

**LAWS6091: Special Interest Topic (the “Project Course”)**

Newcastle City Precinct  
Semester 1 - 2024



## OVERVIEW

<b>Course Description</b>	In Semester 1, 2024, the Special Interest Topic will be the Community Legal Development Project. In this course, students will – individually or in small groups – complete one or more projects that engage with and benefit the community.
<b>Requisites</b>	This course is only available to students enrolled in the Juris Doctor/ Graduate Diploma in Legal Practice, Master of Laws, or a Bachelor of Laws (Honours) combined program.
<b>Assumed Knowledge</b>	For Juris Doctor/Graduate Diploma in Legal Practice students: LAWS6000, LAWS6001, LAWS6120, LAWS6121, LAWS6130, LAWS6006 or LAWS6011; for Bachelor of Laws (Honours) combined program students: LAWS1010, LAWS1011, LAWS1020, LAWS1021, LAWS2030, LAWS4001.
<b>Skills Focus</b>	Skills vary by project, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Advanced Indigenous Awareness / International Awareness</li><li>• Advanced Project Management</li><li>• Advanced Policy Analysis and Law Reform</li></ul>
<b>Contact Hours</b>	<b>Newcastle City Precinct Seminar</b> Face to Face On Campus [ <i>there are <u>not</u> set meeting times each week for <u>most</u> projects [although some do have them]; rather, these will be organised in consultation with each student/group</i> ]
<b>Unit Weighting</b>	10
<b>Workload</b>	Students are required to spend on average 120-140 hours of effort (contact and non-contact) including assessments per 10 unit course.

# COURSE OUTLINE

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# CONTACTS

**Course Coordinator**     **Newcastle City Precinct**  
Dr Kevin Sobel-Read  
Kevin.Sobel-Read@newcastle.edu.au  
(02) 4921 6613  
Consultation: I'm happy to meet in person or by Zoom, please email to organise a time.

**Teaching Staff**             Other teaching staff will be advised on the course Blackboard site.

**School Office**                **Newcastle Law School**  
5th Floor  
NU Space  
409 Hunter Street  
Newcastle  
Law-School@newcastle.edu.au  
+61 2 4921 8666

# SYLLABUS

**Course Content**             The course content will vary with the particular topic area chosen as of special interest to the student and supervisor.

**Course Learning Outcomes**     **On successful completion of this course, students will be able to:**

1.     Successfully develop and complete a project that provides practical legal value to the community.
2.     Demonstrate an advanced and integrated understanding of the law and concepts relative to the particular topic area.
3.     Effectively communicate the relevant legal concepts to the target audience in the chosen form and medium.
4.     Employ initiative, self-motivation and efficient time-management skills in order to complete the project.
5.     Effectively collaborate with the project supervisor(s) (and, where relevant, other team members and/or stakeholders) in a professional manner.
6.     Thoughtfully reflect on the project experience in order to develop improved project-management skills.

**Course Materials**             Individualised depending on topic and in consultation with supervisor.

# SCHEDULE

Week	Week Begins	Topic	Learning Activity	Assessment Due
1	26 Feb	in consultation with supervisor	project work	
2	4 Mar	in consultation with supervisor	project work	
3	11 Mar	in consultation with supervisor	project work	
4	18 Mar	in consultation with supervisor	project work	
5	25 Mar	in consultation with supervisor	project work	
6	1 Apr	in consultation with supervisor	project work	
7	8 Apr	in consultation with supervisor	project work	
<b>Mid-Term Break</b>				
<b>Mid-Term break</b>				
8	29 Apr	in consultation with supervisor	project work	
9	6 May	in consultation with supervisor	project work	
10	13 May	in consultation with supervisor	project work	
11	20 May	in consultation with supervisor	project work	
12	27 May	in consultation with supervisor	project work	
13	3 Jun	in consultation with supervisor	project work	
<b>Examination Period</b>				
<b>Examination Period</b>				

# ASSESSMENTS

This course has 1 graded assessment and two formative assessments. Each assessment is described in more detail in the sections below.

	Assessment Name	Due Date	Involvement	Weighting	Learning Outcomes
1	Project Engagement + Project Output	tbd (depending on project), presumably week 13	Individual	100%	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
2	Project Portfolio	tbd (depending on project), presumably week 13	Individual	formative	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
3	Reflection (in writing or by video)	tbd (depending on project), presumably week 13	Individual	formative	6

To ensure that grades are fair both within and between courses and cohorts, Newcastle Law School has a rigorous policy of moderating and reviewing assessment. The School Assessment Board (SAB) reviews all final grades before they are released to students, and the SAB process may result in the overall marks of a class being moved up or down by a specific amount, thus impacting individual marks. This is consistent with grading practices in other Law Schools across the country and important to ensure the integrity of assessment. This means that the final grade you are awarded may not be the sum of marks you have received in all assessments

## Late Submissions

The mark for an assessment item submitted after the designated time on the due date, without an approved extension of time, will be reduced by 10% of the possible maximum mark for that assessment item for each day or part day that the assessment item is late. Note: this applies equally to week and weekend days.

