



The University of Southern Queensland

Course specification

| Description: Building Communities of Practice | | | | | | |
|------------------------------------------------------|---------|-------|---------|------|-------|-----------|
| Subject | Cat-nbr | Class | Term | Mode | Units | Campus |
| FET | 8605 | 58193 | 3, 2006 | WEB | 1.00 | Toowoomba |

| | |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Academic group: | FOEDU |
| Academic org: | FOE003 |
| Student contribution band: | National Priority Teaching |
| ASCED code: | 070303 |

STAFFING

Examiner: Kaye Cleary

Moderator: Shirley Reushle

RATIONALE

Globalisation and the rise of communication information technologies are having a marked impact on organisations and individuals who work within them. In this global networked environment, knowledge is a key source of competitive advantage that can improve individual and organisational effectiveness and efficiency and lead to innovation and creativity. Leveraging of knowledge, and creation of an infrastructure that facilitates and encourages individual development, group learning and corporate sharing is vitally important if organisations are to meet the common challenges in today's globalised environment. The development of knowledge networks and the learning organisation has given rise to the development of 'communities of practice'. A community of practice brings together key knowledge workers who form part of the knowledge network and have the potential to be an organisation's most versatile and dynamic knowledge resource. While 'communities of practice' already exist in many organisations, there is evidence to suggest that they require systemic and organisational support which is structured and managed in such a way to allow individuals and groups to act, research and develop alliances that can generate and apply knowledge. Community building and facilitation skills are needed to enable practitioners to develop sophisticated skills and knowledge to function effectively in 'communities of practice' within a learning organisation.

SYNOPSIS

This course aims to provide participants with an opportunity to explore how communities of practice can be used as a tool to facilitate knowledge management, organisational learning, workplace learning, and change management within their organisations. The course will employ an 'open space technology' which provides a strong model for learner-managed learning. Participants in the course will experience first-hand the development of a learning community as they create their own knowledge around organising themes and key capacities for the building and facilitation of the Communities of Practice. NOTES: 1. This course (FET8605) is available through INTERNET DELIVERY ONLY. There are NO print materials for this course. 2. For details of the technical requirements and accessing Internet study materials, please consult the following URL: <http://usqconnect.usq.edu.au>. IMPORTANT NOTE: Working with Children:

State law in Queensland requires that all adults (including university students, pre-service educators, trainers, vocational teachers, industry educators) working with children under the age of 18, in the state of Queensland*, obtain approval before commencing such work. Many education courses include a practical component (professional experience, project work, research, assessment etc..) that may require engagement with children under the age of 18. It is your responsibility to ensure that you possess a current suitability card (Blue Card) before commencing any practical components of this course. **DO NOT PARTICIPATE IN ANY PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE WITH CHILDREN UNDER 18 UNLESS YOU POSSESS A CURRENT 'BLUE CARD'**. For further information:

<http://www.childcomm.qld.gov.au/employment/bluecard/informationSheets.html>. *If you are undertaking practical experience outside the state of Queensland, Australia you should check local requirements.

OBJECTIVES

The course objectives define the student learning outcomes for a course. The assessment item(s) that may be used to assess student achievement of an objective are shown in parenthesis. On completion of this course students will be able to:

1. articulate a definition of Communities of Practice (Assignment 1)
2. analyse the functions and importance Communities of Practice play in a range of contexts (Assignment 2)
3. identify critical success factors, benefits, limitations and potentials for Communities of Practice (Assignment 2)
4. examine the role of Communities of Practice as an organisational learning tool (Assignment 2; Assignment 3)
5. develop and nurture a community of practice with focus on structure and stages of development (Assignment 3)
6. explore the development of leadership/people capability/organisational capability through Communities of Practice (Assignment 3)
7. apply 'open space technology' as a framework for collaboration in developing knowledge around an issue or theme. (Assignment 2)

