



The University of Southern Queensland

## Course specification

### Description: Contexts and Environments

Subject	Cat-nbr	Class	Term	Mode	Units	Campus
GDE	3002	51264	1, 2006	ONC	1.00	Toowoomba

**Academic group:**

FOEDU

**Academic org:**

FOEDUC

**Student contribution band:**

National Priority Teaching

**ASCED code:**

070199

### STAFFING

Examiner: Patrick Danaher

Moderator: John McMaster

### RATIONALE

Socio-cultural and socio-political factors are powerful influences on the environments in which teachers conduct their work in schools and, in turn, on the environments that they establish for their work with students. In the broader context of globalisation, with its attendant homogenising forces, inclusive practice needs to recognise the differences that students and communities bring to the learning context. In order to design teaching and learning environments that are socially just and inclusive, teachers require an understanding of the socio-cultural realities of learners and the positioning of schools within particular cultural contexts and locations.

### SYNOPSIS

This course is designed to assist students to understand the range of social and political forces that interact to shape the nature of educational contexts and environments within schools, as well as the cultural identities of the individuals within schools. Understandings of these forces and trends are connected to exploration of whole-school and individual-teacher approaches to the establishment of inclusive learning environments. Awareness of how particular schools respond to particular features of their socio-cultural communities is explored through the lens of a social justice approach to meeting the needs of 'at risk' groups. The course provides for a nominal 7.5 days of professional attachment to an identified school. During this period of attachment students will be immersed in the day-to-day operations of the school and in the work of a teacher, with a particular focus on the connections between that work and the issues covered in this course. **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

On completion of this course students will be able to:

1. identify the key elements of inclusive learning environments
2. demonstrate knowledge of the socio-cultural, legislative, systemic and educational contexts that inform quality teaching for diversity
3. understand the application of ecological theory in a particular context
4. identify the implications and ramifications of actions taken at different levels of an education system
5. apply whole of school and community approaches to social justice in education
6. demonstrate knowledge, understanding and skill in the use of appropriate personal, professional and academic literacies
7. demonstrate knowledge, understanding and application of appropriate ICT uses for teaching and learning in a particular context
8. apply an understanding of contexts and environments in the professional attachment
9. articulate an example of how the key concepts encountered in this course can be applied in an educational setting.

## TOPICS

Description	Weighting (%)
1. Socio-cultural influences on individuals, schools and education	25.00
2. Whole-school and community approaches to inclusivity and social justice	25.00
3. Features of inclusive learning environments	25.00
4. Educational reform and the role of the teacher	25.00

## 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).

GDE3002 USQ resource package.

## 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.

Austin, J (ed.) 2005, *Culture and identity*, 2nd edn, Pearson, Frenchs Forest.

Brady, L & Kennedy, K 2003, *Curriculum construction*, Pearson, Frenchs Forest.

Burnett, B, Meadmore, D & Tait, G (eds) *New questions for contemporary teachers: taking a sociocultural approach to education*, Pearson, Frenchs Forest.

Curtis, D & Carter, M 2003, *Designs for living and learning: transforming early childhood environments*, Red Leaf Press, St Paul, MN.

Fraser, S 2000, *Authentic childhood: experiencing Reggio Emilia in the classroom*, Nelson, Canada.

Greenman, J 1988, *Caring spaces, learning places: children's environments that work*, Exchange Press Inc, Redmond, WA.

Harms, T, Jacobs, E & White, D 1996, *School-age care environment rating scale*, Teachers College Press, New York.

Lubawy, J & Bebe, J 1999, *Building walls of wombats: constructing knowledge with young children*, Pademelon Press, Castle Hill, NSW.

## STUDENT WORKLOAD REQUIREMENTS

ACTIVITY	HOURS
Assessment	30.00
Private Study	85.00
Residential Schools	20.00
Workshops	30.00

## ASSESSMENT DETAILS

Description	Marks out of	Wtg(%)	Due date
ASSIGNMENT 1 - PART 1	10.00	10.00	14 Apr 2006 (see note 1)
PROFESSIONAL ATTACHMENT	50.00	50.00	23 Jun 2006
ASSIGNMENT 1 - PART 2	40.00	40.00	03 Jul 2006 (see note 2)

### NOTES

1. All assessment items will receive a grade. Assignment 1 - Part 1: Proposal
2. Assignment 1 - Part 2: Problem-Based Presentation

## IMPORTANT ASSESSMENT INFORMATION

- 1 Attendance requirements:  
It is the student's responsibility to attend and participate appropriately in the residential school and other scheduled learning activities (such as on-campus workshops and web-based activities) scheduled for them. Students must complete 7.5 days of professional attachment at an identified school site.
- 2 Requirements for students to complete each assessment item satisfactorily:  
To complete each of the assessment items satisfactorily, students must obtain at least a grade of C- for each assessment item.
- 3 Penalties for late submission of required work:

Students who fail to submit assignments by the due date without prior approval must apply to the course examiner for deferred assessment. The course examiner will consider each such application on its individual merits.

- 4 Requirements for student to be awarded a passing grade in the course:  
In order to gain a passing grade in the course, students must submit all items of assessment; complete all professional attachment requirements successfully; and attain a passing grade in all items. Normally, there will be no opportunity for the resubmission of failed or unsatisfactory items of assessment.
- 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 (or grades) 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 The due date for an assignment is the date by which a student must dispatch the assignment to the USQ. The onus is on the student to provide proof of the dispatch date, if requested by the examiner.
- 2 Students must retain a copy of each item submitted for assessment. This must be produced within 24 hours if required by the examiner. The student must retain this copy until the grade for this course has been finalised.
- 3 In accordance with the University's assignment extension policy (Regulation 5.6.1), the examiner may grant an extension of the due date of an assignment in extenuating circumstances.
- 4 In the event that a due date for an assignment falls on a local public holiday in their area, the due date for the assignment will be the next working day. Students are to note on the assignment cover the date of the public holiday for the examiner's convenience.
- 5 Students who have undertaken all of the required assessments in a course but who have failed to meet a limited number of the specified objectives of a course within the normally prescribed time may be awarded the temporary grade: IM (Incomplete - Make up).
- 6 Students who, for medical, family/personal, or employment-related reasons, are unable to complete an assignment at the scheduled time may apply to defer an assessment in a course. Such a request must be accompanied by appropriate supporting documentation. The following temporary grade may be awarded: IDM (Incomplete Deferred Make-up).
- 7 When there is more than one marker for a single item of assessment, the distributed patterns and means for the different markers will be compared and marks adjusted if necessary.

- 8 Marking criteria are provided in course material as mark sheets/guides or as part of assignment specifications.
- 9 All students must successfully pass the professional attachment as well as the academic component to successfully complete the course.
- 10 All assessment items will receive a grade.

## **OTHER REQUIREMENTS**

- 1 Students will require access to e-mail and Internet access to USQConnect for this course.
  - 2 Students are to use a recognised referencing system as specified by the examiner.
  - 3 **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:**  
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