

Supercourse newsletter

Aug. 17, 2013

"Health is a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity". (WHO)

<http://ssc.bibalex.org/helpdesk/introduction.jsf> (BA Superhelp desk)

<https://www.facebook.com/TheBaSuperhelpDesk> (BA Superhelp Facebook)

[www.pitt.edu/~super1/](http://www.pitt.edu/~super1/) Supercourse

"Keep a knockin' but you can't come in" (Little Richard, 1957) Little Richard had a wonderful Blues hit which is still played today.

With the Help desk, we are seeing many people "knocking, but they don't come in". Our first 2 months statistics on the BA help desk were very good with over 1000 visits a month. However, we received only 8 questions, which our gray/no/dyed hair experts readily answered. It appears that more budding researchers should stop knocking and open the door to research methods knowledge and "how to publish". We would appreciate your thoughts as to why young researchers who have to publish are not "knocking down our door" with questions.

[ronaldlaporte@gmail.com](mailto:ronaldlaporte@gmail.com)).

The pilot period has been great in that we found that our expert team answered questions well, the library of Alexandria platform was slick and smooth. The answers to the questions were of very high quality. Also a whole new world opened up when Eman indicated that the help desk would be good on Facebook. Eman's Facebook help page opened new vistas and ease to establish National help desks. We are not worried, as when the Supercourse of Health started in 1998, in the first 4 months there were only 6 PowerPoint lectures, all by Ron LaPorte!!! We held on and tried different approaches and from 30 lectures the first year, by year 3 we were obtaining 500 lectures a year and millions of visitors. We will see the same thing here.

"Some say that opportunity knocks only once. That is not true.

Opportunity knocks all the time, but you have to be ready for it. If the chance comes, you need to have the equipment to take advantage of it"

(Louis L'Amour)

There are 2 possible reasons people are not using the help desk, either they do not know about it, or they just do not use it. One possibility for a young faculty person is that seeking "help" might be viewed as a sign of weakness as they should already know the methods. If this is the case we need to change the culture.

"Opportunity only knocks once" (proverb) If budding researchers lack knowledge in research methods, statistics and how to publish, they will not publish, and they will not be promoted in good universities. How can we make them aware of this fact?

National Help Desks:

Based upon the experiences of the global help desk we are developing a Methods of Operation for National Help Desks. There are already 2 National Help desks in Iran and Pakistan. We are under discussion as to build National Help desks in Philippines, India and other countries. If we can build effective help desks in these large, complex countries, we can probably establish help desks any place. Now that we have these experiences we see that writing a general Methods of Operation is in order and will be available in the next few weeks.

"Clear Conscience never fears midnight knocking" (Chinese Proverb) Lecture of the Week:

This week we chose the lecture by Elham Ahmadneshad from Iran on Mixed Models

<http://www.pitt.edu/~super1/lecture/lec36411/index.htm>. This outstanding lecture discussing cutting edge research on how we in epidemiology can incorporate qualitative and quantitative

research together. It is the best lecture I have seen on this important new topic, as few of us in Epidemiology know what to do with Qualitative data.

This lecture is not new, it was placed into the Supercourse in 2009.

However, what is new is that Dr. Ahmadnexhad sent to me emails that she received from people who used this lecture. It is really nice to see these. She should be very proud of her lecture and the world wide interest. Eugene, Faina and I would very much like it if you received letters about your lecture, if you could send them to me ([ronaldlaporte@gmail.com](mailto:ronaldlaporte@gmail.com)). We plan to build a qualitative testimonial page on the impact of Supercourse lectures. Thanks so much "When your work becomes your play, you are knocking on the door of success" (anon) Here are a few of the beautiful letters to Dr. Ahmadnexhad.

Dear Dr. Elham Ahmadnezhad

I am a Nepali citizen but studying in Thailand. I just wanted to thank you for your slide on Research Design Mixed Method. I have been studying PhD in Research Methodology at Prince of Songkla University in Pattani Campus.

I am in 2nd semester but my wife Binita is on 3rd semester. I followed her. Just I wanted to introduce as you are also in same field and you are most senior and want to learn and get experience...However, have a great day, Take Care Greetings from Ethiopia, I am one of the youngest researchers in Ethiopia. Currently I am attending my PhD in Health Studies at University of South Africa (UNISA).I was googling to find PhD thesis and dissertation and so I found your presentation on Sequential mixed method study design. I have a plan to use this study design to my research. Therefore this is your assistance to know more about this methodology. My research topic is A strategy to facilitate the integration of FP and HIV services at operational level

Hai madam,

i red your ppt of mixed research methods.....so nice and easy alsoit is very useful to research sholars and so on.thanking you, your faithfully Dear Dr. Ahmadnezhad, I just finished reading your lecture on Research Design and Mixed Methods.

I randomly came across it just now as I was studying for my Environmental Toxicology midterm tomorrow. I wanted to let you know that your lecture was very well written and I really enjoyed reading it.

My goal is to get my PhD in Epidemiology as well. When I read your description, I realized you're basically who I want to be in the future! I wish you the best of luck in all your future endeavors!

If you have any questions, please send them to [ronaldlaporte@gmail.com](mailto:ronaldlaporte@gmail.com) "Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity" (WHO) Best Regards, Faina, Ron, Zhaksybai, Shalkar, Sholpan, Aiyim, Kyle, Sean, Rob, Eugene, Francois, Nicholas, Ohanyido, Gil, Mita, Ismail, Eric, Kawkab, Vint, Ali, Olga, Maria, Eman