

College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

Department of Global Studies and Sociology

Master of Arts in Transformational Urban Leadership (MATUL) Program

**TUL675 *Research Project/Thesis* (2 units)**



**Summer 2014**

May 5 – July 25, 2014

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APU ext 3046 MTh or 2911 TuWF

Mission and Purpose Statement of APU

*“Azusa Pacific University is an evangelical Christian community of disciples and scholars who seek to advance the work of God in the world through academic excellence in liberal arts and professional programs of higher education that encourage students to develop a Christian perspective of truth and life.”*

Master of Arts in Transformational Urban Leadership

***The aim*** *of the MA in Transformational Urban Leadership is to increase the capacity of emergent leaders among urban poor movements with wisdom, knowledge, character and skill.*

The mission of the MATUL program is to catalyze urban religious and social movements through which citizens mobilize in an attempt to achieve some transformation of their environment. The focus is exclusively on the needs and capacities of working class urban poor within the structures of the contemporary capitalist mega-city. The Church is seen to play a critical role to the extent that it forms psychologically stable, spiritually integrated, and non-exploiting persons as the human "building blocks" for a saner and more just urban society. The MATUL program aims to train a new generation of leaders capable of forging strategic linkages between Church-related organizations and community-based organizations, public agencies, private enterprises) with a view to the final goal of God’s plan: the redemption of humanity and the restoration of creation, the reconciliation of all things through Jesus Christ.

**I. Course Description**

Students apply qualitative participatory-action research proposal for a missiological issue in partnership with an urban church movement or community organization. This culminates in the writing and oral presentation of a report that involves local residents in transformation, followed by a professional presentation at a re-entry week.

Prerequisite: TUL671.

**II. Expanded Course Description**

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**The MATUL Commission course description:** Students apply analytic frameworks and practical skills to an investigation of a specific issue on behalf of a church movement or community organization that involves local residents in specific transformation efforts. Research methods are taught and used to gather and organize pertinent information, culminating in the writing and oral presentation of a Professional Report. (This may be replaced with a thesis if required by some accrediting bodies).

**New Knowledge:** One of the major tasks of a graduate program is to train students to *produce* new knowledge, and then to *communicate* that new knowledge to relevant audiences. For advanced MATUL students, this entails the design of a research project, the organization of tasks and activities, the use of a variety of research methods to collect information, and the presentation of findings to a public audience. In social sciences tradition, this involves “field research”: Students leave the campus compound, library or laboratory in order to obtain first-hand information within community contexts. This is not a PhD, where the aim is to develop a new theory, but a Masters generally takes extant theory and evaluates or extends an aspect of it.

**Theological Action-Reflection:** This degree began with reflection on the process of Transformational Conversations, a development of the Hermeneutic Cycle in urban ministry. This begins in action that defines a question, iterates through theological conversation, social analysis and returns to a new point of action. This theological paradigm parallels action-research theory in the social sciences.

**Community Organization Focus:** The Thesis or Project is designed to structure a process by which student-investigators conduct field research oriented towards the needs of a specific community organization. This organization can be public, private, or non-profit. In some cases it will be an urban poor church; in other cases an issue-oriented community organization with a large professional staff. Although the range of possible partner organizations is broad, it is imperative that it be “high quality.” The capacity, reputation, and level of public involvement of the organization will all directly affect whether project planning will be ‘participatory,’ as well as how well research results will be applied within specific populations or communities. Students should thus exercise great care in selecting partner organizations that can support their research effort. Students will eventually negotiate with the organization a particular issue and research question that supports its mission and agenda. Then they will select appropriate approaches and methods for investigating it.

**Program Integration and Preparation for Your Future:** In architecture, the “capstone” is the crowning piece of an arch, the center stone that holds the arch together, giving it shape and strength. The research and writing involved in the Thesis or Projectplays a similar role, challenging students to tie together, extend, and deepen the work they’ve already undertaken during their core courses and practical training (internships), and based on this integration to then potentially project forwards to the future ministry or career of the student.. As action research it should result in a specific extension of a church or community context . The parallel course in Entrepreneurial Leadership can well be utilized to broaden this thesis into a fundable proposal, including a workable business plan and funding proposal.

As this degree is a missions theology degree, a degree in social entrepeneurship, and in movement leadership and the multiplication of churches, this research could move in each one of these directions. It would be wise to choose your focus in the direction of your gifts and call. It could also ideally integrate the spiritual, theological, and socio-economic aspects of the degree, but research, to be successful, tends to be focused on a narrow topic, rather than broad ideas.

