LEARNING THROUGH AN UNDERGRADUATE COMMUNITY BASED RESEARCH (CBR) PROJECT:
A PROFESSOR AND A STUDENT'S REFLECTION ON TWO OPPORTUNITIES

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Purpose: *To compare two opportunities (i.e., undergraduate course versus summer undergraduate research assistantship) for a student to learn qualitative methods through CBR.*

Take Away Message: *Both enable students to understand the entire research process, be change agents, and engage in transformative learning, however, the URAship provides more nuanced understanding, richer skill development and critical reflection of the benefits and drawbacks of collaborative research.*

	Brief Overview	Professor's Reflection of Learning	A Student's Reflection of Learning
Undergraduate Qualitative Methods Course	▪ In the Winter 2012 semester, in a 12 week course, 3rd year sociology and anthropology students self-selected into 1 of 11 research teams, ranging in size from 8-10 students ▪ Research teams conducted a qualitative research study to assess a local community group's expressed issues ▪ Students gain skills in qualitative research design, in group work, research ethics, participant recruitment, interview, data transcription and analysis using NVivo and result presentation through two modes: a qualitative research report and a poster presentation	Met anticipated student benefits based on course learning objectives: 1. Appreciate the merits of qualitative research 2. Describe and compare different ways of collecting, organizing, and analyzing qualitative data 3. Conduct a qualitative research project with a group of peers 4. Identify issues of ethics, power, and reflexivity within the research process 5. Develop and refine note-taking, qualitative research, time-management and group work skills Constraint: ▪ Limited time and resources to effectively engage every student in every aspect of research project to the same degree	1. Importance of preparation and background knowledge before conducting interviews 2. Acceptance of silence during interviews 3. Iterative nature of qualitative research 4. Time-management – you cannot rush participant recruitment 5. Researcher's impact on the research 6. Benefits of computer software are limited by your ability to effectively use the program 7. Difference in perspectives within collaborative research team 8. Importance of ethics 9. Assumptions about research conclusions at onset may not be correct 10. Qualitative research is a long, detailed, and complex process requiring patience, a lot of thought and contemplation. Note: Above based on final course assignment where students were asked to list the top 10 things they learned about qualitative methods through the CBR project.
Summer Undergraduate Research Assistantship (URA)	▪ One student from Winter 2012 semester was hired as a summer URA to help conduct a further qualitative analysis and synthesis from the CBR projects of student research teams enrolled in course noted above ▪ The URA co-authored research report for the community partner ▪ The URA provided support for a research article based on subsequent analysis of the qualitative data set ▪ The URA reflected on summer experience to contribute to poster ▪ 17.5 week summer employment	Met anticipated URA benefits: ▪ Significant exposure to intensive qualitative analysis research skills ▪ Gain practical experience writing for a non-academic and an academic audience Constraints ▪ Funding limits learning opportunity to one student	1. Importance of active listening and asking probing questions during interviews in order to form meaningful conclusions 2. Increased research article reading comprehension 3. Importance of keeping detailed notes of research process 4. Increased understanding of iterative nature of qualitative research 5. Advantages and drawbacks of working collaboratively in research team 6. Value of quality over quantity of data 7. More thorough appreciation of research process has had strong influence on re-thinking future educational direction 8. Improved writing skills and understanding of report writing in general