**NOTES FROM NAGPUR**

Rich Slimbach’s Recollections

Some edits by Viv in red. The actions I have put onto Basecamp

MATUL Consultation—Nagpur, India—May 23-27, 20111

**1. Program evaluation.** Each school will be asked by their respective accreditation agency to provide evidence that they are achieving the goals they set for themselves. This requires three levels of data (a) individual course, (b) program (annually), and program (every five years).

Action Point: Commission members need to create and share model *course evaluation* and *program evaluation* processes and forms.

Action Point: Following Colin’s lead, the Commission approved the change of TUL550 from *Service* ***to*** *the Marginalized* to *Service* ***Among*** *the Marginalized*.

2. **Common course components.** In order to work together effectively in relation to the MATUL, we need a level of curricular commonality that also allows for school-specific variation. We have agreed to share common (a) course titles and (b) course descriptions. Rich proposed that we also share 4-6 “global” course outcomes. [Viv: not sure if this was approved by group; I think so. Yes]

Action Point: All proposed changes to course titles and descriptions, and the rationale for each, should be brought to the Commission for everyone’s learning. Each school can work on create and share a set of 4-6 global course outcomes for each course they teach. Care must be taken to write outcomes that conform to globally-accepted standards:

<http://www.ssdd.bcu.ac.uk/outcomes/>

<http://seattlecentral.edu/users/crc/Assessment/IA_Writing_Course_Outcomes.htm>

Action Point: Commission members must tie assessment procedures in each course to the specific learning outcomes (above). In other words, we need some way of knowing whether or not students have achieved the learning outcomes we’ve outlined for the course.

3. **Syllabus review and evaluation**. The course syllabus is an essential “map” of the course and the primary point of connection between the subject and students. It defines the parameters of course content, prescribing what students will read, discuss (in class), research (in community) and write about. As a Commission, there needs to be some mechanism for *peer review* (benefiting from the knowledge and experience of other urban leaders) without violating *institutional integrity* (local decision-making).

Action Point: (a) We need a Syllabus Checklist that itemizes globally accepted benchmarks (standards) for course development. (b) Program directors are responsible to mentor course instructors, and to review syllabuses *before* the course is taught, to ensure that these standards are met.

4. **MATUL Commission leadership**. Help is needed to do many of the detail-oriented tasks in the Commission: focused fund-raising, website management, and conference set-up.

Action Point: We need one or more persons to volunteer themselves or recommend someone from their schools who could work closely with Viv on these tasks. Colin agreed to manage conference set-up in Nairobi for 2012.

5. **Commission budget.** What expenses should properly be born by the Commission (vs. each participating school)?

Action Point: Please send ideas to Viv.

6. **MATUL and movements.** Does the MATUL aim to *create* movements among urban poor populations or *strengthen* the capacity of existing movements—some that do not describe themselves as Christian but are doing kingdom-oriented work? Or both?

Action Point: (a) It was suggested that we revise the statements in the MATUL literature to include “redemptive” movements. (b) It was suggested that someone research and bring to a Commission meeting a short paper that answers: What does a “redemptive movement” look like? When does a “ministry” actually become a “movement”?

7. **MATUL students: scholar shipped or paying?** HBI requires all students to pay tuition. ATS scholarships all students. Discussion surrounded the prospective problems of each model.

a. *Quality of students.* Do “free” programs encourage the wrong kind of students—those who simply want to earn a master’s degree and “move on”? How many graduates actually are working in slum communities?

b. *Educational standards.* Do subsidized students tend to take their studies less seriously? Does the program, over time, become degraded as reading is not done, papers are delayed, and fieldwork is eliminated? Do students expect to “earn” a master’s degree without doing master’s level work? What do we say to students who protest, “We’re in full-time ministry. We have families. We can’t do the work you’re asking us to do”? Does the program run the risk of becoming, over time, a “degree mill”?

c. *Sustainability.* How sustainable over the long term are “free” programs?

8. **Course workload**. Discussed was the standard for graduate level courses as requiring at least 120 hours of work. The typical MATUL courses would require 40 hours of presentation, 40 hours of “fieldwork” of some kind (e.g. internships), and 40 hours of reading and writing.

9. **Exchange of students**. Discussion on the exchange of MATUL students from one site (e.g. Nairobi) to another (e.g. Chennai). Group was favorable. Students would need to bear expenses , and would likely need “field work helpers” in local language in order to complete fieldwork.

10. **Exchange of faculty.** Some MATUL courses in one place (e.g. Nairobi) might benefit from having faculty from elsewhere (e.g. Chennai) teaching one or more courses. Faculty would need to bear the financial expense and they would need to consider the environmental (CO2) impacts of non-essential plane travel. But they could stay with local faculty and make progress in learning the local context. This should be seen as an opportunity for ongoing faculty development.

Evaluation of cross-course issues in Program Evalaution

11. **Gender balance in curriculum.** From the outset we have committed to see gender balance in the MATUL curriculum. There are several dimensions of this “balance”: (a) Student population: Are female students well represented in the program? (b) Faculty: Are women fairly represented in the teaching staff of the program? (c) Course content: Do MATUL courses highlight the needs of female urban poor populations, whether in education, health, or human rights? (d) Case studies: Do core texts address the ways women are working for the improvement of slum conditions?

Action points:
1. St Pauls to review Colin’s submissions
2. These be fed back to other schools.
3. Each school then review their materials, course outlines and make sure these issues are addressed.

12. **Theological infusion in curriculum**. The MATUL curriculum needs to progress is committed to from an giving theological attention to both the role of individual heart change (evangelism) and the gathering of believers (church-planting) and to relating Scripture/theology to issues of urbanization, leadership, public health, human rights (vulnerable populations), education, and the like. This is “public” theology for which relatively little has been written (and example is Max Stackhouse’*God and Globalization* series). Schools need to research and then order course-specific materials. Faculty of record then need to study these materials and incorporate insights into their courses (teaching and field projects). Until this is done, and done well, theology will only scratch the surface.

Action: This is documented in the program evaluation rubric now on the web. Done

13. How to Develop the **Publication Goal in the Program Goals**. The *Journal for Urban Mission* p http://www.facebook.com/topic.php?uid=158757239183&topic=13974 publishes material from ‘center’ to ‘margins’. They would be glad to published exemplary papers produced by MATUL students at each program site. Faculty should (a) instruct students on the writing of case studies (i.e. rich description, careful analysis, proper format), and then collect and electronically archive the best papers for sharing on the MATUL website.

This will serve as one vehicle for MATUL publications

Action: A publications rep be appointed by each faculty to integrate and review these, and be part of a MATUL Committee.

Please submit names of faculty rep to Viv, and we will set up a BAseCamp site for this discussion.