



COURSE OUTLINE

COU754 Research Project A

Course Coordinator: Mark Pearson (mpearson@usc.edu.au) **School:** School of Law and Society

2021 | Semester 1

USC Sunshine Coast

ON CAMPUS

Most of your course is on campus but you may be able to do some components of this course online.

Please go to the USC website for up to date information on the teaching sessions and campuses where this course is usually offered.

1. What is this course about?

1.1. Description

This course will build on the work you completed in your Research Methods course. Using the proposal you developed, you are required to develop a research project in a core area of counselling under the supervision of academic staff in counselling. The research question under investigation may have either theoretical or practical application of counselling significance. In this semester, you will refine your research project with your Supervisor, complete your application for ethical approval, and commence the project.

1.2. How will this course be delivered?

ACTIVITY	HOURS	BEGINNING WEEK	FREQUENCY
ON CAMPUS			
Tutorial/Workshop – On campus training on design of research project - 2 hours	2hrs	Week 1	6 times
Independent Study/Research – Consultations with individual research supervisor	1hr	Week 1	6 times

1.3. Course Topics

Workshop 1 Topics:

- *What does it mean to become a researcher? Why is this relevant to counsellors?*
- Learning materials and Details of Assessment Tasks
- Review USC Library Guides
- Research Question Checklist
- Sharing of projects – Q and A
- The ethics application process

Workshop 2 Topics:

- Methodological paradigms and project summaries
- Review research method articles provided on Blackboard
- Report on your initial search of the major literature
- Using APA7 formatting and referencing style
- Creating a quality literature review

Workshop 3 Topics:

- Writing an introduction to your study
- Data gathering challenges and solve these
- Practical steps to data collection
- Clarify data analysis plans, e.g. thematic analysis, content analysis, etc.
- How to read a research article
- Academic writing tips

Workshop 4 Topics:

- Developing your methods section
- Enhancing reflexivity in qualitative research
- Using semi-structured interviews in research

Workshop 5 Topics:

- Q and A on oral presentations
- Structuring your proposal and final article

2. What level is this course?

700 Level (Specialised)

Demonstrating a specialised body of knowledge and set of skills for professional practice or further learning. Advanced application of knowledge and skills in unfamiliar contexts.

3. What is the unit value of this course?

12 units

4. How does this course contribute to my learning?

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES	GRADUATE QUALITIES
On successful completion of this course, you should be able to...	Completing these tasks successfully will contribute to you becoming...
1 Demonstrate a mastery of theoretical knowledge and reflect critically on theory and professional practice through a research project.	Creative and critical thinker Ethical
2 Develop the cognitive and technical skills to ethically investigate, analyse and synthesise complex counselling information and develop interventions or research for specific needs.	Empowered Ethical
3 Communicate and justify your findings with clarity through written and oral presentations.	Knowledgeable Creative and critical thinker

5. Am I eligible to enrol in this course?

Refer to the [USC Glossary of terms](#) for definitions of “pre-requisites, co-requisites and anti-requisites”.

5.1. Pre-requisites

CMN574, SCS725 or other approved Research Methods course and enrolled in Program AR708

5.2. Co-requisites

Not applicable

5.3. Anti-requisites

Not applicable

5.4. Specific assumed prior knowledge and skills (where applicable)

Not applicable

6. How am I going to be assessed?

6.1. Grading Scale

Standard Grading (GRD)

High Distinction (HD), Distinction (DN), Credit (CR), Pass (PS), Fail (FL).

6.2. Details of early feedback on progress

Timely and detailed feedback is provided for each assessment. Feedback is provided both within text and general comments to build scholarly skills. Students are able to seek feedback through face-to-face discussion with the course coordinator. Tutorials will include extended discussion and review of the assessment task requirements and scope.

6.3. Assessment tasks

DELIVERY MODE	TASK NO.	ASSESSMENT PRODUCT	INDIVIDUAL OR GROUP	WEIGHTING %	WHAT IS THE DURATION / LENGTH?	WHEN SHOULD I SUBMIT?	WHERE SHOULD I SUBMIT IT?
All	1	Artefact - Professional	Individual	0%	As per HREC's requirements	Week 4	Online Assignment Submission
All	2	Written Piece	Individual	25%	1000 words	Week 6	Online Assignment Submission
All	3	Oral	Individual	20%	15 minutes	Refer to Format	In Class
All	4	Literature Review (or component)	Individual	55%	4000 words approx.	Week 12	Online Assignment Submission

