



SOC 325

Understanding Contemporary Societies

S2 Day 2014

Sociology

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Macquarie University has taken all reasonable measures to ensure the information in this publication is accurate and up-to-date. However, the information may change or become out-dated as a result of change in University policies, procedures or rules. The University reserves the right to make changes to any information in this publication without notice. Users of this publication are advised to check the website version of this publication [or the relevant faculty or department] before acting on any information in this publication.

General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Lecturer/Tutor

Evelyn Honeywill

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Contact via email

By request

Credit points

3

Prerequisites

39cp including 12cp in SOC units

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

This unit provides essential sociological skills that enable you to understand contemporary societies and the lives we live in them. The goal is to guide students from sociology and other disciplines through the complexities of sociological thinking by exploring diverse areas such as work, identity, relationships, politics, racism and multiculturalism, crime, health, the environment, and the media. The unit has a strong focus on practical applications of social theory and prepares graduates to deal with and make sense of major social developments, which shape our lives and the world we live in.

Important Academic Dates

Information about important academic dates including deadlines for withdrawing from units are available at <https://www.mq.edu.au/study/calendar-of-dates>

Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, you will be able to:

- An understanding of the nature of contemporary societies and the issues surrounding the classification of such societies as modern, postmodern, information, risk and network societies;
- an appreciation of the similarities or differences between today's society and societies of the past;
- consolidation of knowledge acquired in previous studies in Sociology;

an acquisition of theoretical and empirical knowledge in sociology that will serve as a foundation for post-graduate studies;
and, an appreciation of the interdependence of fields of study in the discipline.

General Assessment Information

Assignment Submission

The submission of both a hard and an electronic version of assignments are required.

Hard copies of assignments must be submitted through the sociology assignment box in the foyer of W6A. Assignments must include a signed [Arts Faculty coversheet](#).

Electronic copies of assignments must be submitted through Turnitin via the SOC325 iLearn page.

Referencing

Sociology referencing guidelines can be accessed [here](#).

Extensions and Late Submission

Extension requests should be made as soon as possible before the assignment due date to the tutor.

Late submission of written work will result in a **deduction of 5% of the mark awarded for the first day and 1 % each day thereafter** beyond the due date, or date to which an extension has been granted.

Extensions are granted **only** on grounds of illness or misadventure, and appropriate supporting documentation must be submitted. Work submitted after 3 weeks beyond the due date, or the date after which an extension has been given, will not be accepted. If you are having problems completing an assignment, please contact the tutor as early as possible.

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Due
Writing Exercise 1	40%	Week 6
Writing Exercise 2	40%	Week 12
Participation and Engagement	20%	Weekly

Writing Exercise 1

Due: **Week 6**

Weighting: **40%**

Word Limit: 800 words

For writing exercises 1 and 2 the task is the same. The word count for each is different.

Choose one week of the course as your focus. You cannot jump ahead to a week that we have not yet dealt with, neither can you choose the same week twice (a different week must be chosen for each task).

A writing exercise requires you need to think about the chosen week's topic(s), themes and corresponding readings and write up your insights. You can do so by explaining how your chosen week and the topic(s) it covers helps us to understand contemporary societies. For that to work, you need to:

- (1) identify the key sociological point(s) / concept(s) / question(s) presented in your chosen week;
- (2) define the concept(s) concisely in your own words and with the use of quotes from the corresponding/relevant reading(s). **Do not quote the lectures;**
- (3) consider the context/origin or development of the concept(s) / how the concept(s) came about and into use; and,
- (4) demonstrate why the concept(s) or theorists addressed are still useful or not for understanding contemporary societies.
- (5) Be sure to use the corresponding reading(s) from your chosen week to support your explanations and reference them correctly in your assignment.

IMPORTANT NOTES:

A writing exercise is not a summary of the lecture or a review of the reading(s) from the chosen week. You need to show that you have thought the topic/concepts through and that you have understood the sociological relevance of it.

