

MPhil in Development Practice

School of Development Studies

and

School of Human Studies



Preamble of Development practice

'Development' as concept has multiple connotations and the complexity of its many contours and trajectories have become an area of intense contestation in the social sciences and in what has now come to be known as the 'developmental sector'. Further, the idea and practice of development in India has been largely constructed in terms of the discourses of European modernity. Needless to say, the practice of development has failed to address the lived experiences and the livelihoods-health-education-governance issues of a large segment of the Indian rural poor since independence. This does not mean that developmental initiatives of the State and the non-State sector has not made any change in the lives of the rural poor; but such changes, fostered in by primarily mainstream notions of development, have not been sustained, deep-rooted and participatory, especially when it comes to poverty alleviation, cultural and political empowerment, and self-determination. The 'rural', even if in transition, continue to be seen as 'backward' and 'under-developed'. The MPhil in Development Practice through

(a) an examination of

(i) the unexamined 'underdevelopment of the rural' and the

(ii) equally unexamined 'royal road to Development', and

(b) the setting up of a long-term and intimate relationship with the rural through a ten-month immersion-based-learning in rural contexts

wishes to give birth to a Development Sector Professional who would have the capacity to initiate transformative social action in rural India. The MPhil programme co-hosted by an University and by a reputed development sector agent, PRADAN is an attempt to introduce each year into the development sector a cohort of 25 developmental professionals imbued with alternative visions of development and innovative grassroots level action plans borne out of (i) a critical engagement with theories of development, (ii) rural immersion, (iii) practice-based learning, (iv) self-reflection and (v) engaged scholarship. Building on PRADAN's existing work in the rural this programme, housed in an University, is thus an attempt to offer to the country at large a cohort of professionals who do not just 'study' the rural but bring change to the rural and become themselves harbingers of social transformation.

MPhil Programme in Development Practice

The School of Development Studies (SDS) and the School of Human Studies (SHS) at Ambedkar University, Delhi (AUD) in collaboration with PRADAN, offer an MPhil in *Development Practice*. The programme being among the first of its kinds, running into its second academic session, the idea driving this MPhil is that a new set of professionals, trained in rural development/ transformational skills are needed to fulfill the bottom-up version of the Indian developmental dream, seeking to link the ‘transformation of self’ to the larger goals of *social justice and collective transformation*.

Hence the present programme is planned to build on PRADAN’s existing work and bring their work to a University (in the form of a programme that gives an MPhil degree in Development Practice), guided by the vision of bridging equality and social justice with excellence. This would also offer to the country at large and to the developmental sector a cohort of trained professionals every year.

Duration: 2 years

Total Credits: 64

Medium of Instruction: English

Nature of Programme: Interdisciplinary (drawing from development studies, human ecology, human studies, cultural studies, gender studies, psychology, sociology, political philosophy, economics, biology, environmental studies, education)

Number of Seats: 25 (10 seats to be filled as per the Reservation Policy of the Govt. of NCT of Delhi; 13 seats open to candidates from all over India and subject to Reservation Policy of the Govt. of India, 2 seats open to candidates from outside India.)

Eligibility: Masters with 55% (with 5% relaxation to SC/ST/PD) in the Social Sciences, Humanities and Natural Sciences or professional degrees like law, engineering, agriculture and medicine



The University

The Bharat Ratna Dr B.R. Ambedkar University, Delhi or AUD was established by the Government of the National Capital Territory of Delhi through an Act of Legislature in 2007 and was notified in July 2008. Mandated to focus on research and teaching in the social sciences and humanities and guided by Dr Ambedkar's vision of bridging equality and social justice with excellence, AUD considers it to be its mission to create sustainable and effective linkages between access to and success in higher education. AUD is committed to creating an institutional culture characterised by humanism, non-hierarchical and collegial functioning, teamwork and nurturance of creativity.

To know more about AUD please visit: www.aud.ac.in.

The Partner Organisation

PRADAN (Professional Assistance for Development Action) is a non-government, non-profit organisation that works with India's rural poor. Across seven of the poorest states in the country, PRADAN promotes Self-Help Groups; develops locally suitable economic activities; mobilises finances; and introduces systems to improve livelihoods of the rural poor and sustain their progress.

PRADAN was pioneered by a group of young professionals, all of whom were inspired by the conviction that individuals with knowledge resources and empathy for the marginalized must work with communities at the grassroots in order to help them overcome poverty. It currently works with more than 2.5 lakh women in most backward districts of India to help them lead a life of dignity.

To know more about PRADAN please visit: www.pradan.net

The MPhil Programme Development Practice is being financially supported by **Sir Dorabji Tata Trust**. (www.dorabjitatatrust.org).



Rationale and Objectives

Going by present trends, by 2030, at least 60 per cent of the population in India is likely to live in rural settings (UN, 2007). However, currently, there is little societal focus on the issues faced by rural people; rural areas continue to be seen as both transient and 'backward'. After 60 years of independence, there remains a huge deficit in the availability of quality human resources to work in the villages, along with communities. In order to transform such mainstream perspectives, there is an immense need to institutionalize, legitimize, and bring rigour to the field of rural development practice, research and policy. This requires a new thinking about development (beyond mere critique), that is grounded in everyday rural realities of poverty, lack of basic services and inability to influence larger societal processes and that builds on local traditions of sharing and collectivity. PRADAN, the Ambedkar University, Delhi partner in this MPhil programme, has been engaged in giving shape to this for over the past 30 years.

