

Qualitative Coding Process Notes

Shannon Lally (2021)

Things not to code:

- generally, boilerplate “*insert course code* is a class designed to...”
 - Sometimes, goals of the course are hidden in there, which I code as goals
 - “As this course progresses, hopefully you will...” “gain an understanding” etc.
- Sometimes, values are also hidden in there
 - Often times mentions of “learning proper conventions”
- Do not code list of required texts or course prerequisites (must have completed 52 hours of English credits, etc.)

Practices:

- So far, all assignments/productions of work have been coded as practices
 - Papers
 - Reading
- Code these practices throughout the course calendar if included in the syllabus
 - Generally, code each day as a practice or as a goal
 - Code as a goal if it expresses an explicit due date
 - Code holidays as values
 - Sometimes professors include goals or practices for themselves in the syllabus and calendar, so code these, too
 - For example, talking about possible changes to the format of the class or returning work to students

Goals:

- Goals do not always mean goals
 - Many syllabi include AWD departmental “goals,” but many of these are often not goals at all
 - I code the last two “goals,” which include the production of 5,000+ words and a written reflection as goals although now that I’m thinking about it they could be practices and the rest as values, as they talk about “conventions,” “understanding,” etc.
- Explicit due dates listed in the course calendar (if included in the syllabus) are coded as goals
- Goals also include aims of the course included in the introduction to the course

Values:

- The easiest way to spot a value is to look for a threat
 - Attendance
 - Punctuality
 - Late Papers
 - Academic Integrity
- Some values are not followed up by a threat (such as a teacher wanting to provide office hours times or urging students to use university resources to get help with their writing), but most values are punitive

- Holidays are coded as values because they represent a kind of respect for the observance of national and religious dates
- Sections included about Writing Center resources are values

Beliefs:

- Beliefs are the most difficult to spot
- Generally broad sweeping statements about something being good or bad for your writing
 - “Peer reviews will improve the quality of your writing,” etc.
- Professors will often present their beliefs in the form of a quote included in or at the beginning of the syllabus
 - Although this is not explicitly expressing a “belief,” the inclusion of the quote suggests that this is a principle that the professor believes in and will incorporate into the class
- Beliefs are similar to values but not punitive
- Overlap?
 - Some expressions might overlap codes depending on their use in the syllabus
 - For example, “peer review”
 - Peer review included on the calendar is coded as a practice because it is an everyday activity and writing exercise
 - Peer review otherwise is likely coded as a belief or value depending on how it is used
 - “Peer reviewing improves your skills as a writer” = belief
 - “This class is collaborative and requires you to edit not only your own papers, but those of your peers” = value

Codes I am Still Unsure Of:

- When professors are not explicit
 - A day off for unspecified reason uncoded?
 - A day off for a university mandated holiday: value
- Professors setting assignment requirements
 - Values or goals of the paper?

Overall Experience:

The process was slightly tedious, but I believe that the 10 hours a week is sufficient to cover the workload. Some weeks, if you get behind because of classwork, it is possible to catch up. You will not always do 10 hours per week; sometimes it will be less, and sometimes it will be more. I enjoyed this process, though, as it opened my eyes to a new area of academic research. Having more meetings throughout the semester was helpful.

Joseph Wheatley (2021)

Things not to code:

- Required texts or materials
- Anything not specifically related to the class
 - Writing center requirements
 - Publication options

Things To Code:

Practices

- Anything that is directly completed daily
- All types of assignments
 - Papers
 - Reading

Values

- Everyday things that are implemented into practice
- Attendance, respect, participation, etc.

Goals

- major projects, research papers, group presentations, etc.
- goals/outcomes/assignments created by a department for students to complete throughout the course
- “Milestones”
- Teacher goals, student goals, university goals

Beliefs

- Statements made by the instructor that are subjective and lack punitive action.
 - Example: peer review is necessary within the editing process

Definition Notes

Values:

- Everyday things that are implemented into practice
- Usually are punitive: i.e., “if you miss more than three classes you will lose a letter grade.”
- There can be a difference between teacher values and University values
 - Teacher values are specifically written in by the teacher and followed within the specific class.
 - University values, such as plagiarism, are respected by every student.
- Examples: Attendance, respect, participation, etc.

Beliefs:

- Statements made by the instructor that are subjective and lack punitive action. The instructor believes these statements to be true and beneficial, but not everyone may agree with the statements (personal opinions/subjective).
 - Example: peer review is necessary within the editing process
- Professor can structure their syllabus and course based on these beliefs

Goals:

- A list of goals/outcomes/assignments created by a department for students to complete throughout the course

- Can be viewed as milestones: *major projects, research papers, group presentations, etc.*
- Sometimes sections listed as “goals” are not always goals.
- There can be teacher goals, student goals, and university goals.

Practices:

- Actions taken when completing goals, or actions that will be important for the completion of goals or learning new skills
 - Anything that is directly completed daily
 - Examples:
 - Daily journaling
 - Writing a 5000 word paper

We’re coding sentences as “units of meaning”

- First priority: write down four codes and define them based on how you applied them to your codes, add keywords underneath each definition
 - **values ("it's best that you...")**: "everyday thing to implement into practices"; e.g., emphasis on attendance (presence, engagement, collaboration **community, communication**), submitting assignments on time (**respect**; "email at this time, not past this time, respect my time")
 - "oftentimes I could tell what was a value by the repercussions/punitive actions" --> if a value is violated, often some kind of penalty (e.g., **academic integrity**)
 - either personal (respect) OR disciplinary (e.g., community, collaboration)/institutional (academic integrity)
 - make a list of values keywords --> this code corresponds to these keywords, "big" abstract terms like those bolded above
 - can be more interdisciplinary --> no clear set of shared disciplinary values but we might have sets of shared beliefs about writing processes and practices
 - **beliefs ("writing is a process")**: "highly subjective blanket statements, kind of like values but **didn't have any explicit threat following them**; e.g., 'editing is crucial to writing'" --> perhaps more steeped in specific discipline/sub-discipline/subfield training
 - what a professor "feels" about the specific thing that they think, some professors will care more about peer editing than others
 - **goals ("you will accomplish xyz")**: set of standardized departmental goals/outcomes
 - some weren't actually goals though framed as such (they might've been values)
 - coded some of these as values --> "we're framing these as goals but they're actually values"
 - **the goal is to instill a value in the students**
 - **practices ("multi-stage writing projects"/"what do students do?")**: tangible expectations, day-to-day, "what do I have to do for today?"; also instructors outlining their own practices (e.g. instructor put reminders to have x graded by a certain date)