



## 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: Introduction to Communication Research

Subject	Cat-nbr	Class	Term	Mode	Units	Campus
CMS	2012	74599	1, 2008	EXT	1.00	Toowoomba

<b>Academic group:</b>	FOART
<b>Academic org:</b>	FOA003
<b>Student contribution band:</b>	1
<b>ASCED code:</b>	100700

#### STAFFING

Examiner: Laretta Wright  
Moderator: Karey Harrison

#### REQUISITES

Pre-requisite: CMS1000 or ASD1000

#### SYNOPSIS

Social Science research projects require variously a range of methods, both qualitative and quantitative. The researcher needs to be able to identify a research problem, decide on research objectives and select appropriate method/s to carry out the research. This course examines, from both practical and critical perspectives, a range of qualitative and quantitative research methods relevant to professional and academic needs in the social sciences and human services fields. These methods include focus groups, content analysis, in-depth interview and survey methods.

#### OBJECTIVES

On completion of this course students will be able to:

1. identify and critically analyse a variety of research methods currently employed by researchers in relevant fields of interest;
2. evaluate qualitative and quantitative research data, in the context of declared methodological frameworks
3. understand the concept of reliability and validity as applied to different types of research.

#### TOPICS

Description	Weighting (%)
1. The political and ethical contexts of research practice	10.00
2. Overview of qualitative and quantitative approaches and major research paradigms.	10.00

3.	Ethnographic methods including: interview techniques, focus group techniques and participant observation.	10.00
4.	Statistical methods in communication research, including: sampling, social surveys, questionnaire design and opinion sampling.	10.00
5.	Textual analysis, both quantitative and qualitative.	10.00
6.	Application of methods to social science contexts.	20.00
7.	Analysing qualitative data: manual and computerised methods.	10.00
8.	Analysing quantitative data: statistical package for the social sciences.	10.00
9.	Reliability and validity in quantitative and qualitative research methods.	10.00

### **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).

Bauer, Martin W & Gaskell, George (eds) 2000, *Qualitative researching with text, image and sound: A practical handbook*, Sage, London.

Wimmer, R & Dominick, J 2006, *Mass media research: An introduction*, 8th edn, Wadsworth Publishing Co, Belmont, CA.

### **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.

Asian Journal of Communication 302.2 P7

Australian Journalism Review 079.94 P8

Australian Studies in Journalism 079.94 P10

Communication 302.2 P1

Communication Research 302.2072 P1

Communication Research Trends 302.2072 P2

Communication Yearbook 001.5 P1

Continuum 302.23 P2

Critical Studies in Mass Communication 302.2 P3

Discourse and Society 401.41 P1

European Journal of Communication 302.2 P5

Feminist Studies (Social Sciences on Disk - full text data base)

Gold Reports of the International Public Relations Association  
 Human Communication Research 302.2 P8  
 The Journal of Communication 301.16 P1  
 Journal of Communication Inquiry 302.2 P6  
 Journal of International Communication  
 Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly 301.160973 P1  
 Media Asia 301.16 P2  
 Media Culture and Society 302.234 P1  
 Media Information International 301.160994 P1  
 Nordicom  
 The Public Relations Journal  
 Public Relations Quarterly 659.2 P1  
 Public Relations Research and Education  
 Public Relations Research Annual 659 Pub  
 Public Relations Review 659.2 P2  
 Signs 305.4 P2  
 Theory Culture and Society 301.01 P1  
 Theory and Method in Sociology: A Guide for the Beginner 301 Jon  
 Australian Journal of Communication 302.2 P2  
 Decolonising methodologies: research and indigenous peoples 305.80072 Smi  
 Designing social research: the logic of anticipation 300.72 Bla  
 The handbook of qualitative research 300.72 Han  
 Interpretive ethnography: ethnography practices for the 21st century 305.8001 Den  
 The landscape of qualitative research: theories and issues 300.72 Lan  
 The Sage encyclopedia of social science research methods 300.72 Lew  
 Social research methods: an Australian perspective 300.72 Soc  
 Strategies of qualitative inquiry 300.72 Str

## **STUDENT WORKLOAD REQUIREMENTS**

<b>ACTIVITY</b>	<b>HOURS</b>
Private Study	165.00

## ASSESSMENT DETAILS

Description	Marks out of	Wtg (%)	Due date
CMA SELF-TEST	100.00	0.00	03 Mar 2007 (see note 1)
CMA SELF-TEST	100.00	0.00	03 Mar 2008 (see note 2)
CMA SELF-TEST	100.00	0.00	03 Mar 2008 (see note 3)
CMA SELF-TEST	100.00	0.00	03 Mar 2008 (see note 4)
CMA SELF-TEST	100.00	0.00	03 Mar 2008 (see note 5)
CMA SELF-TEST	100.00	0.00	03 Mar 2008 (see note 6)
CMA SELF-TEST	100.00	0.00	03 Mar 2008 (see note 7)
CMA SELF-TEST	100.00	0.00	03 Mar 2008 (see note 8)
AT HOME TEST	100.00	25.00	11 Apr 2008 (see note 9)
PROJECT PROPOSAL	100.00	20.00	18 Apr 2008 (see note 10)
RESEARCH PROJECT	100.00	55.00	13 Jun 2008 (see note 11)

### NOTES

1. All quizzes are self-marking and may be completed at the student s own pace. They are not due on the date stated on the course specification - this is merely an unfortunate convention of the USQ computer system.
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8. All quizzes are self-marking and may be completed at the student's own pace. They are not due on the date stated on the course specification - this is merely an unfortunate convention of the USQ computer system.
9. This assessment item relates to Objective 1.
10. This assessment item relates to Objectives 1 and 2.
11. This assessment item relates to Objective 3.

## **IMPORTANT ASSESSMENT INFORMATION**

- 1 Attendance requirements:  
There are no attendance requirements for this external course. However, it is the student's 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 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 summative assessment items in the course.
- 6 Examination information:  
There is no exam for this course.
- 7 Examination period when Deferred/Supplementary examinations will be held:  
Given the details under (6) above, there are no deferred exams for this course. However, if any deferred/makeup work is granted, it would have to be submitted by a date set by the examiner.
- 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>

## **ASSESSMENT NOTES**

- 9 (a) The due date for an assignment is the date by which a student must either submit online or despatch the assignment to the USQ. The onus is on the student to provide proof of the despatch date, if requested by the Examiner. Online submission must be no later than 5.00 pm on the due date. (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).