**Research Skills:** This final project report, as the culminating course product, is intended to profoundly shape student learning. It asks students to define a research agenda, familiarize themselves with similar studies, collect and analyze fresh data, develop conclusions and recommendations, and represent findings to a public audience it all in a clear and operational format. The report not only contributes to the students’ education, but also becomes a significant resource for the public good.

The actual seminar walks students through a research and writing process that extends over a two-courses (27 week) period. Successful completion of the course earns 5 units of graduate credit and represents approximately 360 hours of “invested learning.” Learning activities include: completing assigned reading and video viewing, consulting with organization staff, participating in on-line forums, conducting fieldwork, producing project reports, and disseminating results. It is expected that the student will spend, *on average*, ten hours per week on course-related activities.

The course aims to structure a research process by which students can apply disciplinary knowledge and discover their potential as problem solvers. They experience the gratification, frustration, uncertainty, and enlightenment that accompany field research, and to prepare themselves for assuming new levels of community leadership and service. While the quality of the research and writing must be high to be of use to the host organization, the specific findings and recommendations are secondary to *mastering the research process*. What students and organizational staff learn together from a collaborative process of inquiry is at least as important as the results they obtain. That is why it is critical that students enrolled in the course be sincerely motivated and committed to **participatory research** that **empowers** community organizations, as opposed to students seeking to merely fulfill a program requirement.

**III. Student Learning Outcomes**

Thinking

1. Present the results of the research to the leadership and people served by the partnering church or community organization that: (a) Articulates the philosophical, theological, and practical distinctives of the missional participatory action research; [TD6, 7, Project 5] (b) Critically discusses literature related to the research topic and central question; (c) Demonstrates the results of various qualitative research techniques to answering the research question within a specific social context; (d) Critically evaluates the strengths and weaknesses of research findings as evidence for conclusions and recommendations; [TD 8, Project 6, 7] (e) Results in active decision-making involvement by partners; (f) Results in expansion of a theological paradigm among the partners and community.

Being

2.1 Demonstrate personal warmth, humility, power sharing, and empathy with community organization staff and “clients” manifest in "buy-in" to the proposed transformative action [TD6, 7; Project 5]

2.2 Process spiritual and emotional stress factors and growth from the period of MATUL immersion among the poor

Doing

3.1 Demonstrate academic and project management skills—i.e. the ability to: (a) work appropriately within the capacity and reputation of partner organizations; (b) redefine the research problem over time in consultation with agency staff; (c) implement a project plan with timelines and deliverables; and (d) monitor progress against the project plan.

3.2 Demonstrate in-field research skills—i.e., the ability to (a) gain access to the study population in their social settings; (b) select appropriate data collection methods; (c) conduct interviews with select informants; (d) analyze the data; (e) develop with the people and disseminate theological paradigms that impinge on the topic and (f) effectively communicate findings in writing and public presentations to both the community leaders and to APU faculty [TD6, 7 &10; Project 5, 8]

***Information literacy***

Students enrolled in TUL675 are also required to demonstrate the ability to locate, evaluate, and effectively use information that is pertinent to the research question they investigate within urban poor communities.

|  |
| --- |
| * Determine what information is needed to provide a conceptual framework for their inquiry |
| * Access the needed information effectively and efficiently through high-quality sources |
| * Evaluate information and its sources critically |
| * Incorporate selected information into one’s knowledge base and a relevant theoretical framework for the project |
| * Use information effectively to refine research plan and especially to analyze collected data |
| * Understand the economic, legal, and social issues surrounding the use of information, and access and use information ethically and legally |

**IV. Course Materials**

Students are responsible to obtain the “required” materials below in either hard copy or electronic version. The “recommended” materials, though optional, offer valuable information for the various phases of the project. Portions of the text can be accessed online. Students can also identify local materials that feature case studies of research among urban poor populations from their particular region.

