USC

COURSE OUTLINE

SCS725 Advanced Social Research

Course Coordinator: Peter Innes (pinnes@usc.edu.au) **School:** School of Law and Society

2021 | Semester 2

USC Sunshine Coast	ON CAMPUS	Most of your course is on campus but you may be able to do some components of this course online.

Please go to the USC website 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 equips you with the knowledge and skills needed to evaluate, undertake and commission social research. In order to critically understand how social data are produced, analysed and interpreted, the connections between epistemological underpinnings, theoretical orientations, methodology and methods are explored. You will formulate and design a research proposal and undertake practical key research methods. Debates concerning the relationship of science to social research, ethics, the power and purposes of research and research with minorities and marginalised groups are examined.

1.2. How will this course be delivered?

ACTIVITY	HOURS	BEGINNING WEEK	FREQUENCY
ON CAMPUS			
Tutorial/Workshop 1 – 1 hour on campus tutorial - weeks 2 - 9	1hr	Week 2	9 times
Laboratory 1 – 1 hour on campus laboratory class weeks 10, 11 and 12	1hr	Week 10	3 times
Lecture – 2 hour live online lecture for timetable	2hrs	Week 1	13 times

1.3. Course Topics

Foundations/Nature of Social Research

Research Design & The Research Process

Sampling

Ethics and Social Research

Critical and Functional Research Methodologies

Surveys

Qualitative Interviewing Methods

Content and Discourse Analysis

Practice and Evaluation

Analysing Qualitative Data

Analysing Quantitative Data I

Analysing Quantitative Data II

2. What level is this course?

700 Level (Specialised)

Demonstrating a specialised body of knowledge and set of skills for professional practice or further learning. Advanced application of knowledge and skills in unfamiliar contexts.

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 Critical understanding of the nature and purposes of social research and its contribution to knowledge and theory in the social sciences.	Knowledgeable Empowered
2 Critical understanding of current methodological debates and issues in social research and the ethical dimensions of research practice	Knowledgeable Ethical
3 Formulate researchable question and conceptualise and articulate research problems	Creative and critical thinker
4 Develop and design a coherent research strategy to answer a research question	Knowledgeable Creative and critical thinker
5 Analyse and interpret quantitative data using SPSS	Knowledgeable Creative and critical thinker
6 Critical awareness as professionals of the ways in which social research informs professional practice and the ethical, moral and political responsibilities that follow from this	Ethical Engaged

5. Am I eligible to enrol in this course?

Refer to the USC Glossary of terms for definitions of "pre-requisites, co-requisites and anti-requisites".

5.1. Pre-requisites

Enrolled in a Postgraduate Program

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

Timely and detailed feedback is provided for each assessment. Feedback is provided both within text and general comments to build scholarly skills. Students are able to seek feedback through face-to-face discussion with the course coordinator. Tutorials will include extended discussion and review of the assessment task requirements and scope.

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	25%	500 words (excluding references)	Week 5	Online Assignment Submission
All	2	Quiz/zes	Individual	45%	Each Quiz contains a number of multiple choice questions.	Refer to Format	Online Assignment Submission
All	3	Quiz/zes	Individual	30%	NA	Week 13	Online Assignment Submission

All - Assessment Task 1: Own Research Concept

GOAL:	To demonstrate your capacity to conceptualise and articulate a research concept.
PRODUCT:	Written Piece
FORMAT:	Write a 500 word (maximum) preliminary research statement, including in-text referencing in either Harvard or APA format) about your own research problem/puzzle/question explicitly addressing the following: Use the following numbered headers: 1) General Problem/Puzzle/Question (~ 50 words) • Explain your research topic and focus. E.g. This research focuses on … OR In [location] the issue of … 2) Rationale/Significance of this Study (~ 50 words; one reference) • Provide a justification of the importance of undertaking this study. E.g. [X] number of individuals experience the problem of … (reference) // Research seldom addresses … 3) Brief Literature Summary (~250 words; minimum of three references) • Provide a short review of previous research, perspectives, and/or the current scholarly debates/discussions about your topic 4) Specific Research Question (~ 50 words) • State your proposed general research question or research problem • Indent and Italicise • Use course-specific language to state your research question (E.g. for quantitative OR qualitative OR practice-oriented research approaches). 5) Generate a reference list of at least four references cited in your Own Research Concept (These are not included in the word count). NB: Include your research topic title and name of researcher on a cover page.

