

# ENS222 Terrestrial Vertebrate Diversity and Ecology

**School:** School of Science, Technology and Engineering

2025 | Semester 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 [usc.edu.au](http://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 introduces you to the diversity, ecology and evolution of the terrestrial vertebrates through the disciplines of herpetology, ornithology and mammalogy. You will develop an appreciation of the scope and relevance of these disciplines via learning materials and laboratory classes. You will participate in a local field project where you will apply theoretical knowledge and develop practical skills in ethical wildlife research.

### 1.2. How will this course be delivered?

ACTIVITY	HOURS	BEGINNING WEEK	FREQUENCY
<b>BLENDED LEARNING</b>			
<b>Learning materials</b> – Weeks 1-7, Weeks 9-12	2hrs	Week 1	10 times
<b>Tutorial/Workshop 1</b> – Recapping information and consolidation	1hr	Week 1	13 times
<b>Tutorial/Workshop 2</b> – Weeks 6, 7, and 9.	2hrs	Week 6	3 times
<b>Fieldwork</b> – Outdoor vertebrate surveys and censuses	4hrs	Week 8	Once Only
<b>Laboratory 1</b> – Wet lab in weeks 2-5 (including a practical examination in week 5).	2hrs	Week 2	4 times

### 1.3. Course Topics

Herpetology

Ornithology

Mammalogy

Counting wildlife: Mark-  
Recapture and Distance  
sampling

Terrestrial habitats

Evolution and biogeography

Conservation

Vertebrate population ecology

Vertebrate community ecology

## 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	Apply and demonstrate knowledge of diversity, ecology and evolution of wildlife in various contexts. Building disciplinary and interdisciplinary knowledge through a scholarly approach incorporating global and regional perspectives (Professional Standards mapping)	Knowledgeable
2	Conduct scientific research using field and ecology data analysis skills - having both the capacity and confidence to pursue the attainment of full potential (Professional Standards mapping)	Empowered
3	Communicate in the style of a formal scientific poster - having both the capacity and confidence to pursue the attainment of full potential (Professional Standards mapping)	Engaged
4	Identify and apply ethical principles to wildlife research - acting with integrity in intellectual, professional and community pursuits (Professional Standards mapping)	Ethical

## 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

SCI102

### 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 Week 4 your responses to an online quiz will be viewed to ascertain your grasp of key concepts delivered during the first three weeks of this course.

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	Quiz/zes	Individual	0%	20 questions	Week 4	Online Test (Quiz)
All	2	Examination - not Centrally Scheduled	Individual	35%	1hr	Week 5	In Class
All	3	Artefact - Creative	Group	30%	A3 scientific poster	Week 13	Online Assignment Submission with plagiarism check
All	4	Examination - Centrally Scheduled	Individual	35%	2hr	Exam Period	Exam Venue

All - Assessment Task 1: Online quiz

GOAL:	Demonstrate basic comprehension of the learning material and practical class material, and the course structure, covered up to and including week 3.		
PRODUCT:	Quiz/zes		
FORMAT:	Multiple choice questions		
CRITERIA:	No.		Learning Outcome assessed
	1	Demonstrated ability to correctly answer questions drawn from the course outline, learning materials and practical classes up to and including week 3.	1
GENERIC SKILLS:	Information literacy		

**All - Assessment Task 2:** Practical exam

<b>GOAL:</b>	Demonstrate an understanding of the relationships between animal form and ecology and to correctly identify animal groups.				
<b>PRODUCT:</b>	Examination - not Centrally Scheduled				
<b>FORMAT:</b>	Individual; short answer practical exam based on the labs in weeks 1-3				
<b>CRITERIA:</b>	<table> <tr> <th>No.</th><th>Learning Outcome assessed</th></tr> <tr> <td>1</td><td>Demonstrated ability to correctly identify the lifestyle of various animal specimens based on morphology of limbs, sensory organs, <b>1</b></td></tr> </table>	No.	Learning Outcome assessed	1	Demonstrated ability to correctly identify the lifestyle of various animal specimens based on morphology of limbs, sensory organs, <b>1</b>
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<b>GENERIC SKILLS:</b>	Problem solving, Applying technologies, Information literacy				

**All - Assessment Task 3:** Scientific poster - field project

<b>GOAL:</b>	Produce a scientific poster outlining the methods, results and implications of field work.								
<b>PRODUCT:</b>	Artefact - Creative								
<b>FORMAT:</b>	<p>Group assessment; scientific poster which outlines the methods, results and implications of data gained during the class field trip.</p> <p>Layout follows the conventional scientific convention; Introduction, Methods, Results and Discussion; Appropriate use of images and text; appropriate analysis of ecological data collected during field surveys.</p>								
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3	Meeting discipline specifications for a scientific poster <b>3</b>								
<b>GENERIC SKILLS:</b>	Communication, Collaboration, Organisation								

**All - Assessment Task 4:** Final exam

<b>GOAL:</b>	Demonstrate knowledge of evolution, diversity, and field study of terrestrial vertebrates				
<b>PRODUCT:</b>	Examination - Centrally Scheduled				
<b>FORMAT:</b>	Written exam including multiple choice and short answer questions				
<b>CRITERIA:</b>	<table> <tr> <th>No.</th><th>Learning Outcome assessed</th></tr> <tr> <td>1</td><td>Correctly answer multiple choice questions; provide comprehensive written responses to short answer questions <b>1</b></td></tr> </table>	No.	Learning Outcome assessed	1	Correctly answer multiple choice questions; provide comprehensive written responses to short answer questions <b>1</b>
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<b>GENERIC SKILLS:</b>	Communication, Problem solving, 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.

## 7.1. Schedule

PERIOD AND TOPIC	ACTIVITIES
Week 13 - Revision	Learning Materials

## 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
Recommended	HICKMAN,Susan L. Keen,David J. Eisenhour,Allan Larson,Helen l'Anson	0	Integrated Principles of Zoology 18e	n/a	n/a

### 8.2. Specific requirements

Students will be required to participate in a half day of field work on one day during Week 8.

## 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:

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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto:studentcentral@usc.edu.au)