**Required**

* Desai, V. and Potter, R. (Eds.) (2006). *Doing development research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications. **ISBN-13:** 978-1412902854
* Scheyvens, R. and Storey, D. Eds. (2003). *Development fieldwork: A practical guide.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications. ISBN-13:978-0761948902 ($34.99 second hand Amazon).
* Waymire, B. and C. Townsend (2000). *Discovering Your City : Bringing Light to the Task of Community Transformation*, Light International. **ISBN-13:** 978-0967534206.
* Schwartz, C. A. (2003). *Natural Church Development: A Guide to Eight Essential Qualities of a Healthy Church*. D-25924 Emmesbull, Germany, C & P Publishing. ($5.90 Amazon). **ISBN-13:** 978-1889638003

**Recommended**

Gray, D. E. (2009). *Doing research in the real world* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Maxwell, J. (2004). *Qualitative research design*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Diana Mitlin & David Satterthwaite. Eds. (2004). *Empowering squatter citizen: Local government, civil society and urban poverty reduction*. Earthscan Publications. [*This book provides eight case studies of community-driven initiatives based on participatory research processes. It profiles some projects where the primary development agent is local government, and others where grassroot organizations are the main catalysts. Reading this text will suggest potential research topics and questions. It also serves to highlight the importance of building, strengthening, and working through competent, accountable local organizations formed by the poor themselves.*]

Urban Missiological Action-Research

Grigg, V. (2009). Transformational Conversations: Hermeneutic for a Postmodern City. *The Spirit of Christ and the Postmodern City: Transformative Revival Among Auckland's Evangelicals and Pentecostals*. Lexington, KY, Asbury: Emeth Press and Auckland: Urban Leadership Foundation. (available at <http://www.urbanleaders.org/transrevival/8TransformativeRevival.htm>)

Elliston, Eddie. (2011). *Introduction to Missiological Research Design*. William Carey Library. ISBN: 978-0-87808-475-3. (Also at <http://www.foundationscourse.org/uploads/documents/Elliston-Missiological_Research.pdf> ). $15.99

**V. Expectations & Grading**

**Assessments** (Components of Final Grade)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | |
| #5 *Information description*  Evaluative criteria: selection of appropriate research methods; blend of observational and interview data; # of informants; quality of interview guide; quality of data collected; clear organization of data by labeled themes; writing quality (clear, succinct, spelling, persuasiveness). | 15 |
| #6 *Information analysis*  Evaluative criteria: evidence of collaboration with national guide; evidence of concept integration from prior studies; clear identification of relationships between variables; succinct but insightful conclusions; writing quality (use of headings, clarity, conciseness, spelling, grammar, and persuasiveness) | 15 |
| #7 *Written Thesis or Professional report*  *Evaluative criteria:* Timeliness (submission of product on time); incorporation of “description” and “analysis” sections, as well as the other structural elements outlined in Addendum D of the “Real World Research” doc; mastery of the research issue/problem, including knowledge of the larger context of the study and background knowledge from prior studies; writing quality (formatting, clarity, conciseness, spelling, grammar, and persuasiveness). | 25 |
| #8 *Public presentations*  Evaluative criteria:organization of event; creativity in presentational techniques; clarity of presentation; persuasiveness. | 15 |
| *SKYPE or Adobe Connect:*  Evaluative Criteria: Attendance; Breadth of Discussion of Concepts from Readings; Depth of Expression of Perspectives and Depth of Questions for Readers; Integration of Ideas; Connectedness of Thoughtful Reflection; Stimulates Additional Conversation; Sensitivity Towards Others Views; Contribution to Discussion; Comprehensible | 13 |
| *Forum:*  Evaluative Criteria: Breadth of Discussion of Concepts from Readings; Depth of Expression of Perspectives and Depth of Questions for Readers; Integration of Ideas; Connectedness of Thoughtful Reflection; Stimulates Additional Conversation; Sensitivity Towards Others Views; Contribution to Discussion; Comprehensible Writing Mechanics; Timely | 15 |
| *Evaluation of Course* | 2 |
| **Totals:** | 100%  100 pts |

*Grades will be calculated on a 100-point scale as follows:*

APU grades are converted to the following scale:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | APU | |
| Grade | GPA | Numeric |
| A+ |  | Not given |
| A | 4.0 | 95-100 |
| A- | 3.7 | 92-94.99 |
| B+ | 3.3 | 89-91.99 |
| B | 3.0 | 84-88.99 |
| B- | 2.7 | 81-83.99 |
| C+ | 2.3 | 78-80.99 |
| C | 2.0 | 73-77.99 |
| C- | 1.7 | 70-72.99 |
| D+ | 0 | 69-69.99 |
| D | 0 | 68-68.99 |
| D- | 0 | 65-67.99 |
| F | 0 | 0-64.99 |
| Inc. |  |  |

