The University of Southern Queensland

Course Specification

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description: Torres Strait Islander Studies</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subject</td>
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<td>HUS</td>
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**Academic Group:** KUMBN
**Academic Org:** KUMBNL
**HECS Band:** 1
**ASCED Code:** 090311

**STAFFING**
Examiner: Phillip Dreise
Moderator: Beris Anning

**PRE-REQUISITES**
Pre-requisite: HUS1001

**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 Aborigines and the peoples of Torres Strait. In order that all Australians receive a balanced education, the curriculum taught to students at higher education level should reflect, therefore, the existence of the many cultures and societies living together on this continent, particularly the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. All students need to have an understanding and appreciation of the diversity of cultures within Australia and how they interact. Hence, a study of Torres Strait Islander cultures and societies, because of their uniqueness and diversity, in comparison to Aboriginal culture and societies, provides an avenue for the development and consolidation of an understanding and appreciation of all peoples, their cultures and societies. The course has three major categories that have been developed from a central core. The core is the presentation of knowledge and experiences through Torres Strait Islander perspectives and viewpoints. In so doing concepts may be presented in a manner that differs from the learner's understanding. The aim of presenting a Torres Strait Islander perspective is to correct the imbalance in knowledge and understanding of Australia's history and Indigenous groups, which has predominated since invasion. In the first half of the course, consideration is given to the concepts of history, Torres Strait society and group. A Torres Strait Islander perspective on issues created by misunderstandings about the socio-economic-politico and educational aspects as they relate to Torres Strait culture is presented. Government policies
and projections for the future will also be presented. Without knowledge of the past one cannot appreciate the present or predict the future. The second half of the course investigates particular aspects of Torres Strait Island cultures including, kinship, customs and protocols, languages and communication, and the Arts.

**SYNOPSIS**

The content and structure of the course emphasizes the need for students to adopt a greater educational stance and understanding in the area of Torres Strait Island Studies. Hence, the course seeks to broaden the awareness of non-Indigenous Australians to the Torres Strait Islands and its Peoples on the basis of a knowledge and understanding of, and empathy towards, those people who are the original inhabitants of the Torres Strait. Throughout the course, four major constructs will be explored - 1. The history and colonisation of the Torres Strait; 2. Torres Strait Islander social, economic and political structures; 3. Policies and practices in relation to education for Torres Strait Islander peoples; and 4. Significant Torres Strait Island culture: custom, language, protocol, and the Arts.

**OBJECTIVES**

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

- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of aspects of Torres Strait Islander identity, culture and society within a contemporary culture;
- Respect and understand Torres Strait Islander people's lifestyles and attitudes;
- Develop awareness and appreciation of the socio-cultural, political and economic position of Torres Strait Islander people in contemporary society;
- Understand Torres Strait Islander peoples' desires for access to, and participation in, education at all levels, which does not deny their heritage;
- Consider strategies for increasing the involvement of community based Torres Strait Islander people and other professionals (i.e. knowledge providers); and
- Understand and appreciate current policies and practices in relation to Torres Strait Islander people.

**TOPICS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Weighting (%)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Introduction</td>
<td>2.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The History of the Torres Strait</td>
<td>8.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. The Colonisation of the Torres Strait</td>
<td>8.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Torres Strait Island Peoples' socio-economic situation (Economics and employment)</td>
<td>8.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Torres Strait Island land ownership and kinship systems</td>
<td>8.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Torres Strait Island Peoples' socio-economic situation (Health and Housing)</td>
<td>8.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Torres Strait Island Peoples' legislation and the Law</td>
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8. Australian Indigenous Peoples politics and decision-making 8.00
9. Torres Strait Island Peoples' and Education policies and practices 8.00
10. Teaching and working with Torres Strait Islander people 8.00
11. Torres Strait Island Peoples' customs and protocol 8.00
12. Languages and communication of the Torres Strait Islanders 8.00
13. The Arts of the Torres Strait Island Peoples' (Arts and crafts, Music, Dance and Literature)

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.


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.

Babbage, Ross 1990, *The Strategic Significance of Torres Strait*, Australian National University, Canberra. (Strategic and Defence Studies Centre Research School of Pacific Studies)


(Hardly pp. 549-533)


**STUDENT WORKLOAD REQUIREMENTS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTIVITY</th>
<th>HOURS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Directed Study</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Study</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Work</td>
<td>30</td>
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**ASSESSMENT DETAILS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Marks Out of</th>
<th>Wtg(%)</th>
<th>Required</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ESSAY</td>
<td>999.00</td>
<td>30.00</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>22 Jul 2003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(see note )</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>PROJECT PROPOSAL</td>
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<td>20.00</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>22 Jul 2003</td>
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<tr>
<td>PROJECT</td>
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<td>50.00</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>22 Jul 2003</td>
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**NOTES:**

1. 1500 Words

**OTHER REQUIREMENTS**

1. Attendance Requirements: It is the students' responsibility to actively participate in all classes 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 to Satisfactorily Complete Each Assessment Item: To satisfactorily complete the assignments, students must gain at least 50% of the marks available for each of the assignments.
3 Minimum Requirements to Pass the Course: To be assured of a passing grade for the course, students must demonstrate, via the assessment items in the Assessment Details section, that they have achieved the required minimum standards in relation to the objectives of the course by: (i) satisfactorily completing all assessment items; and (ii) obtaining at least 50% of the total marks available for all assessment items. Students who do not qualify for a Passing grade may, at the discretion of the Examiner, be assigned additional work to demonstrate to the Examiner that they have achieved the standard required for a Pass. It is expected that such students will have gained at least 45% of the total marks available for all assessment items.

4 Grading: Final grades for students will be determined by the addition of the marks obtained in each assessment item, weighted as in the Assessment Details section.

5 Marking Criteria: Marking criteria will be provided in course material as mark sheets/guides or as part of assignment specifications.

6 Assignments: 6.1 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. 6.2 Students must retain a copy of each item submitted for assessment. This must be produced within five days if required by the Examiner. 6.3 In accordance with the 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. This policy may be found in the USQ Handbook, the Distance Education Student Guide and the Faculty of Sciences’ Orientation Handbook for new on-campus students. All students are advised to study and follow the guidelines associated with this policy. 6.4 An assignment, submitted after the due date without an extension approved by the Examiner, will attract a penalty of 20% of the assigned mark for each day (or part thereof) that the assignment is late.