The University of Southern Queensland

Course Specification

Description: Being Informed: Locating & Critiquing Pro Lite'e

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Cat-Nbr</th>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Mode</th>
<th>Units</th>
<th>Campus</th>
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<td>EDU</td>
<td>8355</td>
<td>24890</td>
<td>2, 2003</td>
<td>EXT</td>
<td>1.00</td>
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Academic Group: FOEDU
Academic Org: FOE002
HECS Band: 1
ASCED Code: 070303

STAFFING
Examiner: Don Rice
Moderator: Barry Fields

RATIONALE
Locating relevant information quickly and effectively is one hallmark of developing expertise in the postgraduate student. Being able to effectively critique such information is a closely related and essential skill, not only for reviewing professional literature wherever it may appear, but as a prerequisite for developing one's own academic writing. This course is viewed as a particular and specific means of developing competence and independence in the general domain of educational research and scholarship. The acquisition of skills in locating and critiquing professional literature will serve as a foundation on which to build further skills in understanding research design and methodology. It also allows the student to develop their own knowledge based on proven approaches to obtaining reliable information, both generally within the broad cultural context of educational knowledge, and more specifically in response to a particular research topic or question. Such research skills should not only account for evaluating knowledge from the traditional research base of scholarly books and journals, but also from more recent information technology sources, with a particular emphasis on educational research presented in the Internet and World Wide Web. The skills developed through study in this course will address several core attributes of the USQ graduate. Particular emphasis will be placed on information technology literacy, communication and independent learning and problem-solving skills, all combining to culminate in an emergent expertise in critical reading of the academic literature and in scholarly writing.

SYNOPSIS
The course will introduce USQ postgraduate education students to the art and science of finding and evaluating educational research literature. The course will address this task in terms of both qualitative and quantitative research approaches. Two major sources of such information will be given particular attention: journal articles as exemplars of professional
literature on the one hand, and the broader rubric of information presented in various ways on the Internet and the World Wide Web on the other. In addition to the above, information to be found in other more informal sources such as educational newsletters and magazines and other media will also be critically examined. The course has the twin aims of equipping students to locate relevant information rapidly and efficiently, and also to judiciously critique and evaluate that information on the other. A broad general understanding of research methodologies will be presented as a prelude to understanding research literature, but is not a substitute for designated courses in research methods. The subject will also include information on effective writing skills in higher education. Note: To complete the study tasks in this course, students will require access to USQConnect. Students will, therefore, be expected to have reliable access to the Internet.

OBJECTIVES

On successful completion of this course students will have:

- An understanding of the nature of educational research and its main traditions.
- An ability locate relevant literature on a research topic or question by utilizing information services through the university library.
- An understanding of the structure and organization of library and internet resources, particularly educational research literature and databases.
- An ability to effectively critique information and sources, including scientific and professional literature, and internet sites.
- A high standard of academic writing.

TOPICS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Weighting (%)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The Nature and Traditions of Educational Research</td>
<td>10.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Accessing Information Resources in the University Library: On-campus and Electronic</td>
<td>15.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Organisation and Structure of Educational Databases</td>
<td>15.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Identifying and Searching Relevant Education-Specific and Education-Related Databases, Journals, Theses, Dissertations, etc.</td>
<td>20.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Approaches to Critiquing Professional Literature and Other Information Sources</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Developing Competence in Academic Writing</td>
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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.

To be advised.
STUDENT WORKLOAD REQUIREMENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTIVITY</th>
<th>HOURS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assessment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Directed Study</td>
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<tr>
<td>Private Study</td>
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ASSESSMENT DETAILS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Marks Out of</th>
<th>Wtg(%)</th>
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<tr>
<td>CMA TEST</td>
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<td>06 Aug 2003 (see note )</td>
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<td>REPORT 1</td>
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<td>REPORT 2</td>
<td>999.00</td>
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NOTES:
- Letter grades will be used in this course and displayed in the Notes Section.

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 each of the assessment items satisfactorily, students must obtain at least 50% of the marks available (or at least a grade of C-) for each assessment item.

3 Penalties for late submission of required work:
   The lecturer may decline to assess assignments submitted after the due date without prior permission.

4 Requirements for student to be awarded a passing grade in the course:
   To be assured of a passing grade, students must demonstrate, via the summative assessment items, that they have achieved the required minimum standards in relation to the objectives of the course by satisfactorily completing all summative assessment items (the examination and assignments).

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

ASSESSMENT NOTES

1 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.

2 Students must retain a copy of each item submitted for assessment. This must be produced within five days if required by the Examiner.

3 The examiner may grant an extension of the due date of an assignment in extenuating circumstances.

4 The Faculty will normally only accept assessments that have been written, typed or printed on paper-based media.

5 The Faculty will NOT accept submission of assignments by facsimile.

6 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.

7 Students who have undertaken all of the required assessments in a course but who have failed to meet some of the specified objectives of a 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.

8 Students who, for medical, family/personal, or employment-related reasons, are unable to complete an assignment or to sit for an examination at the scheduled time may apply to defer an assessment in a 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).

9 When there is more than one marker for a single item of assessment, the distributed patterns and means for the different markers will be compared and marks adjusted if necessary.

10 Marking criteria are provided in course material as mark sheets/guides or as part of assignment specifications.

11 All assessment items must be attempted/submitted with a pass overall gained.

12 Summative assessment items will be graded HD, A+, A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C- or F.
OTHER REQUIREMENTS

1. Students will require access to e-mail and internet access to USQConnect for this course.