Your final grade is a reflection of a combination of your talent, effort and achievement, *not effort alone*. Different students may earn very different grades, even though they expend the same amount of time and energy. The meanings I attach to “A”, “B”, “C”, “D” and “F” grades are as follows:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **A** | Outstanding performance: shows intrinsic interest in the course and subject; consistently asks penetrating questions and/or offers thoughtful reflections during Forum discussions; demonstrates exceptional intelligence and creativity in project reports; earns high scores on course assignments—usually the highest in the class. |
| **B** | *Above average* student in terms of participation, preparation, attitude, initiative in asking questions, time management, and assignment quality. |
| **C** | Average or typical student in terms of participation, preparation, attitude, initiative in asking questions, time management, and assignment quality. |
| **D** | *Below average* or atypical student in terms of participation, preparation, attitude, initiative in asking questions, time management, and assignment quality — minimally passing in performance. |
| **F** | Repeat course. Inadequate/insufficient performance. |

**Online Discussion Guidelines**

Online or “threaded” Discussions (“Forums” in Sakai) are topically organized dialogs or conversations that take place in Sakai. The Forums enable MATUL students and faculty to link messages in order to exchange project-related insights from geographically dispersed locations.

During threaded discussions, students interact with *content* (e.g. assigned readings and videos), their *classmates* (via discussion, peer review), and with the *instructor* (as they seek to instruct, guide, correct, and support learners). Messages in a given thread share a common topic and are linked to each other in the order of their creation. All students have a “voice” in the discussions; no one—not even the instructor—is able to dominate or control the conversation. Because the course is available *asynchronously* (i.e. at any time and from any location with an Internet connection), online discussions enable participants to reflect on each other’s contributions, as well as their own, prior to posting. As “iron sharpens iron,” each student’s contribution enhances the learning of all other students, and feeds back into our life within our host communities.

To make this process work for all, “posts” must be made during specified time periods (as specified under each project). ***This means that you will have to finish processing any assigned reading and/or other project-related work within those same time periods.*** To write substantive posts, you will need to stay healthy, focused, and organized.

*Procedure*

* Begin a particular project within the specified time period.
* Wait for the instructor to pose a topic-related query.
* Each student responds with an initial, substantive post.
* Students respond to each other’s posts.
* Instructor interacts with student responses, redirecting the discussion when necessary to improve participation, while also encouraging the exploration of topic-related issues

*Guidelines for participation*

* Students adhere to specific timeframes for discussion and reflection.
* For each topical thread, each student contributes at least three (3) posts.
* Students pay attention to the *quantity/timeliness* and *quality* of their postings (see rubric below)

*Assessment rubric*

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** |
| **Quantity and timeliness of post** | * Does not respond to most postings; rarely participates freely * Appears indifferent to learning community | * Responds to most postings several days after initial (scheduled) discussion; * Takes limited initiative | * Responds to most postings within a 24-hour period; * Rarely requires prompting to post | * Consistently responds to posting in less than 24 hours * Shows initiative in motivating group discussion’ |
| **Quality of post** | * Posts topics unrelated to discussion topic; * Appears “rushed” with poor spelling/ grammar and unclear expression | * Occasionally posts off topic; offers short posts with limited insight on the topic; * Difficulty in expressing ideas clearly | * Frequently posts topics related to discussion topic * States opinions and ideas clearly; contributes insights to topic | * Consistently posts topics related to discussion topic * Clear, creative expression of ideas and opinions |

**Workload expectations**

Following the APU Credit Hour Policy (approved 02/12), graduate students are expected to complete 3 hours of "out of class" learning activity for every 1 hour "in class." Over a 12 week term, that is approximately 120 hours (10 hrs/wk) of learning activity that includes: faculty instruction, self-guided reading, video viewing, consultation with community organizations, electronic database research, participation in online discussions (“Forums”), ethnographic fieldwork, report writing, and any public presentations. This includes approximately 45 hours of direct faculty instruction. *"Classroom or direct faculty instruction and out-of-class student work leading to the award of credit hours may vary for courses that require laboratory work, internships, practica, studio work, online work, research, guided study, study abroad, and other academic work to achieve the identified student learning outcomes."* To meet the identified student learning outcomes, the expectations are that this 3-unit course, delivered over a 12-week term will approximate:

**Academic Interaction**

* 1 1/2 hours/week of direct faculty instruction (via Forums, Skype, or lecture) [18 hrs total]
* 1 hours/week online guided study (reading and video viewing) [12 hrs total]
* 5 hours/course of online student-to-student and instructor-to-student mentoring (Forums, Skype) [5 hrs total]

Fieldwork

* 2 hours/week community consultation and research over a 9 week period [18 hrs total]
* 2 1/2 hours/week project-related fieldwork [30 hrs total]
* 1 hour/week field-related writing [12 hrs total]

TOTAL: approx. 120 **hours**

Usually Research Projects and Theses take considerably more than the formal time allotted to them, at least twice as much time.

