The University of Southern Queensland

Course Specification

**Description: Australian Indigenous Studies**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Cat-Nbr</th>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Mode</th>
<th>Units</th>
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<tr>
<td>EDU</td>
<td>1141</td>
<td>10730</td>
<td>1, 2002</td>
<td>OMC</td>
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**Academic Group:** FOEDU
**Academic Org:** FOE002
**HECS Band:** 1
**ASCED Code:** 070303

**STAFFING**
Examiner: John McMaster
Moderator: John Budby

**RATIONALE**

Education involves, in part, the transmission of the culture of a society. Australian society is fortunate in that it supports a variety of cultural groups, each with its own system of beliefs, ways of doing things and ways of communicating. (Department of Education, Queensland, 1:94) Furthermore, Australia has two cultural groups which can claim Indigenous status - the Australian Aboriginal and Australian Torres Strait Islander peoples. In order that all Australians receive a balanced education, the curriculum for all Australian schools should reflect, therefore, the existence of many cultures and societies living together on this continent. All teachers need to have an understanding and appreciation of the diversity of cultures within Australia and how they interact. A study of Australian Indigenous cultures and societies, because of their uniqueness and complexity, provides an avenue for the development and consolidation of an understanding and appreciation of all peoples, their cultures and societies. It is through a study of Australian Indigenous cultures and societies that attitudes can be challenged and a foundation set to address issues of cultural arrogance (i.e., belief in the superiority of one's own culture), ethnocentrism and ignorance facilitating progression towards mutual understanding and respect for each others' culture and society. The unit is built around themes with a central core running throughout them. The central core is the presentation of knowledge and experiences through Australian Indigenous perspectives and viewpoints. In so doing concepts may be presented in a manner that differs from the learner's understanding. You may consequently conclude that the viewpoints expressed are political and are designed to cast blame on the learner as the oppressor. However the aim of presenting an Indigenous Australian perspective is to correct the imbalance in knowledge and understanding of Australia's history which has predominated since invasion. In the first half of the unit, consideration is given to the concepts of culture, society and group and individual identity. An Australian Indigenous perspective on issues created by ignorance and misunderstandings about the sociological, technological and
ideological aspects as they relate to Indigenous cultures of the world, especially Australia, is presented. The rights of people from Indigenous cultures internationally, are also explored. Without a knowledge of the past one cannot appreciate the present or predict the future. The second half of the unit investigates particular aspects of Australian Indigenous cultures including, kinship, languages, land affiliation, occupation and the Native Title debate. Government policies and projections for the future will also be presented. The third context will be an educational one presented during tutorials. Each tutorial session will consider the implication of a study of Australian Indigenous peoples for the classroom teacher. Tutorial activities will be undertaken to assist in making the unit as pragmatic as possible. The Queensland Department of Education in 1996, trialed the P - 12 Guidelines for Teaching Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies and a Board subject entitled Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander studies, in Year 11 and 12. With the emphasis currently placed on having an understanding and appreciation of Australian Indigenous studies, comes the need for teachers to be skilled and to have an understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and societies and ways of introducing them in the classroom.

SYNOPSIS

The content and structure of this course is such that it is more than an historical/anthropological account of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australia. The content of the course will emphasise the need for teachers to adopt an educational stance which reflects a sound theoretical and philosophical understanding in the area of cultural education and difference in pedagogy and learning. The course seeks to confront the stereotypes that have been constructed around Australia's indigenous populations, and to reconstruct those images on a basis of knowledge and understanding of, and empathy towards, those people who are the original inhabitants of this country. Throughout the course, four major constructs will be explored. 1. Contested views of contemporary Australian Indigenous cultures, societies and identity; 2. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander social and political structures; 3. Policies and practices in relation to education and schooling for Aborigines and Torres Strait Islander peoples; 4. Racism as a construct in policy and curriculum development.

OBJECTIVES

On successful completion of this unit students will have:

- Demonstrated knowledge and understanding of aspects of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander identity, culture and society within a contemporary culture;
- Developed a respect for and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's lifestyles and attitudes;
- Developed awareness and appreciation of the socio-cultural, political and economic position of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in contemporary society;
- Contributed to the enhancement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' desires for access to, and participation in, education at all levels which does not deny their heritage;
- Considered strategies for increasing the involvement of community based Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander teachers (i.e. knowledge providers);
- Developed an understanding and appreciation of current educational policies and practice in relation to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
### TOPICS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Weighting (%)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Introduction</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Society, Cultures, Identity and representation</td>
<td>8.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. World Indigenous Peoples and change in Australian Indigenous societies</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and cultures - Australian Aborigines</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. World Indigenous Peoples and change in Australian Indigenous societies</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and cultures - Australian Torres Strait Islanders</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Australian Indigenous organisations and kinship</td>
<td>8.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. The impact of Colonisation</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. The Occupation of Australia, Terra Nullius, Native Title</td>
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<tr>
<td>10. Australian Indigenous peoples and communications (Languages, Art,</td>
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<tr>
<td>Music, Dance and Literature)</td>
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<td>11. Education for Indigenous Australians</td>
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<td>12. Reconciliation - a new Partnership</td>
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<td>13. Revision - Australia's Future and Indigenous Australians</td>
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### TEXT and MATERIALS required to be PURCHASED or ACCESSED:

Books can be ordered by fax or telephone. For costs and further details use the 'Book Search' facility at http://bookshop.usq.edu.au by entering the author or title of the text.

Internal Study Pack is available from USQ Bookshop.

### 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.

*Conference proceedings Nation Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Higher Education Conference*, Kumbari/Ngurpai Lag Higher Education Centre, Toowoomba, Queensland, pp90-98.

(Hervey Bay Queensland 6-11 December 1992)


(No. 1)


(No. 2)

Miller, J 1985, *Koori: A will to win; the heroic resistance, survival and triumph of black Australia*, Angus & Robertson, pp1-14.


(Ros 1/2)


Singe, J 1989, *The Torres Strait: People and history*, University of Queensland Press, St. Lucia, Queensland, pp127-140.


Valadian, M 1992, *The Sixth Frank Archibald Memorial Lecture*,

(Delivered at the University of New England Armidale on 6 September 1991)


**STUDENT WORKLOAD REQUIREMENTS**

<table>
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<th>ACTIVITY</th>
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<tr>
<td>Directed Study</td>
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<td>Private Study</td>
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<td>Project Work</td>
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ASSESSMENT DETAILS

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NOTES:
1. Further details about the due dates are detailed in the assessment section of the Course Specifications.
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OTHER REQUIREMENTS
1. When there is more than one marker for a single item of assessment, the distribution patterns and means for the different markers will be compared and marks adjusted if necessary.
2. Marking criteria are provided in course material as mark sheets/guides or as part of assignment specifications.
3. Summative assessment items will be given a numerical score.
4. Course Grades will be calculated by aggregating the weighted result or numerical score for each summative assessment item. Any ungraded assessment requirement will receive a Pass, Fail or Incomplete.
5. Each Assessment item must be passed.
6. If assignments are submitted after the due date without an approved extension of time, a penalty of 20% of the mark awarded by the examiner for the assessment item will apply for each day late.
7. Take home exam: paper to be collected from 8:00am. Answers to be returned by 5:00pm the same day.