The proposed programme thus has two broad goals:

- i. (a) to institutionalize in a University setting the professionalizing of rural development practice (where developmental practice is seen as a socially meaningful and legitimate arena of work)
- (b) to de-institutionalize the existing imagination of the University (which is largely academic, urban and elite) through its partnership with a grassroots level developmental sector agent of change (here PRADAN) and take it to the rural sector, make its University-level work relevant to the needs of the rural poor and
- ii. to build 'capacities' in terms of developing and increasing the pool of quality human resource in the developmental sector

This would involve an understanding of development paradigms over time, alongside building a perspective on the normative themes of social justice, transformation and change.



A practitioner working in rural settings with poor men and women faces continuous challenges and dilemmas in relation to his/her own role and positionality vis-à-vis the community. It is not easy to work long-term in rural areas; given the primarily urban or semi-urban upbringing of most university students, it would require a somewhat higher level of psychic resilience. The programme would therefore address important personal conflicts and self-doubts that may arise out of one's rural location by enabling the learner to be self-reflexive and in touch with their own emotions, which in turn could enable him/her to be sensitive to and be in tune with the needs and feelings of 'rural others'. Interactions based on principles of mutual respect, willingness to listen and to learn, can potentially transform the lives of both the practitioner and the communities with whom he/she is working. Such understanding can contribute to a process of collective solidarity and action whereby demands for change are pursued in relation to larger goals and structures. There is no such programme that builds on these premises of reflective practice, of change in self, as key to the processes of education that focuses on changing society. This would perhaps be the first programme of its kind, based on these premises, and would help to evolve a professional identity for the development professional and a model for the country and development sector to spawn such a cadre to meet the growing needs.



Overview of MPhil Programme

Facilitating rural transformation requires intellectual resources alongside personal maturity. The programme envisages coalescing theory, research and practice, self-reflection and community engagement as well as epistemological openness to different knowledge systems/streams. The programme is fundamentally *interdisciplinary* in its approach, combining a mix of methods for transacting the curriculum, and strengthening the balance between knowledge (theoretical and practical field-based), conceptual clarity and reflection.

The programme, in addition to philosophies and histories of development, shall also be informed by the long history of work in ‘depth psychology’, so as to attend to the psychic processes of students and the rural community. This will help students cope with the stress and the hope/despair dyad of transformative work in the rural.

The programme is based on a *learner-centred* and *immersion-based pedagogy*. The structure of the field and course work allows for reflection-based learning, so that the learner can draw on real life experiences to understand and engage with key conceptual ideas as well as develop *grounded theory*. The immersion component has

multiple benefits: it can help make an informed decision about career choice, provide hands-on learning through exposure to the field under the supervision and with the support of mentors and guides, help concretise the theoretical learning of the classroom, and finally enable safe experimentation in the field under supervision. The programme will also strengthen research skills, particularly in relation to developing appropriate methodologies, both participatory and action-oriented, for answering critical questions arising from the field. It is envisaged that dissertations would involve reflective exercises applying analytical tools to understand the implications of specific development interventions in which the learner may have been involved themselves.

The programme provides the *conceptual, methodological* and *emotional skills* for a unique progression from understanding the rural context and problematising the developmental issues therein to engaging with processes of change and transformation. The focus on discovery and open-mindedness is coupled with intellectual rigour and the development of professional skills.

Pedagogy

The pedagogy of the programme comprises of two integral aspects – experiential learning and learner support and reinforcement systems. *Experiential learning* premises itself on the *immersion* of the learner in actual life experience and engaging with the milieu of practice; the opportunity to reflect by herself/ himself as well as receive observations and feedback from peers, mentors, supervisors and members of the milieu itself. Building a cognitive map supported by existing or evolving theory ties the experience of the learner in an attempt to help her/him make meaning of her/his experience. Drawing up fresh hypothesis, evolving new ones to experiment with and learn from, becomes the next step. *Learner support groups and reinforcement systems* are meant to create a learning community. To build consonance between experience ‘out-there’ and experience and learning ‘in-here’ in the classroom, group-centred pedagogy will focus on the learners’ sharing, critiquing and helping each other examine stances, approaches and methods that they have used in practice. Over a period of time it is envisaged that a vibrant learning community will emerge in charge of their own learning and deriving joy through contribution towards each other’s learning and growth.



Field Immersion

The programme involves a field ‘immersion’ of 8 months; where the students shall be expected to stay 1 month ‘in’ the village and 7 months at the village district.

MPhil Dissertation

The MPhil Dissertation will entail doing an Action Research Project, collaborating the field immersion experience of the students with the theoretical understanding of the developmental context, in the University.

Attendance

The minimum attendance required for the programme in the University for classroom teaching is expected to be 65%. The field immersion shall be treated as a Practicum with maximum attendance requirements, with only 5 day leave permissible. Students will be expected to fulfill these attendance requirements unless there are unavoidable circumstances.

Selection Process

The Selection Process will include:

- Multiple choice test of Observation and Clear Thinking & Verbal Ability
- Essay-type test: As a part of the application procedure, a set of text(s) will be uploaded on the website. Applicants will be asked to respond to questions from these text(s).

Candidates will be short-listed on the basis of scores obtained on the above-mentioned tests.

The shortlisted candidates will undergo:

- Two rounds of Group Discussion (GD) followed by an Individual Interview.

