

SWK100

Introduction to Social Work Practice Theories

School: School of Law and Society

2026 Trimester 2

 UniSC Sunshine Coast
 UniSC Moreton Bay
 UniSC Caboolture
 UniSC Fraser Coast
 UniSC Gympie

 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 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 provides you with an introduction to a range of theories which inform social work practice. You will develop an understanding of social work theory to develop skills in applying theory to understand and intervene with individuals, communities and society. You will further extend your practice philosophy and skills within these theoretical frameworks. You will be challenged to integrate your own personal perspective and societal influences when applying theoretical concepts to specific practice contexts and understand the implications of these for practices.

1.2. How will this course be delivered?

| ACTIVITY | HOURS | BEGINNING WEEK | FREQUENCY |
|---|-------|----------------|-----------|
| BLENDED LEARNING | | | |
| Learning materials – online learning materials | 1hr | Week 1 | 11 times |
| Tutorial/Workshop 1 – Weekly tutorials | 2hrs | Week 1 | 11 times |
| ONLINE | | | |
| Learning materials – 11 weeks of online learning materials | 1hr | Week 1 | 11 times |
| Tutorial/Workshop 1 – Weekly online (Zoom) tutorials | 2hrs | Week 1 | 11 times |

1.3. Course Topics

Social theories, models and perspectives

Micro and macro theories of practices

Application of theory to practice

[Mature content across all topics]

1.4. Mature Content

Adult themes

2. What level is this course?

100 Level (Introductory)

Engaging with discipline knowledge and skills at foundational level, broad application of knowledge and skills in familiar contexts and with support. Limited or no prerequisites. Normally, associated with the first 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 Association of Social Workers |
| 1 Engage with the process of self-reflection and describe how your own environment, beliefs, values and worldviews your role as a social worker. | Knowledgeable Creative and critical thinker Ethical Engaged | 5, 6 |
| 2 Apply theoretical concepts to specific practice contexts and are able to adopt or adapt innovations in practice on the basis of a critical assessment of evidence | Empowered Engaged | 1, 5, 6 |
| 3 Apply your knowledge of theory to a particular case study. | Knowledgeable Creative and critical thinker Ethical | 1, 5, 6, 7 |
| 4 Make professional decisions on the basis of a holistic assessment of the needs, strengths, goals and preferences of clients | Knowledgeable Creative and critical thinker Ethical Problem solving | |
| 5 Demonstrate emerging professional communication skills | Knowledgeable Creative and critical thinker Empowered Ethical Engaged | 1, 9 |

* Competencies by Professional Body

| CODE | COMPETENCY |
|--|--|
| AUSTRALIAN ASSOCIATION OF SOCIAL WORKERS | |
| 1 | Practice Standard 1: AASW Code of Ethics |
| 5 | Practice Standard 5: Critical thinking in practice |
| 6 | Practice Standard 6: Exercising professional judgement |

| CODE | COMPETENCY |
|------|--|
| 7 | Practice Standard 7: Professional identity |
| 9 | Practice Standard 9: Professional growth |

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)

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

The annotated bibliography will be used to provide early feedback on the understanding of course content.

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 | 20% | A minimum of 5 peer-reviewed articles | Week 3 | Online Assignment Submission with plagiarism check |
| All | 2 | Oral and Written Piece | Individual | 30% | 5-10 minutes | Week 7 | Online Submission |
| All | 3 | Case Study | Individual | 50% | 2000 words | Week 12 | Online Assignment Submission with plagiarism check |

All - Assessment Task 1: Annotated Bibliography

| | | |
|------------------------------|--|---|
| GOAL: | The goal of this assessment task is to develop students' abilities to critically engage with current research by compiling an annotated bibliography of recent studies on a chosen social work topic. Students will summarise key findings and evaluate the practical relevance of each article, enhancing their skills in literature review, critical appraisal, and connecting evidence to social work practice. | |
| PRODUCT: | Written Piece | |
| AUTHORSHIP STATEMENT: | | |
| FORMAT: | This task will be submitted on Turnitin via a Word doc. | |
| CRITERIA: | No. | Learning Outcome assessed |
| | 1 | Able to summarise the article's key finding 5 |
| | 2 | The quality and relevance of articles to practice issue 5 |
| | 3 | Writing quality & referencing standards upheld 5 |
| GENERIC SKILLS: | Communication, Organisation, Information literacy | |

