in the College of Education stocks some qualitative software, but this facility is not available for Sociology and Women's Studies undergraduates. Digital recorders of reasonable quality and qualitative software are too costly for individual student purchase for a course. The Department of Sociology is sympathetic to the goal of innovative, technology-rich instruction in qualitative methods courses but in tight budget times and with the costs of recent hardware upgrades in Baldwin Hall does not have the resources to purchase the needed equipment and consultant services.

Relevance of the Project to Unit and University Priorities

The proposed project is relevant to the Sociology department's goal of teaching small-enrollment, seminar-style methods courses that expose students to state of the art instructional technologies and engage them in independent research. It is consistent with Professor Richard's goals in WMST 4011 in engaging students in feminist research. It also fits well with UGA's goal of preparing students to be technologically proficient and in engaging undergraduates in independent research. Qualitative methods courses often are taught as writing-intensive courses, and students carry forward projects to present in various on-campus forums, including the Women's Studies Research Conference, the Undergraduate Sociology Symposium, and the CURO Research Conference. The project also is consistent with UGA's goals related to diversity. Undergraduate qualitative methods courses enroll larger shares of students of color in comparison to quantitative methods classes, and thus greater exposure to technology in qualitative courses may help to close the so-called digital divide.

Specific Courses Served

The courses most directly served by the proposed project would be the following:
SOC 3590: Qualitative Methods in Social Research
SOC 6750: Seminar in Qualitative Methods
WMST 4011: Research Methods in Women's Studies

There is also a possibility of involvement of students in the following course:
WMST 2040: Gender and Computing

Numbers of Students Served

The most direct beneficiaries of the proposed project would be students enrolled in Sociology's and Women's Studies undergraduate and graduate methods courses. This amounts to approximately 75 Sociology undergraduates, 15 Sociology graduate students, and 15-20 Women's Studies students per academic year. Once students become proficient in the use of qualitative software, we anticipate that it will have further use in other substantively-focused undergraduate courses, where instructors already assign qualitative projects (see above). We also anticipate the technology will be used in the independent research carried out by Sociology undergraduate and graduate students.

Section II: Budget

Budget Item	Quantity	Total Cost	Requested from LTGP
Olympus VN-2000 Digital Voice Recorder	15	\$1050	\$1050
MXqda software and Teaching lab license	30*	\$1545	\$1545
Atlas.ti software	10**	\$3670	\$3670
ResearchTalk 2-day Consultation		\$2750	\$2750
Travel expenses for ResearchTalk Consultant		\$1500	\$1500
One-course summer salary (2007) For Dr. Belisa Gonzalez		\$3469	\$3469
Fringe benefits (summer rate) For Dr. Gonzalez, @ 15%		\$521	\$521
TOTALS		\$14,505	\$14,505

Budget Justification

Digital voice recorders, in sufficient quantities to permit one per students in a typical undergraduate or graduate methods course, are priced at the state contract rate of \$70.00 each. These are medium-quality recorders, sufficient for instructional use.

In consultation with Dr. Gonzalez, we have selected MXqda as a cost-effective, easy to learn program appropriate for use with undergraduate students. The software would be used only in the Baldwin Computer laboratory, room 219, to which undergraduates have access during hours that it is staffed by a graduate assistant or reserved for specific-course use. The maker requires purchase of one single-user package and license be purchased (at \$445), then provides an instructional license for up to 30 computers at an additional \$1,100. These are one-time fees that do not require annual renewals.

We will purchase Atlas.ti as an appropriate for use by graduate students, who conduct more elaborate analyses with larger datasets. Several faculty and graduate students already have some familiarity with this program. In quantities of 10 or more, one-time-only fee site licenses can be purchased for \$420 each.

ResearchTalk is a New York-based company that provides on-site training in qualitative software, including both both MAXqda and Atlas.ti. Their fee covers 2 days of on-site training for up to 8 faculty or graduate students who would be involved in instructional use of these softwares, plus 6 hours of online or phone followup consultation. Bringing a consultant to Athens is less expensive than sending faculty to their NY headquarters, and faculty can learn on our own equipment. Travel is extra, and funds are requested for airfare from NY, plus 2 days and 3 nights in Athens.

Summer salary for summer 2007 equivalent to teaching one course with benefits is requested for Dr. Gonzalez so that she can work individually with faculty who will be using the software in methods teaching to design and give trial runs to assignments for their classes. Although Dr. Gonzalez has considerable technological expertise, her role here would be pedagogical as well. We believe this will be an effective strategy to encourage rapid dissemination and maximal student use of the new technological innovations. Although the initial goal of consultations would be to produce innovations for courses at UGA, we envision working toward producing an instructional manual, possibly with an eye toward publication. Sociology will provide lab space and maintenance by Rebecca Brooks, Instructional Technology Specialist IV.

Project Timeline:

2/1/2007	Purchase, installation of software	Dr. Grant, Rebecca Brooks
5/10/2007 (approx.)	ResearchTalk Consultation on site	Dr. Grant
Summer 2007	Individual faculty	Drs. Grant, Gonzalez

Section III: Learning Outcomes*Learning Goal and Methods for Evaluation:*

1. Students will become knowledgeable of usage of technology in the collection and the analysis of qualitative data. We will modify our typical course evaluations to ask specifically about new technology use. Sociology will also add questions about technology use to exit polls of graduating seniors.
2. Students will complete independent projects using new technologies. At the end of the first year of implementation, faculty involved in methods teaching in Sociology and in Women's Studies will evaluate the extent of use and quality of projects produced by students in methods classes. We will also systematically assess how many papers and presentations based on the new technologies are presented on and off campus.
3. Faculty will adopt the usage of qualitative technology for substantively-focused courses. We will systematically review syllabi and poll faculty in Sociology and Women's Studies about use of technologies by students, either in formal classroom work or out of class projects. We will also address any difficulties in usage.

Potential Applications to Other Units:

While the proposed project involves two units, we believe that that the qualitative technologies can be adopted in other social science units and may also have applicability to disciplines that rely on text analysis, such as Speech Communication or Journalism. We will be happy to develop workshops and demonstrations for other units.

Some of the faculty involved in the project already have written for national audiences on qualitative methods teaching, and we anticipate continuing these efforts. The course exercises to be developed consultation with Dr. Gonzalez can be shared with others outside UGA through a variety of discipline-based channels, such as the American Sociological Association's syllabi collections or teaching resource manuals and through listserves maintained by qualitative methods textbook publishers and various disciplinary groups in Sociology and in Women's Studies.

IV: Support Plan: Once resources are available, faculty can continue to train new faculty and students in technology use. Technical support is provided by Sociology. A large contingent of qualitative researchers on the Sociology and Women's Studies faculty will continue to provide support.

