

Subject Description Form

Subject Code	APSS5021																				
Subject Title	Dissertation Research I, II, III																				
Credit Value	9																				
Level	5																				
Pre-requisite / Co-requisite/ Exclusion	APSS5016 Research methods and Statistics for Educational Psychology RS538 Psychometric theories and practice																				
Assessment Methods	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 50%;">100% Continuous Assessment</th> <th style="width: 25%;">Individual Assessment</th> <th style="width: 25%;">Group Assessment</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1. Competence in carrying out an empirical research</td> <td style="text-align: center;">20%</td> <td style="text-align: center;">--</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2. Conceptualization of problem and quality of literature review</td> <td style="text-align: center;">30%</td> <td style="text-align: center;">--</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3. Interpretation of findings and generation of knowledge and theory</td> <td style="text-align: center;">30%</td> <td style="text-align: center;">--</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4. Language proficiency</td> <td style="text-align: center;">20%</td> <td style="text-align: center;">--</td> </tr> <tr> <td>0% Examination</td> <td style="text-align: center;">--</td> <td style="text-align: center;">--</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>			100% Continuous Assessment	Individual Assessment	Group Assessment	1. Competence in carrying out an empirical research	20%	--	2. Conceptualization of problem and quality of literature review	30%	--	3. Interpretation of findings and generation of knowledge and theory	30%	--	4. Language proficiency	20%	--	0% Examination	--	--
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Objectives	<p>In general, the dissertation shall be a piece of work to reflect evidence of a standard of competence attained by a graduate at the master's level of study possessing the characteristic of a scientist-practitioner tradition in the field of educational and child psychology. The aims of dissertation would thus include the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To examine critically with methods of scientific enquiry a focused topic of research interest arising, ideally, from the work done within the programme, funded research projects as assigned by the Department and/or in the course of student's employment; 2. To have possessed the conceptual ability in the formulation of a framework of enquiry supported by demonstrated skills necessary in performing an exhaustive search of the relevant research literature in the identified topic- 																				

	<p>area;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. To engage in the use of appropriate scientific and analytical methods and practical skills, including those acquired during the programme, in data definition, collection, validation and analysis; 4. To demonstrate a standard of writing appropriate to the presentation of arguments, interpretation of findings, locating the conclusions in a wider context of academic knowledge, professional practice, and / or policies in educational and child psychology.
<p>Intended Learning Outcomes</p>	<p>Upon completion of the subject, students will be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Formulate an academic inquiry on a topic of importance in the field of educational and child psychology with specific research questions and appropriate research design; b. Implement such an inquiry in a real world setting; c. Interpret the data generated through the inquiry process and discuss the findings with reference to the international and local literature; d. Evaluate the research process, examine limitations and identify strengths; and write up a report on the research project and make recommendations, if appropriate.
<p>Subject Synopsis/ Indicative Syllabus</p>	<p>The dissertation should be focused on an empirical investigation of a well-defined problem of importance in the professional practice of educational psychologists. Students are encouraged to approach Faculty members from the Psychology team with research and consultancy projects in the areas of education, applied child & adolescent health, social welfare, and community sciences.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Integrative Seminars: This series of integrative seminars will serve the purpose of assisting students to integrate competence in research methods and statistical analysis with knowledge from substantive areas in educational and child psychology attained so far to be able to draw up a feasible piece of empirical research proposal. 2. Student-Dissertation Supervisor Consultation: A teacher acting as a Dissertation supervisor will be assigned by the Department to each student for consultation and monitoring of work so as to achieve the aim of completing the Dissertation. Students are expected to spend at least 36 hours over two semesters on consultation with his/her Dissertation supervisor whose main roles are to guide refinement of research methodology, procedures and interpretations, give critical and constructive comments, and to evaluate the completed Dissertation. Upon endorsement of the research proposal, students will commence on an applied research activities under the guidance of their respective Dissertation supervisor. 3. Applied Research Activities: It is estimated that students use about 13