Fees

Rs. 16,500/- per semester will be charged as the full semester fees. The total fee payable at the time of admission will be Rs. 18,500/- (for Semester I) and a refundable caution deposit of Rs. 2000/- for the use of university facilities.

Fellowship/ Student Stipend

AUD will offer a stipend of Rs 12,000/- to each student per month. And a yearly contingency amount of Rs 36,000/- will be offered to each student to cover up the travel and house rent expenses which will be borne by the student, during the field immersion.

The fellowships of three MPhil students will be supported by the ***Rohini Ghadiok Foundation***. The foundation is committed to supporting institutions that aid students through educational, technical and vocational training programs; to expand opportunities for all those who believe they can make a difference. (www.rohinighadiokfoundation.org).

Please Note: The students, who decide to leave amidst the programme, will have to pay the entire stipend money given to them till date, back to the University.

Reservation Policy

Delhi (NCT*)- 85%	
SC	15%
ST	7.5%
OBC	27%
Outside NCT- 15 %	
SC	15%
ST	7.5%

*{NCT category will include those students who have passed their last qualifying examination from an institution located in the NCT of Delhi or are residents in the NCT of Delhi.}

Cancellation of Admission

The admission of Candidates who fail to provide proof of securing the merit as evident from original transcripts is likely to be cancelled. Refund of fees in such cases will be as per the policy on refund of fees.

University Policy on Refund of Fees

Before start of Orientation- Rs. 1,000

After start of Orientation- Only caution deposit will be refunded

- The decision of the Admission Committee on all matters of admission will be final.
- The jurisdiction of any dispute will be limited to the NCT of Delhi.

Admission to Foreign Students

The eligibility in terms of academic qualifications for foreign students will be the same as for Indian students. However, they must produce evidence of proficiency in English. In addition, foreign students should fulfill the following conditions before finalisation of admission:

1. They must hold a student visa endorsed by the Ministry of External Affairs to Ambedkar University, Delhi. The visa should be valid for the entire period of study.
2. Their eligibility equivalence must be recognised by the Association of Indian Universities.
3. They must meet the conditions specified by the UGC and the Ministry of External Affairs from time to time.

Fees: The fees for foreign students would be Rs 32,500 per semester. In addition, they would have to pay Rs. 2,000 as a refundable caution deposit (for Library and other University facilities). So fees at the time of admission would be Rs 34,500.

Fees and expenses charged for foreign scholars may be adjusted in cases where a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) exists between AUD and a particular foreign university, consortium of universities, foundation, or education authority.

The foreign student would also be required to undergo a Skype Interview before the finalization of results.



Course Structure with Calendar (2013-2015):

	Semester I (Aug – Dec)	Semester II (Jan – May)	Summer	Semester III (Sept – Dec)	Semester IV (Jan – May)
Immersion at PRADAN Development Centre, Kesla	<p>Orientation to the MPhil Programme & Pre-Course Immersion-- 15 days– at Kesla</p> <p>Aug – Dec , 2013</p> <p>Understanding the Rural - 4 Credits</p>	<p>Natural Resource Management - 15 days – 2 Credits</p> <p>March – May , 2014</p> <p>Gender and Development - 2 credits</p> <p>Equality, Discrimination</p>		<p>Rural Livelihoods – 15 days – 2 Credits</p> <p>Sep – Nov , 2014</p> <p>Politics, Resistance and Change – 2 Credits</p>	

Core Interdisciplinary Courses (at AUD)	<p>Institutions in Rural Spaces</p> <p>Deprivation and Resources</p> <p>Experiencing Self – Relating Self with Others - 4 Credits</p> <p>Philosophy of Development Practice -4 Credits</p>	<p>Marginalization and Development - 2 Credits</p> <p>Environment, Natural Resources, and Development - 2 Credits</p> <p>Listening, Learning and Communication – 2 Credits</p> <p>Research Methods in Rural Contexts- 2 Credits</p>		<p>Intervention, Inclusion and Collective Action – 2 Credits</p> <p>Reflections on Justice – 2 Credits</p> <p>Discourses on Well-Being – 2 Credits</p>	
Research Methods		Participatory Research and Grassroots Engagement Methodology (to be transacted at Kesla) – 5 Days - 2 Credits		Project Management – 2 Credits	
Seminars/ Workshop		<p>Education in Rural Context</p> <p>Health in Rural Context</p> <p>Gender, Culture, Rights and Ethics</p>		<p>Rural Through Art, Literature, Films - 4 Credits</p> <p>Dissertation Seminar: Giving final shape to the Action Research Project</p>	
Practicum/ Immersion		Immersion I (2 months): Stay in a Rural Household (1 month) and Village study (1 month) -- 2 Credits	Immersion II (2 months): Developing Competencies in Community/ Group Context --2 Credits		Action Research (16 weeks) — 12 Credits
Reflective	Group Processes at AUD	Group Processes at Kesla – 2 Credits		Group Processes at AUD – 1	

Practice	– 1 Credit			Credit	
	The Development Practitioner - 2 Credits				

Course Evaluation:

Each module would have appropriate assignments to evaluate the understanding of core ideas and their application in a development context. These would include a combination of essays, seminar presentations, book reviews, peer assessment and other reflective pieces.

The basic premise underlying the assessment of immersion is that data is a mirror that aids reflection and learning. Those around the learner can help him/her generate such data; the system for review then becoming a formal mechanism to help all concerned reflect on this data and learn from it. The assessment process discussed below has been developed by experts in the field of psychology and psychometry, and has been used and refined for over 15 years in the field. Data is gathered through both sociometric and direct methods.

