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Asian Theological Seminary

MATUL

1st Semester 2011-2012

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**TUL670: Integration Seminar**

**Course Description**

Students apply the analytic frameworks and practical skills acquired through the MATUL program to investigate a specific issue or problem. Participatory Action Research methods are used to gather and organize pertinent information, culminating in the writing and oral presentation of a final paper (3 units) or thesis (6 units) that involves local residents in specific transformational efforts.

**Expanded Course Description**

One of the major tasks of a graduate program is to train students to produce new knowledge, and to be able to communicate that new knowledge to relevant audiences. For advanced MATUL students, this entails the design of a research project and the organization of tasks and activities, the use of Participatory Action Research and skills during the project, and the opportunity to present the results. This involves field research in order to obtain first-hand information within community contexts.

The Integration Seminar is designed to provide optimal guidance to student-investigators as they conduct field research oriented towards the needs of a specific group. Students work with communities and organizations to diagnose an issue or problem situation, select appropriate approaches and methods for investigating it, and propose solutions.

The final paper or thesis shapes learning by asking students to define a research agenda, familiarize themselves with similar studies, collect and analyze fresh data, develop conclusions and recommendations, and represent it all in a clear and operational final paper or thesis. The project not only contributes to the students’ education, but also becomes a significant resource for the public good. In the same time, the research aims to work with the target community in an empowering manner, where the partners from the community become co-researchers.

The three-unit paper is approximately 30 pages long and must be completed within the duration of the semester. The six-unit thesis requires more extensive research, may take a year or more to complete and is approximately 150 pages in length.

**General Flow of the Course**

**Setting the Direction:** Focus is on knowledge , skill development and appreciation of empowering research. Presentations and discussions address the theoretical framework that guide field research, the formulation of research questions, the development of a research proposal, the reading of exemplary studies and materials that inform good practice, the selection of appropriate data collection methods, the organization and analysis of data, and the writing of a final paper or thesis.

**Field Research, Writing and Presentation:** Students work closely with their chosen organization/group and the professor.

**Course Goals:** The student will be able to gain confidence as a reflective leader among the urban poor by practicing the following skills:

*Research Preparation*

* Framing and refining the problem
* Developing a literature review and relating it to findings of the study
* Formulating research questions and methodology
* Developing a proposal with the church, community or organization
* Developing a project work plan with timelines
* Assessing one’s strengths and weaknesses as a researcher

*Field Research*

* Selecting and carrying out appropriate data collection methods
* Conducting interviews, observations and content analyses
* Soliciting and integrating feedback on findings
* Appreciating the distinctives of participatory action research

*Drawing Conclusions*

* Analyzing quantitative and qualitative data
* Drawing conclusions based on findings
* Developing well-supported and realistic recommendations
* Evaluating research findings as evidence for conclusions and recommendations

**Preparatory Reading:**

**Before the start of classes, all students must have read:**

Maxwell, J. (2004). *Qualitative Research Design* (2nd ed.). Sage Publications, Chapters 1-4

**Course Reading (compiled in a course reader):**

Herr, K., & Anderson, G. L. (2005). *The action research dissertation: a guide for students and faculty*. Thousand Oaks, California: SAGE. Chapter 4, pages 49-68

IBON. (2004). *Ibon manual on facilitating participatory research*. Manila, Philippines: IBON Foundation. Part 2: pages 23-82

Maxwell, J. (2004). *Qualitative Research Design* (2nd ed.). Sage Publications, Chapter 7.

Merriam, S. B. (1998). *Qualitative research and case-study applications in education* (Revised ed.). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass. Chapter 4: pages 71-93

Nitschke. P. (2011). *Participatory action research.* Unpublished Paper. Quezon City, Philippines

Patton, M. Q. (2002). *Qualitative research & evaluation methods* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks: SAGE. Chapter 6, pages 259-333

Selener, D. (1997). *Participatory action research and social change*. New York: Cornell University. Chapters 1-2, pages 7-54

Wolcott, H. F. (1994). *Transforming qualitative data: Description, analysis and interpretation*. Thousand Oaks: SAGE. Chapter 2, Pages 9-54

**Grading of Three-Unit Paper, Presentation and Participation**

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| **General Formatting**-Clarity of writing and appropriate formatting, spelling, grammar organization, use of APA and completeness | 10% |
| **Literature Review**-Quality of sources and quality of argument | 10% |
| **Field Research**-Mastery of the research issue/problem; understanding of applying the right PAR methods appropriate to the study; ability to interpret data critically and to draw conclusions; understanding of the limitations of the research in making broad generalizations; initiative and self-reliance | 60% |
| **Oral Presentation**-Creativity clarity, persuasiveness and quality of presentation | 10% |
| **Participation**-In course activities | 10% |

**Grading of Six-Unit Thesis--**The thesis is pass/fail, is the decision of the thesis committee, and is based solely on the final product.