	<p>weeks on a piece of psychological inquiry of a chosen topic of interest. Students are generally expected to review relevant psychological literature, refine the research design, work with and prepare study participants and conduct data collection independently, collate and analyse the data, interpret the findings for academic discussion, evaluate and write up the dissertation.</p>																																								
<p>Teaching/Learning Methodology</p>	<p>The following learning and teaching activities are designed to provide a supportive learning environment, help cultivate students' critical thinking, develop creative ideas and produce a scholarly written Dissertation:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Integrative Seminars 2. Student-Dissertation Supervisor Consultation 3. Applied Research Activities 																																								
<p>Assessment Methods in Alignment with Intended Learning Outcomes</p>	<table border="1" data-bbox="424 734 1437 1480"> <thead> <tr> <th rowspan="2">Specific assessment methods/tasks</th> <th rowspan="2">% weighting</th> <th colspan="4">Intended subject learning outcomes to be assessed (Please tick as appropriate)</th> </tr> <tr> <th>a</th> <th>b</th> <th>c</th> <th>d</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1. Competence in carrying out an empirical research</td> <td>20%</td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2. Conceptualization of problem and quality of literature review</td> <td>30%</td> <td>✓</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>3. Interpretation of findings and generation of knowledge and theory</td> <td>30%</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4. Language proficiency</td> <td>20%</td> <td>✓</td> <td></td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>100 %</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Both the students and the dissertation supervisors are provided with the following set of 13 quality criteria in the preparation and continuous assessment of the submitted dissertation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The grade is calculated according to the percentage assigned. • The completion and submission of all component assignments are required for passing the subject. <p>Quality Criteria</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Dissertation content is elaborative and relevant. 2. The Dissertation is clearly organized with headings and sub-headings. 	Specific assessment methods/tasks	% weighting	Intended subject learning outcomes to be assessed (Please tick as appropriate)				a	b	c	d	1. Competence in carrying out an empirical research	20%	✓	✓	✓	✓	2. Conceptualization of problem and quality of literature review	30%	✓				3. Interpretation of findings and generation of knowledge and theory	30%			✓	✓	4. Language proficiency	20%	✓		✓	✓	Total	100 %				
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	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. The language is accurate, concise and academic. 4. The Abstract highlights the main research questions, methods, findings, conclusion, and recommendations (if any). 5. The Introduction contains relevant background information and shows the research aim(s), scope and potential significance of the study. 6. The Literature review provides evidence of sufficient coverage of the knowledge base of the chosen topic of investigation drawing reference from the academic literature. 7. The Dissertation reports the research methodology, the findings, discussion of the findings, limitations of the study and conclusion, and may include recommendations. 8. The Dissertation highlights the analyses and / or implications relevant to the topic. 9. The figures or tables are labelled and the data have been described and interpreted. 10. The Dissertation can reflect the use of theoretical knowledge and concepts in Applied Psychology, as well as personal experience and ability to integrate knowledge from different sources. 11. The Dissertation can exhibit students' creative and/or original ideas. 12. The Dissertation can demonstrate students' critical/ independent thinking. 13. Sources are properly cited and a list of references is included, following the latest APA Publication Manual. 												
Student Study Effort Required	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td colspan="2" style="padding: 5px;">Class contact:</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">▪ Integrative Seminars</td> <td style="text-align: right; padding: 5px;">6 Hrs.</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">▪ Student-Dissertation Supervisor Consultation</td> <td style="text-align: right; padding: 5px;">36 Hrs.</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2" style="padding: 5px;">Other student study effort:</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">▪ Applied Research Activities</td> <td style="text-align: right; padding: 5px;">13 Weeks</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">Total student study effort</td> <td style="text-align: right; padding: 5px;">302 Hrs.</td> </tr> </table>	Class contact:		▪ Integrative Seminars	6 Hrs.	▪ Student-Dissertation Supervisor Consultation	36 Hrs.	Other student study effort:		▪ Applied Research Activities	13 Weeks	Total student study effort	302 Hrs.
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Reading List and References	<p><u>Recommended Textbooks</u></p> <p>Conrad, C., & Serlin, R.C. (Eds.). (2006). <i>The Sage handbook of research in education</i>. London: Sage Publications.</p> <p>Heppner, P. P., & Heppner, M.J. (2004). <i>Writing and publishing your thesis, dissertation, and research : A guide for students in the helping profession</i> . Belmont, Calif. : Thomson / Cole-Thomson Learning.</p> <p>Sternberg, R.J. (2003). <i>Psychologist's companion: A guide to scientific reading for students and researchers</i>. (4th ed.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.</p> <p>Thody, A. (2006). <i>Writing and presenting research</i>. Thousands oaks: Sage Publications.</p>												

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References

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Herr, K., & Anderson, G.L. (2005). *The action research dissertation: A guide for students and faculty*. London: Sage Publications.

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Reason, P., & Bradbury, H. (2006). *Handbook of action research*. Thousands Oaks: Sage Publications.

Roberts-Holmes, G. (2006). *Doing your early years research project; A step-by-step Guide*. London: Paul Chapman publications.

	<p>Rossi, P.H., Lipsey, M.W., & Freeman, H.E. (2004). <i>Evaluation: A systematic approach</i> (7th ed.). London: Sage Publications.</p> <p>Shaw, I., Green, J.C., & Mark, M.M. (2006). <i>The Sage handbook of evaluation</i>. London: Sage Publication.</p> <p>Silverman, D. (2005). <i>Doing qualitative research: A practical handbook</i> (2nd ed.). London: Sage Publications.</p> <p>Stanovich, K. E. (2007). <i>How to think straight about psychology</i> (8th ed.). Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.</p>
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