**Course Policies**

**Class attendance::**

Online: Students are required to join in both the virtual face to face video mediated conversations and the class forum discussions each week, with an opening statement in response to one of the questions and 2 responses to others comments later in the week in the online forums. This gives the core coherence to the online learning process.

Face to face: Students are expected to be arriving promptly to class, coming fully prepared, participating actively in the discussions and activities are important components of this part of your grade for the course. Tardiness and absences must be discussed with the professor. Make-up work may be negotiated for absences due to medical or emergency reasons.

Students absent for more than 3 sessions will be advised to withdraw. Excused absence may be made up with an additional assignment.

Deadlines: All assignments for the course are to be completed and submitted on time in order to receive full credit. Late assignments will be penalized 10% or one-half grade of the total points available per assignment for each week late or portion thereof. Permission for late work is granted only by special request to your faculty. Incompletes are rare and are available only in “special or unusual circumstances” as negotiated with the instructor prior to the end of the term. See Student Handbook for policies regarding Withdrawals and grade record permanence

Advance Assistance: Students wishing feedback (comments, no grade) from the instructor regarding initial drafts of papers/presentations are invited to schedule such with the instructor sufficiently in advance of due dates to enable review, discussion, and subsequent refinement (as necessary).

Assignment Options: Students interested in proposing other means (different from those outlined above) of demonstrating their comprehension, inquiry, and skill relative to the purpose(s) of this course may do so upon the instructor’s discretionary consent. Such students are to submit thorough and well-reasoned proposals (appropriate to graduate-caliber study) in sufficient time for both the instructor to review and accept or modify the proposal and the student to complete it prior to the end of the term.

# Make up and extra credit: If a student has an “excused” absence from a week’s work that delays an assignment, they may make that up within the next week. If they have no excuse from the weeks work, they will receive a 10% drop in grade if submitted the next week, and 20% if submitted two weeks later. Assignment will not be accepted three weeks late..

# Incompletes: The grade of “Incomplete” can only be given in the case of a verified personal/family emergency and with the approval of the course professor and the college dean.

For policies on Withdrawal and Grade Permanence, Academic Integrity, and Appeals and Grievance procedures refer to the Graduate Catalog and Departmental Student Handbooks as applicable.

# Academic Integrity: The mission of Azusa Pacific University includes cultivating in each student not only the academic skills that are required for a university degree, but also the characteristics of academic integrity that are integral to a sound Christian education. It is therefore part of the mission of the university to nurture in each student a sense of moral responsibility consistent with the biblical teachings of honesty and accountability. Furthermore, a breach of academic integrity is viewed not merely as a private matter between the student and an instructor but rather as an act that is fundamentally inconsistent with the purpose and mission of the entire university. A complete copy of the Academic Integrity Policy is available in the Office of Student Life, the Office of the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Programs, and online.

In this class, collaboration is encouraged on assignments. However each assignment needs to be submitted by each person, and documentation by each party of how many hours they put in, others put in and the % and nature of workload each contributed.

It is the policy of the University that academic work should represent the independent thought and activity of the individual student. Work that is borrowed from another source without attribution or used in an unauthorized way in an academic exercise is considered to be academic dishonesty that defrauds the work of others and the educational system. Engaging in academic dishonesty is a serious offense that may result in a failing grade for an assignment, a failing grade in the course, and/or academic probation. The full academic integrity policy is available in the graduate catalog. Some of the most noteworthy forms of academic misconduct in course focusing on research and writing are as follows:

* Presenting the work of another as one's own.
* Quoting directly or paraphrasing without acknowledging the source.
* Submitting the same work or major portions thereof to satisfy the requirements of more than one course without permission from the instructor.
* Receiving assistance from others in informational research or field data collection that constitutes an essential element in the undertaking without acknowledging such assistance.
* Fabricating data by inventing or deliberately altering material (this includes citing "sources" that are not, in fact, sources).

# References to author and text must be included whenever the author is quoted or ideas used. This is simple respect. Use the APA6 Author-Date system. It is required that you get a copy of EndNote from IMT or the Library for keeping your references over the years. It will do most of the formatting for you.

# Disability Procedure: Students in this course who have a disability that might prevent them from fully demonstrating their abilities should communicate with the MATUL program director, as soon as possible to initiate disability verification and discuss accommodations that may be necessary to ensure full participation in the successful completion of course requirements.

