



Hear how student expectations are transforming

Secure your spot

technologyone

SHOWCASE

CAMPUS REVIEW



Home | Faculty Focus | Dun dun: TV crime comes to the University of South Australia



Still from Westside Justice.

By: Nicole Madigan in Faculty Focus, Top Stories April 9, 2019 0

Crime shows – be they fiction or true – are some of the world’s most popular television programs, frequently devoured by a wide range of audiences.

There are no shortage of options when it comes to choosing your favourite series, but now there’s a new kid on the block, designed to provide a genuine insight into how a crime is investigated.

The University of South Australia’s online education arm, UniSA Online, will soon launch *Westside Justice*, an in-house feature film starring a cast of local Australian actors that has been produced by academics from the university’s online Criminal Justice degree.

The film has been designed to give students an insight into just what it takes to investigate and assemble the physical evidence required to get a conviction.

“The film offers that single crime event which can be examined from multiple criminal justice perspectives and which transposes theory, law and good practice into something concrete for students,” says online course facilitator and former police officer, Bec Medhurst.

“It’s a way of introducing criminal investigation techniques and approaches for students who may pursue various roles in criminal justice. Plus, who doesn’t enjoy a good ‘who dun it’ film?”

Medhurst says the film is anchored to *Policing Investigations and Intelligence*, with students ‘riding along’ with detectives in the initial stages of a criminal investigation to get a taste of what’s involved.

“Film has been scripted to prompt and demonstrate suspect, victim and witness interviewing; crime scene investigation; intelligence processes; arrest procedures; evidence collection and management; and simple forensic procedures,” she says.

Welcome **Richard Garfield!**

[Change Password](#)

[Logout](#)

UniBank
Know more

Banking* for staff, students and graduates of Australian Universities and their families.

[Know more](#)

*Conditions apply. Membership eligibility criteria apply to join UniBank.

Bonus Saver Account

2.85% p.a

Promotional interest rate*
Amounts \$0-\$149,999

[Start Saving](#)

Click for General Advice
Warning and T&Cs

bankfirst

AS#404: NO AD FOUND IN ROTATION

Westside Justice Preview



The full film is divided into a series of shorter scenes that follow the learning topics over the 10-week course.

"When the film is viewed as a full-length feature, it's just a good film.

"When paired with educational narrative, activities, discussions and assessments, the film brings criminal investigation and intelligence to life for students."

Medhurst says fictional crime series offer abridged and filtered versions of real-life crime.

"Well, TV crime is faster, louder, snappier, and when it wants to be, intrinsically satisfying.

"Perhaps because you guessed who the perpetrator was, or you never saw that 'twist' coming, but mainly because you're not the one standing in the rain wondering where you left the keys to your police car.

"You're toasty warm and safe at home watching it all happen."

And while Medhurst says they do a pretty good job, real life crime is less predictable.

"Real life crime can be hot, cold, smelly, scary and many other things.

"Our film is similar to TV in some ways – we don't highlight unfruitful leads or red herrings.

"Students will, however, engage in the reading, thinking and writing that goes hand in hand with investigation work.

"We did have some fun with a few TV crime stereotypes though in our film and we've planted a crime twist or two.

"As for 'real' crime investigations? They can be both unexciting and extremely exciting.

"In fact, toggling between mundane and extreme excitement can happen in a single moment and, it frequently does.

"The film scenes are written in a way that means they can be repurposed for different activities and assessments in courses across the degree, and student feedback has been extremely positive."

Medhurst says students will gain an understanding of how theory, law, policy and procedure meld together in professional practice, and how the sum of the investigation and intelligence tasks progress criminal investigations.

"There are some reflective moments and lighter moments in the film which humanises investigators and, I hope, demystifies some of the aura surrounding crime investigation.

"The film characters are earnest yet fallible and there are moments when departure from the correct procedure can derail the entire investigation.

"Those moments become powerful teaching and learning opportunities."

Medhurst says the changing nature of policing and the closer alignment of immigration, border protection, law enforcement and domestic security through the new Home Affairs portfolio has expanded the required skills and knowledge base for careers in the sector.

"People working in this sector need a broad understanding of the different roles and responsibilities of all of these agencies, and how they all work together," she says.

"Our online degree provides students with a 360-degree view of the criminal justice sector, including everything from law enforcement to the courts and corrections. And it includes learning on the latest trends in cybercrime, counter-terrorism, police investigations and intelligence and applied criminology.

"It makes sense that in teaching the latest challenges for people working in law enforcement and the criminal justice system, we use all the best tools to make that learning thorough, relevant and memorable.

"We believe *Westside Justice* will be a real asset to learning for our online students around Australia."

Do you have an idea for a story?

Email dallas.bastian@apned.com.au



May 10, 2019



Keeping it in the family: mother, daughter graduate with nursing degrees

May 10, 2019



Morrison promises \$30m school for mining, manufacturing

May 10, 2019



Curtin Singapore comes out on top

May 9, 2019



International student association blasts Four Corners coverage

May 8, 2019

Global Search for Chair Professor / Professor / Associate Professor / Assistant Professor
Kowloon, Hong Kong > The Hong Kong Polytechnic University > [Full Time](#)



eMag archive



Get the news delivered straight to your inbox

Receive the top stories in our weekly newsletter [SIGN UP NOW](#)



👁 Post Views: 500

Share this:



Edit

Tagged with: [CRIME](#) [UNISA](#) [WESTSIDE JUSTICE](#)

Logged in as Richard Garfield. [Log out?](#)

Post Comment

[Contact Us](#)

[Advertise with us](#)

[Subscribe](#)

[Editorial guidelines](#)

[Privacy Policy](#)

[Terms of use](#)

Email Address*

First Name*

Last Name*

Company Name

Please select which forms of communication you would like to receive from us

E-newsletters Partner messages

Submit