**Absences, Tardiness, Extensions, Incompletes:**

There are two absences allowed during the whole semester. A third absence would result in failing the class. Being ten to thirty minutes late is considered as tardiness. Three times of tardiness are considered one absence. Students being late more than 30 minutes are considered as absent. Due papers during the semester have to be submitted on time. Late submission will result in a 5% grade deduction/ every three days. Late submission for final papers will not be accepted, as well as requests for extensions beyond three days, however 5% of the grade will be deducted.

**Weekly Lessons**

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| **Week 1, June 16: Introduction to the course**   * Maxwell Qualitative Research Design.ppt |
| Assignment: Prospectus (due on week 2)   1. Choose a church, organization or community through which to do your research. 2. Get answers for the following questions:  * What is the mission of the group? * How might research advance its mission? * What gaps exist in the work of the organization that this project might help fill? * List the literature that might help guide the project? * What are the project’s scope and objectives? * Compile this information in a 3-4 page prospectus. Be prepared to summarize the information in a 3-4 minute oral presentation. Bring copies for the class. |
| Readings Due: Maxwell, Joseph, *Qualitative Research Design* (Ch. 1, 2, 3,4) |

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| **Week 2, June 23: Overview of Participatory Action Research:**   * Oral presentations of prospectuses |
| Assignment: Revision and expansion of prospectuses in light of class critiques and readings.  Preparation for Participatory tools Group presentations; Facilitation outlines |
| Readings Due:  Nitschke. P. (2011) *Overview of participatory action research.* Unpublished Paper. Quezon City, Philippines  Selener, D. (1997). *Participatory action research and social change*. New York: Cornell University. Chapters 1-2, pages 7-54 |

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| **Weeks 3-5, June 30, July 7 & 14: Participatory Tools for Participatory Action Research** |
| Group- Presentations of Participatory Tools |
| Readings due: (readings for the tools you present)  IBON. (2004). *Ibon manual on facilitating participatory research*. Manila, Philippines: IBON Foundation.  Possible sources:  Pretty, J. N., Guijt, I., Scoones, I., & Thompson, J. (1995). *A trainer's guide for participatory learning and action*. London: International Institute for Environment and Development.  Hope, A., & Timmel, S. (1995). *Training for transformation: A handbook for community workers: Books 1-3* (rev ed.). Gewru, Zimbabwe: Mambo Press  IRR. (1998). *Participatory methods in community-based coastal resource management* (Vol. 3). Silang, Cavite, Philippines: International Institute of Rural Reconstruction |

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| **Week 6, July 21: Doing Literature Review and Writing of Research Proposal** |
| **Discussion topics**   * In-class quick-write: Research Autobiography. * Share project proposals in small groups. |
| **Beginning the Proposal Process**   1. Consider your potential assets and liabilities as a researcher 2. Develop a focus for your research 3. Write your research problem(s) and question(s) 4. Determine methods for collecting information 5. Consider any ethical issues involved in your research 6. Draft your proposal |
| **Assignment : Research Proposal (due week 7)**  The proposal should include the following:   1. **Cover letter** that explains your interest in working with the organization; 2. **Research Proposal** that includes:   • *Proposal Introduction*  *• Research question(s)* (What do you want to understand or achieve?)  • *Rationale* (*why* it is important to the organization and community)  • Discussion of the *participatory approach* you plan to use  • *Methods* that will be used to complete the project  • *Timeline* to complete the project  • *Help* that you might need to complete the research  Proposals will be reviewed in small groups in order to receive feedback on ways to improve the organization, completeness, clarity, and do-ability of the research plan. ***Students will then submit a revised version of the proposal to the instructor.*** |
| **Readings Due:**  Maxwell, Joseph, *Qualitative Research Design, Chapter 7*  Herr, K., & Anderson, G. L. (2005). *The action research dissertation: a guide for students and faculty*. Thousand Oaks, California: SAGE. Chapter 4, pages 49-68  Articles about Writing Literature Review |