A writing exercise is not an account of what you personally think about a topic or a list of examples (avoid editorial style writing and lists). Use the lecture and reading material in order to demonstrate your sociological knowledge and understanding.

Academic prose must be used and sociological referencing style is required.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- An understanding of the nature of contemporary societies and the issues surrounding the classification of such societies as modern, postmodern, information, risk and network societies;
- an appreciation of the similarities or differences between today's society and societies of the past;
- consolidation of knowledge acquired in previous studies in Sociology;
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- and, an appreciation of the interdependence of fields of study in the discipline.

Writing Exercise 2

Due: **Week 12**

Weighting: **40%**

Word Limit: 1000 words

For writing exercises 1 and 2 the task is the same. The word count for each is different.

Choose one week of the course as your focus. You cannot jump ahead to a week that we have not yet dealt with, neither can you choose the same week twice (a different week must be chosen for each task).

A writing exercise requires you need to think about the chosen week's topic(s), themes and corresponding readings and write up your insights. You can do so by explaining how your chosen week and the topic(s) it covers helps us to understand contemporary societies. For that to work, you need to:

- (1) identify the key sociological point(s) / concept(s) / question(s) presented in your chosen week;
- (2) define the concept(s) concisely in your own words and with the use of quotes from the corresponding/relevant reading(s). **Do not quote the lectures;**
- (3) consider the context/origin or development of the concept(s) / how the concept(s) came about and into use; and,
- (4) demonstrate why the concept(s) or theorists addressed are still useful or not for understanding contemporary societies.
- (5) Be sure to use the corresponding reading(s) from your chosen week to support your explanations and reference them correctly in your assignment.

IMPORTANT NOTES:

A writing exercise is not a summary of the lecture or a review of the reading(s) from the chosen week. You need to show that you have thought the topic/concepts through and that you have understood the sociological relevance of it.

A writing exercise is not an account of what you personally think about a topic or a list of examples (avoid editorial style writing and lists). Use the lecture and reading material in order to demonstrate your sociological knowledge and understanding.

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On successful completion you will be able to:

- An understanding of the nature of contemporary societies and the issues surrounding the classification of such societies as modern, postmodern, information, risk and network societies;
- an appreciation of the similarities or differences between today's society and societies of the past;

- consolidation of knowledge acquired in previous studies in Sociology;
- an acquisition of theoretical and empirical knowledge in sociology that will serve as a foundation for post-graduate studies;
- and, an appreciation of the interdependence of fields of study in the discipline.

Participation and Engagement

Due: **Weekly**

Weighting: **20%**

The participation and engagement component of the course requires students to attend and contribute to discussion in the weekly tutorials and lectures.

Throughout classes students need to demonstrate comprehension of the weekly topics, concepts, theories and the readings by reflecting on the class materials, engaging with peers, and, drawing on external examples that help illuminate key aspects of the course content. External examples might include current or past local and global news, and/or entertainment (TV, movies and Internet content) or literature that you have come across.

Attendance will be recorded.

On successful completion you will be able to:

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- consolidation of knowledge acquired in previous studies in Sociology;
- an acquisition of theoretical and empirical knowledge in sociology that will serve as a foundation for post-graduate studies;
- and, an appreciation of the interdependence of fields of study in the discipline.

Delivery and Resources

Students participate in 1 lecture/seminar and 1 tutorial.

The lecture/seminar:

Tuesday morning 9 - 11 am.

The lecture/seminar is held in W2 Mac Theatres Interactive Learning Space. This new room allows students and teachers to utilise the latest learning technologies.

