

PAR205 Paramedic Primary Health Care – Mental Health

School: School of Health - Paramedicine

2028 | Trimester 2

UniSC Sunshine Coast

**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 equips student paramedics with contemporary knowledge and practical skills to assess and manage mental health across diverse populations and settings. Emphasising culturally safety, person-centred care, students will explore mental health, well-being, and illness through case-based learning. The course integrates communication strategies, clinical decision-making, and evidence-informed interventions. Students learn to respond to acute and chronic presentations, including substance use and crisis situations, while developing emotional resilience and collaborative practice with consumers, carers, and health teams.

1.2. How will this course be delivered?

ACTIVITY	HOURS	BEGINNING WEEK	FREQUENCY
BLENDED LEARNING			
Learning materials – Online – on Canvas, asynchronous	2hrs	Week 1	12 times
Tutorial/Workshop 1 – Two hour on-campus synchronous	2hrs	Week 1	12 times
Laboratory 1 – Lab sessions occurring across semester	2hrs	Throughout teaching period (refer to Format)	5 times

1.3. Course Topics

Mental health across the lifespan
Assessment and management of people with mental health conditions
Mental State Exam and risk assessment
Co-occurring disorders (managing complex presentations)
Mental health and substance use disorders
Mental health recovery and harm minimisation
Management of acute presentations - de-escalation strategies
Stress, trauma and violence
Evidence-based care plans
Community mental health care
Self-harm and suicide
Reflection and advocacy

1.4. Mature Content

Drug Use, Sex/Sexual references, Violence, Coarse Language, Adult themes

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 MAPPING	PROFESSIONAL STANDARD MAPPING *
On successful completion of this course, you should be able to...	Completing these tasks successfully will contribute to you becoming...	Paramedicine Board of Australia
1 Identify common mental health disorders and co-morbidities and examine how these present clinically in people across their lifespan.	Knowledgeable	5, 5.2.b, 5.3.a, 5.3.c, 5.3.d, 5.3.e, 5.3.f, 5.3
2 Critically evaluate the interrelationship between mental health, well-being, psychopathology and substance use.	Creative and critical thinker	1.2.a, 3.2.a, 5, 5.3.a, 5.3.b, 5.3.d, 5.3.e, 5.3.f, 5.3
3 Demonstrate culturally safe, ethical, and professional practice in the care of vulnerable populations.	Ethical	1, 1.1.d, 1.1.g, 1.1.h, 1.2.a, 1.2.b, 1.2.c, 1.2.d, 1.2.e, 1.4.a, 1.4.b, 1.2, 1.4, 2, 2.1.a, 2.1.c, 2.1.d, 2.1.e, 2.1.f, 2.1.g, 2.1.h, 2.1, 4.1.b
4 Apply interpersonal, interprofessional, and clinical assessment competencies to design and implement effective, person-centred care for people presenting with mental illness or substance use.	Engaged	1.2.d, 1.2.e, 1.4, 2.1.a, 2.1.b, 2.1.c, 2.1.d, 2.1.e, 2.1.f, 2.1.g, 2.1.h, 2.2.a, 2.2.b, 2.1, 2.2, 3.1.b, 3.2.a, 3.2.e, 3.2.f, 3.3.b, 3.1, 3.2, 4.1, 5.2.a, 5.2.b, 5.2.c, 5.2.d, 5.2.e
5 Critically reflect on practice to reduce stigma and advocate for patients' rights.	Sustainability-focussed	1.2.a, 1.4.a, 1.2, 1.4, 2.1.a, 2.1.c, 2.1, 3.4.b, 4.6.e, 4.6, 5.6.a