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| **Week 7-8, July 28 & Aug 4: Doing Fieldwork** |
| **Discussion topics**   * Strategy for Entering--Participating in Everyday Life * Strategy for Getting Organized * Strategy for Watching * Strategy for Listening—Formal and Informal interviewing * Strategy for Recording * Strategy for Analyzing * Strategy for Communicating Results |
| **Assignment: Literature Review & Conceptual Framework (8-12 pgs, due on week 13)**  Searching for similar studies brings the researcher up to date on the knowledge and contrasting viewpoints related to your topic. Beginning a literature review *before* starting field research allows you to see what has and has not been investigated, to identify data sources that other researchers have used, and to identify potential relationships between concepts and your research questions, and to identify researchable hypotheses. The research plan is refined as you review other studies and ask the following questions:   * What is already known about the subject? * Are there any gaps in the knowledge of the subject? * Have areas of further study been identified by other researchers that I may want to consider? * Is there any consensus about the topic? * What aspects have generated significant debate on the topic? * What methods or problems were identified by others and how might they impact your research? * What is the most productive way to carry out your research based on the literature reviewed? * What sources of information or data might be useful to you? |
| **Essential Reading**  Patton, M. Q. (2002). *Qualitative research & evaluation methods* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks: SAGE. Chapter 6, pages 259-333  Merriam, S. B. (1998). *Qualitative research and case-study applications in education* (Revised ed.). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass. Chapter 4: pages 71-93 |

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| **Weeks 9-14, Aug 11,18,25 & Sept 1, 8: Conducting Research** |
| Students will continue to meet weekly to discuss progress on their research or grant proposals. Students will conduct research and seek one-on-one consultation with the professor and any advisors. Students will develop a draft of their paper and prepare a presentation for week 15. |

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| **Week 13, Sept 8: Writing the Final Paper or Thesis** |
| Reports on and submission of literature reviews |
| **Assignment: Research and Writing of the Final Paper (due week 16)**  The final paper or thesis is a formal statement of the results of an investigation conducted on behalf of an organization or group of people. In this paper situations are analyzed, conclusions drawn, alternatives considered, and recommendations made. It is concise and has a specific purpose and structure. It is primarily used to share information and to make decisions. Information is presented clearly and coherently in a well-structured format.  An extended period of time is dedicated to continuing independent field research and writing the final paper or thesis. During this time take the initiative to make sure you get the help you need. It is your responsibility to keep your instructor-advisor and client supervisor updated on your progress. It is recommended that you initiate meetings with your advisor regularly. |
| **Readings Due:**  Wolcott, H. F. (1994). *Transforming qualitative data: Description, analysis and interpretation*. Thousand Oaks: SAGE. Chapter 2, Pages 9-54 |

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| **Week 14, Sept 15: Communicating Findings:**  By the 15th week your final paper should be complete, and you can prepare for the oral communication of the research. |
| **Discussion topic**   * Presentation Skills (structuring a persuasive presentation, effective openings and closures) |
| **Assignment: Presentation**  Develop a PowerPoint presentation summarizing your research. Also work with your organization to plan a presentation of your research findings. The presentation should creatively combine audio, video, graphic, or oral elements. |

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| **Week 15 &16, Sept 22 & 29: Research Presentations:** |
| Students will present 10-15 minute summaries of their research followed by class discussion. Use creative means to communicate you ideas. Students will revise and finalize papers to be turned in the following week. |

**Final Papers Due: October 10, 2011**

**Bibliography**

**Useful Guides**

APA Formatting and Style Guide – (In Electronic Reader and available at <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/printable/560/>)

**Qualitative Research and Participatory Action Research**

Action Research Resources. (2002). Papers associated with "areol" -- action research and evaluation on line. In Electronic Reader and available at: <http://www.scu.edu.au/schools/gcm/ar/arp/arphome.html>

Dick, Bob. (2002). *Action Research: Action and Research*.  (In Electronic Reader and available at: <http://www.scu.edu.au/schools/gcm/ar/arp/aandr.html>.)

Fetterman, D. M. (1989). *Ethnography: Step by Step*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications. (Library)

Garau, Pietro and Sclar, Elliott D. (2004). Interim Report of the Task Force 8 on Improving the Lives of Slum Dwellers. (In Electronic Reader and available at <http://www.unmillenniumproject.org/documents/tf8interim.pdf>

Herr, Kathryn and Anderson, Gary L. (2005). *The Action Research Dissertation: A Guide for Students and Faculty*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

*IBON Manual on Facilitating Participatory Research.* (2004). Manila: IBON Foundation Inc. (Library)

Imparato, I., & Ruster, J. (2003). *Slum Upgrading and Participation: Lessons from Latin America.* World Bank Publications. (Library)

Kettner, Peter M., Moroney, Robert M. and Martin, Lawrence. (2008). *Designing and Managing Programs: An Effectiveness-Based Approach.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Maxwell, J. (2004). *Qualitative Research Design: An Interactive Approach (2nd ed.)*. Sage**.** (Library)

McDowell, C., Nagel, A., Williams, S., & Canepa, C. (2005). Building knowledge from the practice of local communities*.* Knowledge Management for Development Journal, Vol 1, No 3 . (In Electronic Reader and available at: http://journal.km4dev.org/journal/index.php/km4dj/article/view/44)

McTaggart, R. (1989). 16 tenets ofParticipatory Action Research. *The Caledonia Centre for Social Development***.** . (In Electronic Reader and available at: <http://www.caledonia.org.uk/par.htm>)

