

ENP103 Planning Theory, Governance and Politics

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

You will be introduced to government, politics and governance; the complexity of planning across three levels of government in partnership with NGOs, Business and Indigenous communities. You will consider the role of politics in planning because planners deal with the allocation of resources - a political process. It will be discussed how Planners need to understand the formal authority of governments, along with informal arrangements. Field experience on K'gari, a World Heritage Area, will highlight issues associated with successful spatial governance and sustainable development.

1.2. How will this course be delivered?

ACTIVITY	HOURS	BEGINNING WEEK	FREQUENCY
BLENDED LEARNING			
Learning materials – Course content delivered online through learning materials/content in Canvas.	1hr	Week 1	5 times
Tutorial/Workshop 1 – On campus tutorial	2hrs	Week 1	5 times
Fieldwork – 3 Day off Campus Fieldtrip. Details to be advised by Course Coordinator	18hrs	Week 4	Once Only

1.3. Course Topics

- Spatial governance
- Planning practice in Queensland
- Indigenous worldviews in planning and design
- Planning theory and its purpose
- Ethics in planning

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 MAPPING	PROFESSIONAL STANDARD MAPPING *
On successful completion of this course, you should be able to...	Completing these tasks successfully will contribute to you becoming...	Planning Institute of Australia
1 Understand the nature of spatial planning at all levels of government in Australia.	Knowledgeable Empowered	1, 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6, 1.7, 1.8, 1.9, 1.10, 1.11, 1.12, 2, 2.1.1, 2.1.10, 2.1.11, 2.1.2, 2.1.3, 2.1.4, 2.1.5, 2.1.6, 2.1.7, 2.1.8, 2.1.9, 2.2.1, 2.2.10, 2.2.11, 2.2.2, 2.2.3, 2.2.4, 2.2.5, 2.2.6, 2.2.7, 2.2.8, 2.2.9, 2.3.1, 2.3.2, 2.3.3, 2.3.4, 2.3.5, 2.3.6, 2.3.7, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 3, 3.1.1, 3.1.2, 3.1.3, 3.1.4, 3.1.5, 3.2.1, 3.2.2, 3.2.3, 3.2.4, 3.4.1, 3.4.2, 3.4.3, 3.4.4, 3.4.5, 3.5.1, 3.5.2, 3.5.3, 3.5.4, 3.1, 3.2, 3.5
2 Reflect on your field trip and practical experience.	Creative and critical thinker Engaged	1, 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6
3 Apply theoretical and practical understanding about spatial planning to undertake a practical exercise.	Empowered Sustainability-focussed	1, 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6, 1.7, 1.8, 1.9, 1.10, 1.11, 1.12, 2.2.1, 2.2.10, 2.2.11, 2.2.2, 2.2.3, 2.2.4, 2.2.5, 2.2.6, 2.2.7, 2.2.8, 2.2.9, 2.3.1, 2.3.2, 2.3.3, 2.3.4, 2.3.5, 2.3.6, 2.3.7, 2.2, 2.3, 3, 3.1.1, 3.1.2, 3.2.1, 3.2.2, 3.2.3, 3.2.4, 3.2.5, 3.2.6, 3.3.1, 3.3.2, 3.3.3, 3.3.4, 3.3.5, 3.4.1, 3.4.2, 3.4.3, 3.4.4, 3.4.5, 3.4.6, 3.5.1, 3.5.2, 3.5.3, 3.5.4, 3.5.5, 3.5.6, 3.6.1, 3.6.2, 3.6.3, 3.6.4, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 3.6

