



The University of Southern Queensland

## Course specification

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: What's The Story? Getting and Using Information

Subject	Cat-nbr	Class	Term	Mode	Units	Campus
APN	7001	75224	1, 2008	WEB	0.50	Toowoomba

<b>Academic group:</b>	FOART
<b>Academic org:</b>	FOA003
<b>Student contribution band:</b>	1
<b>ASCED code:</b>	100703

## STAFFING

Moderator: Michael Sankey

## REQUISITES

Pre-requisite: Students must be enrolled in the following Program: APNJ

## SYNOPSIS

This course is designed to diagnose the existing skill level of APN staff journalists, and develop their capacity to research and write stories according to APN's Readers First program. Emphasis will be placed on the journalist's current editorial working practices and environment, and trainees will be encouraged to record and reflect upon the day-to-day processes of finding and completing stories for publication. Readers First approaches to news writing will be highlighted and reflected upon in the course of compiling a reflective portfolio of practice for assessment.

## OBJECTIVES

On successful completion of this course, students should be able to:

1. Connect newsroom and field work with principles and elements of journalistic practice aligned with APN's Readers First program.
2. Self-assess and peer-assess stories at individual level of journalistic proficiency.
3. Reflect upon process and outcomes of story research and writing.
4. Present a complete portfolio of practice for assessment.

## TOPICS

Description	Weighting (%)
1. Information-gathering skills	10.00
2. Newsroom Record	15.00
3. Reflective Diary	20.00
4. Best 3 Stories	10.00

5. Interviewing	10.00
6. News Writing	35.00

### **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.

Fogg, Christine 2005, *Release the hounds: a guide to research for journalists and writers*, Allen and Unwin, Sydney.

Harcup, Tony 2004, *Journalism principles and practice*, Sage, London.

Rich, Carole 2005, *Writing and reporting news*, Wadsworth Thompson, Belmont, CA.

### **STUDENT WORKLOAD REQUIREMENTS**

ACTIVITY	HOURS
Assessments	10.00
Directed Study	30.00
Professional Practice	40.00

### **ASSESSMENT DETAILS**

Description	Marks out of	Wtg (%)	Due date
GRAMMAR QUIZES	15.00	15.00	28 Mar 2008 (see note 1)
NEWSROOM DIARY	20.00	20.00	11 Apr 2008 (see note 2)
REFLECTIVE POST	20.00	20.00	24 Apr 2008 (see note 3)
BEST 3 - SELF-SELECTED STORIES	45.00	45.00	24 Apr 2008 (see note 4)

#### **NOTES**

1. All items must be submitted to electronic portfolio of practice for passing grade. This assessment item is aligned with Objectives 1,2 & 4.
2. This assessment item is aligned with Objectives 1 & 4.

3. Trainees will be expected to complete the reflective diary in the form of web log contributions. This assessment item is aligned with Objectives 2, 3 & 4.
4. Ongoing assessment throughout the course. With this assessment activity participants will be expected to engage in the research, writing, and publication of stories for submission to a virtual portfolio. This assessment item is aligned Objectives 2 & 4.

## **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. Generally, participants are encouraged to participate in all course discussion via the Internet.
- 2 Requirements for students to complete each assessment item satisfactorily:  
To successfully complete an individual assessment item, a student must achieve at least 50% of the marks or a grade of at least C-. This statement must be read in conjunction with Statement 4 below.
- 3 Penalties for late submission of required work:  
If students submit assignments after the due date without extenuating circumstances and without prior approval, then a penalty of a maximum of 5% of the assigned mark may apply for each working day late, up to a maximum of 10 working days, at which time a mark of zero can be recorded for that assignment.
- 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 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 (a) 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. (b) Students must retain a copy of each item submitted for assessment. This must be despatched to USQ within 24 hours if requested by the Examiner. (c) In accordance with University's Assignment Extension Policy (Regulation 5.6.1), the examiner of a course may grant an extension of the due date of an assignment in extenuating circumstances such as documented ill-health. (d) In the event that a due date for an assignment falls on a local public holiday in their area, such as a Show holiday, the due

date for the assignment will be the next day. Students are to note on the assignment cover the date of the public holiday for the examiner's convenience. (e) Students who do not have regular access to postal services or who are otherwise disadvantaged by these regulations may be given special consideration. They should contact the examiner of the course to negotiate such special arrangements. (f) Students who have undertaken all of the required assessments in the course but who have failed to meet some of the specified objectives of the course within the normally prescribed time may be awarded the temporary grade: IM (Incomplete-Makeup). 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. (g) Students who, for medical, family/personal, or employment-related reasons, are unable to complete an assignment or sit for an examination at the scheduled time, may apply to defer an assessment in the course. Such a request must be accompanied by appropriate supporting documentation. One of the following temporary grades may be awarded: IDS (Incomplete - Deferred Examination); IDM (Incomplete Deferred Make-up); IDB (Incomplete - Both Deferred Examination and Deferred Make-up).

## **OTHER REQUIREMENTS**

- 1 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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