STAFFING
Examiner: Julianne Stewart
Moderator: Karey Harrison

SYNOPSIS
This 4 unit course enables students enrolled in the Master of Professional Communication or Master of Editing and Publishing degrees 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 by 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 course work units 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 or Master of Editing and Publishing. 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, including defining a topic or developing a research design;
- undertake independent research, under supervision, on a proposed topic;
- review the literature relevant to a selected dissertation topic;
- apply and justify appropriate methodology to research topic;
- collect, present and analyse data relevant to the research topic;
- write, edit and present in publishable form a completed dissertation ready for submission to dissertation examiners.
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.

STUDENT WORKLOAD REQUIREMENTS:

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<th>ACTIVITY</th>
<th>HOURS</th>
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<tr>
<td>Private Study</td>
<td>660</td>
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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:
   Refer Item 4

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 may 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-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. (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 2-3 page preliminary thesis proposal with application for enrolment.

2 It is the responsibility of the student to ensure that all chapter drafts, as well as the final draft of their dissertation, be written in an acceptable standard of English expression. If students’ initial work is not of an acceptable standard, students will be encouraged to use the services of a copy-editor, or to seek assistance from a competent writer of English. It is not the supervisor's principal role to correct English spelling, expression or grammar, although appropriate advice will be given. Dissertations or drafts of chapters of dissertations that are not expressed to a standard of English expression acceptable to the supervisor will be referred back to the student for correction, and will not be submitted for examination until corrected. Students who fail to address this aspect of their dissertation risk failing the course. Any expenses incurred in having drafts checked by copy-editors will be met by the student. Please also note that while copy-editing may be carried out by someone who is not the student, all the substantial content of the dissertation must be the student's own work.

3 Assessment of the dissertation shall be carried out by two persons, one of whom may 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 whom 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.

4 The dissertation shall be typed and three spiral-bound copies should be submitted to the student's supervisor.

5 A public seminar presentation may be required at the time of the submission of the dissertation for assessment.

6 Students should consult regularly with their supervisor.

7 If work in the course require the use of surveys, interviews, etc., students should be aware of the University and Faculty of Arts ethical requirements/guidelines.