

ENS222

Terrestrial Vertebrate Diversity and Ecology

School: School of Science, Technology and Engineering

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

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
BLENDED LEARNING			
Learning materials – Throughout trimester	2hrs	Week 1	10 times
Tutorial/Workshop 1 – Recapping information and consolidation	1hr	Week 1	12 times
Tutorial/Workshop 2 – On campus	2hrs	Week 6	3 times
Fieldwork – Outdoor vertebrate surveys and censuses	4hrs	Week 8	Once Only
Laboratory 1 – Wet lab	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

SC1102

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

Kahoot quizzes in each tutorial/workshop will help gauge learning of concepts to date. These are ungraded.

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	Practical / Laboratory Skills	Individual	35%	1 hour	Refer to Format	In Class
All	2	Written Piece	Group	30%	A3 scientific poster	Refer to Format	Online Assignment Submission with plagiarism check
All	3	Oral	Individual	35%	Up to 30 minutes	Exam Period	In Class

All - Assessment Task 1: Practical exam

GOAL:	Demonstrate an understanding of the relationships between animal form and ecology and to correctly identify animal groups.	
PRODUCT:	Practical / Laboratory Skills	
AUTHORSHIP STATEMENT:		
FORMAT:	Individual; short answer practical exam based on the labs in weeks 1-3	
CRITERIA:	<p>No.</p> <p>1 Demonstrated ability to correctly identify the lifestyle of various animal specimens based on morphology of limbs, sensory organs,</p>	<p>Learning Outcome assessed</p> <p>1</p>
GENERIC SKILLS:	Problem solving, Applying technologies, Information literacy	

All - Assessment Task 2: Scientific poster - field project

GOAL:	Produce a scientific poster outlining the methods, results and implications of field work.												
PRODUCT:	Written Piece												
AUTHORSHIP STATEMENT:													
FORMAT:	Group assessment; scientific poster which outlines the methods, results and implications of data gained during the class field trip. 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.												
CRITERIA:	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>No.</th> <th></th> <th>Learning Outcome assessed</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1</td> <td>Knowledge of wildlife diversity</td> <td>1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2</td> <td>Field and ecology data collection and analysis skills</td> <td>2 4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3</td> <td>Meeting discipline specifications for a scientific poster</td> <td>3</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	No.		Learning Outcome assessed	1	Knowledge of wildlife diversity	1	2	Field and ecology data collection and analysis skills	2 4	3	Meeting discipline specifications for a scientific poster	3
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1	Knowledge of wildlife diversity	1											
2	Field and ecology data collection and analysis skills	2 4											
3	Meeting discipline specifications for a scientific poster	3											
GENERIC SKILLS:	Communication, Collaboration, Organisation												

All - Assessment Task 3: Interview

GOAL:	Demonstrate knowledge of evolution, diversity, and field study of terrestrial vertebrates. This is assessed by responding to interview questions based upon chosen career stream; provide comprehensive responses to questions						
PRODUCT:	Oral						
AUTHORSHIP STATEMENT:							
FORMAT:	In person interview (question and answer).						
CRITERIA:	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>No.</th> <th></th> <th>Learning Outcome assessed</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1</td> <td>Respond to interview questions based upon chosen career stream; provide comprehensive responses to questions</td> <td>1</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	No.		Learning Outcome assessed	1	Respond to interview questions based upon chosen career stream; provide comprehensive responses to questions	1
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1	Respond to interview questions based upon chosen career stream; provide comprehensive responses to questions	1					
GENERIC SKILLS:	Communication, Collaboration, 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.

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

You need regular access to the resource(s) below. Many texts are available as ebooks through the [Library](#) at no additional cost.

REQUIRED?	AUTHOR	YEAR	TITLE	EDITION	PUBLISHER
Recommended	HICKMAN,Susan L. Keen,David J. Eisenhour,Allan Larson,Helen I'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:

- (a) The final mark is in the percentage range 47% to 49.4%; and
- (b) The course is graded using the Standard Grading scale

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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](#)