

COU265 Strengths Based Counselling: Collaborative Approaches

School: School of Law and Society

2026 | Trimester 2

UniSC Sunshine Coast
UniSC Moreton Bay

**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 unisc.edu.au 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

Strengths based counselling sees people as having capabilities and resources within themselves and their social systems. It builds on client strengths to help them resolve concerns, heal and achieve desired changes. The course will be both knowledge-based and experiential, enabling you to promote change through respectful, educational, therapeutic and operational processes in addition to practices that encourage and empower others.

1.2. How will this course be delivered?

ACTIVITY	HOURS	BEGINNING WEEK	FREQUENCY
BLENDED LEARNING			
Learning materials – One hour-long engagement including formative quizzes, podcasts/webinars, screen casts, interviews, simulations, videos and recorded discussions	1hr	Week 1	12 times
Tutorial/Workshop 1 – On campus tutorial- 2 hours to encourage the application of skills and knowledge introduced in the online learning materials for the week, via class activities (Week 11 tutorial via zoom to demonstrate telehealth principles)	2hrs	Week 1	10 times
Information session – Online learning activity facilitated by the tutor	1hr	Refer to Format	Once Only

1.3. Course Topics

- Strength based Counselling Introduction
- Solution Focused Counselling
- Narrative Therapy
- Applying strength based counselling to adult populations
- Applying strength based counselling to children and youth
- Skills Development

2. What level is this course?

200 Level (Developing)

Building on and expanding the scope of introductory knowledge and skills, developing breadth or depth and applying knowledge and skills in a new context. May require pre-requisites where discipline specific introductory knowledge or skills is necessary. Normally, undertaken in the second or third full-time year of an undergraduate programs.

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 Analyse, apply and evaluate the use of a strength-based approach to counselling from a client and counsellor perspective.	Knowledgeable Empowered
2 Identify and articulate the history and principles of strength-based collaborative counselling.	Knowledgeable
3 Critically reflect on your own values and beliefs in relation to the counselling process using a strengths-based approach.	Empowered
4 Demonstrate and apply your understanding of the ethical responsibilities and professional requirements underpinning the use of a strengths-based approach.	Ethical
5 Demonstrate and utilise a solution-focused approach to build on progress, change, health and wellbeing for the clients that counsellors serve.	Empowered
6 Demonstrate effective communication through written reports and oral presentations, complying with accepted APA 7th ed. guidelines.	Knowledgeable Creative and critical thinker

5. Am I eligible to enrol in this course?

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

5.1. Pre-requisites

COU180 or SCS180 or SCS280

5.2. Co-requisites

Not applicable

5.3. Anti-requisites

SCS265

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

Not applicable

5.5. Microcredential Information

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	Activity Participation	Individual	10%	Course duration	Throughout teaching period (refer to Format)	In Class
All	2	Oral and Written Piece	Individual	25%	20 slides, each for 20 seconds	Week 4	Online Assignment Submission with plagiarism check
All	3	Case Study	Individual	30%	1500 words	Week 7	Online Assignment Submission with plagiarism check
All	4	Essay	Individual	35%	2000 words	Week 12	Online Assignment Submission with plagiarism check

All - Assessment Task 1: Participation

GOAL:	Students will actively participate for a minimum of 80% of their on-campus tutorials. Failure to meet the minimum participation requirements will result in failure for this task.						
PRODUCT:	Activity Participation						
AUTHORSHIP STATEMENT:							
FORMAT:	Tutor to record participation each week, via the LMS						
CRITERIA:	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>No.</th> <th></th> <th>Learning Outcome assessed</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1</td> <td>Demonstrate professional dispositions through tutorial participation</td> <td>4</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	No.		Learning Outcome assessed	1	Demonstrate professional dispositions through tutorial participation	4
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GENERIC SKILLS:							

