

## ABOUT THE PROGRAM

MATUL may be the only graduate program in the world exclusively focused on the world's burgeoning slums and shantytowns. Its goal is to train a new generation of urban poor leaders to organize local residents in initiatives that can instill hope, mend families, create jobs, foster educational opportunities, improve sanitation and health care, and promote sound planning policies.

The entirely field-based degree program is co-sponsored by entrepreneurial training institutions on four continents (Asia, Africa, Latin America, and North America). APU-enrolled students (both U.S. citizens and foreigners) complete coursework, side-by-side, with "national" (e.g. Indian, Filipino) classmates enrolled through the host institution.

The MATUL degree program features a 45-credit curriculum that includes two years of field residence, study with senior development practitioners, and the completion of supervised internships in areas that include land rights, health care, small business development, educational centre development, and service to marginalized populations (e.g. sex workers and street children).

Intensive classroom-based learning is combined with extensive field-based learning. The integration of theoretical disciplines and experience-based learning engages students directly with community issues as both learners and advocates. The assumption underlying this process is that insight and understanding is revealed, not through physical distance and emotional objectivity, but by entering into compassionate, mutually accountable relationships with those whose reality we wish to comprehend. The primary bond of the knower to the known is one of empathy and love, not dispassionate logic.

### Field-Based:

Students are expected to relocate to program sites, find housing with local families either in or adjacent to slum communities, and commence intensive language learning for 3-6 months prior to commencing formal coursework through the hosting institution.

### Practice-Oriented:

Residence in or adjacent to actual slum communities enables students to combine living and learning (study, research, writing, and active problem-solving) in an integrated approach to leadership development. Following language study, students begin practical training (internships) in various areas of community improvement through local community organizations.

### Intensive Format:

Each course is taught in an intensive format (one week, full time) at locations arranged by the sponsoring institution. This classroom-based phase is followed by an extensive field-based phase where students complete course requirements over several weeks. The dates of instructional periods are staggered to enable fieldwork to be completed and for international expert faculty (when used) to travel from one location to another.

### Blended Delivery:

While many program resources are accessible online, extensive topical discussion, problem solving, mentoring, and supervision take place face-to-face with faculty, other students, and practitioners in the larger community. Both delivery methods seek to enhance the exchange of concepts, ideas, and experiences in the analysis of urban poor issues.

### Field Support:

The challenge of living and learning in distressed environments is balanced with a high level of practical support. Students regularly participate in daylong or overnight retreats together under the direction of an assigned field supervisor. During these times, they rest, worship together, engage in reflective journaling and conversation, and do course-related reading.