It covers the following key components:

- Interest in community work
- Respect for social norms and practices
- Understanding the community context with a developmental perspective, with a special focus on
 - Understanding community problems through their eyes
 - Intervening to help or facilitating the community solve its problems
- Ability to comprehend the total task to be undertaken, with a focus on
 - Breaking the task into components

- Understanding his/her role in the components
 - Planning to implement her/his part in the total task
- Application of self to work in terms of
- quality,
 - progress or completion
 - cost effectiveness
 - schedule and timeliness, and
 - accrued benefits

Course Preambles:

Semester I: Understanding rural life and exploring personal motivations for engagement in grassroots work.

Semester I will begin with immersion (2 weeks of immersion at the beginning at Kesla + 2 weeks of immersion at the end in a village = a total of 4 weeks; the first 2 weeks immersion would be at PRADAN, Kesla; AUD Faculty would take turns to accompany students in the first 2 weeks; they would be with students in their village visits; classes will be conducted either in the field or in the evenings; in the next 2 weeks students would be placed in villages away from Kesla)

Course 1: Orientation Course: The Experience of Development (at Kesla, PRADAN) – to be transacted over 15 days in the workshop mode – 2 Credits

The aim of this orientation (duration 14 days) is to familiarize the learner with the context of the course and expose them to the concept of rural engagement. Learners explore their feelings, assumptions, images and thoughts about rural India. They will be oriented to the purpose and method of education in the M.Phil programme. This is done by visiting villages with experienced practitioners and completing a short stay of 2 weeks with a host family in a village after the first 2 weeks at PRADAN, Kesla. Through this experience, learners engage with families and groups in a village to understand their world views, and evolve their own preliminary understandings of the context. It is expected that at the end of this phase learners have made a

preliminary assessment of the realities of a development practitioner and their own interest in such a profession. They would be helped to reflect on their experience and process their observations and learning specifically in the course on Reflective Practice, but during the other courses too. Students would be expected to write two diaries – one in the first 2 weeks and the other in the last 2 weeks of the semester.

Course 2: Understanding the Rural – 4 credits – to be transacted over 16 weeks

Working on and working through the diaries/reflections students produce in the initial 2 week stay at Kesla, this course would first like to place before the students the problems of a progressivist and Orientalist understanding of the rural. Gandhi and Tagore shall guide us in this search for the rural. The 2 week experiences of the students shall also guide us in our search for the rural. In this course, we shall try to generate an understanding of the rural through our experiences. The diary students write in the first 2 weeks shall be taken up in this course.

The course shall thereafter take up two issues pertaining to the rural: (i) institutions, (ii) resources and deprivations.

2A. Institutions in Rural Spaces (4 weeks):

The aim of this course is to expose the students to the diversity of institutions and the structures of governance that are specific and important to their interaction with the rural landscape. Much academic work and field experience shows the imbrications of the lack of access to resources and rural poverty. It is therefore crucial to understand resource governance in order to plan for and advocate more equitable and just outcomes. This course will introduce students to rural individuals and collectives' multifaceted interactions with natural resources and to the institutions and mechanisms that mediate these relations. To this end, the course will examine the use and conservation by rural communities and other agents of resources such as land, water, forests and minerals. Institutions mediating resource access that will be examined include Panchayati Raj, the state at various scales (e.g. forest bureaucracy including local level forest guards), civil society groups, parallel bodies (e.g. Watershed Committees, Forest Councils), and new agents such as the Village Secretary. The course will build on these institutional foundations through the analysis of the shifting legal and policy frameworks regulating resources, such as land reforms and the Land Acquisition Act, National Water Policy, Joint Forest Management, Forest Rights Act, and Minerals Act. Upon completion of the course, students immersed in a specific rural context will possess the tools to map resource use, identify relevant institutional actors, and critically engage with grounded debates around these concerns. The course is also envisioned to provide a background to Immersion1, which is to culminate in the preparation of an

independent village study. It is envisioned that a case-study based pedagogy would be used to compliment critical reading of legal and policy material.

2B. Deprivation and Resources (4 weeks):

The aim of this course is to explore and critically engage the student's introduction within the immersion to institutions and structure of governance that are specific and important to the rural landscape. This course will comprise of 'guided readings' to problematize and critically analyse power and politics in rural contexts, particularly around differential access to resources. Possible themes include the conflicts around new and old bureaucracies, differential access within rural communities, relations between forest officials and forest dependent groups, issues related to the role of civil society, the often contradictory legal frameworks that govern resource access.

Course 3: Philosophy of Development Practice: In the Context of Developing Societies – 4 credits

What *is* development? How can it be measured? What is the relationship between growth and development? What indeed is *development practice*? This course will explore some of these questions to trace the shifting ideas of development. It will take students through varied historical contexts that generated different paradigms of development thinking as well as different conditions for initiating development processes, focusing on the post-Second War period. The course will also introduce students to various ways of 'doing' development, and will examine the role of state, market and society in this context. This course shall also provide students with the conceptual and analytical tools required to make sense of what they are likely to observe in the field. The course will be transacted through lectures and presentations, using theoretical and empirical studies. Development becomes meaningful only in the context of societies which it seeks to transform. Therefore, it is crucial to understand developing societies in order to comprehend development. Given that each society is unique in its own way, the task of making sense of them becomes challenging. One possible pathway of addressing this challenge is to locate and understand analytical concepts and categories which together construct developing societies and play a crucial role in the process of identity formation. This course would attempt to conceptualize developing societies by engaging into an exploration of interface areas between politics, society, and culture. The broad issues which would be addressed in this course would include 'tribes and ethnicity', 'religion and secularism', 'conceptualizing gender', 'caste as a category', 'class and its divisions', 'family and kinship', 'village as a construct', 'conceptualizing city', 'civil society and social movement', 'state, nation, and government', and 'understanding

democracy'. It will also trace the different histories and philosophies of Development Practice in different locations and contexts. Strong emphasis will be placed on thinkers like Tagore and Gandhi.