CRITERIA:	**No.**	**Learning Outcome assessed**
	1 General Problem/Puzzle/Question (3 marks)	① ③ ④ ⑥
	2 Rationale/Significance (4 marks)	① ③ ④ ⑥
	3 Brief Literature Summary (10 marks)	① ③ ④
	4 Specific Research Question (4 marks)	② ③
	5 Generate a Reference List (4 marks)	① ③

All - Assessment Task 2: Method Quizzes (Survey Design Week 7/ Interview Questions Week 9)

GOAL:	To critically apply your knowledge to specific method-oriented questions to demonstrate you understand the basic concepts (Two quizzes: one each for survey design and interviewing)
PRODUCT:	Quiz/zes
FORMAT:	Choose the correct responses to quiz questions each of two major methods exercises. The first, in Week 7, Survey Design quiz is based on a provided short pdf survey (provided end of Week 6). Each question in the survey suffers from a primary problem outlined in the Survey Design Lecture content (and workshop). The second, in Week 9, is based on a provided short YouTube interview (provided end of Week 8). Each interviewer question in the interview is evaluated as effective based on content outlined in the Interview Lecture (and workshop). Additionally, two articles are used to correctly select appropriately aligned potentially new interview questions. For each quiz, you have a week to work on the provided resources to develop your answers to the quiz submission.

CRITERIA:	No.		Learning Outcome assessed
	1	Correct application of concepts (identify and provide appropriate alternatives) to provided examples of survey design and interview question development.	① ② ③ ④ ⑥

All - Assessment Task 3: Data Analysis - SPSS

GOAL:	To critically apply your knowledge to demonstrate your capacity to analyse and interpret research data, specifically with SPSS
PRODUCT:	Quiz/zes
FORMAT:	You are required to correctly complete and submit the data analysis task provided. This involves using SPSS (either in USC Laboratories, or through online access via USC's virtual machine access to SPSS). Optionally, SPSS may be downloaded temporarily as a trial licence from IBM. SPSS data and a list of questions will be provided. Students need to use SPSS with the provided data to answer the questions. When ready, the answers are to be entered into the online submission area.

CRITERIA:	No.		Learning Outcome assessed
	1	Adequate knowledge of quantitative methods of data analysis.	② ③ ④ ⑤
	2	Demonstrate correct application of quantitative data analysis techniques. 7	④ ⑤

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. Directed study hours may vary by location. 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 Blackboard 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	PUBLISHER
Required	Maggie Walter	2019	Social Research Methods	Oxford University Press, USA

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 Blackboard, are electronically checked through SafeAssign. This software allows for text comparisons to be made between your submitted assessment item and all other work that SafeAssign has access to.

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. 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.

10.5. 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.

10.6. 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.

10.7. 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
- Administration of Central Examinations
- Deferred Examinations
- Student Academic Misconduct
- Students with a Disability

Visit the USC website: http://www.usc.edu.au/explore/policies-and-procedures#academic-learning-and-teaching

10.8. General Enquiries

In person:
- **USC Sunshine Coast** - Student Central, Ground Floor, Building C, 90 Sippy Downs Drive, Sippy Downs
- **USC Moreton Bay** - Service Centre, Ground Floor, Foundation Building, Gympie Road, Petrie
- **USC SouthBank** - Student Central, Building A4 (SW1), 52 Merivale Street, South Brisbane
- **USC Gympie** - Student Central, 71 Cartwright Road, Gympie
- **USC Fraser Coast** - Student Central, Student Central, Building A, 161 Old Maryborough Rd, Hervey Bay
- **USC Caboolture** - Student Central, Level 1 Building J, Cnr Manley and Tallon Street, Caboolture

Tel: +61 7 5430 2890

Email: studentcentral@usc.edu.au