

# PSY401 Advanced Theoretical Issues in Psychology

School: School of Health - Psychology

2024 Semester 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.

*Please go to [usc.edu.au](http://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 introduces you to an in-depth analysis of major theoretical issues that have influenced the direction of contemporary psychology, including the scientist-practitioner philosophy of professional practice, the prominence of cognitivism within cognitive developmental, cognitive behavioural and cognitive motivational research and practice, and the emphasis on social and cultural contexts of thought and action. The course provides you an opportunity to explore one or more of these theoretical paradigms in relation to a core psychological interest.

### 1.2. How will this course be delivered?

ACTIVITY	HOURS	BEGINNING WEEK	FREQUENCY
<b>BLENDED LEARNING</b>			
<b>Tutorial/Workshop 1</b> – On campus tutorial/workshop - 3 hours	3hrs	Week 1	13 times

### 1.3. Course Topics

The topics of the course are based on using psychological theories to understand the complexities of human interactions. These topics will include a psychological understanding of current affairs, everyday life, decisions about selecting and implementing interventions, and understanding the theoretical basis of the work of psychologists and non-psychologists who are involved in assisting individuals to improve their lives, improve mental health outcomes, and improve occupational outcomes.

## 2. What level is this course?

400 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 Articulate and explain a number of theoretical perspectives that are central to the science and practice of psychology, highlighting the relative strengths and limitations of these perspectives.	Knowledgeable	2.1, 2.3, 2.4
2 Demonstration of critical evaluation of associated research methods, observations, and theoretical developments.	Engaged	2, 2.1, 2.3, 2.4
3 Postulation of future directions in the field of psychology and potential applied applications.	Creative and critical thinker Engaged	2, 2.1, 2.3, 2.4

#### \* Competencies by Professional Body

CODE	COMPETENCY
AUSTRALIAN PSYCHOLOGY ACCREDITATION COUNCIL	
2	PRE-PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCIES: Graduates of programs at this level have basic knowledge and skills in the professional practice of psychology and the independent conduct and evaluation of scientific research. Programs for pre-professional competencies are typically a Bachelor Honours Degree or Graduate Diploma (if the graduate competencies in research can be met).
2.1	Taking into account broad diversity, and consistent with current relevant legal frameworks and codes of ethical practice, graduates apply psychological knowledge to competently and ethically demonstrate successful (prior or concurrent) achievement of foundational competencies.
2.3	Taking into account broad diversity, and consistent with current relevant legal frameworks and codes of ethical practice, graduates apply psychological knowledge to competently and ethically demonstrate basic assessment strategies in situations appropriate to psychological practice and knowledge of psychometric theory and principles of the construction, cultural considerations, implementation and interpretation of some of the more widely used standardised psychological test instruments.
2.4	Taking into account broad diversity, and consistent with current relevant legal frameworks and codes of ethical practice, graduates apply psychological knowledge to competently and ethically explain how basic psychological intervention strategies can be applied across a range of contexts.

#### 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

Enrolled in Program AR403, AR405 or AR645

##### 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

In Week 3, the draft plan for the presentation will be peer reviewed in your workshop. This formative assessment will help you to prepare for the presentation, by considering the scope of your topic, the literature and theory you are using, and how you structure your presentation.

### 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	Oral	Individual	30%	30 minutes	Week 5	Online Assignment Submission with plagiarism check and in class
All	2	Report	Individual	35%	1800 words	Week 8	Online Submission
All	3	Examination - Centrally Scheduled	Individual	35%	2 hours	Exam Period	Exam Venue

#### All - Assessment Task 1: Oral

<b>GOAL:</b>	The goal of this assessment is to communicate your understanding of a current topic in psychology and consider the types of solutions and interventions that could be applied to the topic. The list of topics will be given on Canvas in Week 1 of the semester. In the first class (i.e., in Week 1), you will form groups for the presentations and topics will be allocated at that time. It is important that you attend this class to be part of this process.
<b>PRODUCT:</b>	Oral
<b>FORMAT:</b>	<p>Part A (10%): 5-minute presentation in class in Week 5, with 5 minutes for feedback and questions (10 minutes in total). You and your group will deliver a 5-minute (maximum) overview of your topic in class, using one slide, and with one or more of the group presenting the information. The slide can take the form of an infographic or be more conventional in its display. The slide should state the issue or problem being considered, the theoretical framework, a brief summary of research, and briefly, the solutions or interventions that could be applied to change or mitigate the issue or problem. The slides should also have a heading and names of all group members.</p> <p>Part B (20%): 20 minute video, submitted in Week 5.</p> <p>Building on Part A, the in-class presentation, you and your group will prepare a longer version of the presentation, which will be submitted by the end Week 5 (i.e., one of the group will submit on behalf of the group). The presentation will identify the issues involved, key constructs, appropriate theoretical/conceptual framework/s, applying and critically analysing appropriate current research to present possible solutions and interventions to change, moderate, or improve the issue/s. You will use a narrated PowerPoint display (or similar) (saved in a video format) to assist with your oral presentation and the recording will last 20 minutes (maximum).</p>

