



The University of Southern Queensland

Course Specification

Description: Research Methodology for the Human Sciences

Subject	Cat-Nbr	Class	Term	Mode	Units	Campus
HSC	4050	20481	1, 2003	EXT	1.00	TWMBA

Academic Group:	FOSCI
Academic Org:	FOS004
HECS Band:	1
ASCED Code:	060399

STAFFING

Examiner: Cath Rogers-Clark

Moderator: Lorna Robertson

RATIONALE

Nurses and midwives need to be able to read and critique research. They therefore need to develop the ability to be a critical consumer of research and to be able to apply this to their own areas of practice. It is particularly important that nurses and midwives base their practice on research evidence and can provide health care consumers with research evidence when they seek to make informed decisions.

SYNOPSIS

This course will develop students' abilities to be critical consumers of research. Studies will focus on extending students' knowledge about the purpose of research, research design and various methodologies including empirical, interpretive, critical and feminist approaches. Through examination of past research students will distinguish the hallmarks of effective research design including ethical considerations. They will learn about evidence based practice and write a critical literature review for their own area of practice.

OBJECTIVES

On completion of this course students will be able to:

- Critically analyse the current methodological debates taking into consideration the different philosophical bases of different scientific approaches to research;
- Explain the varying ways the term "theory" is used in each of the research paradigms;
- Discuss the centrality of theory to research and describe how each paradigm claims to demonstrate the theory-evidence link;
- Discuss the benefits and limitations of the evidence-based practice movement in health care;

- Discuss ethical considerations which arise in research design and conduct;
- Demonstrate the ability to take an area of research concern and refine it by framing a researchable problem or question; and
- Demonstrate the ability to analyse and critique the literature in a field of specific interest.

TOPICS

Description	Weighting (%)
1. Methodological Debate - What is Science? & What is Research?	30.00
2. Theory-Practice-Research - Meanings of theory in each paradigm, Evidence-based practice	15.00
3. Research Design - Selecting an appropriate method, Review of quantitative methods, Evidence-based practice, Overview of qualitative methods, eg. - semi-structured interviewing	30.00
4. Research Ethics - Informed consent, Safety, The researcher/participant relationship, The impact of the researcher	5.00
5. The Critical Practitioner - Conducting a literature search, Selecting an appropriate tool for critique, Critically reviewing the literature	20.00

TEXT and MATERIALS required to be PURCHASED or ACCESSED:

Books can be ordered by fax or telephone. For costs and further details use the 'Book Search' facility at <http://bookshop.usq.edu.au> by entering the author or title of the text.

Roberts, K. & Taylor, B. 2002, *Nursing Research Processes: An Australian Perspective*, 2nd edition, Nelson, Melbourne.

REFERENCE MATERIALS

Reference materials are materials that, if accessed by students, may improve their knowledge and understanding of the material in the course and enrich their learning experience.

Anderson, J.M. 1991, Reflexivity in Fieldwork: Towards a Feminist Epistemology, *Image: Journal of Nursing Scholarship*, Vol 23, no.2, pp115-118.

Carrier, J. 1995, Feminist research: strengths and challenges, *Contemporary Nurse: A Journal for the Australian Nursing Profession*, Vol 4, no.4, pp180-186.

Colquhoun, D. & Kellehear, A. 1993, *Health Research in Practice: Political, Ethical and Methodological Issues*, Chapman and Hall, London.

Cozby, P. 1993, *Methods in Behavioural Research*, 5th edition, Mayfield Publishing, California.

Creswell, J.W. 1998, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Traditions*, Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks.

Crotty, M. 1998, *The Foundations of Social Research*, Allen and Unwin, Sydney.

