COURSE OUTLINE

SWK402 Organisational Contexts for Social Work Practice

School: School of Law and Society

2026 | Semester 1

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 builds on your experiences from Social Work Field Education 1, providing the opportunity to reflect on and draw further learning from your experiences during placement. A critical framework will be used to examine key theories of organisations and management, culture, learning, funding and accountability structures. The course has a strong practice focus, enabling exploration of the role of social work in statutory and government organisations as well as non-government organisations and the impact of voluntarism. Implications for service users and their experiences of service systems is central.

1.2. How will this course be delivered?

ACTIVITY	HOURS	BEGINNING WEEK	FREQUENCY
ONLINE			
Online – online lecture (asynchronous/not timetabled)	1hr	Week 1	13 times
Online – online tutorial (synchronous/timetabled)	2hrs	Week 2	12 times

1.3. Course Topics

Weekly topics will be announced on Blackboard, and will include themes of social work in organisations, bureaucracies and public organisations, neoliberalism, practice settings, organisational culture, vision, values, conflict, relationships, and consumerism.

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 On successful completion of this course, you should be able to...		GRADUATE QUALITIES Completing these tasks successfully will contribute to you becoming...
1	Develop a critical understanding of organisational theory and the role of social workers as agents of change within human service organisations.	Knowledgeable
2	Critically analyse the current socio-political context of human service organisations and understand the implications for social work practice.	Creative and critical thinker
3	Critically reflect upon your own human service organisation experiences in first placement and how they impacted on your presentation	Empowered
4	Identify ethical dilemmas inherent in human service organisations, and articulate how to effect change which facilitates an organisation's ability to work from an anti-oppressive framework.	Ethical
5	Utilise critical reflection as a means of sustaining yourself as you respond to oppressive organisational processes.	Sustainability-focussed

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

(SWK301 and enrolled in Program AR362 or AR363) or AR707

5.2. Co-requisites

Not applicable

5.3. Anti-requisites

SWK200

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

Feedback will be provided in the first third of the course via online quizzes. Feedback will also be provided on the oral assessment during tutorials in the first third of the course.

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	Quiz/zes	Individual	30%	3 quizzes	Refer to Format	Online Test (Quiz)
All	2	Oral	Individual	30%	7 minutes	Week 6	Online Self and Peer Assessment
All	3	Case Study	Individual	40%	3,000 words	Week 10	Online Assignment Submission with plagiarism check

All - Assessment Task 1: Quizzes

GOAL:	The goal of this task is to apply your understanding of human service organisations through multiple choice quizzes.
PRODUCT:	Quiz/zes
AUTHORSHIP STATEMENT:	
FORMAT:	Submit: Weeks 3, 4, and 5 Three (3) multiple choice quizzes. You will be assigned to read text chapters and other readings provided on Blackboard that pertain to the quiz topics. You will be required to respond to multiple choice questions about the text chapters and other materials. Quizzes are open-book.
CRITERIA:	

No.		Learning Outcome assessed
1	Mastery of key terms, concepts, discussions, and debates in human service organisational practice.	
2	Understand relevant theoretical perspectives and arguments.	
3	Apply AASW practice standards to organisational issues.	
4	Assessment Criteria are mapped to the course learning outcomes	1 2 3 4 5

GENERIC SKILLS:	

All - Assessment Task 2: Presentation on Organisational Behaviour

GOAL:	To analyse a contemporary human service organisational issue
PRODUCT:	Oral
AUTHORSHIP STATEMENT:	
FORMAT:	Students are to prepare a 7 minute presentation on a contemporary organisational behaviour topic. The purpose of the presentation is to educate your team on a contemporary organisational behaviour topic that interests you. Select from one of the following topics: • Workforce diversity in human service organisations • Work-life balance in human service organisations • Workplace harassment in human service organisations • Hostile work environments human service organisations The key elements of the presentation will be as follows: • Define the organisational behaviour topic that you chose using a clear statement of purpose/thesis statement • Describe theoretical issues surrounding the organisational behaviour topic • Provide a lived experience of your chosen organisational behaviour topic. You might provide a video clip or even tell your own story of how the organisational behaviour issue impacted you personally. Presentations will be peer-marked (10%) marked during the scheduled tutorial time. You must attend tutorial to have your presentation marked by your peers. Annotated slides will be placed on Blackboard for review by the tutor (20%).
CRITERIA:	
GENERIC SKILLS:	

No.		Learning Outcome assessed
1	A critical understanding of organisational issues that impact on social work practice and service users	
2	Present well researched information, clearly linking theory and practice in relation to organisational settings	
3	Conduct a quality presentation, including verbal presentation (expression and content) and visual presentation (appropriate, concise, usefulness as an aid to understanding), utilising logically structured arguments	
4	Respond to questions and comments, demonstrating evidence of careful analysis	
5	Use of academic peer reviewed literature (minimum of 6 sources)	

All - Assessment Task 3: Organisational Assessment/Case Study

GOAL:	To assess the strengths and opportunities within your field organisation
PRODUCT:	Case Study
AUTHORSHIP STATEMENT:	
FORMAT:	This assessment is designed to help you assess the strengths and opportunities of a past field organisation, using concepts of organisational culture discussed in course readings and lecture. For this assessment, you will focus on the culture of a particular organisation. For example, you may select an organisation from which you are employed for pay, you completed a field placement, or you serve as a volunteer. Any human service organisation in which you made a significant contribution, whether paid or unpaid, will be acceptable for this assessment. This assessment will be a chance for you to reflect on your learning, including your first placement, but also show some critical and theoretical sophistication, as it is expected to have personal dimensions, but be primarily an academic piece.
CRITERIA:	

No.		Learning Outcome assessed
1	Description of the organisation that you work (or completed a field placement or service as a volunteer)	
2	Discussion of how new and existing staff, students, and other stakeholders are socialised into the culture of your organisation, including both formal and informal methods of teaching and learning.	
3	Analysis of the language, slogans, symbols, rituals, stories and traditions of your organisation and their impact on social work practice and service users	
4	Demonstrated understanding of how concepts of organisational culture specifically relate to the values of this human service organisation	
5	Reflection on your observations of how theories of organisational culture can be employed to improve or make organisation more effective at meeting its mission	
6	Written with clarity (expression, correct grammar, spelling and punctuation), logically structured and coherently argued analysis	
7	Use of academic peer reviewed literature (minimum of 6 sources)	

GENERIC SKILLS:	

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
n/a	n/a

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

You need regular access to the resource(s) below. Many texts are available as ebooks through the Library at no additional cost.

REQUIRED?	AUTHOR	YEAR	TITLE	EDITION	PUBLISHER
Required	Mark Hughes,Michael Wearing	2016	Organisations and Management in Social Work	n/a	Sage Publications Limited

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. 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

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