



## COURSE OUTLINE

# LAW422 Cultural Legal Studies

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

2022 | Semester 1

USC Sunshine Coast

**BLENDED  
LEARNING**

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 examines the way in which law acts upon, is expressed through, and is constituted by cultural texts, artefacts and spaces. You will learn how legal theory is understood and experienced beyond the confines of legal institutions by investigating the way in which various images of law circulating in popular culture (novels, art, movies, television series, comics, video games) depict, critique and distort the legal process, lawyers and jurisprudence. You will explore a series of sustained 'readings' of cultural texts and artefacts. You will be asked to reflect and examine a range of texts of popular culture, as well as develop your own 'cultural legal reading' of a particular text or texts.

### 1.2. How will this course be delivered?

ACTIVITY	HOURS	BEGINNING WEEK	FREQUENCY
<b>BLENDED LEARNING</b>			
<b>Learning materials</b> – Learning materials for each week will provide readings and context for each of the workshops. In the second half of the course, the learning materials will focus on developing your essay-writing skills.	1hr	Refer to Format	12 times
<b>Tutorial/Workshop 1</b> – The workshop will run twice weekly in Weeks 2-6. The workshops in each week will involve a combination of explanatory theory session, cultural legal reading presentation, and seminar-style group discussion.	2hrs	Refer to Format	10 times
<b>Seminar</b> – The week 1 seminar will provide an introduction to Cultural Legal Studies and discussion of course content, expectations and assessment. The remaining seminar will be held in week 7 in order to facilitate class presentations and feedback.	2hrs	Refer to Format	2 times

### 1.3. Course Topics

What is Cultural Legal Studies?

Images of Law and Justice

Law and Sovereignty

Speculative Legalities

Rights and Legal Persons

Social Legalities

## 2. What level is this course?

400 Level (Graduate)

Demonstrating coherence and breadth or depth of knowledge and skills. Independent application of knowledge and skills in unfamiliar contexts. Meeting professional requirements and AQF descriptors for the degree. May require pre-requisites where discipline specific introductory or developing knowledge or skills is necessary. Normally undertaken in the third or fourth full-time study year of an undergraduate program.

## 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 Understand, analyse, judge and critique the cultural, philosophical, political, social and historical contexts in which the ideas of law and legal institutions develop and function in cultural texts and artefacts.	Knowledgeable
2 Identify and demonstrate an understanding and appreciation of the cultural constitution of justice and ethics in relation to law.	Ethical
3 Apply critical thinking and analysis to generate creative and critical readings of cultural representations of law.	Creative and critical thinker
4 Use advanced written and oral communication skills for legal and non-legal audiences.	Empowered

## 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

LAW102 and enrolled in any Law Program OR successful completion of 96 units and enrolled in Business, Creative Industries, Criminology & Justice or Social Science or AB101, UU301, UU302 or XU301.

### 5.2. Co-requisites

Not applicable

### 5.3. Anti-requisites

Not applicable

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

The course engages with critical and theoretical analyses of law and justice through an examination of a range of cultural texts. For law students, this builds upon the introduction to legal theory covered in LAW102 Foundations of Australian Law B. For non-law students, some familiarity with any of legal theory, critical theory, philosophy, film studies or cultural studies would be helpful.

## 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

Formative feedback will be provided during the seminars in the form of class discussion of the methods of analysis appropriate to Cultural Legal Studies.

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	Oral and Written Piece	Individual	20%	600 words and 1 seminar	Refer to Format	In Class
All	2	Oral and Written Piece	Individual	30%	5-7 min + 3 pages	Week 7	In Class
All	3	Essay	Individual	50%	2,500 words	Week 13	Online Assignment Submission with plagiarism check

**All - Assessment Task 1:** Class Facilitation and Reflection – Reading Culture, Thinking Law

<b>GOAL:</b>	The goal of the ‘Reading Culture, Thinking Law’ exercises is for you to both gain an in-depth knowledge of the methods of cultural legal studies via the analysis of particular texts, as well as the ability to engage in critical dialogue on those texts.																
<b>PRODUCT:</b>	Oral and Written Piece																
<b>FORMAT:</b>	Task 1 provides the opportunity for students to develop their skills of cultural legal reading and analysis. Students will elect a seminar discussion in which their participation will be graded. Students will then be required to complete a short written reflection identifying a cultural text or artefacts that deals with the same or similar themes as their chosen seminar.																
<b>CRITERIA:</b>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>No.</th> <th></th> <th>Learning Outcome assessed</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1</td> <td>Evidence of engagement with materials and questions</td> <td>1 2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2</td> <td>Critical analysis and evaluation of material, including evaluating and making judgments about the representation under analysis</td> <td>3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3</td> <td>Demonstration of advanced academic writing skills</td> <td>4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4</td> <td>Effective communication and discussion with peers indicating understanding and analysis of the topic.</td> <td>4</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	No.		Learning Outcome assessed	1	Evidence of engagement with materials and questions	1 2	2	Critical analysis and evaluation of material, including evaluating and making judgments about the representation under analysis	3	3	Demonstration of advanced academic writing skills	4	4	Effective communication and discussion with peers indicating understanding and analysis of the topic.	4	
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**All - Assessment Task 2:** Research Proposal Seminar

