



The University of Southern Queensland

Course specification

This version produced 20 Dec 2007.

The current and official versions of the course specifications are available on the web at
<<http://www.usq.edu.au/coursespecification/current>>.

Please consult the web for updates that may occur during the year.

Description: Building Communities of Practice

Subject	Cat-nbr	Class	Term	Mode	Units	Campus
FET	8605	70154	3, 2007	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

OTHER REQUISITES

State law in Queensland (Australia) requires that all adults working/undertaking professional experience/researching with children under the age of 18, in the state of Queensland are required to possess a current suitability card (Blue Card). (See "Other Requirements" for further information.) Also see: <http://www.childcomm.qld.gov.au/employment/bluecard/informationSheets.html>.

RATIONALE

The apparent success of self-organising Communities of Practice (CoP) has encouraged organisations, networks, and institutional units to foster CoPs aligned to institutional interests. Traditionally CoPs have evolved as a loose collective of individuals coming together to share ideas, strategies, resources and solutions related to an activity or practice; institutional cultivation of CoPs challenge the perceived organic nature of these entities. Contemporary lifelong and lifewide learning imperatives continue to encourage robust self-organising CoPs as individuals move into and out of institutional settings and between professional sectors. Success in building and sustaining CoP invites critical, reflective evaluation with innovative stimuli, applying strategies to fashion otherwise fluid, dynamic entities, nourished and shaped by a plexus of resources.

SYNOPSIS

This course aims to critically examine the concept of Communities of Practice and related phenomenon emerging across sectors as diverse as education, management, and the social sciences. By applying theoretical and empirical frameworks to highlight issues around conflict, trust and mutuality, inclusion, power, and the significance of broader social and organizational contexts, learners will investigate and evaluate the development and sustainability of Communities of Practice. 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 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>.

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. define the concept of Communities of Practice and distinguish it from related concepts. (Assignment 1)
2. using a range of contemporary research and theoretical positions, analyse the functions and importance Communities of Practice play in a range of contexts. (Assignment 2)
3. critically review and discuss the efficacy and limitations of Communities of Practice as an organisational learning tool. (Assignment 2; Assignment 3)
4. develop and nurture a community of practice with focus on structure and stages of development. (Assignment 3)
5. explore the development of leadership/people capability/organisational capability through Communities of Practice. (Assignment 3)
6. apply 'open space technology' as a framework for collaboration in developing knowledge around an issue or theme. (Assignment 2)
7. demonstrate competence in collaborative scholarly writing.

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 and organisational learning	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 2007
ASSIGNMENT 2	40.00	40.00	05 Jan 2008
ASSIGNMENT 3	40.00	40.00	09 Feb 2008

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:
If students submit assignments after the due date without (prior) approval of the examiner then a penalty of 5% of the total marks gained by the student for the assignment may apply for each working day late up to ten working days at which time a mark of zero may be recorded. No assignments will be accepted after model answers have been posted.
- 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/>).
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