

**GIGA Workshop “Interviewing Experts – Qualitative Interviews and its Techniques”**  
**Dr. Beate Littig**  
**November 12-13, 2014**

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## Course outline *Interviewing Experts – Qualitative Interviews and its Techniques*

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The course aims to give an overview of the methodology and practice of expert interviews. Expert interviews are frequently used in empirical research but rarely theoretically reflected. In the first part of the course the methodology of expert interviews will be considered: Who is an expert? Is an expert necessarily part of ‘the elite’? The latter seems to be assumed in the Anglo-American tradition of qualitative methodology, where the term expert interview is not used; instead, the term elite interview is frequently used. Is it appropriate to state a special methodology of expert interviews? What are the main characteristics and problems of expert interviews? The second part of the course will focus on more practice-oriented topics of research design, data collection/sampling, the interaction between interviewer(s) and interviewee and gender effects. In the third part of the course, the most important techniques of expert interviews will be examined: designing a topic guide, conducting an expert interview, transcription and methods of analysis.

Students will be trained in the methodological reflection about qualitative expert interviews (as a special method of qualitative research), as well as in practical skills of interviewing and data analysis. Methodological issues focus on the philosophical and theoretical underpinnings of qualitative research. Different traditions of paradigms will be compared. A major part of the course (especially on the second day) will concentrate on participants’ individual plans with the application of expert interviews and their individual competencies. Exercises and practical training shall help them to improve their empirical research skills.