

CANBERRA COLLEGE OF ADVANCED EDUCATION

THE DEVELOPMENT OF COURSES IN PSYCHOLOGY FOR
SECONDARY COLLEGES IN THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL
TERRITORY : A CASE STUDY OF A CURRICULUM
INNOVATION

by

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ABSTRACT

The main purpose of this study was to examine the way in which courses in psychology were developed and introduced to the curriculum of secondary colleges in the Australian Capital Territory. It is a case study in curriculum change viewed from the perspective of a participant-observer. Briefly the study attempts to analyse the process of curriculum change within a sociological framework. The second section deals with the history behind, and subsequent introduction of similar courses in Tasmania, the United Kingdom and the United States of America, and their significance to the curriculum innovation under study. The third section deals with the background to the case study, the context in which the project was undertaken and the factors which gave rise to it. Emphasis is given to the negotiations which must go on in reconciling the differing perspectives of those groups directly involved in the change process. The process of accreditation and the influence this had on the structure of the courses is also examined. The problems inherent in developing and establishing a curriculum innovation are dealt with in considerable depth. Finally the process of curriculum change is analysed in the context of the currently available research literature on models and strategies for change in education. Implications are drawn for future studies in this field. Hopefully this report will contribute to the various theoretical models and strategies of change to be found in curriculum theory.

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