USC

Course Outline	

Code: LAW440
Title: Honours Research Methods, Design and Confirmation

School: Law and Criminology
Teaching Session: Semester 1
Year: 2020

Course Coordinator: Professor Jay Sanderson
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Course Moderator: Dale Mitchell
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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 is the first of two linked courses required to graduate with honours in Law. In this course you will further prepare and develop your knowledge and capability in research skills, methods and ethics. Specifically, in consultation with your academic supervisor, you will formulate and clarify a research topic including research planning, generating research questions, ethical considerations, search techniques and methodology. The aim of which is to prepare you for the writing and submission of your Law Honours Thesis in semester two (LAW441).

1.2   Field trips, WIL placements or activities required by professional accreditation

Activity	Details
N/A	N/A

2.   What level is this course?

400 level Graduate - Independent application of graduate knowledge and skills. Meets AQF and professional requirements. May require pre-requisites and developing level knowledge/skills. Normally taken in the 4th 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?

Specific Learning Outcomes On successful completion of this course, you should be able to:	Assessment tasks You will be assessed on the learning outcomes in task/s:	Graduate Qualities or Professional Standards mapping Completing these tasks successfully will contribute to:
Design a research project and develop a management plan.	1 and 2	Engaged
Assess the ethical obligations of researchers.	1 and 2	Ethical
Identify and apply appropriate research methods to address complex legal research issues.	1 and 2	Empowered
Demonstrate advanced learning and understanding in an area of law.	2 and 3	Knowledgeable
Critically review, analyse and synthesise knowledge.	1 and 2	Creative and critical thinkers
Exercise critical thinking and judgment to generate appropriate responses to complex legal issues.	1, 2 and 3	Creative and critical thinkers
Work independently and make use of feedback to support your professional and/or academic development.	1, 2 and 3	Empowered
Communicate effectively in writing and orally to a professional and/or academic audience.	2 and 3	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   Enrolment restrictions

This course is available only to students enrolled in a Law program who have been invited to enrol in Law Honours based on a minimum GPA of 6[1] in their Law-coded courses.

5.2   Pre-requisites

GPA of 6[1] with no more than eight courses remaining to complete their Law program.

5.3   Co-requisites

Nil

5.4   Anti-requisites

Nil

5.5   Specific assumed prior knowledge and skills (where applicable)

N/A

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[1] Students with a GPA >5.75 may make a case to the Honours coordinator as to why they should be admitted to the program.

6.   How am I going to be assessed?

6.1   Grading scale

Limited – Pass (PU), Fail (UF). All assessment tasks are required to be passed for successful completion of the course.

6.2   Details of early feedback on progress

Students receive ongoing early feedback from assigned supervisors, with the usual expectation of weekly or bi-weekly meetings for this purpose. Additionally, students are able to receive feedback early on their research plans and progress when they attend the 2-hour seminars on research and research methods in the first three weeks of semester.

6.3   Assessment tasks

Task No.	Assessment Product	Individual or Group	Weighting %	What is the duration / length?	When should I submit?	Where should I submit it?	Work Integrated Learning (WIL) activity/Professional Competency Task
1	Plan	Individual	PU or UF	15oo words	Friday Week 4 (by 12pm)	Online Assignment Submission with Plagiarism check	Yes
2	Written Piece	Individual	PU or UF	3500 – 4000 words	Friday Week 11 (by 12pm)	Online Assignment Submission with Plagiarism check	Yes
3	Oral	Individual	PU or UF	30 minutes	Week 13, date and time to be confirmed	In Class	Yes
			100%				

Assessment 1: Research Plan

Goal:	The goal of the Research Plan is to enable you to develop project planning skills that will lead to timely completion of your Honours Thesis in second semester. The Research Plan will plot the aims, methods and milestones of the honours research paper, presentation and thesis. The Research Plan will include: (i) an overview of current knowledge of the topic and a statement/s about the research questions and aims of the research; (ii) details about the research methodology and, if applicable, ethics consideration and approval; and (iii) realistic milestones indicating content, activities and research to be undertaken in preparation for Assessment Task 2 and 3, as well as LAW441 Honours Thesis. The Research Plan is a dynamic document that you will review and revise with your supervisors throughout your honours project.
Product:	Plan
Format:	This is an individual assignment, no more than 1500 words.
Criteria:	- A plan for developing the knowledge required for the question; - Coherence and suitability of research question/s and aims/s; - Appropriateness of research methodology; - Evidence of critical thinking and judgment; - Realistic milestones, provision for making use of feedback.