<b>GOAL:</b>	The purpose of the Research Proposal Seminar is two-fold: 1. It provides students with the opportunity to ‘test-run’ an outline of their Task 3 Essay argument and reading with the course staff prior to submission; 2. It gives students the opportunity to develop their oral communication skills and gain feedback from their peers on their research proposal.
<b>PRODUCT:</b>	Oral and Written Piece
<b>FORMAT:</b>	This task requires students to prepare a written research proposal (3 pages) and present for 5-7 minutes on their proposed essay topic and text(s). The proposal should include: - A brief outline of the popular culture text/texts under analysis; - A brief overview of the legal theory/jurisprudence/critical theory being employed in your ‘reading’; - A brief explication of your overall reading and argument of the texts. There will then be time for questions and comments from the staff and students following the presentation.

CRITERIA:	No.	Learning Outcome assessed	
	1	Understanding and analysis of the cultural text under consideration	1
	2	Appropriate nomination and understanding of school of jurisprudence/legal theory/critical theory/area of thought	2
	3	Clarity and development of overall thesis and reading	3
	4	Clarity of explanation of proposal summary	4
	5	Oral communication skills	4

### All - Assessment Task 3: Cultural Legal Essay

<b>GOAL:</b>	The purpose of the Essay is for students to develop their theoretical and critical understanding of law and legal theory in the context of conducting a 'close reading' of a particular cultural text or texts. Students must focus on analysis and critique of both the theory and cultural text under consideration. This is more than simple exposition of the text but a sustained analysis of it.		
<b>PRODUCT:</b>	Essay		
<b>FORMAT:</b>	This is a 2500-word individual written assignment. It involves developing a cultural legal reading of a particular cultural text or artefact discussed in class or of the student's own choosing.		
CRITERIA:	No.		Learning Outcome assessed
	1	Understanding of both cultural text and legal or critical theory being engaged with, as evidenced by engagement with primary and secondary sources	1 2
	2	Ability to engage in critical analysis and think creatively in constructing persuasive arguments, as demonstrated by the development of an original reading, strong thesis, clear development of arguments in support of that thesis, and persuasive pre	3
	3	Advanced academic communication skills	4

## 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 Canvas site– Please log in as soon as possible.

### 8.1. Prescribed text(s) or course reader

There are no required/recommended resources for this course.

### 8.2. Specific requirements

The focus of this course is on critical engagement with primary sources including films, novels, comics, television series and other cultural artefacts. A list of these will be provided on Canvas, along with places these can be sourced. In some instances, students may need to buy or rent their own copies of the text. In addition, a reading list of relevant secondary sources and required reading will be provided.

## 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 Canvas, are electronically checked through Turnitin. This software allows for text comparisons to be made between your submitted assessment item and all other work to which Turnitin has access.

### 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 will 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 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 and supply the required documentation to negotiate an outcome.

### 10.4. SafeUSC

USC is committed to a culture of respect and providing a safe and supportive environment for all members of our community. For immediate assistance on campus contact SafeUSC by phone: [07 5430 1168](tel:0754301168) or using the [SafeZone](#) app. For general enquires contact the SafeUSC team by phone [07 5456 3864](tel:0754563864) or email [safe@usc.edu.au](mailto:safe@usc.edu.au).

The SafeUSC Specialist Service is a Student Wellbeing service that provides free and confidential support to students who may have experienced or observed behaviour that could cause fear, offence or trauma. To contact the service call [07 5430 1226](tel:0754301226) or email [studentwellbeing@usc.edu.au](mailto:studentwellbeing@usc.edu.au).

### 10.5. 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](mailto:studentcentral@usc.edu.au).

### 10.6. 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](mailto:studentwellbeing@usc.edu.au) or call 07 5430 1226.

### 10.7. 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](mailto:AccessAbility@usc.edu.au) or call 07 5430 2890.

## 10.8. 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: <https://www.usc.edu.au/explore/policies-and-procedures#academic-learning-and-teaching>

## 10.9. Student Charter

USC is committed to excellence in teaching, research and engagement in an environment that is inclusive, inspiring, safe and respectful. The [Student Charter](#) sets out what students can expect from the University, and what in turn is expected of students, to achieve these outcomes.

## 10.10. 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](mailto:studentcentral@usc.edu.au)