

UniSA Law School DVD Transcript

Hi. Welcome to the Law School of the University of South Australia. My name's Paul Fairall and I'm proud to be the Foundation Dean of the School. It is my privilege to lead a talented team of Academic staff who have worked hard to develop a unique and modern program that will produce lawyers that are ready for the challenges of the real world. In a moment you will hear from some of my colleagues and students at the law school. I am very proud to welcome you to our School of Law.

We want our students to be able to compete successfully in the Legal profession. It gives our students a set of transferable skills; skills that will take them not just into Legal practise, but into a whole range of related areas.

Walking into the building in the morning you've got this beautiful heritage building and it's just an absolute pleasure to go to work. We've got a mixture of old meets new and it's just a great atmosphere. UniSA is in the CBD so that means that I can go shopping straight after the lecture; go to Aroma and have a coffee with a girlfriend and just enjoy myself while I'm at Uni. We've got trams going all around town. It's the easiest place to get to.

Instead of having two long semesters and then a very long summer break, at our university, our students can take 3 intense trimesters throughout the course of the year. You can complete not only the undergraduate Law degree, but the professional legal training program in a total of 3 years. And it also allows student's flexible entry points throughout the year so that you don't have to wait if you want to come to Law School until the March intake. So what is really good about this degree program is that students can personalise it to suit their own needs and their own particular circumstances.

As a working person it gives you the flexibility to be able to manage your time well. They have got evening tutorials as well which means if you work during the day, as I do, you can come along in the evening. They have flexibility of choice. They can chose to combine their law degree studies with twenty two other degree programs. Doing a double degree helps our graduates by preparing them to be able to handle complex and diverse problems.

Communication is one of the things that we really emphasise. We focus very much on our own communication with our students, but also on developing their communication skills so that they feel secure and comfortable and able to ask us any questions that they might want to ask. It's more beneficial for everyone because we can have a chat about different things and anyone can bring up extra topics that we like.

One of the features of the Law School is the small class sizes. We have a small cohort of students. That means that as teachers we can get to know our students as individuals and that's not only in the classroom but also outside of the classroom. It encourages interaction between all of the

students and them; the tutors really, they look to this; they want us to have an opinion; to think about issues.

E-portfolios are a really exciting development at the Law School. One literally has a living resume. One can link the text of the resume to real examples of learning achievement.

The other thing that we've put in place is a mentoring program. It is a great idea I must say, because it's quite intimidating to come into a Law School in any case. Every student in the Law School has a unique relationship with a particular academic. If you have a problem, there's somebody to turn to.

The majority of our staff are PhD qualified. They're research active and their research informs their teaching. It means that students are exposed to the most modern and contemporary thinking. That they are being challenged by really new and innovative ideas is the study of Law. We as teachers can expose our students to new and exciting areas of the law that aren't a part of the orthodox curriculum throughout the country.

What you will find when you come to UniSA is that the staff are what marks us out. They're passionate about Legal Education. They've spent a lot of their time studying, intensively and they want to impart that knowledge to you. What brought me to UniSA was the opportunity to do something different. To start from scratch and to create a working environment for the staff and a learning environment for the students that was different to the general law degree that you see across the country. They have a passion for what they are doing and they believe in it. The fact that you get to work with such dynamic, enthusiastic, passionate people who support and encourage and challenge you on a daily basis is one of the best things about it.

The academic staff have been really helpful. We have an open door policy with them which means that any time of the day whether it's an exam query or a tutorial query or even just a personal problem they are always there to listen to us. We are a group of different individuals who all have a different approach to teaching our students. Staff are always available, always on hand, and it's great that when you walk in the building on the mornings, everyone is smiling and vibrant and the atmosphere is great.

It has been my privilege to put together, what I think is the best team of legal experts to provide the best legal education on offer, anywhere in this country.