* Competencies by Professional Body

CODE	COMPETENCY
PARAMEDICINE BOARD OF AUSTRALIA	
1.2.a	Demonstrate understanding of the influence of socio-cultural factors on patient attitudes and behaviour.
1	Domain 1: The professional and ethical practitioner
1.1.d	Apply the Paramedicine Board of Australia's Code of conduct to their practice.
1.1.g	Demonstrate understanding of the basic principles underpinning bio-ethics in paramedicine practice.
1.1.h	Demonstrate culturally safe practice when providing healthcare services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.
1.2.b	Display appropriate professional behaviour in patient interactions.
1.2.c	Provide culturally safe care for all patients.
1.2.d	Identify and respect appropriate boundaries between patients and health professionals.
1.2.e	Assess each situation, determine the nature and severity of the problem and apply the required knowledge and experience to provide a response that is in the best interest of the patient/s.
1.4.a	Demonstrate understanding of the principles of patient advocacy and their application to paramedicine practice.
1.4.b	Recognise when it may be appropriate to intervene on the patient's behalf.
1.2	Provide each patient with an appropriate level of dignity and care
1.4	Advocate on behalf of the patient, when appropriate in the context of the practitioner's practice as a paramedic
2	Domain 2: The communicator and the collaborator
2.1.a	Establish a rapport with the patient to gain understanding of their issues and perspectives, and to encourage their active participation and partnership in care and/or treatment.
2.1.c	Convey knowledge and procedural information in ways that engender trust and confidence, and respects patient confidentiality, privacy and dignity.
2.1.d	Respond appropriately to patient queries or issues.
2.1.e	Use appropriate communication skills to effectively manage avoidance, confusion and confrontation particularly with those who cannot communicate verbally or physically.
2.1.f	Identify and effectively manage communication barriers, including anxiety and stress, specific to individual patients and/or carers.
2.1.g	Make appropriate adjustments to communication style to suit the needs of the patient including those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.
2.1.h	Make provisions to engage third parties, including interpreters, to facilitate effective communication with patients whose first language is not English, whenever possible.
2.1.b	Communicate with the patient and/or other relevant people to collect and convey information and reach an agreement about the purpose of any care and treatment.
2.2.a	Establish and maintain effective and respectful collaborative working relationships as a member of a healthcare team.
2.2.b	Demonstrate an understanding of professional roles and responsibilities of healthcare team members and other service providers and how they interact with the role of a paramedic.
2.1	Communicate clearly, sensitively and effectively with the patient and other relevant people
2.2	Collaborate with other health practitioners
3.2.a	Apply evidence-based practice principles along with critical and reflective thinking to resolve clinical challenges.
3.1.b	Make sensible, practical, and culturally safe decisions about their practice, taking account of all relevant information and the best interests of the people who use, or are affected by, the service being provided.

CODE	COMPETENCY
3.2.e	Formulate a diagnosis informed by the patient assessment and analysis of context and situation.
3.2.f	Identify the time criticality of treatment, referral, handover and where appropriate, transport.
3.3.b	Practise situational awareness to changes in risks or hazards and change their practice as needed to take account of new developments.
3.4.b	Critically reflect on personal strengths and limitations to identify learning and development required to improve and adapt professional practice.
3.1	Make informed and reasonable decisions
3.2	Use clinical reasoning and problem-solving skills to determine clinical judgements and appropriate actions
4.1.b	Obtain valid informed consent when possible.
4.6.e	Reflect on practice and the application of such reflection to their future practice.
4.1	Protect and enhance patient safety
4.6	Audit, reflect on and review practice
5	Domain 5: The paramedicine practitioner
5.2.b	Identify patients who are vulnerable or otherwise most at risk including those with mental health issues particularly Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.
5.3.a	Understand the structure, function and pathophysiology of the human body, relevant to their practice, together with knowledge of health, human growth and development, disease, disorder and dysfunction.
5.3.c	Understand the theoretical basis of and the variety of approaches to assessment and intervention.
5.3.d	Demonstrate an applied knowledge of human anatomy and physiology sufficient to understand the nature and effects of injury or illness and to conduct assessment and observation in order to establish patient management strategies.
5.3.e	Understand psychological and social factors, including intergenerational trauma that impact and influence an individual in health and illness.
5.3.f	Understand the clinical sciences underpinning paramedic practice, including physiological, pharmacological, behavioural and functional.
5.3.b	Understand the principles and applications of scientific enquiry, including the evaluation of treatment efficacy and the research process.
5.2.a	Identify factors or conditions that may affect the patient behaviour and/or capacity to undergo the procedure.
5.2.c	Identify contraindications and limitations arising from the patient capacity to consent or refuse to receive care; determine appropriate adjustments to procedures; and, where appropriate, communicate these to the patient.
5.2.d	Perform patient assessment and interventions in accordance with legislation, registration standards, codes and guidelines, including gaining informed consent.
5.2.e	Identify and respond to a patient deteriorating condition, or inability to undergo a procedure or treatment, consistent with duty of care and statutory requirements.
5.6.a	Adapt practice to meet the needs of different groups distinguished by, for example, physical, psychological, environmental, cultural or socio-economic factors within their authorised scope of practice.
5.3	Understand the key concepts of the bodies of knowledge which are specifically relevant to paramedicine practice

