The University of Southern Queensland

Course Specification

Description: Professional Communication Dissertation

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<th>Subject</th>
<th>Cat-Nbr</th>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Mode</th>
<th>Units</th>
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Academic Group: FOART
Academic Org: FOA004
HECS Band: 1
ASCED Code: 100700

STAFFING
Examiner: Julianne Stewart
Moderator: Karey Harrison

SYNOPSIS
This 4 unit course enables students enrolled in the Master of Professional Communication degree to complete their dissertation under supervision. The dissertation shall consist of a 12,000-15,000 word assignment on a topic chosen by the student and approved in advance the supervisor, and may be either the result of original investigation, or embody a critical appraisal or analysis of primary or secondary source material. Students who have completed appropriate production program work courses may, with the approval in advance of the dissertation supervisor, include a substantial software production in a medium or media other than print. Where a software production is submitted for assessment it must be accompanied by a dissertation theorising and contextualising the production at a level appropriate to the award of Master of Professional Communication. In such cases the length of the dissertation may be reduced to no less than 10,000 words.

OBJECTIVES
On successful completion of this course students will be able to:

- develop a research proposal;
- undertake independent research on a proposed topic;
- apply and justify appropriate methodology to research topic;
- write, edit and present in publishable form a completed dissertation ready for submission to dissertation examiners.

STUDENT WORKLOAD REQUIREMENTS

<table>
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<th>ACTIVITY</th>
<th>HOURS</th>
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<tr>
<td>Private Study</td>
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## ASSESSMENT DETAILS

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Marks Out of</th>
<th>Wtg(%)</th>
<th>Required</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
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<td>DETLD PROPOSAL INC LIT REVIEW</td>
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**NOTES:**

- Due date for this assessment item is 21/03/2003.
- Due date for this assessment item is 17/04/2003.
- Due date for this assessment item is 23/05/2003.
- Due date for this assessment item is 29/08/2003.
- Due date for this assessment item is 10/10/2003.

## IMPORTANT ASSESSMENT INFORMATION

1. **Attendance requirements:**
   It is the students' responsibility to attend and participate appropriately in all activities (such as workshops and consultation with supervisors) scheduled for them, and 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 Dissertations/Projects after the due date without prior approval or documented medical circumstances, then a fail grade will be given.

4. **Requirements for student to be awarded a passing grade in the course:**
   To be assured of a passing grade, students must meet the requirements of designated examiners.

5. **Method used to combine assessment results to attain final grade:**
   The dissertation document will be marked out of 100 as Pass, Credit, Distinction or High Distinction. A Fail grade can be awarded where the dissertation is regarded as less than 50% of the possible marks.

6. **Examination information:**
There is no set exam for this course. However the Dissertation/Project will be examined under the conditions set out for the program.

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/SECARIAT/calendar/Part5/ or in the printed version of the current USQ Handbook.

ASSESSMENT NOTES

9 (a) The due date for an assignment is the date by which a student must lodge the assignment at the USQ. (b) Students must retain a copy of each item submitted for assessment. This must be produced within five days if required 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) 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-Make-up). 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. (e) 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 Preliminary proposal (on enrolment in the course). In order to facilitate the satisfaction of these assessment requirements, students must submit a one page preliminary thesis proposal with application for enrolment.

2 Assessment of the dissertation shall be carried out by two persons, one of whom must be a qualified member of staff of the University of Southern Queensland who is not the student's supervisor and one of whom must be a suitably qualified person who is external to the University of Southern Queensland and who is not the student's supervisor. Where the examiners differ on the grade to be awarded the final award shall be determined by the Chair of the Honours and Postgraduate Committee of the Department of Mass Communication.

3 The dissertation shall be typed and bound and shall conform with the Faculty of Arts style guide for the presentation of theses and dissertations.
4 A public seminar presentation may be required at the time of the submission of the dissertation for assessment.

5 The dissertation document will be marked out of 100 as Pass, Credit, Distinction or High Distinction. A Fail grade can be awarded where the dissertation is regarded as less than 50% of the possible marks.