

ENS323 Agricultural and Forest 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

One of the planet's most pressing problems is to ensure food security for around 9 billion people - 2 billion more than the world's current population - while dealing with climate change. There is increasing pressure on our natural resources for food and fuel, when there is an urgent need to manage resources sustainably. In this course, you will investigate the ecology of agricultural and forest systems. You explore different types of agricultural and forest ecosystems, their use for food and fuel and ways to increase their sustainability and minimise the effects on surrounding ecosystems.

1.2. How will this course be delivered?

ACTIVITY	HOURS	BEGINNING WEEK	FREQUENCY
BLENDED LEARNING			
Learning materials – Asynchronous Learning Material	2hrs	Week 1	12 times
Tutorial/Workshop 1 – On campus computer workshop	3hrs	Week 2	4 times
Laboratory 1 – On campus wet Lab	3hrs	Week 6	Once Only
Fieldwork – Fieldwork	5hrs	Week 6	2 times
Seminar – On campus seminar	1hr	Week 1	3 times

1.3. Course Topics

This course will examine the following themes: food security, poverty and population growth, carbon sequestration and climate change, water use and salinity; genetics of agricultural and forest systems, animal-plant interactions, including the ecology of pests and beneficial animals; intensive and agroforestry systems.

2. What level is this course?

300 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?

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 Gather, analyse and synthesise information from the scientific literature and primary data sources	Creative and critical thinker Ethical
2 Construct and communicate a compelling argument for funding a research project	Ethical Engaged
3 Recognize and communicate professional strengths to demonstrate relevant skills and practice for research	Engaged
4 Recommend strategies likely to achieve sustainability in agricultural and forest ecology	Sustainability-focussed
5 Describe and apply knowledge relating to ecological aspects of agriculture and forests	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

SCI110

5.2. Co-requisites

Not applicable

5.3. Anti-requisites

Not applicable

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

You will have prior knowledge and skills in scientific research design and statistical methods that can be used to summarise, analyse and interpret scientific data.

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

This course provides a practical in week 2 on CV and grant writing. Students will also receive formative feedback during this practical on aspects of scientific writing that are assessed in task 2. Answers provided to quiz conducted in week 4.

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%	1 hour	Week 4	Online Test (Quiz)
All	2	Written Piece	Individual	50%	2000 words	Week 9	Online Assignment Submission with plagiarism check
All	3	Examination - Centrally Scheduled	Individual	50%	2 hours	Exam Period	Online Assignment Submission with plagiarism check

All - Assessment Task 1: Formative Quiz

GOAL:	To embed learning objectives and knowledge covered in the early weeks		
PRODUCT:	Quiz/zes		
AUTHORSHIP STATEMENT:			
FORMAT:	Online Quiz		
CRITERIA:	No.		Learning Outcome assessed
	1	Correct application of knowledge regarding agricultural and forest ecology	5
GENERIC SKILLS:			

All - Assessment Task 2: Grant proposal and CV

GOAL:	To demonstrate your ability to put together a well-argued application for project funding including the ethical considerations of the research and scientific evidence-based rationale for the proposal.		
PRODUCT:	Written Piece		
AUTHORSHIP STATEMENT:			
FORMAT:	You are required to submit a grant proposal and CV for the research project that you will complete during trimester. The proposal should follow the format provided in the tutorial, e.g. aims and significance of research, literature review, methodology, budget and budget justification, and a timeline.		
CRITERIA:	No.		Learning Outcome assessed
	1	Constructing and communicating an evidence-based justification for research funding	1 2
	2	Use of Research plan, Methods and Techniques	1
	3	Constructing a Budget and budget justification	2
	4	Identification of Ethics clearance	3
	5	Organizing a Project Timeline	4
	6	Application of scholarly writing (spelling, grammar, written expression, referencing style and accuracy)	3
GENERIC SKILLS:			

All - Assessment Task 3: Final Exam

GOAL:	To demonstrate your knowledge and understanding of agricultural and forest ecology	
PRODUCT:	Examination - Centrally Scheduled	
AUTHORSHIP STATEMENT:		
FORMAT:	The final exam will be scheduled in the central exam period. The exam will be two hours.	
CRITERIA:	No.	Learning Outcome assessed
	1	Application of theoretical and practical knowledge of agricultural and forest ecology (Short answer questions) 5
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

Laboratory coat, covered shoes, hat

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

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 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](#)