All - Assessment Task 2: Systems Analysis of Justice Issues

| | | |
|------------------------------|--|--|
| GOAL: | The goal of this assessment task is to apply systems theory and an ecological lens to critically analyse a contemporary justice issue, demonstrating an understanding of how individual experiences are shaped by intersecting systems at micro, meso, exo, macro, and chrono levels. Students will engage in structural thinking, identify systemic barriers, and reflect on the implications for ethical and culturally responsive social work practice. | |
| PRODUCT: | Oral and Written Piece | |
| AUTHORSHIP STATEMENT: | | |
| FORMAT: | Video and PowerPoint | |
| CRITERIA: | No. | Learning Outcome assessed |
| | 1 | A critical reflection on societal influences that impact your work as an emerging professional 1 3 5 |
| | 2 | Understanding the complexities across multiple levels on individual behaviour and development 1 3 5 |
| | 3 | Demonstrate a Critical Understanding of Societal Influences 2 5 |
| GENERIC SKILLS: | Communication, Problem solving, Organisation, Information literacy | |

All - Assessment Task 3: Case study

| GOAL: | The goal of this task is for you to apply your cumulative understanding of various theories and the multidimensional nature of human behaviour to analyse the behaviour of a case study. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|------------------------------|---|---------------------------|--|---------------------------|---|--|-------|---|--|---|---|---|-------|---|---|---|---|--------------------------|-------|--|
| PRODUCT: | Case Study | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| AUTHORSHIP STATEMENT: | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| FORMAT: | You will develop an eco-map and compare and contrast two different theories in relation to the understanding of a selected case study and identify the strengths and weaknesses of each theory. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| CRITERIA: | <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>No.</th> <th></th> <th>Learning Outcome assessed</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1</td> <td>Critical evaluation and application of theories in their connection to practice.</td> <td>1 2 5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2</td> <td>Demonstrations of clear emerging professional communication skills</td> <td>5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3</td> <td>Identify strengths and limitations of various theories and their application to practice.</td> <td>1 2 3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4</td> <td>Make professional decisions on the basis of a holistic assessment of the needs, strengths, goals and preferences of clients</td> <td>4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>5</td> <td>Development of an ecomap</td> <td>2 3 4</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> | No. | | Learning Outcome assessed | 1 | Critical evaluation and application of theories in their connection to practice. | 1 2 5 | 2 | Demonstrations of clear emerging professional communication skills | 5 | 3 | Identify strengths and limitations of various theories and their application to practice. | 1 2 3 | 4 | Make professional decisions on the basis of a holistic assessment of the needs, strengths, goals and preferences of clients | 4 | 5 | Development of an ecomap | 2 3 4 | |
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| GENERIC SKILLS: | Communication, Problem solving | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

6.4. Assessment to competency mapping

| PROGRAMME DELIVERY MODE | ASSESSMENT TYPE | TITLE | COMPETENCY | TEACHING METHODS |
|--|------------------------|------------------------------------|------------|-----------------------------|
| AUSTRALIAN SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION AND ACCREDITATION STANDARDS (ASWEAS) | | | | |
| All delivery modes | Case Study | Case study | 1 | Taught, Practiced, Assessed |
| | | | 5 | Taught, Practiced, Assessed |
| | | | 6 | Taught, Practiced, Assessed |
| | Oral and Written Piece | Systems Analysis of Justice Issues | 1 | Taught, Practiced, Assessed |
| | | | 5 | Taught, Practiced, Assessed |
| | | | 6 | Taught, Practiced, Assessed |
| | | | 7 | Taught, Practiced, Assessed |
| | Written Piece | Annotated Bibliography | 5 | Assessed |

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

Information regarding prescribed texts or other associated resources will be made available on the Canvas site prior to commencement of study.

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. 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](#)