

PSY305 Psychological Disorders

School: School of Health - Psychology

2025 | Semester 2

UniSC Sunshine Coast
UniSC Moreton Bay

**BLENDED
LEARNING**

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

This course offers a systematic approach to examining psychological disorders. You will learn about various categories of psychological dysfunction, how classification occurs, the aetiology and symptoms associated with disorders, assessment, and clinical formulations. Therapeutic interventions frequently used to treat psychological disorders are also introduced.

1.2. How will this course be delivered?

| ACTIVITY | HOURS | BEGINNING WEEK | FREQUENCY |
|---|-------|----------------|-----------|
| BLENDED LEARNING | | | |
| Learning materials – Online learning materials | 1hr | Week 1 | 13 times |
| Tutorial/Workshop 1 – On-campus tutorial | 2hrs | Week 1 | 11 times |
| Seminar – On-campus seminar with entire cohort | 2hrs | Week 12 | Once Only |

1.3. Course Topics

- History and philosophy of psychological disorders.
- Adult and child psychopathology.
- Classifications, symptoms and assessment of psychological disorders.
- Aetiology and clinical formulation.
- Evidence-based interventions for psychological disorders.

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 MAPPING | PROFESSIONAL STANDARD MAPPING * |
|--|--|---|
| On successful completion of this course, you should be able to... | Completing these tasks successfully will contribute to you becoming... | Australian Psychology Accreditation Council |
| 1 Demonstrate in depth understanding of the history and philosophy of psychological disorders. | Knowledgeable | 1.1.1, 1.1.4 |
| 2 Demonstrate in depth understanding of core concepts in the field of psychological disorders, including (1) symptoms, (2) aetiology, (3) assessment and clinical formulations, and (4) evidence-based treatments. | Knowledgeable Creative and critical thinker Ethical | 1.1.1, 1.1.4, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4 |
| 3 Transfer and adapt knowledge to applied contexts. | Creative and critical thinker Empowered Ethical Engaged | 1.1.1, 1.1.4, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4 |
| 4 Critically evaluate relevant psychological research. | Knowledgeable Creative and critical thinker Ethical | 1.1.4, 1.3, 1.6 |
| 5 Critically apply knowledge of diversity and the impact of social, cultural, historical and professional influences on practice related to psychological disorders. | Empowered Ethical Engaged Sustainability-focussed | 1.1.1, 1.1.11, 1.1.4, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4 |
| 6 Present a clear, coherent and independent exposition of knowledge and ideas. | Knowledgeable Creative and critical thinker Empowered | 1.1.4, 1.3, 1.6 |

* Competencies by Professional Body

| CODE | COMPETENCY |
|---|---|
| AUSTRALIAN PSYCHOLOGY ACCREDITATION COUNCIL | |
| 1.1.1 | Graduates will be able to comprehend and apply a broad and coherent body of knowledge of psychology, with depth of understanding of underlying principles, theories and concepts in the discipline, using a scientific approach, including the history and philosophy underpinning the science of psychology and the social, cultural, historical and professional influences on the practice of psychology |
| 1.1.4 | Graduates will be able to comprehend and apply a broad and coherent body of knowledge of psychology, with depth of understanding of underlying principles, theories and concepts in the discipline, using a scientific approach, including psychological disorders and evidence-based interventions |
| 1.1.11 | Graduates will be able to comprehend and apply a broad and coherent body of knowledge of psychology, with depth of understanding of underlying principles, theories and concepts in the discipline, using a scientific approach, including culturally appropriate psychological assessment and measurement |
| 1.2 | Graduates will be able to apply knowledge and skills of psychology in a manner that is reflexive, culturally appropriate and sensitive to the diversity of individuals. |
| 1.3 | Graduates will be able to analyse and critique theory and research in the discipline of psychology and communicate these in written and oral formats. |
| 1.4 | Graduates will be able to demonstrate an understanding of appropriate values and ethics in psychology. |
| 1.6 | Graduates will be able to demonstrate self-directed pursuit of scholarly inquiry in psychology. |

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

PSY200 and PSY201 or PSY207

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

During tutorials from Week 2 onward, you will be provided feedback on applied activities that directly align to requirements for the 'Report' assessment.