- Denscombe, M. 1998, *The good research guide for small-scale social research projects*, Open University Press, Buckingham.
- Denzin, N. & Lincoln, Y. (eds) 2000, *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, Sage, Thousand Oaks.
- Dey, I. 1993, *Qualitative Data Analysis: A User-Friendly Guide for Social Scientists*, Routledge, United Kingdom.
- Emden, C. 1998, Conducting a narrative analysis, *Collegian*, Vol 5, no.3, pp34-39.
- Emden, C. & Sandelowski, M. 1999, The good, the bad and the relative, part two: Goodness and the criterion problem in qualitative research, *International Journal of Nursing Practice*, Vol 5, no. , pp2-7.
- Feyerabend, P. 1993, *Against Method*, 3rd edition, Routledge, Verso, New York.
- Foddy, W. 1993, *Constructing Questions for Interviews and Questionnaires: Theory and Practice in Social Research*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- Fonow, M. & Cook, J. (eds) 1991, *Beyond Methodology: Feminist Scholarship as Lived Research*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington.
- Grbich, C. 1999, *Qualitative Research in Health: An Introduction*, Allen and Unwin, Sydney.
- Habermas, J. 1974, *Theory and Practice*, Beacon Press, Boston.
- Lincoln, Y. 1995, Emerging criteria for quality in qualitative and interpretive research, *Qualitative Inquiry*, Vol 1, no.3.
- Lincoln, Y.S. & Denzin, N.K. 1998, *The fifth moment. In the Landscape of qualitative research: theories and issues (edited by NK Denzin and YS Lincoln)*, Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks.
- Marshall, C. & Rossman, G. 1999, *Designing Qualitative Research*, 2nd edition, Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks.
- Omery, A., Kasper, C. & Page, G.G. 1995, *In Search of Nursing Science*, Sage, Thousand Oaks.
- Polgar, S. & Thomas, S.A. 2000, *Introduction to Research in Health Sciences*, 4th edition, Churchill Livingstone, Edinburgh.
- Polit, D.F., Tatano Beck, C. & Hungler, B.P. 2001, *Essentials of Nursing Research: Methods, Appraisal and Utilization*, 5th edition, Lippincott, Philadelphia.
- Reinharz, S. 1992, *Feminist Methods in Social Research*, Oxford University Press, New York.
- Yin, R.K. 1994, *Case Study Research: Design and Methods (Applied Social Research Methods Series)*, 2nd edition, Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks, Vol 5.

STUDENT WORKLOAD REQUIREMENTS

ACTIVITY	HOURS
Assessment	12
Directed Study	50
Private Study	110

ASSESSMENT DETAILS

Description	Marks Out of	Wtg(%)	Required	Due Date
ASSIGNMENT 1 - S/ANS QUESTIONS	100.00	40.00	Y	26 May 2003
ASSIGNMENT 2	100.00	50.00	Y	13 Jun 2003
RPT - ONLINE GRP DISCUSSION	10.00	10.00	Y	13 Jun 2003

IMPORTANT ASSESSMENT INFORMATION

- 1 Attendance requirements:
There are no attendance requirements for this course. However, it is the students' responsibility to study all material provided to them or required to be accessed by them to maximise their chance of meeting the objectives of the course and to be informed of course-related activities and administration.
- 2 Requirements for students to complete each assessment item satisfactorily:
To complete each of the assessment items satisfactorily, students must obtain at least 50% of the marks available for each assessment item.
- 3 Penalties for late submission of required work:
If students submit assignments after the due date without prior approval then a penalty of 5% of the total marks available for the assignment will apply for each working day late.
- 4 Requirements for student to be awarded a passing grade in the course:
To be assured of a passing grade, students must demonstrate, via the summative assessment items, that they have achieved the required minimum standards in relation to the objectives of the course by: (i) satisfactorily completing the examination and assignments; and (ii) obtaining at least 50% of the total weighted marks available for all summative assessment items.
- 5 Method used to combine assessment results to attain final grade:
The final grades for students will be assigned on the basis of the weighted aggregate of the marks obtained for each of the summative assessment items in the course.
- 6 Examination information:
There is no examination in this course.
- 7 Examination period when Deferred/Supplementary examinations will be held:
There will be no Deferred or Supplementary examinations in this course.
- 8 University Regulations:

Students should read USQ Regulations 5.1 Definitions, 5.6. Assessment, and 5.10 Academic Misconduct for further information and to avoid actions which might contravene University Regulations. These regulations can be found at the URL <http://www.usq.edu.au/SECARIAT/calendar/Part5/> or in the printed version of the current USQ Handbook.

ASSESSMENT NOTES

- 9 The due date for an assignment is the date by which a student must despatch the assignment to the USQ. The onus is on the student to provide proof of the despatch date, if requested by the Examiner.
- 10 Students must retain a copy of each item submitted for assessment. This must be produced within five days if required by the Examiner.
- 11 The examiner may grant an extension of the due date of an assignment in extenuating circumstances.
- 12 Students who have undertaken all of the required assessments in a course but who have failed to meet some of the specified objectives of a course within the normally prescribed time may be awarded the temporary grade: IM (Incomplete - Make up). An IM grade will only be awarded when, in the opinion of the examiner, a student will be able to achieve the remaining objectives of the course after a period of non directed personal study.