



First Postgraduate Courses in *Male Studies* To be Offered Internationally in 2014



The University of South Australia, in a joint initiative with the Australian Institute of Male Health and Studies and with the support of a group of American, Canadian, and European colleagues, is currently proposing to develop two postgraduate courses in Male Studies to be offered internationally in 2014. These will be a Graduate Certificate in Male Studies and a Graduate Diploma in Male Studies. These offerings will be followed by masters and doctoral level options as additional parts of a nested and comprehensive Male Studies Program.



Rationale

Discussion of gender in the last half-century has often been characterised by a polarisation of the sexes, making it very difficult to engage with issues of vital importance to health and healthy interpersonal and social relationships. Accordingly, key themes of the proposed Male Studies courses will include the context and factors that influence health and wellbeing outcomes for males, and

will bring analysis to bear on the many common and culturally embedded assumptions that negatively influence male experience and wellbeing, and consequently community health and wellbeing.

The Male Studies Program will endeavour to pursue a different approach to gender issues, one open to constructive dialogue and guided by available evidence of a range of different academic disciplines. Consideration will be given to both men's and women's particular cultural experience and circumstances and the indispensable contribution both genders make to the quality and viability of family and community life.

Why "Male Studies"?

Male Studies is rapidly becoming the most widely accepted term to describe a new discipline, one that recognises the need to pursue new approaches to understanding gender issues and the contemporary experience and roles of males in society.

In contrast to the current discourse regarding "men's studies," which has a largely speculative sociological basis, Male Studies will:

- avoid intellectual reductionism, political partisanship, and ideological advocacy, instead openly encouraging constructive academic dialogue, and enquiring and dynamic multidisciplinary scholarship; and
- be guided by principles of equity, intellectual integrity, and a view of human experience, society, and ethics that is inseparable from biological, psychological, cultural, and economic realities;

The *Male Studies* program will be a suite of offerings that redeems the pursuit of an understanding of health, human psychology, and social relations for contemporary males, using bases of evidence, reason, and interdisciplinary enquiry suited to academe and the proper preparation of graduates for health and human service professions.

Program Aim

The *Male Studies* program will be largely vocational in focus. However, it will also be suited to students with a more general interest in male psychology, sociology and experience, and the roles of males in culture and society. Award offerings will aim to equip allied health, human service, educational and industry professionals with knowledge and skills to work with and engage males more effectively, and to improve the health, psychological, educational and social outcomes for males. Accordingly, the target groups are health, human services, educational and industry professionals who work extensively with men and boys and/or in male preponderant industries.

Program Structure

The aim is for a nested postgraduate program of *Male Studies* that will incorporate award offerings that include a Graduate Certificate, Graduate Diploma, and coursework eventually leading to a Masters degree. Each stream will comprise core subjects and a series of electives which will be offered under a general stream, practitioner stream, health promotion stream, or research stream depending on the background, interests and needs of students.

Each program component will articulate with the next. For example, the Graduate Certificate will progress to the Graduate Diploma and then to the coursework Masters, enabling students several entry and exit points. The programs will be offered wholly on-line on a fee-paying basis commensurate with other postgraduate programs offered by the University of South Australia and Open Universities Australia. Assessment will incorporate best practice principles for on-line evaluation of student learning. Examples include assignments, work related projects, individual or group video presentations, participation in moderated on-line forums and discussion groups, case studies, peer evaluation exercises, and on-line evaluations by faculty.

International Scope

Male Studies is a relatively new discipline and one that is both diverse in scope and scholarship, requiring the expertise of academics and practitioners knowledgeable in this field. Consequently, an international collegial community of contributors who are most discerning of the quality and interdisciplinary coherence of the required curricula will be assisting in the development and delivery of the program. The *Male Studies* programs will be international in content, scope and availability.



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