



The University of Southern Queensland

## Course specification

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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: Concepts of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health

Subject	Cat-nbr	Class	Term	Mode	Units	Campus
IMH	5001	63196	1, 2007	EXT	1.00	Toowoomba

<b>Academic group:</b>	KUMBN
<b>Academic org:</b>	KUMBNL
<b>Student contribution band:</b>	2
<b>ASCED code:</b>	061305

### STAFFING

Examiner: Deanne Hellsten

Moderator: Bill McCann

### RATIONALE

Indigenous Australians' concepts of health, both physical and mental, differ from those of Western society. This course centres on Indigenous ways of talking about health and illness, and their views of life and their experience of distress, a view encapsulated in the term 'holistic'. Reference is made to the original statement about the nature of 'holistic health' contained in NAHS, 1989. The ultimate aim of the course is for mainstream health workers to take account of the Indigenous holistic view of health and health problems in assessment and treatment services, in specific Indigenous cultural settings. Thus Indigenous health issues (especially mental health issues) pertaining to a holistic concept of health is the focus of this course. Indigenous people do not see illness, mental or otherwise as discrete. Instead, well-being is a holistic, collective issue, with specific individual health problems being of little relevance if not considered part of wider social, spiritual and community health. Indigenous concepts of health emphasise the importance of family and community well-being, including the benefits of whole-of-life view, traditional healing, socialisation and cultural practices, and self-determination in finding local solutions to local problems. The meaning of health to Indigenous people is multi-dimensional and embraces all aspects of life and living. This clearly differentiates the Indigenous view of health/mental health from Western-dominated models. In the past, services have failed from the outset, as they have not acknowledged that Indigenous people view health differently from mainstream society. The traditional Western approach of considering and treating a specific physical or mental problem of an individual, is seen as not meeting the real needs of Indigenous people, who take a more holistic approach to mental health and emotional and spiritual well-being, with a corresponding high emphasis on family and community. This course addresses this key concept as a vital component in a collaborative approach to more positive mental health outcomes for Indigenous people. Importantly, too, the course includes coverage of this holistic conception of health and well-being in relation to a cyclic concept of life-death-life.

## SYNOPSIS

The course centres on the wider view Indigenous Australians have of health (both physical and mental) compared with the Western medical model of health, and the importance of culturally appropriate strategies and interventions in assessment, diagnosis and treatment of Indigenous mental health problems and disorders. Students are cautioned not make generalisations and assumptions about Indigenous people, as there are many Indigenous groups in Australia, with varying cultural issues. The problems inherent in gaining an in-depth understanding of 'culture' in general are emphasised, and students will move away from the belief that cultural competence is readily achievable. It needs to be acknowledged that non-Indigenous people are unable to fully understand the intricate cultural and traditional ways of Indigenous people and that Indigenous staff, with their knowledge of cultural dynamics, are indispensable in providing basic mental health intervention. Students will also become equipped with knowledge of how to gain greater knowledge of, and respect for, particular Indigenous cultural groups within Australia.

## OBJECTIVES

On successful completion of the course students will be able to:

1. understand the wider concept of health embraced by Indigenous people as holistic, encompassing the broad conceptual framework of social, emotional and cultural well-being of the whole community
2. acknowledge the need to respect the Indigenous meaning of mental health and diagnosis
3. support the Indigenous mental health holistic framework to improve health outcomes
4. demonstrate knowledge and understanding of a range of culturally appropriate initiatives in the provision of health care
5. understand that, for a complex of reasons, Indigenous populations are at high risk of continued mental health problems and misdiagnosis
6. analyse the nexus between Indigenous concepts of health and the importance of delivery of appropriate cultural mental health services
7. recognise the cultural differences between different Aboriginal and different Torres Strait Islander communities
8. appreciate the frustrations of Indigenous people to access and/ or deliver appropriate mental health services to the community
9. critically examine the issues relating to intergenerational impacts on Indigenous people's mental health

## TOPICS

	Description	Weighting (%)
1.	Indigenous holistic view of health; whole-of life view; cyclical concept of life-death-life	7.00
2.	Physical health, spiritual health, cultural health, kinship an health, psychological health, land and holistic health	7.00
3.	Western and Indigenous understandings of health	7.00
4.	Unifying issues of health - Alma Ata and Ways Forward	7.00
5.	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health pre-settlement	7.00
6.	Concepts of health post-settlement for Indigenous Australians	7.00

