

Call for Applications

Advanced Training for Multi-Method and Policy Oriented Research



April 2019

The Partnership for African Social and Governance Research is currently accepting applications for the April, 2019 Advanced Training for Multi-Method and Policy Oriented Research.

COURSE STRUCTURE AND DATES

This is a residential programme that will be offered in two consecutive blocks, including a mandatory pre- and post-workshop online engagement:

Block 1: Advanced Research Design (11 training days: April 3-13, 2019)

Designing Social Inquiry
Multi-Methods Research Strategies
Critical Policy Engaged Research
Ethics for Social Science Research

Block 2: Elective Modules (4 training days: April 15-18, 2019)

Applied Quantitative Methods
Comparative Case Study Analysis

NOTE: For Block 2, participants: (i) are expected to choose only one elective, and (ii) must have previously taken PASGR's Advanced Research Design (ARD) course or Multi-Method Research Course (MMRC). Participants registering for the Block 1 course are encouraged to also register for an elective (Block 2) module. The electives will run concurrently.

APPLICATION PROCESS

- Please access <https://bit.ly/2RV1KKw> to download and submit the application forms

ELIGIBILITY

These are high level professional development courses for active and committed African researchers and policy actors interested in broadening their knowledge and skills in design and execution of policy oriented research.

Applicants working in think tanks, universities, NGOs, the civil society, media, corporate research units, parliaments and government departments, as well as PhD students working through their research projects are encouraged to apply.

In past years, faculty who teach research methods have successfully incorporated PASGR's training in their courses.

PARTICIPATION FEE

This training programme is heavily subsidized.

Block	Conference fees	Accommodation	Total
1	USD 500	USD 780	USD 1,280
2	USD 600	USD 325	USD 925

This training will be held in Nairobi, Kenya and the actual training location will be communicated to selected participants.

DUE: ~~January 27, 2019~~ Deadline Extended: Feb 3, 2019

FOR QUESTIONS AND/OR CLARIFICATION

please email: nirungu@pasgr.org

Testimonials

“...PASGR offers excellent research method training which no serious researcher should miss. After undergoing the intensive training, I put what I learned in practice. The results were awesome and amazing. I have successfully written several grant proposals and got funding for one as the principle investigator. I have managed to write 3 book chapters for different books. One has already been published...My Gender project students ...were last year semester 2, 2016/17 rated as the best performed by the external examiner...Going by the above achievements, I can attest that PASGR offers practical skills and enhance dons’ capacity to compete favorably in grants proposal writing and consultancy.” *Kenyatta University Lecturer*

“As a researcher working with the Parliament, the PASGR training was the best and most relevant training I have so far attended. It linked directly to what I am expected to do every day as I carry out research for the legislators and decision policy makers. *Uganda Parliament Researcher*

“My experience at PASGR in November 2017 left an indelible smile on my face. I got to learn about research methods in a whole new dimension that completely revolutionized my research capacity. Currently, I am working on two major papers for international conferences with the skills I got from PASGR on comparative case analysis. My abstracts were readily accepted, unlike what was the case previously. I expect to conclude the works by the end of May. Overall, there has been a great leap in my research output and I look forward to more trainings with PASGR.” *University of Nigeria, Nssuka PhD student*

COURSE OVERVIEW

The training is unique in using participants’ research and small group work to explore design innovations in multi-method research that engages public policy. The training emphasises the design of mixed methods strategies, and explores some of the different ways and moments throughout the research cycle that researchers could engage with different policy actors. It is applied and participant-centred, and uses innovative alternative pedagogic approaches such as e-cases, simulations, animations and peer-learning.

DETAILED COURSE CONTENT

BLOCK 1: ADVANCED RESEARCH DESIGN

DESIGNING SOCIAL INQUIRY

The module’s first goal is to develop participants’ critical engagement with the existing state of knowledge in their respective disciplines. It equips participants with the competencies to question conventional definitions of the problem, the categories or techniques used for its analysis, and possible interpretations.

It also helps participants to turn ideas or assumptions into researchable questions. This involves making explicit not only one’s own possible explanations or hypothesis, but also rival ones that exist in the literature, or circulated through other media. An important part of this process is to explicitly and carefully define the key concepts in a study. Finally, it introduces participants to advances in concept formation and illustrates how concepts can be modified, redefined, or created to accurately capture the empirical events, actors, or processes being investigated.