* Competencies by Professional Body

CODE	COMPETENCY
PLANNING INSTITUTE OF AUSTRALIA	
1	Generic Capabilities and Competencies
1.1	Recognise the need for, locate and be able to use credible information to develop new skills and knowledge
1.2	Perform critical analysis and synthesis
1.3	Develop and evaluate arguments
1.4	Apply creative thinking processes to complex problems
1.5	Make meaningful new connections between challenging, contradictory or unlikely elements
1.6	Think strategically and apply planning concepts, skills and knowledge in a range of spatial settings
1.7	Write and present with clarity, cohesion, logic, structure, relevance, accuracy and precision of expression in a range of contexts
1.8	Effectively use voice, body-language, structure, word choice, graphics, and presentation technologies, across a range of media, appropriate to the knowledge base and cultural background of the audience
1.9	Work as a team member, with commitment to shared goals, team processes and appropriate interpersonal skills, including respect, reliability, mutual supportiveness and time management
1.10	Operate in a manner that recognises the position of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the first peoples of Australia, the relationship of those peoples to planning practice in historical and contemporary terms; and compliance to the maximum extent possible with accepted international standards of best practice working with Indigenous communities

CODE	COMPETENCY
1.11	Awareness of challenges and opportunities posed by operating in diverse and globally oriented settings
1.12	Work in diverse employment situations requiring the application of the theory, knowledge and practice of planning
2	Core Curriculum Competencies
2.1.1	Knowledge of unique and special position of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and Indigenous peoples, their rights and interests, knowledge, culture and traditions, and the appropriate protocols of respect and recognition for engaging with them on matters affecting their rights and interests
2.1.10	Capacity to apply theoretical and technical planning skills to unfamiliar or emergent circumstances, even with incomplete information
2.1.11	Capacity to communicate in written, oral, and graphical form about planning issues, development proposals and actions via a range of media to various audiences in a manner appropriate to the situation
2.1.2	Knowledge of the diversity of populations served, including the cultures of ethnic groups in Australia, other groups with special needs, including children and older people, and a capacity to engage meaningfully with diverse groups
2.1.3	Knowledge of the development of planners' roles over time and in various contexts including the challenges and requirements of contemporary circumstances
2.1.4	Knowledge of and capacity to use relevant technical tools for data collection, analysis and mapping, and have knowledge of quantitative methods, spatial mapping, relevant digital software, and geographic information systems (GIS)
2.1.5	Knowledge of and capacity to use project management and risk management principles, techniques and tools
2.1.6	Capacity to make appropriate choices in ethically ambiguous situations based on knowledge of social, economic, environmental, and cultural aspects of planning
2.1.7	Capacity to work productively as an individual or in a team, with other planners, or with multidisciplinary and diverse groups, including lay people, while representing and maintaining professional opinions and standards
2.1.8	Capacity to mediate and negotiate to resolve planning conflicts
2.1.9	Capacity to apply and develop planning knowledge to identify problems, devise ways to investigate and solve these problems drawing on research-based evidence, and producing solutions as the basis for appropriate action
2.2.1	Knowledge of relevant aspects of the history of planning in Australia and internationally and of different planning approaches in their historical and comparative context
2.2.10	Capacity to review, evaluate and monitor planning processes
2.2.11	Capacity to critically evaluate and assess plans, planning tools, built environment proposals, and likely outcomes
2.2.2	Knowledge of planning theories and capacity to critically apply these theories when undertaking planning, including theories that recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' and Indigenous peoples' rights, interests, laws, perspectives and knowledge systems
2.2.3	Knowledge and theories of urban and regional planning and environmental planning and design, including but not restricted to principles of land use, urban form, infrastructure systems, ecological systems, global trends and emerging issues, climate change, transport, the integration of land use and transport, heritage conservation, landscape and human settlement patterns
2.2.4	Knowledge of the main types of plan-making processes and implementation techniques including strategic planning, statutory planning, urban design and place-making together with the capacity to select appropriate processes and implementation methods according to the scale and circumstance of intervention
2.2.5	Knowledge of key legal principles and practices in plan making and implementation, including an understanding of native title as a specific land tenure in Australian land and environmental law
2.2.6	Knowledge of the main processes and forms of governance relevant to planning and of the influence of politics upon these, and the related capacity to design and implement workable and democratic participatory processes in association with communities and other stakeholders
2.2.7	Capacity to perform key planning tasks via strategic and statutory frameworks
2.2.8	Capacity to gather qualitative and quantitative data relevant to different planning circumstances including global trends and emerging issues, to analyse it and to communicate its relevance and any shortcomings of findings

