

MHN704

Understanding and Preventing Suicide

School: School of Health - Psychology

2025 | Semester 2

Online

ONLINE

You can do this course without coming onto campus.

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

Suicidality is a significant, complex public health problem and its impacts on communities are far reaching. In this course, you will learn about theories of suicide, as well as the current evidence-base around its neurobiology and the innovations in assessment and suicide prevention. The emphasis in the course is on the integration of policy, person-centred practices and care, and the role of the community in suicide prevention. You will also explore approaches to preventing suicide in at-risk groups and vulnerable populations.

1.2. How will this course be delivered?

ACTIVITY	HOURS	BEGINNING WEEK	FREQUENCY
ONLINE			
Online – The online activities will include a variety of asynchronous, interactive learning materials, and options for lecturer and peer to peer collaborations, and lecturer and peer zoom drop-ins.	3hrs	Week 1	13 times

1.3. Course Topics

- How do we understand suicide?
- Neurobiology of suicide
- Suicide prevention approaches ranging from focused to broad
- Suicide prevention for vulnerable populations
- Wider considerations for suicide prevention

*Note that **all topics** above may contain mature content including adult themes

1.4. Mature Content

Adult themes

2. What level is this course?

700 Level (Specialised)

Demonstrating a specialised body of knowledge and set of skills for professional practice or further learning. Advanced application of knowledge and skills in unfamiliar contexts.

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	Identify and explain the evidence base supporting historical and contemporary considerations and complexities in suicide prevention, using appropriate scholarly or professional language.	Knowledgeable
2	Communicate and explain the various approaches to suicide prevention, and appraise each in the context of a relevant discipline.	Engaged
3	Apply appropriate and inclusive communication skills and strategies when discussing suicidality and suicide prevention to a broad audience.	Empowered
4	Review and examine the complex needs of different populations across the lifespan.	Creative and critical thinker Sustainability-focussed
5	Evaluate how current suicide prevention strategies address complex needs and propose appropriate future suicide prevention initiatives.	Creative and critical thinker Sustainability-focussed
6	Collaborate and reflect as an interdisciplinary team, to address complex issues in different populations.	Engaged

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

Must be enrolled in program AR503, AR602, AR706, SC546 or SC514

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

You will be provided with multiple opportunities to gain early formative feedback relevant to your first assessment task by engaging with your learning materials. These include interactive self-check activities in the modules, posting responses to discussion forums and responding to your practice activities in the indicated manner.

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	25%	1000 words	Week 5	Online Assignment Submission with plagiarism check
All	2	Oral and Written Piece	Individual	35%	15 minutes	Week 9	Online Assignment Submission with plagiarism check
All	3	Report	Individual and Group	40%	3000 words (500 + 2500 report)	Refer to Format	Online Assignment Submission with plagiarism check

All - Assessment Task 1: Conversation article

GOAL:	The goal is to identify and explain the complexities of suicide prevention to a broad audience.					
PRODUCT:	Written Piece					
FORMAT:	You will identify key components in relation to suicide prevention relevant to one of the topics in the first block of the course. Assuming the role of a Conversation article author, you will expand on these components and explain the complexities of addressing suicide prevention relevant to this area. You will present your article in line with the Conversation's guidelines, with their readership as the audience.					
CRITERIA:	No.					Learning Outcome assessed
	1	Identification of key components influencing suicide prevention in Australia				1
	2	Explanation of complexities of suicide prevention				1
	3	Application of scholarly writing skills appropriate to article style and guidelines				1 3
GENERIC SKILLS:	Communication					

All - Assessment Task 2: Oral presentation to a professional group

GOAL:	The goal is to explain various approaches to suicide prevention, appraising the most relevant suicide prevention strategies relevant for specific professions.					
PRODUCT:	Oral and Written Piece					
FORMAT:	You will develop a recorded presentation (slides and spoken audio) according to the guidelines provided, with either your profession, or a chosen one, as the target audience. Your presentation will inform your audience of current approaches to suicide prevention, using appropriate language when discussing suicide, then highlight the key intervention strategies relevant to your chosen profession and how they may be implemented.					
CRITERIA:	No.					Learning Outcome assessed
	1	Explanation of the approaches to suicide prevention				2
	2	Appraisal of the approaches to suicide prevention relevant to your current or chosen profession.				2
	3	Application of appropriate language to communicate suicide prevention.				3
	4	Application of professional communication skills				1 3
GENERIC SKILLS:	Communication, Problem solving					

All - Assessment Task 3: "White paper report"

GOAL:	The goal is to examine the complex needs of populations within the community in relation to suicide prevention, evaluate current prevention strategies and propose new initiatives.		
PRODUCT:	Report		
FORMAT:	Submit: Week 12 and Exam period. Part A (submit in Week 12): You will identify a distinct population group in the community and review their particular needs and vulnerability to suicide. You will contribute your findings to build a class knowledge base, thereby working collaboratively as a interdisciplinary team, i.e., sharing your insights and reflecting on your peers' contributions. Part B (submit in Exam Period): You will choose a population to address on your own, to produce a 'White paper report', targeted at a government level, according to the guidelines provided. In the report, you will examine the complex needs of your chosen population, then evaluate current prevention strategies to propose appropriate new initiatives.		
CRITERIA:	No.		Learning Outcome assessed
	1	Review and examination of complex needs at a particular stage in the lifespan of chosen population.	4
	2	Evaluation of current suicide prevention strategies.	5
	3	Proposal of appropriate suicide prevention initiatives.	5
	4	Application of inclusive communication skills.	3
	5	Application of appropriate professional writing style.	1
	6	Collaboration and reflection as an interdisciplinary team, to address complex issues in different populations.	6
GENERIC SKILLS:	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.

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
Required	n/a	0	No prescribed text. Key readings will be provided each week through the library course readings	n/a	n/a

8.2. Specific requirements

All work submitted for assessment is to be word processed and submitted electronically. It is expected that students will have ready access to a computer with common productivity software and reliable Internet access.

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