

HIS201 The uses and abuses of history

School: School of Law and Society

2026 | Trimester 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

The past is present, everywhere: historians, politicians, museum curators, journalists and internet commentators all provide different versions of it. Historical events are constantly remembered, celebrated, reimagined, trivialised, repressed and forgotten. This influences communities' and individuals' values, identities, beliefs and practices. This course analyses and explores how major historical events have been appropriated, contested and denied for political, cultural and economic gain, and encourages students to reflect on the crucial role historians can play.

1.2. How will this course be delivered?

ACTIVITY	HOURS	BEGINNING WEEK	FREQUENCY
BLENDED LEARNING			
Learning materials – 1 hour non-sequential online materials	1hr	Week 1	12 times
Tutorial/Workshop 1 – On campus face-to-face two hour seminar / workshop.	2hrs	Week 2	10 times
ONLINE			
Learning materials – 1 hour non-sequential online materials.	1hr	Week 1	12 times
Tutorial/Workshop 1 – Zoom two hour seminar / workshop.	2hrs	Week 2	10 times

1.3. Course Topics

The practical, conceptual and ethical questions of 'doing' and 'using' history

Mis-use and misunderstandings of history from ancient to contemporary times

The complications of history via issues such as propaganda, conspiracy theory, historical revisionism, historical denialism, memory/trauma, and censorship

Interactions between history and historians with fields such as law, science, archaeology, medicine, and politics

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 Research and critically analyse complex historical figures and events, and their different interpretations over time and in the present	Knowledgeable Creative and critical thinker
2 Identify and demonstrate how different interpretations of the past can influence (and/or have influenced) more recent ideologies, worldviews, and practices	Knowledgeable Creative and critical thinker Empowered
3 Evaluate and explore the role that history and historians can play contemporary society	Empowered Ethical Engaged
4 Communicate the critical issues of historical practice in clear, effective and academically appropriate oral and written formats	Empowered Engaged Communication

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)

You will have a demonstrated knowledge of historical practice which includes: experience with primary and secondary sources; historical analysis and interpretation; some basic knowledge of different historical approaches; content knowledge from focused studies in national and global histories.

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

Timely and detailed feedback is provided for each assessment. Feedback is provided both within text and general comments to build scholarly skills. Students are able to seek feedback through face-to-face discussion with the course coordinator. Tutorials will include extended discussion and review of the assessment task requirements and scope.

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	Written Piece	Individual	30%	2 x 500 words (1000 words total, not including direct quotes, references, list of sources)	Refer to Format	Online Assignment Submission with plagiarism check
All	2	Oral	Individual	30%	8 minutes	Week 7	Online Assignment Submission with plagiarism check
All	3	Essay	Individual	40%	2250 words (excluding direct quotes, references, list of sources)	Exam Period	Online Assignment Submission with plagiarism check

All - Assessment Task 1: 2x 500-word written responses

GOAL:	To demonstrate an ability to engage in a concise and scholarly manner with course content, workshop/tutorial discussions, and set readings relating to the practical, conceptual and ethical questions of 'doing' and 'using' history		
PRODUCT:	Written Piece		
FORMAT:	<p>Students will produce:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A 500-word written piece due Friday Week 4 - A 500-word written piece due Friday Week 8 <p>Students will be provided with the topics for the Written Pieces on Canvas at the beginning of trimester. Students will be required to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reflect upon and articulate the challenges involved in researching, writing, and interpreting history across different periods and cultures; - Engage in contemporary historical debates drawn from weekly course themes; and - Analyse and synthesise competing / contrasting academic views drawn from weekly course readings. <p>The Written Pieces must demonstrate academic integrity, using appropriate academic language and formatting. All primary and secondary sources must be referenced. A reference list must be provided at the end of each Written Piece, but will not be included in the word count. Direct quotes and references will also be excluded from the word count.</p> <p>The referencing style used should be either Harvard, APA, or Chicago 17A.</p>		
CRITERIA:	No.		Learning Outcome assessed
	1	Demonstrates understanding of course themes and set readings, and engagement in workshop/tutorial discussions.	2 3 4
	2	Effectively incorporates and synthesises academic ideas and theories from relevant scholarly secondary sources.	1 2 3 4
	3	Demonstrates effective, original, and well-structured scholarly written communication.	4
	4	Demonstrates academic integrity with work that is suitably referenced to academic standards and meets word count expectations.	1 4
GENERIC SKILLS:	Communication, Organisation		