CODE	COMPETENCY
2.2.9	Capacity to prepare plans and urban designs to address and manage land use and development issues and opportunities
2.3.1	Capacity to interpret and use land tenure systems and relevant acts and case law to undertake typical plan-making and implementation actions with regard to planning law requirements
2.3.2	Knowledge of wider legal and related governmental principles and frameworks underpinning planning, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander law, lore, governance systems and customs.
2.3.3	Knowledge of statutory processes associated with plan making, implementation and administration.
2.3.4	Knowledge of the principles and practices of legal interpretation and the drafting of legislation and regulations.
2.3.5	Knowledge of the operation of appeal systems including the role of courts and tribunals, including the role of expert evidence.
2.3.6	Capacity to act in typical planning roles using planning law, such as giving basic advice about fundamental principles to lay people and other professionals.
2.3.7	Capacity to develop implementable planning regulations and policies
2.1	Professional and Ethical Planning Practice
2.2	Plan Making, Land use Allocation and Management, and Urban Design
2.3	Governance, Law, Plan implementation and Administration
3	Supporting Knowledge Areas
3.1.1	Ability to understand the different cultural beliefs and assumptions built into various theories and methods of planning practice, the ways those methods and assumptions have been used to marginalise and dispossess Indigenous peoples, the contribution Indigenous perspectives and theories are able to make to mainstream theories, and how their rights may be better recognised and accommodated through planning systems.
3.1.2	Capacity to engage respectfully with the full range of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's rights and interests and their special place as the first peoples of Australia.
3.1.3	A sound working knowledge of how Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' rights and interests are recognised and protected under Australian law including through land rights schemes, cultural heritage and its protection, joint management arrangements, and native title legislation.
3.1.4	Knowledge and understanding of the protocols for engaging with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples including an understanding of the concept of free, prior and informed consent as set out by the Australian Human Rights Commission and best practice ethical guidelines.
3.1.5	A broad knowledge of Indigenous peoples and cultures at an international level including any international charters, instruments and precedents.
3.2.1	Knowledge of the spatial-economic underpinnings of urban regions and cities including the economic principles of land use distribution.
3.2.2	Knowledge of the fundamentals of the economics of development including land and property development
3.2.3	Knowledge of the fundamentals of market feasibility, commercial decision making, comparative advantage and property markets.
3.2.4	Capacity to analyse spatial economic plans at a basic level.
3.4.1	Knowledge of the main sources of information about communities, including census and survey data.
3.4.2	Ability to undertake basic primary and secondary data gathering and analysis utilising quantitative and qualitative methods
3.4.3	Knowledge of basic demographic statistics, analysis and presentation
3.4.4	Working knowledge of principles and issues of social impact analysis
3.4.5	Recognition of social and cultural diversity and the capacity to assess the equity, health and social inclusion aspects of urban and regional plans and practices.
3.5.1	Knowledge of the relationship and integration between transport and land use.

CODE	COMPETENCY
3.5.2	Knowledge of the principles of transport planning and modelling
3.5.3	Knowledge of various transport modes and their operation.
3.5.4	Capacity to understand and critique key concepts in transport economics and project planning.
3.2.5	Capacity to produce basic spatial economic plans and development strategies at a level demonstrating understanding and use of relevant market related concepts.
3.2.6	Capacity to link economic understandings with other ethical and practical dimensions of planning, such as socio-spatial disparities associated with globalisation.
3.3.1	Knowledge of the main principles of sustainable development, ecological systems, resilience and key issues including climate change.
3.3.2	Knowledge of natural hazards and planning approaches to managing those hazards.
3.3.3	Capacity to undertake and use environmental impact assessments.
3.3.4	Capacity to produce basic environmental plans at a level demonstrating understanding of broader principles and policy implementation.
3.3.5	Capacity to practically and critically link plans into wider frameworks of environmental action and influence at a variety of scales.
3.4.6	Capacity to produce basic social plans – including planning for social infrastructure and remediation of socio-spatial disparities - at a level demonstrating understanding of the main components of social plan production and implementation
3.5.5	Capacity to critique plans and design proposals, according to sustainable transport planning principles, linking these with other forms of planning and urban change influences
3.5.6	Capacity to contribute to the production of transportation plans and policies at a sufficient level to demonstrate a good understanding of the main components of transport plan production and implementation.
3.6.1	Knowledge of the role of urban design as a discipline in the improvement and management of the public realm and urban spaces and places.
3.6.2	Capacity to read and understand drawings and plans, including visualisation of the items represented, and to recognise and be able to critique inadequate drawings and representations.
3.6.3	Capacity to produce basic urban design plans at a level showing understanding of the main components of urban design plan production and implementation.
3.6.4	Capacity to write policy and draft controls relevant to achievement of urban design outcomes.
3.1	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' and Indigenous peoples' rights, interests and planning approaches
3.2	Economic Planning
3.3	Environmental Planning
3.4	Social Planning
3.5	Transport Planning
3.6	Urban Design

