

Qualitative Research Practicum: Community-Engaged Research in Central & West Baltimore

AS.230.323 Center for Africana Studies

Department of Sociology Johns Hopkins University

Course description: how does the way we define, produce, and consume research on Africana communities shape how we perceive black lives and the value of Black Life? What are the possibilities of ethical, engaged qualitative research to influence public narratives about the agency, aspirations, and assets within Africana communities? Our goal for this course is to create rigorous and conscientious research outputs in partnership with community organizations that are deeply invested in the wellness, well-being, and cohesion of Africana communities in Baltimore.

Rooted in the tenets of community-based pedagogy, this course provides an introduction to community-engaged research design, combining seminar-style classroom learning and empirical fieldwork in Central and West Baltimore. Operating in research teams, students will work closely with a host organization to design and implement an action research project that buttresses an existing campaign or research priority of the organization. Host organizations for this course are the PrideCenter of Maryland and Pennsylvania Avenue Main Street, Inc. While community-engaged research can be conducted using a variety of methods, this course will focus on the application of in-depth interviewing, participant observation, and community asset mapping to generate a research report that examines issues and interventions relevant to African diaspora communities in Baltimore. At the end of the term, research teams will make a 30-minute presentation of results to the host organization and deliver an analytical report. Additionally, students will submit three short individual assignments: an observation exercise, an interview exercise, and a critical reflection essay