There are many available support services for graduate students including the Graduate Center, Regional Centers, Libraries, Computer Center, Media Center, Writing Center, Counseling Center, and International Center. See the Graduate Catalog for more details. In addition to these there is the Learning Enrichment Center. Students in this course who have a disability that might prevent them from fully demonstrating their abilities should meet with an advisor in the Learning Enrichment Center as soon as possible to initiate disability verification and discuss accommodations that may be necessary to ensure full participation in the successful completion of course requirements.

**Satisfactory progress** in the degree requires a GPA of 3.0 or above, across your courses.

# Returns: We will attempt to grade work the week submitted though this is not always feasible. The course work and grades will be open to view two weeks after the end of the course.

**University or Department Policies:** All university and departmental policies affecting student work, appeals, and grievances, as outlined in the Graduate Catalog and/or Department Handbook will apply, unless otherwise indicated in this syllabus.

**Support Services:** There are many available support services for graduate students including the Graduate Center, Regional Centers, Libraries, Computer Center, Media Center, Writing Center, Counseling Center, and International Center. See the Graduate Catalog for more details.

In addition to these there is the Learning Enrichment Center. Students in this course who have a disability that might prevent them from fully demonstrating their abilities should meet with an advisor in the Learning Enrichment Center as soon as possible to initiate disability verification and discuss accommodations that may be necessary to ensure full participation in the successful completion of course requirements.

**Writing Assignments:** papers are due on assigned dates. All assignments should be:

* Times New Roman or Cambria, single spaced, 12 point
* 1 inch margins
* Titled, Name and date in right upper corner,
* Page numbers in right lower corner
* single spaced

Late assignments will be deducted 5% for each week late (1 week late = 5% deduction, 2 weeks = 10% deduction). After 2 weeks they receive a zero. If late please note at the top left “1 week” or “2 weeks”.

Please name your assignments in the following manner : VGProj3.2.doc, with your initals first, then the project name.

**Copyright Responsibilities:** Materials used in connection with this course may be subject to copyright protection. Students and faculty are both authors and users of copyrighted materials. As a student you must know the rights of both authors and users with respect to copyrighted works to ensure compliance. It is equally important to be knowledgeable about legally permitted uses of copyrighted materials. Information about copyright compliance, fair use and websites for downloading information legally can be found at http://apu.libguides.com/content.php?pid=241554&search\_terms=copyright

# Information literacy is defined as “a set of abilities requiring individuals recognize when information is needed and have the ability to locate, evaluate, and use effectively the needed information” (American Library Association, 1989). In this course, teaching and learning processes will employ the following information literacy standards, as endorsed by the American Association for Higher Education (1999), the Association of College and Research Libraries (2000), and the Council of Independent Colleges (2004). The students in this course will:

• determine the nature and extent of the information needed.

• access needed information effectively and efficiently.

• evaluate information and its sources critically and incorporates selected information into his or her knowledge base and value system.

• individually or as a member of a group, use information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose.

• understand many of the economic, legal, and social issues surrounding the use of information and accesses and uses information ethically and legally.

This course requires students to complete course assignments using resources available from the University Libraries. Research assistance and subject guides for this course are available at http://apu.libguides.com/

**Emergency procedures:** it is highly recommended that you leave the class title, room and building location, and the APU campus main phone number ((626) 969-3434 with family and/or other contacts you wish to be notified in case of an emergency.

**Legal Disclaimer:** This course is in constant development and may be upgraded at the professor's discretion. All effort is made to not materially change assignments once they have been begun, and if so to do so to the students' advantage. Creativity is encouraged and alternatives to assignments recognized, but normally should be negotiated beforehand.

**VIII. Online Schedule At-a-Glance**

Viv Grigg’s Skype name: <vivgrigg>

Skype call times: International Cohort: LA \_\_\_\_ 8-9:30pm = Manila ---- 12noon-1:30pm = India \_\_\_\_ 9:30-11am = Bangkok \_\_\_\_\_

LA \_\_\_\_\_ 6:30 am = Rio de Janeiro \_\_\_\_\_ = Nairobi

LA Cohort:

TD = Threaded Discussion

**Term 2** [May. 06- July 25, 2014]

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Week** | **Skype Call** | **Threaded Disc** | **Project Due Date** | **Topic** |
| 1 | 05/06 |  |  | Term 2 introduction; Q&A |
| 2 | 05/13 | TD#1 |  | Data Gathering |
| 3 | 05/20 | TD#2 |  | Informant interviewing [cont.] |
| 4 | 05/27 | TD#3 |  | Writing data description |
| 5 | 06/03 | TD#4 | Project 5: 06/03 | Writing data description |
| 6 | 06/10 | TD#5 |  | Writing data analysis |
| 7 | 06/17 | TD#6 | Project 6: 06/17 | Telling the story: guide’s review of draft report |
| 8 | 06/24 | TD#7 |  | Final professional report preparation |
| 9 | 07/01 | TD#8 | Project 7: 07/01 | Returning results |
| 10 | 07/18 |  |  | Returning results [cont.] |
| 11 | 07/15 |  | Project 8: 07/15 | Public Community presentation preparation |
| 12 | 07/22 |  |  | Public Community presentation sharing; course evaluation |

**IX. Syllabus**

**Topic 7: Doing Fieldwork: Informant Interviewing**

***Preparations***

1. Re-read Slimbach, “Real-World Inquiry” (refer to Phase 7)
2. *Doing Development Research*, Ch. 15, 16, 20
3. *Qualitative Research Design,* Ch 5 (“Methods…”)
4. Video: “Getting People to Talk” <http://vimeo.com/1269848> [33 min.]
5. Question types: <http://www.design4instruction.com/articles/pdf/The%20Ethnographic%20Interview.pdf>.
6. Paying informants? <http://sru.soc.surrey.ac.uk/SRU14.html>
7. Joint interviewing? <http://sru.soc.surrey.ac.uk/SRU15.html>

**Threaded discussion (TD) time period for Topic 7:** **TBA**

**Project 5**

***Information Description***

Fieldnotes based on structured observations of community settings and groups have now been completed. Electronic mounds of interview data, whether in the form of transcribed text and/or extensive notes, are also organized on your hard drive, ready for processing. The next two projects ask you to take these “raw” notes and convert them into the “description” (Project 5) and “interpretation” (Project 6) sections of your final report. These two projects are credited at 15 pts each as they represent the “core” of the final report.

The process of describing and analyzing data is detailed in the assigned materials, as well as in “Real World Research” doc (Phases 8-9, along with Addendum D). Please adhere to the specified content and length guidelines as you set out to construct the “story” through the two projects.

For Project 5, construct as complete a record as possible of what you have seen (via observation) and heard (via interviews). Complete the sorting and coding process in order to identify key themes that can provide some organizational structure to the description section. Seek to remain faithful to the actual reality, especially your informants’ thoughts and words. *How* did they talk about this aspect? *How many* talked about it? What did they *not* include? The data, which you have painfully collected, should be the “star" in the description. Present it in all its richness, breadth and depth, with a generous number of direct quotes. When all is said and done, *writing* quality is based on *data* quality—that is, on how well you have done at collecting and preserving quality information.

Submit Project 5 to “Assignments” in Sakai by **TBA.**

**Topic 8: Analyzing Data**

***Preparations***

1. Re-read: Slimbach, “Real-World Inquiry” (carefully re-read Phases 8-9)
2. View: “I Have Some Interview Data. What Next?” <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=em3dRhwQEAA> [9 min.]
3. Read: Ryan & Bernard, “Techniques to Identify Themes” <http://www.engin.umich.edu/teaching/crltengin/engineering-education-research-resources/ryan-and-bernard-techniques-to-identify-themes.pdf>
4. *Qualitative Research Design,* Ch 6 (“Validity…”)

**Discussion period for Topic 8:** **TBA**

**Project 6**

***Information Analysis***

A solid “description” section is indispensable to presenting clear analysis. It provides the necessary background and points of reference for your reader to appreciate the “sense” you make of the data. Analysis *interprets* data sources (what you’ve read, observed in social settings, and heard from informants), and *relates* them back to the main research question. In contrast to the descriptive record, the analysis section requires that we interpret the data in meaningful ways. We draw connections between different ideas or “themes” that emerge from the data, and identify patterns of associations between variables. Writing the analysis section of the report is a creative exercise where you draw heavily on (1) your background knowledge (from academic reading on the topic), (2) your ability to take good fieldnotes and compile solid descriptive data, and (3) your capacity to link specific observations and pieces of interview information to more general concepts and relationships. The Project 6 report is credited at 15 points. It, along with Project 5, constitutes the “core” of the final report.

Project 6 asks you to go through the data questioning, coding, and linking process explained in Phase 8 of “Real World Research”. The themes you may have used to organize the “description” section can now be used to *build an argument* that establishes the points that answer your research question. Under what conditions does this theme emerge? What actions/interactions/strategies are involved? Are there differences in the characteristics and boundaries for a theme across informants or sites? Do themes occur more or less frequently for different group members? Are they expressed differently? The analysis *asks questions* of the data—who, why, what, when?—for each main theme.

