

COU301

Positive Psychology for Counselling

School: School of Law and Society

2026 | Trimester 1

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 usc.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

Traditionally, the foundation for clinical and counselling psychology has been the psychopathological personality, which focused on pre-classical psychoanalysis and modern practices to find what goes wrong in the human mind. This course will help you to examine factors that should be included when considering what goes right in the human mind - a study of strengths, virtues, optimism, hope, resiliency and happiness. The course is largely experiential and presents practical ways of using character strengths to promote and maintain wellbeing.

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	10 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.	2hrs	Week 1	10 times
Information session – Online learning activity facilitated by the tutor	1hr	Refer to Format	3 times

1.3. Course Topics

What is Positive Psychology?

The evidence base for Positive Psychology

Emotion – dealing with the positive and negative (adult themes)

Finding flow states, mindfulness practice and wellbeing

Positive health

The psychological benefits of creativity

1.4. Mature Content

Adult themes

2. What level is this course?

300 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	Review and apply the research that supports the principles, skills and strategies of positive psychology, and critically assess the claims of positive psychology to promote health and wellbeing.	Knowledgeable Creative and critical thinker
2	Identify the changes in lifestyle you want to make and demonstrate through self-reflective writings that you are moving towards living in a positive psychological state with increased stable happiness.	Creative and critical thinker Empowered
3	Understand and identify theoretical and practical concepts of Positive Psychology for counselling.	Knowledgeable Ethical
4	Create and plan Positive Psychology interventions, apply and reflect on effectiveness and outcomes.	Knowledgeable Creative and critical thinker Ethical
5	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 and enrolled in Program AR302, AR303, AR375 or SA306

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

Students will submit a literature review in Week 3, and will receive feedback in week 5 regarding any issues with written work. The literature review will prepare them for future assignments.

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	Literature Review (or component)	Individual	30%	1500 words	Week 3	Online Assignment Submission with plagiarism check and in class
All	3	Journal	Individual	25%	1500 Words	Week 6	Online Assignment Submission with plagiarism check and in class
All	4	Case Study	Individual	35%	1750	Week 12	Online Submission

All - Assessment Task 1: Participation

GOAL:	Students will participate for a minimum of 80% of their on-campus tutorials. Failure to meet the minimum participation requirements will result in a failed grade for this task.		
PRODUCT:	Activity Participation		
FORMAT:	Tutor to assess and record participation each week, in the LMS		
CRITERIA:	No.		Learning Outcome assessed
	1	Demonstrate professional dispositions through tutorial participation	4
GENERIC SKILLS:			

All - Assessment Task 2: Self care intervention literature review

GOAL:	To create a literature review about a self care practice or intervention relevant to assessment 3.					
PRODUCT:	Literature Review (or component)					
FORMAT:	Identify a self care practice/intervention such as mindfulness and gratitude activities that could be practiced during the trimester, and review literature that describes and reports on the effectiveness of this practice/intervention. Literature Review is completed within Cadmus and submitted online via plagiarism checkers.					
CRITERIA:	No.					Learning Outcome assessed
	1	Identification of suitable mindfulness and gratitude activities for self-care				1 2
	2	Literature review of relevant peer reviewed literature on chosen practice/intervention.				1 3 5
GENERIC SKILLS:	Problem solving, Organisation, Information literacy					

All - Assessment Task 3: Reflective journal

GOAL:	Begin to implement the mindfulness and gratitude self-care changes you want to make in order to live in a more positive psychological state, and reflect each week in your journal on changes you are noticing.		
PRODUCT:	Journal		
FORMAT:	Write one-two paragraphs per week reflecting on any changes you notice as a result of engaging in your self care practice/intervention. Each paragraph must connect to relevant literature in your literature review.		
CRITERIA:	No.	Learning Outcome assessed	
	1	Clarity of description of practice/intervention and implementation.	2 4
	2	Clarity and insightfulness of changes noticed.	1 3
	3	Clear reporting on challenges of implementing your plan	2 5
	4	Written expression and APA referencing	5
GENERIC SKILLS:	Communication, Problem solving, Applying technologies, Information literacy		

All - Assessment Task 4: Fostering Community Wellbeing: Design and Development of a Positive Psychology Group Program

GOAL:	Design and develop a six-week therapeutic group program, situated within a community setting, that implements positive psychology principles to enhance the wellbeing of an identified community population (e.g. Older adults; young people; first time mothers; carers). Your program should reflect a thorough understanding of the focal population's specific needs and demonstrate how positive psychology approaches can be effectively customised to address these needs through group intervention.		
PRODUCT:	Case Study		
FORMAT:	A 1750 word program plan is to developed and submitted utilising a provided template. Your plan will include: a description of the population group; a needs assessment of this group from a positive psychology perspective; a brief rationale for the adoption of the positive psychology approach with the identified group; description of the program goals; a session plan for each week of the program; and a resource list. Any pertinent handouts are to be presented in Appendices.		
CRITERIA:	No.	Learning Outcome assessed	
	1	Comprehensive, professional and therapeutically informed description of the community population for whom the group program is being developed. Describe the therapeutic needs of this group with reference to positive psychology constructs.	1 3 4
	2	Provide a clear rationale for the implementation of a positive psychology approach with the identified population, within the proposed group context.	3 4
	3	Clear communication of the goals and aims of the program. Goals and aims to be constructively aligned with both the therapeutic description of the population, the nature of the program (open or closed) and contemporary referent literature.	1 3 4
	4	Detailed description of the developed program including: a plan for each session that outlines the aim, theme, and activities of the session. Any relevant handouts to be presented in the Appendices.	3 4
	5	Demonstrate academic integrity, in the form of scholarly expression, effectively structured sentences and paragraphs, logical sequencing of argument, and appropriate inclusion of in-text citations.	5
GENERIC SKILLS:	Communication, Problem solving, Organisation, Applying technologies, Information literacy		

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

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	EDITION	PUBLISHER
Required	William C. Compton, Edward Hoffman	2019	Positive Psychology	3rd ed	SAGE Publications, Incorporated
Recommended	Martin Seligman	2012	Flourish	n/a	Random House Australia

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 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. SafeUniSC

UniSC 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 SafeUniSC by phone: [07 5430 1168](tel:0754301168) or using the [SafeZone](#) app. For general enquires contact the SafeUniSC team by phone [07 5456 3864](tel:0754563864) or email safe@usc.edu.au.

The SafeUniSC 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.

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.

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 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 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
- 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>

10.9. 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.

10.10.General Enquiries

In person:

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

Tel: +61 7 5430 2890

Email: studentcentral@usc.edu.au