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 | Examination - not Centrally Scheduled | Individual | 30% | 60 minutes | Week 8 | In Class |
| All | 2 | Report | Individual | 35% | 2500 words | Week 11 | Online Submission |
| All | 3 | Examination - Centrally Scheduled | Individual | 35% | 2 hours | Exam Period | Online Submission |

All - Assessment Task 1: In class exam

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|-----------------|--|---|---------------------------|---|---|---|---|--|--|--|
| GOAL: | The in class exam will test your knowledge and understanding of the content covered in online learning materials, workshops/tutorials and other course materials (i.e. prescribed readings). | | | | | | | | | |
| PRODUCT: | Examination - not Centrally Scheduled | | | | | | | | | |
| FORMAT: | The in class exam will cover content covered in Weeks 1 to 7. It will be completed in person during the scheduled class that week. | | | | | | | | | |
| CRITERIA: | No. | | Learning Outcome assessed | | | | | | | |
| | 1 | Accuracy and correctness of a response. | 1 | 2 | 3 | | | | | |
| | 2 | Evidence of critical and original thinking | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | | | |
| | 3 | Demonstrated understanding of key concepts and considerations relevant to psychological disorders | 2 | 3 | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | |
| GENERIC SKILLS: | Problem solving, Organisation | | | | | | | | | |

All - Assessment Task 2: Diagnostic considerations, clinical formulation and treatment plan

| | | | |
|------------------------|--|---|-----------|
| GOAL: | Based on a given case, you will explore potential differential diagnoses and justify how you arrive at a DSM diagnosis. You will then devise a clinical formulation and an evidence-based treatment plan to assist the client's recovery. You will be required to reflect on and describe key professional, cultural, ethical, and social/or considerations when working with this client. | | |
| PRODUCT: | Report | | |
| FORMAT: | The report is to be 2500 words and must conform to APA Style Guide. | | |
| CRITERIA: | No. | Learning Outcome assessed | |
| | 1 | Justification for primary diagnosis and discounting potential differential diagnoses | 2 3 4 6 |
| | 2 | Evidence of critical and original thinking in developing a logically consistent clinical formulation and treatment plan which are adequately supported by strong relevant evidence | 2 3 4 5 6 |
| | 3 | Extent, relevance, and appropriate use of the information sources and research | 2 4 5 |
| | 4 | Ability to write clearly, accurately, to the set word limit, and in adherence with APA referencing style | 6 |
| | 5 | Justification for selection of appropriate measures for assessment and to monitor treatment progress. | 2 3 4 5 6 |
| | 6 | Critical reflection on potential professional, cultural, ethical and social considerations when undertaking assessment, exploring diagnoses and developing the case formulation and treatment plan. | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| GENERIC SKILLS: | Communication, Problem solving, Organisation, Information literacy | | |

All - Assessment Task 3: End of semester exam

| | | | |
|------------------------|---|---|-----------|
| GOAL: | The end of semester exam will test your knowledge of all content delivered within the course. | | |
| PRODUCT: | Examination - Centrally Scheduled | | |
| FORMAT: | The end of semester exam will comprise multiple-choice and short answer questions. | | |
| CRITERIA: | No. | Learning Outcome assessed | |
| | 1 | Accuracy of responses | 1 2 3 5 |
| | 2 | Evidence of critical and original thinking | 1 2 3 5 6 |
| | 3 | Demonstrated understanding of key concepts and considerations relevant to psychological disorders | 2 3 5 6 |
| GENERIC SKILLS: | Problem solving, Organisation, 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 | Rieger, E | 2017 | Abnormal Psychology: Leading Researcher Perspectives. 4th ed | n/a | McGraw-Hill Education |

8.2. Specific requirements

Not applicable

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