TOPICS

| | Description | Weighting (%) |
|----|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|
| 1. | Definition and needs analysis - what are Communities of Practice? Setting the agenda to respond to identified needs? | 10.00 |
| 2. | Frameworks for collaboration | 10.00 |
| 3. | Structures and developmental stages for COP | 20.00 |
| 4. | COP as an organisational learning tool | 20.00 |
| 5. | Facilitating COP - facilitating learning | 20.00 |
| 6. | Analysis, reflection, evaluation and review - critical success factors for COP | 20.00 |

TEXT and MATERIALS required to be PURCHASED or ACCESSED

ALL textbooks and materials are available for purchase from USQ BOOKSHOP (unless otherwise stated). Orders may be placed via secure internet, free fax 1800642453, phone 07

46312742 (within Australia), or mail. Overseas students should fax +61 7 46311743, or phone +61 7 46312742. For costs, further details, and internet ordering, use the 'Textbook Search' facility at <http://bookshop.usq.edu.au> click 'Semester', then enter your 'Course Code' (no spaces).

There are no prescribed texts for this course. Students will be required to read widely and access web and print-based material.

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.

All recommended reference materials are referred to in the WEB materials. Participants are urged to access publications from Wenger & Lave, eg Wenger, E. 1998, 'Communities of practice: learning meaning and identity', Cambridge University Press, NY. Framing the future www.tafe.sa.edu.au/institutes/papa/ftf/home.htm. Staff development and communities of practice www.framingthefuture.net.

STUDENT WORKLOAD REQUIREMENTS

| ACTIVITY | HOURS |
|--------------------------------|-------|
| Assessment | 50.00 |
| Independent Study | 50.00 |
| Online and Group Collaboration | 60.00 |

ASSESSMENT DETAILS

| Description | Marks out of | Wtg(%) | Due date |
|--------------|--------------|--------|-------------|
| ASSIGNMENT 1 | 20.00 | 20.00 | 08 Dec 2006 |
| ASSIGNMENT 2 | 40.00 | 40.00 | 05 Jan 2007 |
| ASSIGNMENT 3 | 40.00 | 40.00 | 09 Feb 2007 |

IMPORTANT ASSESSMENT INFORMATION

- 1 Attendance requirements:
This course contains discussion forums where students' participation is formally assessed and successful participation in that discussion group is required to complete the requirements to be awarded a passing grade in this course. There are no other 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:

In this course, if students are more than two weeks late with the submission of any assessment task, they are required to contact the course examiner prior to the due date, who may, at his/her discretion, grant a further extension. A penalty of 20% 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 receiving a passing grade a student must achieve at least 50% of the total weighted marks available for the course.
- 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/corporateservices/calendar/part5.htm> or in the current USQ Handbook.

ASSESSMENT NOTES

- 1 Detailed criteria to be used in marking contributions in assessment item 1 will be provided in the course materials. These will be based on frequency of contribution, range of types of contribution, responses to contributions of others and linking of contributions to course content.

OTHER REQUIREMENTS

- 1 Students will require access to e-mail and Internet access to USQConnect for this course.
- 2 **IMPORTANT NOTE: Working with Children: State law in Queensland requires that all adults (including university students, pre-service educators, trainers, vocational teachers, industry educators) working with children under the age of 18, in the state of Queensland*, obtain approval before commencing such work. Many education courses include a practical component (professional experience, project work, research, assessment etc..) that may require engagement with children under the age of 18. It is your responsibility to ensure that you possess a current suitability card (Blue Card) before commencing any practical components of this course. DO NOT PARTICIPATE IN ANY PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE WITH CHILDREN UNDER 18 UNLESS YOU POSSESS A CURRENT 'BLUE CARD'. For further information:** <http://www.childcomm.qld.gov.au/employment/bluecard/informationSheets.html>. *If you are undertaking practical experience outside the state of Queensland, Australia you should check local requirements.
- 3 Students enrolling in WEB courses **MUST** have ongoing convenient and reliable access to the Internet in order to access course materials and participate in activities that will affect assessment. The levels of equipment required may change from time to time, with the most recent specification listed at <http://www.usq.edu.au/currentstudents/computingstandards/default.htm>. You can check whether your computer system meets these requirements from USQAssist (<http://usqassist.usq.edu.au/>).