All - Assessment Task 2: Pre-recorded Presentation

GOAL:	To effectively communicate a well-researched argument about the evolving understandings and different perspectives of a controversial historical event.	
PRODUCT:	Oral	
FORMAT:	<p>Submit: Friday Week 7</p> <p>Students will submit an 8 minute pre-recorded presentation on the different historical perspectives of a controversial historical event.</p> <p>Students will be provided with a list of possible events for Task 2 on Canvas at the beginning of trimester. Students will also use their chosen Task 2 event in Task 3 (in combination with a second controversial event).</p> <p>In their presentation, students should consider and discuss:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the actual, known, proven facts about the event; - the methods used by historians to conduct research and develop interpretations of the event; - the different interpretations of the event and why they matter. <p>The Pre-recorded Presentation must demonstrate academic integrity, using appropriate academic language and formatting. It should be engaging and professional in tone, well-illustrated, and referenced (images, quotes and ideas from other sources should be referenced). The referencing style used should be Harvard, APA, or Chicago 17A.</p> <p>Note: The pre-recorded presentation must include 'presenter view' (i.e. vision of you doing the presentation). More information on this will be provided on Canvas.</p> <p>Students are required to submit: the pre-recorded presentation file, and a referenced written script.</p>	
CRITERIA:	No.	Learning Outcome assessed
	1	Suitably details an original and well researched argument, supported by appropriate primary and scholarly secondary sources. 1 2 3 4
	2	Demonstrates critical analysis and reflection on the role of history and historians in contemporary societies 1 2 3
	3	Demonstrates effective and well-structured scholarly oral communication that is supported by appropriate visual materials. 4
	4	Demonstrates academic integrity with suitably referenced work (presentation and script) that meets academic standards, and is delivered within the time limit. 1 4
GENERIC SKILLS:	Communication, Problem solving, Organisation, Information literacy	

All - Assessment Task 3: Essay

GOAL:	To demonstrate your ability to develop a critical analysis of two controversial historical events (and of the different memories, interpretations and historical accounts of the events over time).	
PRODUCT:	Essay	
FORMAT:	<p>Submit: Monday, First Week of Exam Block.</p> <p>Students will produce an essay of 2250 words in which an argument is constructed about the complex, contradictory, important and/or flawed processes of researching, writing, using and/or applying history.</p> <p>Students will be provided with a list of controversial historical events for Task 3 on Canvas at the beginning of trimester. Each of the Task 3 events pairs with one of the events provided for Task 2 (i.e. they will have some underlying themes / questions / challenges in common).</p> <p>In preparing for the Task 3 essay, students should research the second controversial historical event using the same parameters as were applied in Task 2 (What are the actual, known, proven facts about the event? What methods have historians used to research and develop interpretations of the event? What are the different interpretations of the event, and why do they matter?).</p> <p>Using both controversial events, students should then produce an essay that critically reflects on the complex, contradictory, important and/or flawed processes of researching, writing, using and/or applying history.</p> <p>Note: While Task 3 is directly related to Task 2, students are expected to show significant NEW and RELEVANT research and critical analysis in their Task 3 Essay.</p> <p>The Essay must demonstrate academic integrity, using appropriate academic language and formatting.</p> <p>All primary sources must be referenced and (if using images in the essay) labelled. All secondary sources must be scholarly in nature. Direct quotes, indirect (paraphrased) quotes/ideas, and any historical information located during research for this Essay must be referenced. A Reference List must be provided at the end of the Essay. References, direct quotes, and the Reference List will not be included in the Essay word count.</p> <p>The referencing style used should be Harvard, APA, or Chicago 17A.</p>	
CRITERIA:	No.	Learning Outcome assessed
	1	Suitably details an original and well researched argument, supported by appropriate primary and scholarly secondary sources. 1 2 3 4
	2	Demonstrates critical analysis and reflection on the role of history and historians in contemporary societies. 1 2 3
	3	Demonstrates original, effective and well-structured scholarly written communication, with correct formatting. 4
	4	Demonstrates academic integrity with suitably referenced work that meets academic standards, and which builds upon work submitted in Task 2 1 2 3 4
GENERIC SKILLS:	Communication, 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

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

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. 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