MIXED METHODS RESEARCH STRATEGIES

There is a growing interest in mixed methods research among social scientists due to its relevance for policy-oriented research. The practice of mixing methods has emerged as a suitable complement to the dominant quantitative and qualitative paradigms.

This module provides insights into the mixed methods approach and its utility for policy engaged research. It examines the basic assumptions of the mixed methods tradition and its fundamental principles. The module further discusses how to mix and sequence methods within a mixed methods research design.

The final sessions of the module provide hands-on opportunity for participants to critique selected mixed-methods studies. In the process participants also build skills that they can apply to their own research.

CRITICAL POLICY ENGAGED RESEARCH

Researchers engaged in policy-related work stand to benefit if they interest policy actors in the work they are doing, involve them in the various stages of their research project, and get their feedback to enrich the research design. This module aims to enhance researchers’ capacity to strengthen their relationship with policy actors in order to improve their research design and the chances that their findings will be used to engage policy.

The module helps participants develop knowledge and skills related to building relationships with various policy actors and decision makers. It refines participants’ ability to communicate research ideas and findings. It equips them with skills to distil the key message(s) they would like to communicate to relevant policy actors.

Testimonials

“Coming from a country that is devastated by civil war with limited educational facilities, I count myself lucky to have had the opportunity to attend three Advanced research method modules with PASGR. They were instrumental in reshaping my thoughts about research and increased my interest to learn more. In particular, the training increased my analytical abilities in the review of research and policy orientated papers, the use of multi-method approaches in research and survey, formation of clear and focused research questions. The networking experience and opportunity gained is an additional asset”. *Gender Advisor, South Sudan*

“...As a PhD Student, this training gave me the necessary equipment as I work on my Thesis. I have been able to add value to Masters Students I am supervising on dissertation writing. I currently have 6 students under my supervision, and the training has made this exercise easier and more enjoyable. Since then I have submitted two concept papers for conference presentation and they have both been accepted. ... I attribute this Progress to the knowledge I acquired at the PASGR training. I will remain indebted to PASGR and look forward to more training. *Uganda Christian University Lecturer*

Certificates of Completion will be issued on successful attendance as well as completion of all required course/peer read-

DETAILED COURSE CONTENT

ETHICS IN SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH

What is the most important consideration in social science research? Ethics is. While a lot of emphasis has been laid on the importance of appropriate research methodology for validity and reliability of social science research findings, the ethical aspect of research practice has not been given adequate attention.

This course is designed to (re)introduce both novices and experienced research practitioners to the theory and application of the three universal basic principles of research ethics: Respect for human persons, beneficence/non-maleficence, and justice. Further, participants will demonstrate appreciation of the negative implications of research misconduct (including plagiarism and academic fraud) and demonstrate how to avoid these acts of misconduct.

BLOCK 2: ELECTIVE MODULES

Applied Quantitative Research Methods

This module introduces basic statistics and econometric techniques, underlining the appropriate strategies that can be considered for analysis depending on the type of data available. It further explores the idea behind randomisation and why it is important in establishing causality. Practical examples are given for understanding the concept of randomisation and why it can lead to erroneous results if it is not taken into account. The difference between correlation and causality is illustrated using different designs that establish causality, such as randomised control trials (RCTs). It also distinguishes between inferences based on design vis-à-vis those based on econometric techniques.

Comparative Case Study Analysis (CCA)

When presented with research that has policy suggestions or implications, policy actors often ask: “Does it work? Does it cause something to change or to happen?” Only a methodologically sound study can respond convincingly to such questions. The CCA module is packaged to equip researchers to design and execute studies that are sufficiently sound to speak to such questions. It examines different comparative case study designs. It covers different strategies for defining what constitutes “a case” and for locating the case within a larger universe of phenomena. It explains the criteria for selecting cases and introduces several approaches including experimental, quasi experimental, process tracing and path dependence. It thoroughly deals with different strategies for making causal arguments, various methods of data analysis in case study, and how case study contributes to theory development and concept formation.

ABOUT PASGR

PASGR is an independent, non-partisan pan African not-for-profit organisation established in 2011 and located in Nairobi, Kenya. Currently engaged in more than 26 African countries, PASGR works to enhance research excellence in governance and public policy that contributes to the overall wellbeing of women and men. In partnership with individual academics and researchers, universities, think tanks, civil society organisations, governments and policy communities both in the region and internationally, PASGR supports the production and dissemination of policy relevant research; designs and delivers suites of short professional development courses for researchers and policy actors; and facilitates the development of collaborative higher education programmes.