Assessment Task 2: Research Paper

Goal:	The goal of the Research Paper is to present clear and coherent knowledge of an area of the law. More specifically you are expected to present a reasoned and substantiated argument that critically analyses and consolidates legal knowledge and ideas. In doing so you will exhibit the significance and originality of content and argument.
Product:	Written Piece
Format:	This is an individual assignment, in total not more than 4,000 words.
Criteria:	- Advanced knowledge of an area of the law; - Understanding of the issues raised; - Thorough legal and associated research; - Critical thinking, judgement and analysis; - Comprehensive and appropriate use and application of research to law; - Ability to review, analyse and synthesise information in a critical and logical manner; - Clear and coherent communication of research questions, laws and supporting arguments; - Originality and significance in content and argument; - Style guide compliance including appropriate referencing.

Assessment Task 3: Research Presentation (oral)

Goal:	The Research Presentation is how the Law School assesses your progress and determines whether the research project, as set out in the presentation and Research Paper (Assessment Task 2), is clearly defined, coherent and feasible. You will be assessed on your demonstration of a broad understanding of a specific area or law and context, as well as the design and use of research method/s. The Research Presentation will also enable the Law School and you to assess whether the project is suitably designed for successful completion in Law Honours Thesis, LAW441.
Product:	Oral
Format:	30-minute presentation to your Honours student peers and supervisors, based on Assessment Task 2. The presentation will clearly articulate the research question/s and aim/s. You will concisely and clearly describe the research methodology and analysis, and describe the work already completed and how this will be developed in LAW441.
Criteria:	- Advanced knowledge of an area of the law; - Understanding of the issues raised; - Thorough legal and associated research; - Critical thinking, judgement and analysis; - Comprehensive and appropriate use and application of research to law; - Ability to review, analyse and synthesise information in a critical and logical manner; - Clear and coherent communication of research questions, laws and supporting arguments; - Originality and significance in content and argument; - Suitability of the project and student for LAW441.

7.   Directed study hours

The directed study hours listed here are a portion of the workload for this course. 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.

Location:	Directed study hours for location:
Sippy Downs	On campus seminar: 3 x 2 hours in weeks 1-3 (6 hours in total) plus attendance at research presentations

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

Please note that 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

All readings for LAW440 will be provided via Blackboard.

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 as a student 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. It is also your responsibility to familiarise yourself with the University's general health and safety principles by reviewing the online Health Safety and Wellbeing training module 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

Limited Graded Course:

This course will be graded as Pass in a Limited Grade Course (PU) or Fail in a Limited Grade Course (UF) as per clause 4.1.3 and 4.1.4 of the Grades and Grade Point Average (GPA) - Institutional Operating Policy of the USC.

In a course eligible to use Limited Grades, all assessment items in that course are marked on a Pass/Fail basis and all assessment tasks are required to be passed for a student to successfully complete the course. Supplementary assessment is not available in courses using Limited Grades.

10.3 Assessment: Submission penalties

You must contact your Course Coordinator and provide the required documentation if you require an extension or alternate assessment.

10.4 Study help

In the first instance, you should contact your tutor, then the Course Coordinator. Additional assistance is provided to all students through Academic Skills Advisers. To book an appointment or find a drop-in session go to Student Hub.

Contact Student Central for further assistance: +61 7 5430 2890 or studentcentral@usc.edu.au

10.5   Wellbeing Services

Student Wellbeing Support Staff are available to assist on a wide range of personal, academic, social and psychological matters to foster positive mental health and wellbeing for your success. Student Wellbeing is comprised of professionally qualified staff in counselling, health and disability Services.

Ability Advisers ensure equal access to all aspects of university life. If your studies are affected by a disability, mental health issue, learning disorder, injury or illness, or you are a primary carer for someone with a disability, AccessAbility Services can provide assistance, advocacy and reasonable academic adjustments.

To book an appointment with either service go to Student Hub, email studentwellbeing@usc.edu.au or accessability@usc.edu.au or call 07 5430 1226

10.6   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

10.7   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