Again, the “Real World Research” doc (Phases 8-9, along with Addendum D) describes the analysis and writing process in some detail. Please adhere to the content and length guidelines.

Submit Project 6 to “Assignments” in Sakai by **TBA**.

**Topic 9: Telling the Story (report writing)**

The main sections of your final report (“description” and “analysis”) are ultimately integrated into a Professional Report (PR). The PR is a formal statement of the results of an investigation conducted on behalf of a community organization. In addition to the “description” and “analysis” sections, conclusions are drawn and recommendations are made. Reports have a specific purpose and structure. They are primarily used to *convey information* and *to make recommendations*. Information is presented clearly, cogently, and coherently in a well-structured format. Readers can take in the information quickly, at twice the speed of listening, without having to re-read the document. In this way a PR is different from an essay that explores theoretical ideas at a much higher level of abstraction.

***Preparations***

1. Re-read Slimbach, “Real-World Inquiry” (Phase 9)
2. *Doing Development Research*, Ch. 30

**Discussion period for Topic 9:** **TBA**

**Project 7**

***Professional Report***

Project 7 consists of a complete, written professional report (PR) that conforms to the guidelines in Addendum D of the “Real World Research” field guide. In writing the PR, you are expected to demonstrate a firm grasp of how the knowledge and abilities acquired as a MATUL fellow can be applied to enhance the capacity of slum organizations to address a specific problem. Although the nature and structure of a PR is informed by the professional protocol of the host organization, the academic advisor’s role is to ensure that its quality is equivalent to that of a conventional thesis. As such, the faculty advisor may, at their discretion, recommend supplementary reading, research and analysis to augment the quality of the PR and to ensure that its academic objectives are met.

What makes the report “professional” is a clear, inviting layout and an engaging, factual writing style.

* Headings and sub-headings should be clear, meaningful, and follow a logical order so that the reader can interpret them correctly and find information quickly.
* Avoidlong paragraphs with redundant information. Break up the text into shorter paragraphs (“chunks”) with clear transitions. Keep the “story” moving with vivid, factual prose.
* Organize the PR according to the outline structure presented in Addendum D (“Sample Report Outline”) of “Real World Research”.
* Use at least 1½ inch spacing, with a 12-point font. Insert electronic page #s.
* Do a final spell- and grammar-check on the entire document. Submit one electronic copy of the Professional Report to Sakai by the posted deadline. For additional format recommendations, refer to the following websites:
* University of Texas: <http://www.utexas.edu/lbj/students/pr> [scroll down to “Format Requirements”]
* Purdue University: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/workshops/hypertext/reportW/index.html>

Submit the final report to “Assignments” in Sakai by **TBA**.

**Topic 10: Returning Results**

Once the written PR is completed, submitted to Sakai and to the project guide, we are ready for the finale of the research process: the communication of findings to one or more community groups. As explained in Phase 10 of “Real World Research”, there are many potential audiences, as well as many potential formats for communicating research findings to them.

***Preparations***

1. Re-read Slimbach, “Real-World Inquiry” (Phase 10)
2. *Doing Development Research*, Ch. 31
3. “How to Deliver a Report without Getting Lynched”: <http://www.asktog.com/columns/047HowToWriteAReport.html>
4. Read on effective oral presentations: <http://www.projectorreviews.com/effectivepresentations.php>
5. View: “Making Presentations Unforgettable”: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A20IjSpktwg&feature=player_embedded> [10:27]

**Discussion period for Topic 10:** **TBA**

**Project 8**

***Public Presentation***

1. Prior to the presentation, we meet with staff from our host organization to *plan* a public presentation of our research findings. Draft responses to the following questions:

* What audience(s)?
* Using what creative format?
* Presented at what venues?
* Who is presenting?
* In what language(s)?
* How to balance “explanation” with “application”?
* Promoted with what means?

2. Schedule and complete the presentation. List dates and venues.

3. After the actual presentation, take time to *mull over* the results with members of your host organization. Draft summary responses to the following questions: (a) How many of the intended community members (audience) actually showed up? (b) What “worked” well in the presentation? (c) How might the presentation be improved? (d) What evidence is there of at least some community members wanting to “own” the findings, and take some action based on them?

1. Submit (a) the actual presentation, and (b) a 3-4 page, typed, single-spaced report on the presentation to “Assignments” in Sakai by **TBA**.

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