Course 4: Experiencing Self: Relating with Others – 4 Credits – 12 weeks

This course shall facilitate a process of building self awareness and empathy within the learner, by deepening an understanding of the structure, processes and dynamics of individuals as vehicles of change and the role of such change agents in stimulating the agency of people and communities. This course will direct participants towards a more focused awareness and experience of personal selfhood. The course journey will include enriching insights from the experiential domains of psychology and psychoanalysis even as they help us to develop a self reflexive relationship with oneself and to enter the challenges of young adulthood in a more free flowing, vibrant & alive manner. Participants will be encouraged to reflect on the inner and social sources that inspire them to move towards the awaiting commitments of young adulthood. As they do so this course will help them to locate within the self, images of significant others which form the bridge between the self and others, and through which aspirations of the self can be articulated. It will provide nuanced abilities to explore paradoxes *within* while engaged in dilemmas embedded in any change process *without*. The course will proceed with the help of experiential workshops, readings of selected texts & theoretical writings, review & analysis of films & literary stories and participative group work. Participants will be required to submit reflective and analytical writings as they journey through the course. The diary students write in the first 2 weeks shall be taken up in this course.

Course 5: Reflective Practice: positioning and preparing for the field

The aim of this course is to provide a reflective space, where the students can reflect on their experiences both in the field and the classroom, discuss their personal vulnerabilities and insecurities and establish a support group with their peers and guides. Reflective Practice would both prepare the students for the field and also help them reflect constructively on their field experiences. It has both a methodological and a personal-emotional content. While providing methodological tips and tools for coping with difficult circumstances in the field, such as writing a journal or diary, talking to the field guide et, it would also provide an opportunity to reflect on experience including providing a space for sharing frustrations, excitement, conflicts, struggles and hopes. A key purpose is also to develop a space for peer learning and peer support as each student is likely to experience the rural differently given their own personal histories and subjectivities.

Group Processes I – 1 Credit (at AUD)

This is to expand the knowledge base of understanding groups, enhance the ability to diagnose and facilitate processes as well as to understand and internalize the structures, processes and dynamics of interpersonal effectiveness. This course helps learners understand and internalize the structure, processes and dynamics of individuals and groups as vehicles and receptacles of change. The relationships between people, communities, groups and institutions are explored. Learners draw on their field experience and link it with aspects including theories of individual / group/ community learning, leadership, forces that hinder or help groups, different frames of reference, etc.

By reflecting on their here and now experience of being part of a group, learners would explore aspects of interpersonal awareness, sensitivity and responsiveness. Building upon these, they would be introduced to concepts related to groups, stages of their development and processes; intrapersonal dynamics of self and the group; inter-group relations, conflict and collaboration. Through this course, it is expected that the learner would have developed a cognisance of a process of maturation unfolding within her/his own self; an enhanced ability to mobilize group resources and be reflective of the self as facilitator.

Semester II: Linking practice to theory: Consolidating the Learning from Experience and Exploring the Self

Course 6: Immersion I: Village Stay and Study

To be immersed in a rural context and develop an in depth critical understanding of aspects of rural life, especially as it relates to building rapport and trust with a community. This is an open-ended immersion with emphasis on discovery and identification of issues, both internal to the learner and in the village. It will help the learner develop an understanding of lives, livelihoods and well being of people across four dimensions—family and household; community, groups and village; administration, local self governance and markets; and livelihoods, resources and environment. Through a graded progression, the learner is encouraged to deepen understanding of various processes and structures that shape rural existence across these dimensions first through a semi structured village stay by living with a host family. This would further culminate into a systematic village study. It is expected that this would help the learner evolve a nuanced and empathetic understanding of how families cope with deprivation and marginalization as also help them develop an ability to dialogue purposively and build rapport with people. Through processes of guidance, the Teaching Team (Faculty and Field Guides) will help the learners identify areas that they might have overlooked, draw on what they have learnt earlier and reflect upon their own joys, sorrows and aspirations and those of the community as well.

Course 7: Gender and Development – 2 Credits

The aim of this course is to enable students to apply the conceptual and analytical tools they will have acquired in the classroom-intensive first semester, and honed in the field during the second semester to critically examine the politics of and policy-relevant debates on broad themes such as household, kinship and village structures, empowerment and rights, identities and social justice, men, masculinities and development, violence and gender relations. This course will build on and expand the inter-disciplinary analysis of key social categories (such as caste, class, religion) and their interconnections with social development concerns (such as poverty and social exclusion) in rural contexts that the students will have engaged with in the first semester course, *Social Analysis*. The course will pay particular attention to gender related issues, gender and development approaches and debates, and gender planning and mainstreaming in rural contexts. The course will be transacted through a combination of lectures, guided reading, and hands-on activities involving designing and application of tools for social and gender analysis to enable students to grasp the complexities in and implications of politics and policy-relevant debates on the aforementioned themes. This course shall also be a creative dialogue between extant theories of gender and oppression and the experiences and observations of the students in rural contexts.