7.	Cultural beliefs and their impacts on health	7.00
8.	Social determinants of health, including family violence and imprisonment	7.00
9.	Defining social and emotional well-being incorporating loss and grief	7.00
10.	Intergenerational carry-over and social issues	7.00
11.	Western models of clinical examination and assessment	7.00
12.	The blending of Indigenous and Western methods of analysis and treatment	7.00
13.	The burden of health for Torres Strait Islander people	7.00
14.	The experience of Maori health	9.00

### **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).

### **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.

[http://www.healthinonet.ecu.edu.au/html/html\\_health/specific\\_aspects/other\\_aspects/](http://www.healthinonet.ecu.edu.au/html/html_health/specific_aspects/other_aspects/)

Bailey, J 2005, *You're not listening to me!! Aboriginal Mental Health is different - don't you understand?*, ,

(Paper presented at the 8th National Rural Health Conference , 10-13 March, Alice Springs.)

Barrett, R *Cross-cultural psychiatry*, , NSW Institute of Psychiatry,  
(CD)

Cawte, J 1996, *Healers of Arnhem Land*, , University of New South Wales Press, Sydney.

Dudgeon, P, Garvey, D & Pickett 2000, *Working with Indigenous Australians - a handbook for psychologists*, , Gunada Press, Curtin Indigenous Research Centre, Perth, WA.

Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission *A statistical overview of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in Australia*, ,  
(Census Data 2001)

Hunter, E, Reser, J, Baird, M & Reser, P 2001, *An analysis of suicide in Indigenous communities of North Queensland: the historical, cultural and symbolic landscap.*, , Department of Aged Care, Canberra.

McKendrick, J, Ryan, E & Singh, BS (eds) 2002, *Indigenous Mental Health in S Bloch - Foundations of clinical psychiatry*, 2nd edn, , Melbourne University Press, Melbourne.

Mulholland, D, Timothy, W & Broom, R 2000, Aboriginal Mental Health program, *Working both ways*, Top End Division of General Practice's, Aboriginal Mental Health Program,

NACCHO Community LIFE Report 2004, January 2004, Appendix 3, *Guiding Principles*, A NACCHO, Manifesto on Aboriginal Well-being,

(<http://www.NACCHO>)

Parker, R 2003, 'The Indigenous Mental Health worker'113 (Available: ).

Petersen, C 1996, *Looking forward through the lifespan*, 3rd edn, , Pearson Education Australia, Frenchs Forest, NSW.

(sections on Aboriginal Australians)

Raphael, B *Definitions of health*, , NSW Institute of Psychiatry,

(CD)

Sue, DW & Sue, D 2002, *Counselling the culturally different*, , John Wiley & Sons Inc, NY.

Trewin, D & Madden, R 2005, *The health and welfare of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples*, , Aust Bureau of Statistics & Aust Inst of Health, Commonwealth of Australia.

## STUDENT WORKLOAD REQUIREMENTS

ACTIVITY	HOURS
Assessment	40.00
Directed Study	35.00
Private Study	90.00

## ASSESSMENT DETAILS

Description	Marks out of	Wtg(%)	Due date
PARTICIPATE	10.00	10.00	05 Mar 2007 (see note 1)
ESSAY	100.00	50.00	20 Apr 2007 (see note 2)
ASSIGNMENT	100.00	40.00	08 Jun 2007 (see note 3)

### NOTES

1. Participate in Online discussion at end of each module.
2. Indigenous Australian concept of holistic health in the context of your local community.
3. Identify and describe one local health issue in the context of changes to traditional Indigenous health concepts affected by European settlement.

## 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 an assessment item satisfactorily, students must obtain at least 50% of the marks available for that 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 10% of the total marks gained by the student 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 available weighted marks for the 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 aggregate of the weighted 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**

- 9 Marking criteria are provided in course material as marking sheets/guides or as part of assignment specifications.
- 10 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.
- 11 Students must retain a copy of each item submitted for assessment. If requested, students will be required to provide a copy of assignments submitted for assessment purposes. Such copies should be dispatched to USQ within 24 hours of receipt of a request to do so.
- 12 The examiner may grant an extension of the due date of an assignment in extenuating circumstances.
- 13 The Faculty will normally only accept assessments that have been written, typed or printed on paper-based media.