All - Assessment Task 1: USC HREC Ethics Application

GOAL:	You are expected to meet the requirements of the relevant University Ethics Committees and to receive approval for your proposed research before the research can proceed. You are also expected to obtain such other permissions as are required to conduct the research. It is your responsibility to prepare applications for permission to conduct the research as well as for ethical clearance. These applications must be approved by your supervisor before they are submitted. You must ensure that sufficient time remains after such permissions have been received to complete the dissertation in time for submission. Delays associated with these procedures are not sufficient justification for an extension of time to be granted for submission of the dissertation. Similarly, any documents, reports or other works promised to outside agencies as part of the agreements with those participating agencies must be cleared by your supervisor before being sent.		
PRODUCT:	Artefact - Professional		
FORMAT:	USC Ethics application		
CRITERIA:	No.		Learning Outcome assessed
	1	Submission of application to Course Coordinator / research Supervisor, then after corrections to the USC ethics secretary	
	2	Assessment criteria are mapped to the course learning outcomes.	1 2 3

All - Assessment Task 2: Proposed Dissertation Introduction

GOAL:	You are required to submit a written introduction to your dissertation to your course coordinator via Blackboard by Week 6. The introduction should be submitted following discussions with your supervisor. It should include an overview of the research topic and a clear rationale for the research questions to be addressed. The introduction should explicitly state the overall study objectives and the specific aims of the investigation.	
PRODUCT:	Written Piece	
FORMAT:	The introduction should be 1000 words in length. To facilitate your receipt of guidance and informal formative assessment, you should work closely with your supervisor throughout this assessment	
CRITERIA:	No.	Learning Outcome assessed
	1	Demonstrate a critical understanding of contemporary research in the chosen topic area.
	2	Construct a clear rationale for the research question/s to be addressed.
	3	Concisely state the research questions.
	4	Exactly state the overall objectives and specific aims of the investigation.
	5	Demonstrate a sound knowledge of APA6 format, writing and referencing styles.

All - Assessment Task 3: Oral Presentation

GOAL:	The oral presentation is a formative assessment which will provide you with an opportunity to receive additional considered feedback on your dissertation proposal. The oral presentation will demonstrate your ability to: articulate the theoretical framework, research questions and research methods selected; argue for, and defend, the proposed research. It will be presented within your research supervision group.	
PRODUCT:	Oral	
FORMAT:	Submit: Week 10 and 11. See detailed criteria outline on Blackboard for more information	
CRITERIA:	No.	Learning Outcome assessed
	1	Underpinning theoretical framework
	2	Research questions
	3	Research methods selected
	4	Organisation of the project / thesis
	5	Coherent and logical structure and flow
	6	Clear linkages from one section to the next
	7	Main points clearly structured
	8	Good time management
	9	Understands and responds directly; seeks clarification if needed
	10	160 Understands and responds directly; seeks clarification if needed
	11	Responses are knowledgeable, concise, and reasoned
	12	Language appropriate to target audience

All - Assessment Task 4: Dissertation research proposal

GOAL:	You will produce a dissertation research proposal which will lead into your next research stage.		
PRODUCT:	Literature Review (or component)		
FORMAT:	The dissertation research proposal, including introduction, literature review, and method, should be submitted following discussions with your supervisor. The introduction should include an overview of the research topic and a clear rationale for the research questions to be addressed. The introduction should explicitly state the overall study objectives and the specific aims of the investigation. The literature review should provide a critical review of relevant literature, identify knowledge gaps, and address the relationship of the literature to the thesis aims. The method will describe the specifics of investigation design, participant recruitment, ethical approvals, procedures, and data analysis.		
CRITERIA:	No.		Learning Outcome assessed
	1	Demonstrate a critical understanding of contemporary research in the chosen topic area.	
	2	Construct a clear rationale for the research questions to be addressed.	
	3	Exactly state the overall study objectives and the specific aims of the investigation.	
	4	Clearly provide all necessary information to understand the method of enquiry adopted	
	5	Demonstrate a sound knowledge of APA6 format, writing and referencing style.	
	6	The document should be approximately 4000 words in length.	

7. Directed study hours

A 12-unit course will have total of 150 learning hours which will include directed study hours (including online if required), self-directed learning and completion of assessable tasks. Directed study hours may vary by location. Student workload is calculated at 12.5 learning hours per one unit.

8. What resources do I need to undertake this course?

Please note: Course information, including specific information of recommended readings, learning activities, resources, weekly readings, etc. are available on the course Blackboard site– Please log in as soon as possible.

8.1. Prescribed text(s) or course reader

Please note that you need to have regular access to the resource(s) listed below. Resources may be required or recommended.