Course 8: Equality, Discrimination, Marginalisation, and Development – 2 Credits

‘What is Equality’ and ‘Equality of What’, the two central questions will be critically examined in this course by situating it in the contemporary substantive experiences on the notions of discriminations and marginalisations in India. The idea ‘equality’ embedded the question of ‘inequality’ which has an intrinsic connection to the concept and practices of development. Similarly, different types of social arrangements, social system and political practices have been brought direct or indirect implications on the idea of equality. Thus, the meaning of the idea of equality is historical, context specific and undergoes constant change. In order to understand the empirical specificity of the idea of equality in connection with the discriminatory practices and marginalization of the people, particularly associated with caste and gender, it is inevitable to look at the genealogy of the concept equality. Therefore, this course begins by looking at some of the classical philosophical notions of the concept of equality and provides an historical introduction to it. Subsequently, the course will introduce the modern and contemporary political philosophical perspectives on the idea of equality and finally it examines the sociological conceptualization of equality by contextualizing it in the Indian empirical reality. This course will also try to establish an integration of normative questions about the ideal of equality with rural empirical issues identified by the students with regard to the nature of inequality, discrimination and marginalization through their village immersion. Briefly, this course will make an attempt to combine the political philosophical and sociological understandings of the concept equality and through which it will explore the complex contemporary

manifestations of inequality, discrimination and marginalization within the larger terrain of development.

Course 9: Environment, Natural Resources, and Development (at AUD)
– 2 Credits

The course seeks to familiarise students with the concepts and practices of the governance of natural resources and livelihoods. Students are exposed to theoretical and conceptual issues in analyses of governance and natural resource management and also the changing paradigms in NRM and livelihood. Through case study-based learning and interactions, they are exposed to practical issues and problems in natural resource and livelihood. Much academic work and field experience shows the imbrications of the lack of access to resources and rural poverty. It is therefore crucial to understand resource governance in order to plan and advocate for more equitable and just outcomes. This course will introduce students to rural individual's and collectives' multifaceted interactions with natural resources and to the institutions and mechanisms that mediate these relations. This course will comprise of 'guided readings that build on institutions and resources to problematize and critically analyse power and politics in rural contexts, particularly around differential access to resources. Possible themes would include the conflicts around new and old bureaucracies, differential access within rural communities, issues related to the role of civil society, and often contradictory legal frameworks that govern resource access. To this end, the course will examine the use and conservation by rural communities and other agents of resources such as land, water, forests, and minerals.

Course 10: The Rural through Literature, Art, Cinema and Folklore –
4 Credits

The aim of the course is to familiarize the students to the Indian rural through literature, art, cinema and folklore. The course through selected narratives will offer several dimensions of the rural, whether in the form of representing Indian villages or then the diverse indigenous sensibilities existing in India. The range of the selected texts will be broad and will represent the various colors and shades of rural India.

The narratives will range from being narratives of oppression and marginalization, to narratives that celebrate the rural and the indigenous imagination, to narratives that problematise the rural and depict the various complexities surrounding and existing within it. The objective of the course is neither to consolidate the rural as a site of marginalization nor is it to eulogize or romanticize it but to depict it through a realistic lens and to bring to the surface its joys and sorrows, its pain and anguish, its orthodox suffocating conventions and its struggles for emancipation, its existence as a 'unified community' and its expelling practices. Thus the course aims to dismantle the binary of the rural and the urban as conventional and modern on the one hand and as idyllic and alien on the other. The course will operate through readings of a

few selected narratives, in the form of novels, short stories, poems and cinematic texts. As transmission of stories can also be through visual artistic forms, dance, music and rituals, this course will also look into the various songs, stories, paintings, dance, music, tapestries, folklore and rituals that circulate in tribal cultures and rural India.

Course 11: Natural Resource Management (at Kesla) – 2 Credits

The aim of this course is understand the potential and availability of natural resources, practices and use management, limits and opportunities, and institutional landscapes. This course would focus on providing learners the opportunity to understand institutions, natural phenomena and natural processes and its interaction with lives and livelihoods, keeping India in focus. It would enable them to reflect upon and critique idea of sustainability itself and to explore the critique the dominant modes of thinking and explore alternate paradigms and the implications. This course will build on the learner's field experience to equip them with different approaches to interventions. It would help them internalize a more sustainable perspective, a deeper understanding of what people do, threats and everyday risks and vulnerabilities in peoples' lives. It would cover aspects related to natural processes- the interaction of the elements, resource use and development, sustainability, production systems and technology and resource economics

Course 12: Group Process II – 2 Credits (at Kesla in the workshop mode)

Course 13: Methods:

The courses on methods would focus on key skills required for working with people in terms of listening, building trust, engaging with community and reflecting on ethical considerations. It would also introduce the students to basic research methods essential for the field immersion as also aspects of Project Management.

