The University of Southern Queensland
Course specification

Description: Teachers Practical Theories

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Cat-nbr</th>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Mode</th>
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Academic group: FOEDU
Academic org: FOE002
Student contribution band: 1
ASCED code: 070303

STAFFING
Examiner: Dorothy Andrews
Moderator: Rick Churchill

RATIONALE
It is now widely recognised that the ways in which teachers carry out their professional tasks are shaped by notions about how to teach which are, by and large, the products of on-the-job learning. These notions about how to teach are referred to as practical theories because they serve many of the functions of theories. They provide the basis for action in both planning and classroom practice and they allow teachers to interpret and predict classroom events and to explain why they teach the way they do. The practical theories of teachers are individualistic, context-specific and often largely implicit. They are highly significant because they guide what teachers do and determine teachers' levels of teaching effectiveness. Moreover, the introduction of any reforms in teaching or improvements to effectiveness levels depends on teachers reflecting on, and internalising, the proposed reforms and then, where they are prepared to adopt or adapt them, actively adjusting or reconstructing their practical theories to reflect their new conceptions of practice. Because teachers and their practical theories are the keys to reform and improvement in teaching, it is important that teachers be aware of the substance and structure of their practical theories. Such awareness is an essential prerequisite for critical reflection on their teaching and the practical theories which shape practice.

SYNOPSIS
This course has been designed to familiarise teachers with the nature of practical theories in general and to provide opportunities for teachers to make explicit their own practical theories. The course will begin with an exploration of the origins and characteristics of teachers' practical theories. The challenges of making practical theories explicit will be discussed along with techniques for their articulation. There will also be a major focus on the elements and structure of practical theories, that is, on the various ways in which teachers represent their practical knowledge and theories and on the links among such elements.
OBJECTIVES
On successful completion of this course students will be able to:

- understand the directions and causes of changes in society and identify consequences of such changes for teaching and education;
- explain the meaning, origins, development and characteristics of practical theories of teaching;
- explain the significance of practical theories in relation to quality teaching and educational reform;
- outline and comment critically on the different ways teachers have of representing the substance and structure of their practical theories;
- outline and comment critically on ways of articulating practical theories;
- articulate key elements of their own practical theories and provide justification for them;
- synthesise these elements into a coherent framework representing their own practical theories of teaching; and
- subject their own practical knowledge and theories to critical assessment.

TOPICS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Weighting (%)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Change in society and education - directions, causes and implications</td>
<td>5.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Practical theories - definition, epistemological bases and characteristics</td>
<td>10.00</td>
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<td>3. Origins, development and significance of practical theories</td>
<td>15.00</td>
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<td>4. Elements of practical theories - beliefs, metaphors, images, strategies, teacher attributes etc</td>
<td>30.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. The structure of practical theories</td>
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<td>6. Articulation of practical theories - challenges and techniques</td>
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<td>7. Review of practical theories</td>
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TEXT and MATERIALS required to be PURCHASED or ACCESSED:
ALL textbooks and materials are available for purchase from USQ BOOKSHOP (unless otherwise stated). Orders may be placed via secure internet, free fax 1800642453, phone 07 46312742 (within Australia), or mail. Overseas students should fax +61 7 46311743, or phone +61 7 46312742. For costs, further details, and internet ordering, use the 'Textbook Search' facility at http://bookshop.usq.edu.au click 'Semester', then enter your 'Course Code' (no spaces).
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.

, , Educational researcher,
, , Curriculum inquiry,
, , Harvard educational review,
, , Journal of teacher education,
, , Review of educational research,
, , Asia-Pacific journal of teacher education,
, , Teaching and teacher education,


STUDENT WORKLOAD REQUIREMENTS:

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

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<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Marks out of</th>
<th>Wtg(%)</th>
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<tr>
<td>ASSIGNMENT 1</td>
<td>40.00</td>
<td>40.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>ASSIGNMENT 2</td>
<td>60.00</td>
<td>60.00</td>
<td>11 Jun 2004</td>
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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 assignments satisfactorily, students must obtain at least 50% of the marks available (or at least a grade of C-) for each assignment.

3 Penalties for late submission of required work:
   If students submit assignments after the due date without prior approval then a penalty of 10% of the total marks gained by the student for the assignment will apply for each working day late.

4 Requirements for student to be awarded a passing grade in the course:
   To be assured of receiving a passing grade a student must achieve at least 50% of the available weighted marks for the summative assessment items.

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/corporateservices/calendar/part5.htm or in 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. The student must retain this copy until the grade for this course has been finalised.

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

4. 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 working day. Students are to note on the assignment cover the date of the public holiday for the Examiner's convenience.

5. 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.

6. 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).

7. 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.

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

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

10. All assessment items must be submitted with a pass overall gained.

11. Summative assessment items will receive a numerical score. Any ungraded assessment requirement will receive a Pass, Fail or Incomplete.

OTHER REQUIREMENTS

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

2. Students are to use a recognised referencing system as specified by the course examiner.