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

PAR103 and HLT209 and enrolled in Program SC306

5.2. Co-requisites

Not applicable

5.3. Anti-requisites

HLT301

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

Formative feedback will be provided in tutorials and lab sessions.

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	Portfolio	Individual	40%	Refer to format	Throughout teaching period (refer to Format)	Online Submission
All	2	Activity Participation	Individual	30%	2000 words	Week 8	Online Assignment Submission with plagiarism check
All	3	Examination - Centrally Scheduled	Individual	30%	90 minutes	Exam Period	Exam Venue

All - Assessment Task 1: Portfolio of learning and reflection

GOAL:	To complete a series of learning activities across the course that allow you to demonstrate developing knowledge, professional capabilities and reflective practice.						
PRODUCT:	Portfolio						
AUTHORSHIP STATEMENT:							
FORMAT:	n/a						
CRITERIA:	No.						Learning Outcome assessed
	1	Refer to format					2 5
GENERIC SKILLS:	Communication, Collaboration, Problem solving, Applying technologies, Information literacy						

All - Assessment Task 2: Case Study

GOAL:	Explore a case specific to paramedic management of a mental health issue, and evaluate contemporary evidence to support analysis.		
PRODUCT:	Activity Participation		
AUTHORSHIP STATEMENT:			
FORMAT:	n/a		
CRITERIA:	No.		Learning Outcome assessed
	1	Refer to format	1 2 4
GENERIC SKILLS:	Communication, Problem solving, Information literacy		

All - Assessment Task 3: Exam

GOAL:	To demonstrate the attainment of disciplinary knowledge		
PRODUCT:	Examination - Centrally Scheduled		
AUTHORSHIP STATEMENT:			
FORMAT:	Refer to format		
CRITERIA:	No.		Learning Outcome assessed
	1	Exam relating to the following learning outcomes. For more details, please refer to Canvas.	1 2 3 4
GENERIC SKILLS:	Communication, Problem solving		

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 1	Introduction: Drugs & Mental Health in Paramedicine
Week 2	Drugs in Society & Harm Minimisation
Week 3	Mental Health Fundamentals & Recovery
Week 4	Mental State Examination (MSE) & Risk Assessment
Week 5	Substance Use Disorders: Clinical Management
Week 6	Co-occurring Disorders (Dual Diagnosis)
Week 7	Stress, Trauma & Violence
Week 8	Severe Mental Illness (Psychosis, Schizophrenia)
Week 9	Anxiety, Depression & Personality Disorders
Week 10	Community & Online Mental Health Care
Week 11	Self-harm and death by suicide
Week 12	Reflection & Advocacy

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

Not applicable

9. How are risks managed in this course?

Risk assessments have been performed for all studio and laboratory classes and a low level of health and safety risk exists. Some risk concerns may include equipment, instruments, and tools; as well as manual handling items within the laboratory. It is your responsibility to review course material, search online, discuss with lecturers and peers and understand the 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. 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](#)