COURSE OUTLINE

SWK307 Special Topics in Social Work

School: School of Law and Society

2027 | Session 5

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.
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

Explore specialised and emerging topics in social work practice with a focus on trauma at local and global levels. This course examines themes related to the understanding, prevention, and response to trauma within diverse cultural, social, and political contexts. You'll engage critically with current research and practice frameworks to develop advanced, trauma-informed skills for working ethically and effectively with individuals and communities both locally and globally.

1.2. How will this course be delivered?

ACTIVITY	HOURS	BEGINNING WEEK	FREQUENCY
BLENDED LEARNING			
Learning materials – Online learning materials	2hrs	Week 1	6 times
Tutorial/Workshop 1 – Workshop	3hrs	Week 1	6 times
ONLINE			
Tutorial/Workshop 1 – Workshop online	3hrs	Week 1	6 times
Learning materials – Learning materials online	2hrs	Week 1	6 times

1.3. Course Topics

Trauma-Informed Social Work Practice

Current issues

Vicarious Trauma and Professional Resilience

1.4. Mature Content

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

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 Association of Social Workers
1	Apply trauma-informed and culturally responsive approaches to diverse practice settings, demonstrating sensitivity to the impacts of trauma across individuals, families, and communities.	Knowledgeable Empowered Ethical Engaged	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
2	Reflect on new social work understandings and demonstrate advanced communication and analytical skills in articulating complex ideas about trauma, resilience, and social justice in written and oral forms.	Creative and critical thinker Ethical Communication Problem solving	1, 4, 5, 6, 9
3	Demonstrate ethical, legal and respectful attitude and behaviour in relation to trauma-informed care.	Ethical Communication	1, 5, 7, 9

* Competencies by Professional Body

CODE	COMPETENCY
AUSTRALIAN ASSOCIATION OF SOCIAL WORKERS	
1	Practice Standard 1: AASW Code of Ethics
2	Practice Standard 2: Working alongside Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples
3	Practice Standard 3: Human rights and social justice
4	Practice Standard 4: Culture, identity and intersectionality
5	Practice Standard 5: Critical thinking in practice
6	Practice Standard 6: Exercising professional judgement
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

Limited Grading (PNP)

Pass (PU), Fail (UF). All assessment tasks are required to be passed for successful completion of the course.

6.2. Details of early feedback on progress

Class feedback and simulation practice

6.3. Assessment tasks

DELIVERY MODE	TASK NO.	ASSESSMENT PRODUCT	INDIVIDUAL OR GROUP	WHAT IS THE DURATION / LENGTH?	WHEN SHOULD I SUBMIT?	WHERE SHOULD I SUBMIT IT?
All	1	Case Study	Individual	60 minutes	Week 5	Online Submission
All	3	Oral	Individual	10 minutes	Week 6	Online Submission
All	3	Written Piece	Individual	800 words	Throughout teaching period (refer to Format)	Online Discussion Board

All - Assessment Task 1: Simulation Case Study

GOAL:	Students will participate in a simulation-based demonstration of trauma-informed care in a professional social work context. The simulation will present a complex client scenario (e.g., responding to a client affected by family violence, forced migration, or collective trauma). Students will demonstrate engagement, assessment, and intervention using trauma-informed principles, decision-making, and self-awareness in relation to power, safety, and ethical practice.
PRODUCT:	Case Study
FORMAT:	Online

CRITERIA:

No.		Learning Outcome assessed
1	Demonstrates the ability to build trust, establish rapport, and ensure psychological safety for the client. Communicates empathy and respect consistent with trauma-informed and culturally safe practice.	1 3
2	Integrates trauma-informed, ethical, and person-centred principles throughout the simulation. Demonstrates awareness of power dynamics, boundaries, and the impact of trauma on behaviour and communication.	1 2 3
3	Demonstrates clear application of relevant social work theories, models, or frameworks (e.g., strengths-based, ecological, trauma-informed, or systems approaches) to justify intervention and decision-making.	1 2 3
4	Simulation recording is professional, well-organised, and clearly delivered. Demonstrates appropriate non-verbal communication, professional presence, and ethical behaviour.	3

GENERIC SKILLS:	Communication, Problem solving, Information literacy

All - Assessment Task 3: Critical Improvement Plan

GOAL:	Following your simulation, you will review your performance using the structured feedback provided. Drawing on trauma-informed care principles, professional ethics, and relevant theory, students will critically analyse their original simulation response and propose specific, evidence-informed improvements.
PRODUCT:	Oral
FORMAT:	Online Video

CRITERIA:

No.		Learning Outcome assessed
1	Demonstrates critical engagement with simulation feedback and insight into strengths and areas for development. Shows capacity for self-evaluation and professional growth.	1 2 3
2	Describe how you would modify or improve your approach if re-doing the scenario, connecting theory, self-awareness, and applied skills — showing growth and capacity for critical reflection, rather than simply restating what happened.	1 2 3
3	Explain why those changes would enhance trauma-informed, ethical, and culturally responsive practice.	1 2 3
4	Demonstrates clear, confident, and professional communication. Video presentation is well-organised, authentic, and shows improved application of trauma-informed skills. Appropriate tone, nonverbal communication, and ethical sensitivity are evident.	3

GENERIC SKILLS:	Communication, Problem solving, Information literacy

All - Assessment Task 3: Discussion Post

GOAL:	Students will contribute to an online discussion forum exploring a current issue or emerging theme related to trauma and social work practice at local and/or global levels.
PRODUCT:	Written Piece
FORMAT:	Online Discussion Forums
CRITERIA:	

No.		Learning Outcome assessed
1	Demonstrates deep understanding of trauma-informed social work principles. Critically analyses issues raised in the discussion prompt, showing insight into their implications for practice in local and global contexts.	1 2 3
2	Shows reflective awareness of self, values, and positionality in relation to trauma, ethics, and professional boundaries. Demonstrates sensitivity to diversity and ethical practice in responses.	2 3
3	Responds thoughtfully and constructively to at least two peers. Builds on others' ideas, offers new perspectives, and fosters collaborative learning. Demonstrates professional respect and inclusivity in communication.	2
4	Writes clearly, coherently, and professionally. Posts are well-structured, free from bias or discriminatory language, and adhere to academic writing conventions and APA referencing where applicable.	2

GENERIC SKILLS:	Communication, Collaboration, Information literacy

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	Simulation Case Study	1	Taught, Practiced, Assessed
			4	Taught, Practiced, Assessed
			5	Taught, Practiced, Assessed
			6	Taught, Practiced, Assessed
			7	Taught, Practiced, Assessed
			9	Taught, Practiced, Assessed
	Oral	Critical Improvement Plan	1	Taught, Practiced, Assessed
			4	Taught, Practiced, Assessed
			5	Taught, Practiced, Assessed
			6	Taught, Practiced, Assessed
			9	Taught, Practiced, Assessed
	Written Piece	Discussion Post	4	Taught, Practiced, Assessed
			5	Taught, Practiced, 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

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

This course will be graded as Pass in a Limited Grade Course (PU) or Fail in a Limited Grade Course (UF) as per clause 5.1.1.3 and 5.1.1.4 of the Grades and Grade Point Average (GPA) - Academic Policy.

In a course eligible to use Limited Grades, all assessment items in that course are marked on a Pass/Fail basis and all assessment tasks are required to be passed for a student to successfully complete the course. Supplementary assessment is not available in courses using Limited Grades.

10.3. Assessment: Submission penalties

You must contact your Course Coordinator and provide the required documentation if you require an extension or alternate assessment.

Refer to the Assessment: Courses and Coursework Programs – Procedures.

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