Mitlin, D., & Satterthwaite, D. (Eds.). (2004). *Empowering Squatter Citizen: Local Government, Civil Society and Urban Poverty Reduction*. Earthscan Publications.(Library)

Myers, Bryant. Ed. (1999). *Working with the Poor: New Insights and Learnings from Development Practitioners*. World Vision International. (Library)

Reason, P., & Bradbury, H. (Eds.). (2000). *Handbook of Action Research: Participative Inquiry and Practice*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. (Library)

Schaltzman, Leonard and Strauss, Anselm L. (1973). *Field Research: Strategies for a Natural Sociology*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Sung Sil Lee Sohng. (1995). Participatory Research and Community Organizing. (In Electronic Reader and available at: http://www.cdra.org.za/articles/Participatory%20Research%20And%20Community%20Organizing%20by%20Sung%20Sil%20Lee%20Sohng.doc

Spradley, James. (1980). *Participant Observation*. USA: Thomson Learning Inc. (Library)

Wadsworth, Y. (1998). What is Participatory Action Research? *Action Research International.* (In Electronic Reader and available at: <http://www.scu.edu.au/schools/gcm/ar/ari/p-ywadsworth98.html>)

**Appendix 1:**

**Components of the 30 Page Research Project**

* 1. **Title Page.** This should be on a separate sheet. With the title should be the name of the author and the date of completion.
  2. **Abstract.** This should be written separately from the report. It gives a brief (1-2 page) and factual survey of what is contained in the report itself with the material summarized in the same order. It should give readers enough information to assess the importance of the material and its relevance to them.
  3. **Acknowledgements**. This section may come after the title page. It should give credit for personal help given, stimulating and influential ideas, and permission to quote from unpublished work.
  4. **Table of Contents.** This should be on a separate sheet of paper listing the contents by page number. The titles of each section should make it informative.
  5. **Introduction.** The introduction to the report answers *what* the subject is, *why* the research was undertaken, *where*, and *how*. It should also introduce the actual content of the report.
  6. **Main Text**. This is often divided into sections with headings. It should contain a description of all investigations carried out, a statement of facts discovered, clear arguments and opinions arising from the investigations and the facts uncovered by them.
  7. **Conclusions.** These should be firm statements summarizing the findings and inferences of the sections of the main text.
  8. **Recommendations**. Recommendations should be stated with the readership in mind. There is no need to justify them. That should already have been done.
  9. **References and Bibliography**. References to publications (and interviews if appropriate) used in the text should be listed in a separate References List. A separate bibliography may also be included to cite all material used in putting together the work. Students should follow APA format for any in-text citation and bibliographic entry (see APA Formatting and Style Guide - (Electronic Reader and available at <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>).
  10. **Appendices**. Appendices contain relevant detailed and/or descriptive information which are likely to be of interest to the reader and support the conclusions, but would interrupt the flow of the argument if included in the main text. Be careful not to overload these.

**Appendix 2: Components for the 150 Page Thesis**

**Front Matter**

* Title page
* Signature page
* Copyright page
* Dedication
* Acknowledgments
* Abstract
* Table of Contents
* List of Tables
* List of Figures

**Chapter 1: The Problem**

* Introduction
* Background of the problem
* Statement of the problem
* Purpose of the Study (goal orientation emphasizing practical outcomes or products)
* Questions to be answered or objectives to be investigated
* Conceptual or substantive assumptions
* Rationale
* Theoretical framework
* Statement of hypotheses (if any)
* Scope and delimitations of the study
* Outline of the remainder of the thesis

**Chapter 2: Review of Related Literature**

* Organization of the chapter--overview
* Historical background
* Review of research literature acquainting the reader with existing studies relative to what has been found, who has done work, when and where latest research studies were completed, and what research methodology, instrumentation or statistical analysis were followed
* Summary of literature reviewed

**Chapter 3: Methodology or Procedures**

* Overview
* Description of research methodology or approach
* Research design
* Pilot studies as they apply to the research design, development of instruments, data collection techniques, and characteristics of the sample
* Selection of subjects dealing with sample and population
* Instrumentation (tests, measures, observations, scales, interview protocols and questionnaires)
* Field procedures (e.g., instructions to subjects or distribution of materials)
* Data collection and recording
* Data processing and analysis
* Methodological assumptions
* Limitations
* Summary

**Chapter 4: Findings (Analysis and Evaluation)**

* Findings of the study that answer the research questions
* Interpretations or discussions of findings

**Chapter 5: Summary, Conclusion, Recommendations**

* Brief summary of everything covered in the previous chapters
* Conclusions
* Recommendations or practical suggestions for implementation of findings or for additional research

**Rear Matter**

* Bibliography
* Appendices