13A. Listening, Learning and Communication – 2nd Semester – 2 Credits – 6 weeks

This course will enable students to open themselves to listening and communicating. It will foreground the storied nature of lives and the intense universal desire for communication while acknowledging the paradox of its limits. As future development professionals, the course will initiate thinking and feeling in students to respond empathically to conflict, misunderstandings, failures of communication and to spaces of felt alienation and loneliness in human relationships. Through a simultaneous inward turning to one's own self, they will be encouraged to maintain experiential diaries around struggles and possibilities of listening, relating and communicating to themselves as well as their significant others. Drawing from literary and creative narratives, short stories, films and therapy sessions, a foundational emphasis of this course is to enable one to listen to the deeper

resonances of unconscious articulations. By tuning in to a receptive mode of listening, sequences of seemingly disconnected and free flowing communication would begin to acquire a pulsating and rhythmic flow, in consonance with unconscious human life. Further by focusing on lives (characters in literature) that have been rendered invisible, and which remain unheard and “underground”, we will listen to the struggle to communicate as well as, sometimes, the simultaneous desire to erase attempts to be understood by any other human being, and also the self. Further, the philosophy of the course extends itself to not only listening to human life but to all forms of life, and therefore, at an implicit level the course will attempt to create bonds and linkages between psychological perspectives, the spiritual emphasis on compassion and understandings from deep and sustainable ecology. It is hoped that participation in this course will help students to forge healthier personal relationships, to become increasingly open to experiences of sharing joy and also pain within the family and in other intimate spaces.

13B. *Participatory Action Research and Grassroots Engagement Methodology* – 2nd Semester – 2 Credits – to be conducted at Kesla over 7 days

Removing widespread, dehumanizing poverty remains the key challenge before Indian society. Reports of the Tendulkar Committee and the N.C. Saxena Committee (published in December 2009 and September 2009, respectively) estimated that, in 2004-2005, 37.2% and 50% respectively of India’s population is below the poverty line. No other nation/region has so many poor people. The regional distribution of poverty is disquieting as are its social and economic causes. The ecological and institutional contexts in which poor people exist are daunting. Change takes place through interaction of the self with its environment. To facilitate this change process, the focus needs to be both on the immediate environment and on self-reflection. Some of the visible engagements at the grass roots will include:

- * Promoting self-governed and managed collectives
- * Exploiting livelihood opportunities
- * Facilitating access to basic services, rights and entitlements from mainstream agencies
- * Advocating pro-poor policies in the mainstream.

Summer Break: Course 14: Immersion II

To develop competencies for transformative grassroots work, initiate action that would be the base for future action-research and reflect on life as a development practitioner, its attributes, challenges and sources of satisfaction. This immersion stimulates, encourages and supports the ongoing process of discovery through guided grassroots action within the domain of a Field Guide. S/he learns skills and applies

concepts learnt earlier related to ongoing work. It would help to enhance competence to diagnose, mobilize and negotiate with village people; to organize the overall task into parts, representing milestones along the way to achieve the final outcome; and to identify its completion as marked by tangible development outcomes. More specifically, this would involve *initiating and strengthening action towards change*, particularly in areas related to people, institutions and resources and their interface. This could involve processes of formation and strengthening of groups, identifying the different natural resource constituents, actors and institutions and their inter-relationship and trends, or study of a selected sectoral programme. The learner would also engage with groups and help them visualize a desired state and identify ways towards reaching it. Through this immersion it is expected that the learner would have exposure to and practice of (conceptual, technical and human) skills² required to initiate a change process in the community, reflected upon their motivation to enter into this profession and identified areas of interest and organizational work for initiation of action-research projects. Through processes of guidance, the teaching team (faculty and field guide) would act as a mirror and help the learner to gradually move from observation to application. They would help the learner frame the discussion in the light of the courses taught earlier and aid him/her identify emergent learning needs.

Semester III:

Course 15: Politics, Resistance and Change – 2 Credits

This course is about the concept of the ‘political’ in rural context. It is also about the see-saw or the dialectic of ‘resistance’ and ‘change’ in rural situations. What is the political? Where is the resistance? How to overcome? When does change or transformation happen? What is change? What are the theories of change? At one level, these questions form the core of the course. At another level, by placing sociality at the very heart of subjectivity and identity, this course effects a shift from psychic interiority to social and political formations. As members of a collective, what are the possibilities for resistance and transformation of the social and the historical that open up or close off? In turning away from the ‘individual’ and the ‘abstract-theoretical’, the course focuses on exploring the *performative* method of people’s movements against deprivation, oppression, exploitation and injustice. Marked by the philosophy of ‘personal as political,’ the course will also engage with ‘everyday forms of protest’ as a mode of isolated dissent. The role of the state and civil society, the relation between global and local dimensions, and between private and public, urban and rural will be important themes. The course involves presentations, interaction with movement participants, film viewing, and exposure to various forms of protest such as *dharnas* or demonstrations.

Course 16: Intervention, Inclusion and Collective Action – 2 Credits

The aim of this course is to provide a deeper understanding of the complexities and theories/principles of intervention, inclusion and collective action. It will look at different approaches to intervention aimed at facilitating collective action. This course would help learners understand the phenomenon of agency, theories/principles of agency and interventions that are aimed at facilitating agency in individuals, groups, communities and society. The learners are helped to look at agency in the development context (economic, social and political). It also examines social movements, collective action and people's organizations as phenomena of agency. The person of the change agent and the role that s/he plays in stimulating the agency of people and communities is also examined. Through guided reflection, the learner is helped to explore the paradoxes within while they engage in dilemmas embedded in any change process without. Learners will be equipped with different approaches to intervention along with skills to facilitate movement aimed at a developmentally meaningful outcome. At one level, this course shall thus complicate the question of agency. It will grapple with the complicated nature of its understanding in the contemporary and its stimulation in groups. It will ask: how to bring about a non-coercive reconstitution of desire in a group. At another level, this course shall take up the 'means' *versus* 'ends' debate.

