



COURSE OUTLINE

CRM401

Research Dissertation A

School: School of Law and Society

2026 | Trimester 1

UniSC Sunshine Coast

BLENDDED
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

In this course, you are required to develop and implement an independent scholarly investigation into a core area of Criminology and Justice. The research question/s under investigation should be innovative, and should have either significant theoretical or applied implications. Under the supervision of an academic supervisor, you will conceptualise your project, develop a research proposal, and undertake initial project tasks necessary to conduct research.

1.2. How will this course be delivered?

ACTIVITY	HOURS	BEGINNING WEEK	FREQUENCY
BLENDDED LEARNING			
Independent Study/Research – Directed Independent and supervised study	10hrs	Week 1	12 times

1.3. Course Topics

Specific research project – supported by USC academic supervisor

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?

24 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	Demonstrate advanced theoretical knowledge in the core area of Criminology which they have chosen to undertake their dissertation.	Knowledgeable
2	Demonstrate advanced skills in reviewing, critically analysing and synthesising information to complete a range of research activities.	Creative and critical thinker
3	Apply appropriate project management skills.	Empowered
4	Apply appropriate ethical decision-making and conduct research in compliance with ethical standards, requirements and protocols.	Ethical
5	Communicate a clear and coherent exposition of knowledge and ideas to contribute to the discipline.	Engaged
6	Demonstrate autonomy, well-developed judgement, adaptability and responsibility for own learning and practice.	Empowered

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

Must be enrolled in program AR409

5.2. Co-requisites

Not applicable

5.3. Anti-requisites

Not applicable

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

Completion of CRM307 Crime Research Methods or equivalent is recommended

6. How am I going to be assessed?

6.1. Grading Scale

Limited Grading (PNP)

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 will receive formative feedback on your research proposal in two ways: informally, through supervision sessions with your supervisor, and formally, as written and formal feedback for Task 1 & 2. You will also receive additional feedback on your project from other research supervisors when you present your proposed research project in Task 3.

6.3. Assessment tasks

DELIVERY MODE	TASK NO.	ASSESSMENT PRODUCT	INDIVIDUAL OR GROUP	WHAT IS THE DURATION / LENGTH?	WHEN SHOULD I SUBMIT?	WHERE SHOULD I SUBMIT IT?
All	1	Written Piece	Individual	4000 words	Week 8	To Supervisor
All	2	Artefact - Technical and Scientific, and Written Piece	Individual	As per the HREC's requirements	Week 9	To Supervisor
All	3	Oral	Individual	5-7 minutes	Week 12	In Class

All - Assessment Task 1: Research Proposal

GOAL:	The goal of this assessment is to formulate a research proposal for your chosen topic. It should include an overview of research topic, outline key theoretical framework/s, state the overall aims and research questions, and propose appropriate research methods, developed in consultation with your supervisor.	
PRODUCT:	Written Piece	
FORMAT:	Submission of this research proposal is compulsory and is an important component of Task 2, your ethics application. This proposal will include an introduction to the research topic, a critical analysis of current research to highlight current gaps in knowledge, outline the theoretical framework/s underpinning the research and a set out a clear rationale for the proposed research questions, and methodologies, to address these questions. The proposal should also identify and justify an appropriate outlet for a scholarly publication. Resources will be made available on Canvas to assist you with this task.	
CRITERIA:	<p>No.</p> <p>1 Apply advanced theoretical and technical knowledge related to your chosen core area of Criminology and Justice.</p> <p>2 Advanced analytical and critical thinking skills to inform research proposal.</p> <p>3 Clear and coherent presentation and defence of your research ideas through written communication.</p>	Learning Outcome assessed
GENERIC SKILLS:	Communication, Problem solving, Organisation, Information literacy	

All - Assessment Task 2: HREC Ethics Application

GOAL:	The goal of this assessment task is to prepare and submit the ethics application for your thesis research project. You will work with your supervisor to develop and finalise your ethics application to meet the requirements of the relevant University Ethics Committees. This includes projects where an exemption of review is relevant.	
PRODUCT:	Artefact - Technical and Scientific, and Written Piece	
FORMAT:	Your ethics application should include all materials required for an ethics application at USC, e.g., the research protocol, HREA application form, information and consent forms, data collection instruments, and permissions to survey possible participants. Additional information about these processes are available in Canvas. Delays associated with these procedures are not a justification for an extension of submission of your thesis.	
CRITERIA:	<p>No.</p> <p>1 Submission of application via USC's Human Research Ethics Committee.</p>	Learning Outcome assessed
GENERIC SKILLS:	Communication, Problem solving, Organisation, Information literacy	

All - Assessment Task 3: Elevator Pitch

GOAL:	The goal of this task is to practice communicating your research proposal in a clear and concise manner	
PRODUCT:	Oral	
FORMAT:	<p>This is a 5 - 7 minute elevator pitch that communicates the rationale and importance of your research study. This will be presented to your peers and relevant academic staff. It should include:</p> <p>A clear rationale and statement of the importance of this research for the discipline;</p> <p>Theoretical framework/s and aims;</p> <p>Research questions or hypotheses for your research project;</p> <p>Research design, sample, measures and procedures; and</p> <p>Proposed analytic strategy</p> <p>Creativity in presenting this pitch to engage your audience and convey key messages is encouraged</p>	
CRITERIA:	No.	Learning Outcome assessed
	1 Synthesise relevant academic, institutional and media sources to situate the importance of this research within the broader literature	2
	2 Advanced analytical and critical thinking skills.	2
	3 Clear articulation of theoretical framework/s, research questions or hypotheses; research design, measures and proposed data collection methods.	1 4
	4 Use of evidence and examples to effectively illustrate arguments	2
	5 Communicate complex ideas simply and in an engaging format	5
GENERIC SKILLS:	Collaboration, Organisation	

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

There are no required/recommended resources for this course.

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

This course will be graded as Pass in a Limited Grade Course (PU) or Fail in a Limited Grade Course (UF) as per clause 5.1.1.3 and 5.1.1.4 of the Grades and Grade Point Average (GPA) - Academic Policy.

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.

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.

Refer to the Assessment: Courses and Coursework Programs – Procedures.

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](#) or using the [SafeZone](#) app. For general enquiries contact the SafeUniSC team by phone [07 5456 3864](#) 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](#) 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