All - Assessment Task 2: Pecha Kucha

GOAL:	Demonstrate comprehension of the historical underpinnings of the strength based approaches, the ethical and professional requirements for effective delivery, and how their own beliefs and values influence their adoption of a chosen strength based approach.	
PRODUCT:	Oral and Written Piece	
AUTHORSHIP STATEMENT:		
FORMAT:	Recorded and Narrated slide show. Template of narration, image references, and source references.	
CRITERIA:	No.	Learning Outcome assessed
	1	Demonstrate understanding of each strength based approach of counselling 1
	2	Demonstrate comprehension of the historical underpinnings of strength based counselling approaches. 2
	3	Demonstrate awareness of how own values and beliefs influence the adoption of a favoured strength based approach 3
	4	Demonstrate knowledge in a Pecha Kucha format 6
GENERIC SKILLS:	Applying technologies, Information literacy	

All - Assessment Task 3: Case Study

GOAL:	Demonstrate awareness of essential competencies of a chosen strength based approach. Critically reflect of own essential counselling competencies, and best practice techniques to develop competencies to minimum expected standards.	
PRODUCT:	Case Study	
AUTHORSHIP STATEMENT:		
FORMAT:	Written assignment, to APA 7th ed. standards. Written within the Cadmus platform, and submitted online, via plagiarism checkers.	
CRITERIA:	No.	Learning Outcome assessed
	1	Demonstrate awareness of essential counselling competencies (as introduced in COU180) 1
	2	Demonstrate self-awareness of own competency strength and weaknesses, including best practice techniques to develop those competencies identified as needing further development. 1
	3	Written communication skills, including APA 7th ed. conventions 6
GENERIC SKILLS:	Communication, Information literacy	

All - Assessment Task 4: Critical Reflective Essay

GOAL:	Students will critically reflect on their counselling skills practice during tutorials using an accepted experiential learning model (e.g., Kolb's Learning Cycle). Reflection must address the experience of strength-based practice from both the client and counsellor perspectives. Students will identify: Two strengths demonstrated in their counselling practice Two areas requiring further development A plan for improvement informed by relevant academic literature This task supports the development of self-awareness, professional competence, and evidence-based practice in counselling.												
PRODUCT:	Essay												
AUTHORSHIP STATEMENT:													
FORMAT:	This is a Critical Reflective Essay, written to accepted essay structure (introduction, body paragraphs, conclusion, references), and APA 7th ed. formatting and referencing conventions. Assessment is prepared within the Cadmus platform, and submitted online via plagiarism checkers.												
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GENERIC SKILLS:	Communication, Problem solving												

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. 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

You need regular access to the resource(s) below. Many texts are available as ebooks through the [Library](#) at no additional cost.

REQUIRED?	AUTHOR	YEAR	TITLE	EDITION	PUBLISHER
Required	Peter De Jong, Insoo Kim Berg	2013	Interviewing for Solutions	4th	Wadsworth Publishing Company
Required	John J. Murphy, Jacqueline A. Sparks	2018	Strengths-Based Therapy	n/a	Routledge

8.2. Specific requirements

Not applicable

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:

- (a) The final mark is in the percentage range 47% to 49.4%; and
- (b) The course is graded using the Standard Grading scale

10.3. Assessment: Submission penalties

Late submissions may be penalised up to and including the following maximum percentage of the assessment task's identified value, with weekdays and weekends included in the calculation of days late:

- (a) One day: deduct 5%;
- (b) Two days: deduct 10%;
- (c) Three days: deduct 20%;
- (d) Four days: deduct 40%;
- (e) Five days: deduct 60%;
- (f) Six days: deduct 80%;
- (g) Seven days: A result of zero is awarded for the assessment task.

The following penalties will apply for a late submission for an online examination:

- Less than 15 minutes: No penalty
- From 15 minutes to 30 minutes: 20% penalty
- More than 30 minutes: 100% penalty

10.4. 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
- Central Examinations
- Deferred Examinations
- Student Conduct
- Students with a Disability

For more information, visit <https://www.usc.edu.au/explore/policies-and-procedures#academic-learning-and-teaching>

10.5. Student Charter

UniSC 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.

10.6. General Enquiries

For course-specific questions, contact your teaching staff or Course Coordinator.

For other enquiries or to access support, please contact Student Central:

- [UniSC Student Central](#)
- [UniSC Adelaide Student Central](#)