## Assessment 1 – Project Engagement + Project Output

<b>Assessment Type</b>	Project Engagement + Project Output
<b>Description</b>	Your marks will be based on your level of responsibility, initiative, and professionalism in your engagement with your project, along with the quality of your final output(s) (which will vary by project).
<b>Weighting</b>	100%
<b>Due Date</b>	tbd (depending on project), presumably week 13
<b>Submission Method</b>	to <u>Supervisor</u> , by arrangement (usually be email)
<b>Assessment Criteria</b>	Engaged commitment to the chosen project, responsiveness, initiative, etc.
<b>Return Method</b>	n/a
<b>Feedback Provided</b>	individualised feedback upon request

## Assessment 2 – Project Portfolio

<b>Assessment Type</b>	Portfolio
<b>Description</b>	a portfolio that includes your final output(s) as well as other key documents such as relevant correspondence and research (so it is good to be organised from the beginning of your project so as to be managing and preparing your documents as you work on the project).
<b>Weighting</b>	formative
<b>Due Date</b>	tbd (depending on project)
<b>Submission Method</b>	to <u>Course Coordinator</u> (usually by email)
<b>Assessment Criteria</b>	as stated above
<b>Return Method</b>	n/a
<b>Feedback Provided</b>	individualised feedback upon request

## Assessment 3 – Reflection

<b>Assessment Type</b>	Reflection (in writing or by video)
<b>Description</b>	In writing (1-2 pages) or by video (1-2 minutes) you should reflect on your role in your project, including what you did, what you liked, what you found challenging and what could be improved in the project and/or course.
<b>Weighting</b>	formative
<b>Due Date</b>	tbd (depending on project)
<b>Submission Method</b>	to <u>Course Coordinator</u> (usually by email)
<b>Assessment Criteria</b>	as stated above
<b>Return Method</b>	n/a
<b>Feedback Provided</b>	individualised feedback upon request

# ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

### Wellness Contacts

There are a variety of pressures on law students, and being able to perform well academically under pressure, without excessive stress will contribute to enhanced outcomes in wellbeing and academic results. Reach out to support services and learn ways to maintain your mental health, deal with stress and common issues like perfectionism, procrastination and anxiety.

To access UON support:

<https://www.newcastle.edu.au/current-students/support/personal>

Ph: 4921 6622 or email: [counselling@newcastle.edu.au](mailto:counselling@newcastle.edu.au)

For support outside of office hours call the University Crisis Support Line on 1300 653 007 or for chat sms 0488 884 165.

For immediate support contact Lifeline 24/7 on 13 14 11 or <https://www.lifeline.org.au/>

**Grading Scheme**

This course is graded as follows:

Range of Marks	Grade	Description
85-100	High Distinction (HD)	Outstanding standard indicating comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the relevant materials; demonstration of an outstanding level of academic achievement; mastery of skills*; and achievement of all assessment objectives.
75-84	Distinction (D)	Excellent standard indicating a very high level of knowledge and understanding of the relevant materials; demonstration of a very high level of academic ability; sound development of skills*; and achievement of all assessment objectives.
65-74	Credit (C)	Good standard indicating a high level of knowledge and understanding of the relevant materials; demonstration of a high level of academic achievement; reasonable development of skills*; and achievement of all learning outcomes.
50-64	Pass (P)	Satisfactory standard indicating an adequate knowledge and understanding of the relevant materials; demonstration of an adequate level of academic achievement; satisfactory development of skills*; and achievement of all learning outcomes.
0-49	Fail (FF)	Failure to satisfactorily achieve learning outcomes. If all compulsory course components are not completed the mark will be zero. A fail grade may also be awarded following disciplinary action.

\*Skills are those identified for the purposes of assessment task(s).

**Communication Methods**

Communication methods used in this course include: email, Canvas, face-to-face.

**Course Evaluation**

Each year feedback is sought from students and other stakeholders about the courses offered in the University for the purposes of identifying areas of excellence and potential improvement.

**Oral Interviews**

After you have submitted your final assessment/online quiz, you may be required to take part in a Viva (also called an oral exam) for quality assurance purposes. A Viva will consist of an interview with one or perhaps two staff conducted via Zoom, and will last approximately 10 minutes. During this time, you will be asked questions about the answers you have provided in the assessment/online quiz. For instance, you may be asked about the workings or rationale behind the way you structured an assessment response or a couple of questions from the quiz. This will help us verify your knowledge of a topic, demonstrate that it is your own work and provide informative feedback to staff to help them make enhancements to future examination/assessment papers.

**Academic Misconduct**

All students are required to meet the academic integrity standards of the University. These standards reinforce the importance of integrity and honesty in an academic environment. Academic Integrity policies apply to all students of the University in all modes of study and in all locations. For the Student Academic Integrity Policy, refer to <https://policies.newcastle.edu.au/document/view-current.php?id=35>.

**Adverse Circumstances**

You are entitled to apply for special consideration because adverse circumstances have had an impact on your performance in an assessment item. This includes applying for an extension of time to complete an assessment item. Prior to applying you must refer to the Adverse Circumstances Affecting Assessment Items Procedure, available at <https://policies.newcastle.edu.au/document/view-current.php?id=236>. All applications for Adverse Circumstances must be lodged via the online Adverse Circumstances system, along with supporting documentation.

**Important Policy Information**

The 'HELP for Students' tab in UoNline contains important information that all students should be familiar with, including various systems, policies and procedures.

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*This course outline was approved by the Head of School. No alteration of this course outline is permitted without Head of School approval. If a change is approved, students will be notified and an amended course outline will be provided in the same manner as the original.*

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