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

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

Reflection and review of all content is encouraged in weekly interactive tutorials, and feedback will be given in class.

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	Oral and Written Piece	Group	30%	10 minute oral presentation	Week 5	In Class
All	2	Portfolio	Individual	30%	6 to 8 A3 sheets	Week 7	Online Submission
All	3	Quiz/zes	Individual	40%	90 minutes	Week 8	Online Test (Quiz)

All - Assessment Task 1: Fieldtrip workshop

GOAL:	To apply your knowledge and skills in undertaking a practical study of local spatial planning issues during a fieldtrip. The solution requires integrated approaches across levels of government and non-government organisations.		
PRODUCT:	Oral and Written Piece		
AUTHORSHIP STATEMENT:			
FORMAT:	You will work in groups - materials will be provided for the completion of creative work.		
CRITERIA:	No.		Learning Outcome assessed
	1	Data collection and analysis - Including identification of policies and actors and their roles in K'gari management	1 2
	2	Recommendations - Relevance and clarity of conclusions and recommendations	1 2 3
	3	Quality and depth of notes shared with the class	1 2 3
	4	Quality of class presentation - Relevant and effective photos and illustrations to present key ideas and observations. Presentation should be clear and tell a compelling story.	1 2 3
GENERIC SKILLS:	Communication, Collaboration, Organisation		

All - Assessment Task 2: Planning and Place Design Analysis

GOAL:	Reflect individually on your understanding of spatial governance issues in Australia through the analysis of a specific area of K'gari. You will produce an analysis and recommendations for planning and place design improvements.	
PRODUCT:	Portfolio	
AUTHORSHIP STATEMENT:		
FORMAT:	A portfolio constituted of 6 to 8 A3 sheets. All your recommendations should be explained through and supported by images and simple illustrations such as diagrams.	
CRITERIA:	No.	Learning Outcome assessed
	1	Demonstrate an understanding of the complexity of spatial governance in Australia and its effects on planning 1
	2	Demonstrate ability to critique the existing planning and place arrangements and provide solutions 1 2
	3	Use relevant references (readings and precedents) about spatial planning and governance, and place design, to support and comment on the decisions made and the knowledge applied 1 3
	4	Presentation of final portfolio (including layout and spelling) 1 2 3
GENERIC SKILLS:	Communication, Organisation	

All - Assessment Task 3: Examination

GOAL:	To test your understanding of the key concepts and knowledge discussed throughout this course.	
PRODUCT:	Quiz/zes	
AUTHORSHIP STATEMENT:		
FORMAT:	Online test	
CRITERIA:	No.	Learning Outcome assessed
	1	Ability to identify the difference between levels of governance and the nature of informal and formal plans 1
	2	Demonstrate an understanding of the nature of spatial planning carried out at the Commonwealth, State and regional levels of government in Australia 1
	3	Demonstrate an understand of the roles undertaken by various types of non-government organisations in spatial planning across Australia 1
GENERIC SKILLS:	Problem solving, 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

Information regarding prescribed texts or other associated resources will be made available on Canvas

9. How are risks managed in this course?

Risk assessments have been performed for all field activities and a low level of health and safety risk exists. Some risks concerns may include working in an unknown environment as well as slip and trip hazards. 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](#)