

Course Syllabus

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Participatory Action Research is a community-based methodology of researching, analyzing, and using findings that directly benefit members of a community. As a form of applied anthropology, PAR is a method that positions anthropologists to work *in collaboration with others* to develop research questions, conduct research, analyze findings, and present results.

In this course, students will work with an identified community group (in most cases, one that the student has already learned about through participant-observation fieldwork methods in Anth 471/571) on a PAR project. To this end, students will learn about and practice PAR skills in class, discuss relevant issues associated with PAR, read about PAR case studies, and create a Course Portfolio which reflects their involvement in a relevant and practical community research project.

Course Goals and Demonstration of Acquired Skills and Knowledge

As a result of taking this course, students will be able to demonstrate that they have:

- 1) Learned about issues faced by members of a particular community group/agency through check-ins, the project summary statement in their portfolios, and stakeholders' evaluations.
- 2) Acquired PAR skills and know how to use PAR tools by practicing in class, utilizing them in their community project, and reporting on their use in check-in writes. Stakeholders' evaluations will also provide evidence.
- 3) Learned historical and theoretical underpinnings of PAR through participation in class activities and discussion of readings and topics in class.
- 4) Reflected on the ethical, theoretical and pragmatic aspects of using PAR through check-in writes, by participation in class discussions, and through presentations.
- 5) Developed effective communication skills to various stakeholders through portfolio entries, meeting notes, presentations, and from stakeholders' evaluations.
- 7) Prepared for professional academic scholarship through their portfolios and presentations.
- 8) Produced project materials relevant to stakeholders through their completion of portfolios and from stakeholders' evaluations.

Course Requirements

Course Portfolio 50%
Presentation in Community 10%
Class Attendance and Participation 20% for undergraduates; 10% for graduate students
Check-in writes 10%
Graduate paper or extra component of a PAR project 10%
Celebration component 10%

Other Expectations

This five-credit class includes two regular class meeting times each week and a six-hour preliminary orientation "workshop." It is expected that students will spend approximately six to eight hours a week actually engaged in the PAR work with stakeholders. The remainder of their hours of work done outside the classroom will be devoted to reading assignments and writing up notes, reports, etc.

Required Texts available at the Students' Coop Bookstore

Xeroxed [Reader](#) of articles about PAR
Nurtured by Knowledge by Susan E. Smith and Dennis G. Willms with Nancy A. Johnson

Graduate Student Requirements

Graduate students are expected to perform at a level of proficiency appropriate to their graduate status. In addition to the course requirements listed above, graduate students will 1) be responsible for presenting a review/critique of a PAR case study by an anthropologist to the rest of the class and 2) either writing a 5-7 page paper on some aspect of PAR OR creating a PAR component within their field site (such as a short video or presentation to an Advisory Board) that goes beyond the expectations of the PAR course requirements and is discussed in a 2-3 page paper.

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