

DES102 Visual Storytelling

School: School of Business and Creative Industries

2026 | Semester 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.

Online

ONLINE

You can do this course without coming onto campus, unless your program has specified a mandatory onsite requirement.

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

This course investigates visual culture and how and why images are constructed to convey particular meanings. You will examine the benefits and limitations of using images to communicate by exploring how images tell stories, communicate ideas, evoke emotions and create impact. You will learn about controversial, challenging, iconic, appropriated and manipulated images and critically reflect on the use of images in contemporary culture. The course addresses image use in many contexts including art and design, advertising, mass media, historical images, information design and animation.

1.2. How will this course be delivered?

| ACTIVITY | HOURS | BEGINNING WEEK | FREQUENCY |
|--|-------|----------------|-----------|
| BLENDED LEARNING | | | |
| Lecture – 1 hour online lecture content for 12 weeks (or equivalent). | 1hr | Week 1 | 12 times |
| Tutorial/Workshop 1 – On campus tutorial/workshop for 12 weeks (or equivalent). | 2hrs | Week 1 | 12 times |
| ONLINE | | | |
| Online – 3 hours online content for 12 weeks (or equivalent). | 3hrs | Week 1 | 12 times |

1.3. Course Topics

- The power of images
- Images as signs
- Information graphics
- Ideas and meaning
- Visual semiotics
- Vision and perception
- Photographic truth
- Manipulated image
- Controversial images
- Iconic images
- Visual storytelling

2. What level is this course?

100 Level (Introductory)

Engaging with discipline knowledge and skills at foundational level, broad application of knowledge and skills in familiar contexts and with support. Limited or no prerequisites. Normally, associated with the first 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 | Apply knowledge of key theories and concepts and demonstrate an understanding of how images encode and communicate various meanings. | Creative and critical thinker |
| 2 | Understand the benefits, limitations, ethics and impact of employing forms of visual communication. | Knowledgeable |
| 3 | Demonstrate a capacity to effectively communicate analysis of forms of visual communication in written, visual and oral formats. | Knowledgeable |

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

Not applicable

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

In the week 4 tutorial, a draft of your Task 1 storyboard will be reviewed by your tutor and peers. In most weeks there will be small group collaborative tasks. These contribute to Task 3 but also will support you in developing ideas and understanding for Tasks 1 and 2.

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 | Artefact - Creative, and Written Piece | Individual | 40% | 12 symbols, 600 words | Refer to Format | Online Submission |
| All | 2 | Oral and Written Piece | Individual | 45% | Presentation 10 minutes Written component 1500 words | Week 12 | Online Assignment Submission with plagiarism check |
| All | 3 | Portfolio | Individual | 15% | N/A | Week 13 | Online Submission |

All - Assessment Task 1: Visual Story Telling

| | | | |
|-----------------|---|---|---------------------------|
| GOAL: | To enhance understanding of visual semiotics, information design and the capacity of images to communicate meanings through a visual narrative. | | |
| PRODUCT: | Artefact - Creative, and Written Piece | | |
| FORMAT: | Submit: Wed Week 6 (symbols);Wed Week 8 (storyboard, written reflection). Specific task details and description can be found on Blackboard in the Assessment/Task 1 section. | | |
| CRITERIA: | No. | | Learning Outcome assessed |
| | 1 | The ability to comprehensively meet the project requirements | |
| | 2 | Demonstrated understanding of key concepts and theories to support effective design in the development of visual narrative. | |
| | 3 | Critical thinking and analysis in the visual and written communication. | |
| | 4 | Creativity and clarity of communication | |
| | 5 | Assessment criteria are mapped to the course learning outcomes. | 1 2 3 |
| GENERIC SKILLS: | | | |

All - Assessment Task 2: Presentation The Power of Images

| | | |
|------------------------|--|--|
| GOAL: | To convey a sense of the power and impact of a group of related images and to examine some of the ways that images can communicate clear or misleading meanings. | |
| PRODUCT: | Oral and Written Piece | |
| FORMAT: | Specific task details and description can be found on Blackboard in the Assessment/Task2 section. | |
| CRITERIA: | No. | Learning Outcome assessed |
| | 1 | The ability to comprehensively answer the question and meet the project requirements |
| | 2 | The ability to critically analyse and communicate about the material |
| | 3 | An understanding of relevant concepts and the benefits, limitations and impact of image use. |
| | 4 | Clear, well organised verbal, written and visual information |
| GENERIC SKILLS: | | |

All - Assessment Task 3: Portfolio exercises

| | | |
|------------------------|--|---|
| GOAL: | To provide analytical, collaborative and critical responses to material presented in lectures, tutorials, readings and group activities undertaken in tutorials. | |
| PRODUCT: | Portfolio | |
| FORMAT: | In most weeks there will be specific activities to be completed in tutorials. Generally these are small group, collaborative tasks which will enable you to consider differing perspectives concerning image uses. They may involve a practical design task or discussion questions all of which will need to be completed on the weekly exercise sheet. Your responses can reflect group discussions but must also include your individual input. Specific task details can be found on Blackboard. Tutorial activity responses may be handwritten but must be presented neatly and clearly. It is your responsibility to keep a copy of these exercise sheets. They should be combined as a single document and submitted according to instructions on Blackboard. | |
| CRITERIA: | No. | Learning Outcome assessed |
| | 1 | The ability to comprehensively complete the activity |
| | 2 | The ability to critically analyse and communicate your ideas about selected topics |
| | 3 | Demonstration of an understanding and effective application of concepts presented within the course |
| | 4 | Clarity of communication |
| | 5 | Evidence of preparation for class and contribution to discussion and analysis. |
| GENERIC SKILLS: | | |

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

Your eligibility for supplementary assessment in a course is dependent of the following conditions applying:

The final mark is in the percentage range 47% to 49.4%

The course is graded using the Standard Grading scale

You have not failed an assessment task in the course due to academic misconduct.

10.3. Assessment: Submission penalties

Late submission of assessment tasks may 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.

- 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 to negotiate an outcome.

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