CRITERIA:	No.	Learning Outcome assessed	
	1	A: Quality of delivery and answers to questions	1 2
	2	A: Coverage of the topic and Design of the slide	1 2
	3	B: Key constructs and issues, Use and integration of appropriate theory/conceptual framework	1 2
	4	B: Extent and relevance of current research literature and Critical analysis of topic, theory, and literature	1 2
	5	B: Exploration of future directions and potential for applied application	1 2 3
	6	B: Quality of delivery and design of slides	1 2

### All - Assessment Task 2: Briefing Paper

<b>GOAL:</b>	The goal of this assessment is to demonstrate your ability to consider the theoretical perspectives and literature on a current topic in psychology. You will prepare a Briefing Paper for an organisation to explain one of the topics used for the Seminar Presentations (Task 1). You may choose the same topic as your presentation or chose one of the topics presented by another group. The list of topics will be given on Canvas in Week 1 of the semester.		
<b>PRODUCT:</b>	Report		
<b>FORMAT:</b>	<p>The Briefing Paper will be a maximum of 1800 words, excluding the title page and reference list. Whilst there is no minimum word count, be aware that assignments that are much shorter may not cover the topic in sufficient depth. An abstract is not required for this assignment.</p> <p>The Briefing Paper will consist of three sections: first, a statement of the topic, second, theoretical perspective and research literature applied to the topic, and third, solutions and interventions on the topic.</p> <p>The first section should include the organisation to which you are pitching your briefing paper (and why topic would be important to the organisation), explain the topic and it's prevalence, and benefits and/or costs to society. The second section should include the relevant theoretical framework and current, peer-reviewed research literature that explain the topic. The last section should include any interventions, solutions, and/or strategies that could change, moderate, and/or improve issues identified about the topic.</p> <p>It is expected that the word count for the first, second, and third sections will be approximately 300, 1200, and 300 words respectively.</p>		
<b>CRITERIA:</b>	<b>No.</b>		<b>Learning Outcome assessed</b>
	1	Statement of the topic - Identifies suitable organisation and provides rationale for BP	2 3
	2	Statement of the topic - Situation of BP in topic area, definition of key terms, and direction of BP	3
	3	Theoretical framework and research background - Identification and use of appropriate theory	1
	4	Theoretical framework and research background - Extent and relevance of current experimental research applied to topic	2
	5	Solutions and interventions - Evaluation of processes of change, moderation or improvement	3
	6	Writing style and APA - Evidence of critical analysis and original thinking, and careful and accurate use of APA and use of formal academic language	1 2

### All - Assessment Task 3: Examination

<b>GOAL:</b>	The goal of this assessment is to assess your ability to apply theory and literature to practical scenarios, which will be based around the guest lectures given during the semester. The outline of these scenarios will be discussed in class in Week 13.		
<b>PRODUCT:</b>	Examination - Centrally Scheduled		
<b>FORMAT:</b>	The examination will consist of five (5) short answer questions.		
<b>CRITERIA:</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>Learning Outcome assessed</b>	
	1	Use of theoretical or conceptual frameworks applied to the topics	1
	2	Use of relevant research literature used in the answers	2
	3	Evidence of critical analysis and original thinking	1 2
	4	Sophistication and complexity of the written expression	1 2 3

## 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

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 submission of assessment tasks may be penalised at the following maximum rate:

- 5% (of the assessment task's identified value) per day for the first two days from the date identified as the due date for the assessment task.
- 10% (of the assessment task's identified value) for the third day - 20% (of the assessment task's identified value) for the fourth day and subsequent days up to and including seven days from the date identified as the due date for the assessment task.
- A result of zero is awarded for an assessment task submitted after seven days from the date identified as the due date for the assessment task. Weekdays and weekends are included in the calculation of days late. To request an extension you must contact your course coordinator to negotiate an outcome.

### 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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto:studentcentral@usc.edu.au)

