Course Outline

Code: PSY704
Title: Advanced Research Design and Methods

School: Social Sciences
Teaching Session: Semester 2
Year: 2020
Course Coordinator: Dr Prudence Millear - pmillear@usc.edu.au
Course Moderator: Prof Ken Greenwood - kgreenwoo@usc.edu.au

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
The USC postgraduate psychology programs are committed to maintaining the primacy of public safety in the delivery of the program within the education and placement environments. This course extends students’ previous studies by providing a guide to clinical research methods. In recognising the Scientist Practitioner Model, there is a focus on research design with practical implications for clinical practice and on critical use of the research literature to guide Evidence Based Practice. The course will also provide theoretical and practical content relevant to the design of a Masters level clinical research thesis. Assessment will focus on the critical appraisal of relevant literature and the ability to apply theoretical understanding to the design and implementation of clinically based research.

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Details</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nil</td>
<td>Nil</td>
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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?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Specific Learning Outcomes</th>
<th>Assessment tasks</th>
<th>Graduate Qualities or Professional Standards mapping</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>On successful completion of this course, you should be able to:</td>
<td>You will be assessed on the learning outcomes in task/s:</td>
<td>Completing these tasks successfully will contribute to:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrate advanced knowledge and understanding of recent developments</td>
<td>1 and 2</td>
<td>Knowledgeable. Creative and critical thinkers.</td>
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</table>
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:

- in clinical research methodology and design.
- Demonstrate an ability to access and, critique methodological strategies relevant to clinical research, and the ability to present, compare and contrast such methodologies in a cogent manner through professional presentations, materials, and publications.

1 and 2
Creative and critical thinkers. 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
Enrolment in AR703 or AR702

5.2 Pre-requisites
Nil

5.3 Co-requisites
Nil

5.4 Anti-requisites
Nil

5.5 Specific assumed prior knowledge and skills (where applicable)
Fundamentals of Statistical Methods and Analysis

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
You should discuss the topic of your Clinical Decision-Making presentation with the Course Coordinator prior to commencing preparation on any of your presentations. These discussions and the presentations of other students will give your feedback on the nature and content of the work. You will be able to use the feedback from the Clinical Decision-Making presentation to guide your efforts for the later assessments.

6.3 Assessment tasks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task No.</th>
<th>Assessment Product</th>
<th>Individual or Group</th>
<th>Weighting %</th>
<th>What is the duration / length?</th>
<th>When should I submit?</th>
<th>Where should I submit it?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Oral, and Written Piece</td>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>Pass/Fail</td>
<td>20 minutes</td>
<td>As scheduled in Weeks 8-13</td>
<td>In Class</td>
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## Assessment Task 1: Clinical Decision-Making presentation

**Goal:** The goal of this assessment is to communicate your understanding of research about current treatments for particular psychological disorders, through an oral presentation and a handout that demonstrates the decision-making process.

**Product:** Oral and Written Piece

**Format:** You will present the information in two parts, first, as an oral presentation (15 minutes + 5 minutes for class discussion) and second, as a two page summary of the articles and your conclusions.

Consider you are now working in an organisation and have been asked to share with your colleagues about recent research (i.e., last 5 years) on treatments for a particular psychological disorder or condition. You will select three recent empirical articles about the same disorder or condition and demonstrate how you would select the most suitable treatment for a client with that disorder or condition. You will demonstrate how knowledge of statistics can be used to guide a clinician’s decision-making process in how to choose one treatment over another.

You should focus on the treatment of specific populations, such as the elderly, Indigenous and Torres Strait Islanders, people with an intellectual disability, migrants, refugees, people living in rural and remote Australia, and LGBTIQ and minority groups. You should include the prevalence of the disorder and efficacy of treatment and include some or all of the following statistical issues: effect size of the treatments, power, Type I and II errors, sample size, statistical and practical significance of the results, the ethics of the research design, the use of CONSORT diagrams, treatment integrity and fidelity, and qualitative and quantitative design and methods in research.

The handout should give the full citation and summarise each article and be easy to understand, practically useful, and have a conclusion of preferred treatment. The handouts from all students will be combined to provide a resource for students in the future.

**Criteria:** This task will be assessed according to the following:

- Explanation and understanding of psychological disorder or condition
- Explanation and understanding of the statistics used in the research articles and issues that apply to assessing effectiveness of psychological treatments
- Clarity of the decision-making process using the statistics
- Ability to synthesise outcomes of research with clinical practice
- Recommendations for treatment, based on research that is presented
- Design and content of the handout, including summaries of the articles and conclusions

## Assessment Task 2: Systematic review

**Goal:** The goal of this assessment is to communicate your understanding of research pertaining to mental health outcomes in psychology.

**Product:** Literature review (or component)

**Format:** The format of the literature review will be as a systematic review of the literature, using the PRISMA Statement (prisma-statement.org) to guide the style and format of the document. As noted in the PRISMA Statement, the purpose of a systematic review is to collate all...
relevant evidence that fit the pre-specified eligibility criteria to answer a specific research question. You will work in pairs with an academic supervisor to develop the topic for the systematic review with the aim to produce a product that is ready for publication in a quality journal. Meetings with supervisors and formation of pairs will be undertaken by the end of the second week of the semester. Information will be available by Week 1 on Blackboard about possible topics, projects, and supervisors. It is expected that the systematic review will follow the guidelines available for PRISMA and the current extensions (e.g., PRISMA-P, Moher et al., 2015). As such, the systematic review will:

a) Have a clear set of objectives with an explicit, reproducible methodology
b) Conduct a systematic search that attempts to identify all studies that meet the eligibility criteria,
c) Provide an assessment of the validity of findings of the included studies, and
d) Provide a systematic presentation and synthesis of the characteristics and findings of the included studies.

The length and format of the systematic review will be determined by the journal to which it is to be submitted. Students should consult the Author Guidelines for the target journal and adhere to these requirements. Word counts are usually in the range of 5000 to 6000 words, and which includes the abstract and reference list. Students will decide on the target journal in collaboration with their academic supervisor. The systematic review is to be submitted to the academic supervisor for assessment before submission to the target journal.

Criteria: This task will be assessed according to levels of achievement in the following:

- Abstract, as a succinct and clear summary of the systematic review
- Rationale and objectives of the introduction
- Thoroughness of methods that address the requirements of a systematic review (e.g., eligibility criteria, information sources, search strategy, data items, summary measures)
- Presentation of the results as the analysis and synthesis of the selected studies
- Discussion that provides a summary of evidence, explanation of limitations, and conclusions
- Style and format of systematic review, in keeping with the requirements of the target journal

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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Directed study hours for location:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thompson Institute</td>
<td>Seminar: 3 hours per week</td>
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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
Information regarding prescribed texts or other associated resources will be made available on the BlackBoard site prior to commencement of study.

8.2 Specific requirements
Students should download the GPower program on to their personal computer (not the university computers) for their own use. This is the link for the download:

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
If standard graded course, add:
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.
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- 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 and supply the required documentation to negotiate an outcome.

**If Limited graded course, add:**
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 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

10.6 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