REQUIRED?	AUTHOR	YEAR	TITLE	PUBLISHER
Recommended	John McLeod	2015	Doing Research in Counselling and Psychotherapy	SAGE Publications Limited

8.2. Specific requirements

Nil

9. How are risks managed in this course?

Health and safety risks for this course have been assessed as low. It is your responsibility to review course material, search online, discuss with lecturers and peers and understand the health and safety risks associated with your specific course of study and to familiarise yourself with the University's general health and safety principles by reviewing the [online induction training for students](#), and following the instructions of the University staff.

10. What administrative information is relevant to this course?

10.1. Assessment: Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is the ethical standard of university participation. It ensures that students graduate as a result of proving they are competent in their discipline. This is integral in maintaining the value of academic qualifications. Each industry has expectations and standards of the skills and knowledge within that discipline and these are reflected in assessment.

Academic integrity means that you do not engage in any activity that is considered to be academic fraud; including plagiarism, collusion or outsourcing any part of any assessment item to any other person. You are expected to be honest and ethical by completing all work yourself and indicating in your work which ideas and information were developed by you and which were taken from others. You cannot provide your assessment work to others. You are also expected to provide evidence of wide and critical reading, usually by using appropriate academic references.

In order to minimise incidents of academic fraud, this course may require that some of its assessment tasks, when submitted to Blackboard, are electronically checked through SafeAssign. This software allows for text comparisons to be made between your submitted assessment item and all other work that SafeAssign has access to.

10.2. Assessment: Additional Requirements

Eligibility for Supplementary Assessment

Your eligibility for supplementary assessment in a course is dependent of the following conditions applying:

The final mark is in the percentage range 47% to 49.4%

The course is graded using the Standard Grading scale

You have not failed an assessment task in the course due to academic misconduct

10.3. Assessment: Submission penalties

Late submission of assessment tasks may be penalised at the following maximum rate:

- 5% (of the assessment task's identified value) per day for the first two days from the date identified as the due date for the assessment task.

- 10% (of the assessment task's identified value) for the third day - 20% (of the assessment task's identified value) for the fourth day and subsequent days up to and including seven days from the date identified as the due date for the assessment task.

- A result of zero is awarded for an assessment task submitted after seven days from the date identified as the due date for the assessment task. Weekdays and weekends are included in the calculation of days late. To request an extension you must contact your course coordinator to negotiate an outcome.

10.4. Study help

For help with course-specific advice, for example what information to include in your assessment, you should first contact your tutor, then your course coordinator, if needed.

If you require additional assistance, the Learning Advisers are trained professionals who are ready to help you develop a wide range of academic skills. Visit the [Learning Advisers](#) web page for more information, or contact Student Central for further assistance: +61 7 5430 2890 or studentcentral@usc.edu.au.

10.5. Wellbeing Services

Student Wellbeing provide free and confidential counselling on a wide range of personal, academic, social and psychological matters, to foster positive mental health and wellbeing for your academic success.

To book a confidential appointment go to [Student Hub](#), email studentwellbeing@usc.edu.au or call 07 5430 1226.

10.6. AccessAbility Services

Ability Advisers ensure equal access to all aspects of university life. If your studies are affected by a disability, learning disorder mental health issue, injury or illness, or you are a primary carer for someone with a disability or who is considered frail and aged, [AccessAbility Services](#) can provide access to appropriate reasonable adjustments and practical advice about the support and facilities available to you throughout the University.

To book a confidential appointment go to [Student Hub](#), email AccessAbility@usc.edu.au or call 07 5430 2890.

10.7. Links to relevant University policy and procedures

For more information on Academic Learning & Teaching categories including:

- Assessment: Courses and Coursework Programs
- Review of Assessment and Final Grades
- Supplementary Assessment
- Administration of Central Examinations
- Deferred Examinations
- Student Academic Misconduct
- Students with a Disability

Visit the USC website: <http://www.usc.edu.au/explore/policies-and-procedures#academic-learning-and-teaching>

10.8. General Enquiries

In person:

- **USC Sunshine Coast** - Student Central, Ground Floor, Building C, 90 Sippy Downs Drive, Sippy Downs
- **USC Moreton Bay** - Service Centre, Ground Floor, Foundation Building, Gympie Road, Petrie
- **USC SouthBank** - Student Central, Building A4 (SW1), 52 Merivale Street, South Brisbane
- **USC Gympie** - Student Central, 71 Cartwright Road, Gympie
- **USC Fraser Coast** - Student Central, Student Central, Building A, 161 Old Maryborough Rd, Hervey Bay
- **USC Caboolture** - Student Central, Level 1 Building J, Cnr Manley and Tallon Street, Caboolture

Tel: +61 7 5430 2890

Email: studentcentral@usc.edu.au