Course 17: Reflections on Justice – 2 Credits

The aim of this course is to critically engage with the concept of justice. The course will expose students to processes that create, reinforce, challenge, and/or subvert injustice while reflecting on key debates and theories related to justice. The objective is to bring into productive conversation key debates, thinkers and contemporarily relevant concerns. The debates may include contemplations emerging from liberalism, utilitarianism, feminism, universalism, socialism and anarchism, drawing upon the thoughts of, among others, Rousseau, Marx, Gandhi, Ambedkar, Mao, Rawls, and Sen. Students will engage with debates and thoughts to understand and analyse the imbrications of justice with the state, development, media, difference, and bodies. For instance, to understand the set of issues around Naxalism, the students would examine the perceptions of injustice on the ground (through novels, eyewitness accounts, news reports), Maoist interpretations of justice (Mao's writing, and its reworking by Indian Naxalite groups), and the frameworks of justice and injustice within which the Indian state operates (court cases, commentaries on the state). The course will combine the creative use of poetry, political texts, drama, fiction and films with pedagogies such as lectures, debates, role play, and guided readings.

Course 18: Discourse on Well-Being – 2 Credits

Taking off from the student's experiences in the village this course shall look at both goods and services as material conditions of well-being and at intra-psychic processes or the subjective nature of well-being. It will also try to make sense of well-being in the context of groups. Over the last decades, empirical research on subjective well-being in the social sciences has provided a major new stimulation to

the discourse on individual happiness. Recently this research has also been linked to economics where reported subjective well-being is often taken as a proxy measure for individual welfare. This course shall attend to these discourses on well being. The question of well-being shall also be related to questions in moral philosophy, utilitarianism, and welfarism. Challenges to the very notion of well being by G.E. Moore and T.M. Scanlon shall be taken up. Theories of well-being shall also be distinguished from hedonist theories, desire theories, or objective list theories.

19. Courses on Methods:

19A. Introduction to Research Methodology and Basic Research Skills
– 1st Semester – 2 Credits – to be conducted at AUD over 15 days in a workshop mode

The first part of this course provides an introduction to research methodology covering philosophy of social science, principles and process in critical thinking, inductive and deductive reasoning, relationships between facts and theory, positivism and interpretivism, structuration theory, and aspects of feminist and postmodernist approaches to research. It also touches upon research design, issues related to measurement in research as well as ethics and politics of research. The objective is train students to think logically and scientifically in a multi-disciplinary framework. The part on Basic Research Skills, exposes and encourages the students to consolidate their basic academic and research skills through formal activity centered, hands-on training. Worksheets and some reading material will be distributed during the classroom interaction. This course will have continuous assessment in the form of classroom and take home assignments to be done individually, in pairs, and in groups.

19B: Courses on Methods IV: Project Management and Accounting Skills
– 3rd Semester – 2 Credits – to be conducted at AUD over 15 days in a workshop mode.

The aim of this course is to build understanding of different measures, systems, tools, analytical frameworks and basic concepts of accounts and finance. This course draws on management thinking and education, and helps learners equip themselves with the basic management skills required. It helps to appreciate accounting as a language of business and accordingly develop their ability to understand, analyse and interpret the data contained in the financial statements for improved decision-making and to appreciate financial decision making. Learners sharpen their analytical skills, and learn to use systematic frameworks for decision-making and enhance their skills in written analysis and communication. This course will cover topics such as basic financial literacy, a brief introduction to accounting concepts; planning, monitoring and measurement tools; and a historical overview and critique of conventional, alternate and human development models.

Course 20: Group Processes III – 1 Credit (at AUD)

Course 21: Rural Livelihoods – 2 Credits

The aim of this course is to build understanding of different approaches to create and tap opportunities to enhance well being and livelihoods and enable communities to take charge of working towards a better quality of life. This course will equip the student to understand dimensions of well-being and livelihoods and their links with markets and business. It will help them explore patterns of social exchange governing livelihood-seeking behaviour and options available to poor families, especially in the light of changing landscapes of opportunity—including rights and constitutional guarantees, and new economic opportunities. Drawing upon their field experience and village study, students will be encouraged to reflect upon dilemmas of constructivist approach of a livelihoods practitioner.

Semester IV:

22. Action Research Project – 12 Credits

This immersion is centred on the intervention process that the learner is engaged in, and her/his reflection about it. Research, a key focus in this phase of immersion, refers to the study of the implications of the learners' actions. It is oriented towards documenting and analyzing the processes of change, including the involvement of the learner and the members of the community. Ongoing village work would involve continued strengthening of work initiated in Immersion III, as mentioned above. Focus might be on strengthening group processes and engaging with groups to work towards their plans as identified in

Immersion III

As the learner plans to withdraw from active intervention, s/he would work towards 'closure'. This would entail handing over to the Field Guide, as also completing the documentation process. Through this module it is expected that the learner would have participated/ initiated some change processes that have a tangible developmental outcome and documented the same as part of their Action Research project. Moreover, s/he would have developed a sense of inner maturity, and evolved an integrated developmental perspective about the context. Through the guidance process, the teaching team would encourage the learner to develop her/his own style of dealing with emergent concerns and support him/her.