Tutorials:

Tutorial 1: Tuesday 11 - 12 noon - W5A 205

Tutorial 2: Tuesday 12 - 1 pm X5B 132

Note: There are no tutorials in Week 1

Unit Schedule

Week 1	<p>Lecture: Introduction to Understanding Contemporary Societies</p> <p>No reading/No tutorials</p>
Week 2	<p>Lecture: Modernity and Sociology as a Science</p> <p>Reading:</p> <p>Elias N. (1970) <i>What is Sociology?</i> Columbia University Press pp. 33-49.</p>
Week 3	<p>Lecture: The Social Construction of Reality</p> <p>Reading:</p> <p>Berger P. and Luckmann T. (1975) <i>The Social Construction of Reality</i> Penguin University Books, Whitstable, pp. 64-109.</p>
Week 4	<p>Lecture: Individual and Society</p> <p>Reading:</p> <p>Elias N. (1991) <i>The Society of Individuals</i> Continuum, New York / London, pp. vii-20.</p>
Week 5	<p>Lecture: Self and Society</p> <p>Reading:</p> <p>Baumeister, R. F. (1997), 'The self and society. Changes, problems, and opportunities', in Ashmore, R. D. & Jussim, L. (Eds.), <i>Self and Identity: Fundamental Issues</i>, New York: Oxford University Press, pp. 191-217.</p>

<p>Week 6</p>	<p>Lecture: Society as Social Systems</p> <p>Reading:</p> <p>Luhmann N. (1995) <i>Social Systems</i> Stanford University Press, Stanford. Pp. 12-58.</p>
<p>Week 7</p>	<p>Lecture: The Public Sphere</p> <p>Readings:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Dan Hind (2010) <i>The Return of the Public</i>, London, New York: Verso, 'Introduction' pp. 1-4.2. <i>Public Deliberation and Public Culture: The Writings of Bernhard Peters, 1993-2005</i>, (2008) edited by Hartmut Wessler, London: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 36-42.3. David Wells (1997) 'One Nation and the Politics of Populism' in Pauline Hanson: <i>One Nation and Australian Politics</i> (NSW: Univ. New England Press) pp. 18-29.
<p>Week 8</p>	<p>Lecture: Private Sphere, Private Life, Privacy</p> <p>Readings:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Burkart, G. (2010) 'When Privacy goes Public: New Media and the Transformation of the Culture of Confession', in H. Blatterer, P. Johnson and M. Markus (eds), <i>Modern Privacy: Shifting Boundaries, New Forms</i>, Palgrave Macmillan, New York, pp. 23-38.2. Markus, M. R. (2010) 'Can Solitude be Recaptured for the Sake of Intimacy?', in H. Blatterer, P. Johnson and M. Markus (eds), <i>Modern Privacy: Shifting Boundaries, New Forms</i>, Palgrave Macmillan, New York, pp. 88-101.
<p>Week 9</p>	<p>Lecture: The Making and Remaking of the Intimate Sphere</p> <p>Readings:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Giddens, A. (1992) 'Love, Commitment and the Pure Relationship', <i>The Transformation of Intimacy: Sexuality, Love and Eroticism in Modern Societies</i>, Stanford University Press, Stanford, pp. 49-64.2. Evans, M. (2003) 'The Future of Love', <i>Love: An Unromantic Discussion</i>, Polity, London, pp. 124-43.

Week 10	<p>Lecture: Love, Friendship and the Problem of Institution</p> <p>Reading:</p> <p>Markus, M.R. (2010) 'Lovers and Friends: "Radical Utopias" of Intimacy?' Thesis Eleven, vol. 101, no. 6, pp. 6-23.</p>
Week 11	<p>Lecture: Family and Social Change</p> <p>Readings:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Honneth, A. 2007, 'Between Justice and Affection: The Family as a Field of Moral Disputes', <i>Disrespect</i>, Polity, Cambridge, pp. 144-62.2. Roseneil, S., Budgeon, S. (2004) 'Cultures of Intimacy and Care beyond "The Family": Personal Life and Social Change in the Early 21st Century', <i>Current Sociology</i>, vol. 52, no. 2 135 – 59.
Week 12	<p>Lecture: Work and Society</p> <p>Reading:</p> <p>Offe, C. (1985) <i>Work: The Key Sociological Category?</i> in Offe, C. (1985). <i>Disorganized Capitalism</i>. Cambridge, Polity Press in association with Basil Blackwell, Oxford. pp. 129- 150.</p>
Week 13	<p>Lecture: Differentiation and Integration</p> <p>Reading:</p> <p>Honneth, A. (2009) <i>A Social Pathology of reason: On the Intellectual Legacy of Critical Theory</i>, p.19-42.</p>

Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from [Policy Central](#). Students should be aware of the following policies in particular with regard to Learning and Teaching:

Academic Honesty Policy http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/academic_honesty/policy.html

Assessment Policy <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/assessment/policy.html>

Grading Policy <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/grading/policy.html>

Grade Appeal Policy <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/gradeappeal/policy.html>

Grievance Management Policy http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/grievance_management/policy.html

Disruption to Studies Policy http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/disruption_studies/policy.html *The Disruption to Studies Policy is effective from March 3 2014 and replaces the Special Consideration Policy.*

In addition, a number of other policies can be found in the [Learning and Teaching Category](#) of Policy Central.

Student Code of Conduct

Macquarie University students have a responsibility to be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct: https://students.mq.edu.au/support/student_conduct/

Student Support

Macquarie University provides a range of support services for students. For details, visit <http://students.mq.edu.au/support/>

Learning Skills

Learning Skills (mq.edu.au/learningskills) provides academic writing resources and study strategies to improve your marks and take control of your study.

- [Workshops](#)
- [StudyWise](#)
- [Academic Integrity Module for Students](#)
- [Ask a Learning Adviser](#)

Student Services and Support

Students with a disability are encouraged to contact the [Disability Service](#) who can provide appropriate help with any issues that arise during their studies.

Student Enquiries

For all student enquiries, visit Student Connect at ask.mq.edu.au

IT Help

For help with University computer systems and technology, visit <http://informatics.mq.edu.au/help/>.

When using the University's IT, you must adhere to the [Acceptable Use Policy](#). The policy applies to all who connect to the MQ network including students.

Graduate Capabilities

Capable of Professional and Personal Judgement and Initiative

We want our graduates to have emotional intelligence and sound interpersonal skills and to

demonstrate discernment and common sense in their professional and personal judgement. They will exercise initiative as needed. They will be capable of risk assessment, and be able to handle ambiguity and complexity, enabling them to be adaptable in diverse and changing environments.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- consolidation of knowledge acquired in previous studies in Sociology;
- an acquisition of theoretical and empirical knowledge in sociology that will serve as a foundation for post-graduate studies;
- and, an appreciation of the interdependence of fields of study in the discipline.

Assessment tasks

- Writing Exercise 1
- Writing Exercise 2
- Participation and Engagement

Commitment to Continuous Learning

Our graduates will have enquiring minds and a literate curiosity which will lead them to pursue knowledge for its own sake. They will continue to pursue learning in their careers and as they participate in the world. They will be capable of reflecting on their experiences and relationships with others and the environment, learning from them, and growing - personally, professionally and socially.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- An understanding of the nature of contemporary societies and the issues surrounding the classification of such societies as modern, postmodern, information, risk and network societies;
- consolidation of knowledge acquired in previous studies in Sociology;
- an acquisition of theoretical and empirical knowledge in sociology that will serve as a foundation for post-graduate studies;
- and, an appreciation of the interdependence of fields of study in the discipline.

Assessment tasks

- Writing Exercise 1
- Writing Exercise 2
- Participation and Engagement

Discipline Specific Knowledge and Skills

Our graduates will take with them the intellectual development, depth and breadth of knowledge, scholarly understanding, and specific subject content in their chosen fields to make them competent and confident in their subject or profession. They will be able to demonstrate, where relevant, professional technical competence and meet professional standards. They will be able to articulate the structure of knowledge of their discipline, be able to adapt discipline-specific knowledge to novel situations, and be able to contribute from their discipline to inter-disciplinary solutions to problems.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- An understanding of the nature of contemporary societies and the issues surrounding the classification of such societies as modern, postmodern, information, risk and network societies;
- an appreciation of the similarities or differences between today's society and societies of the past;
- consolidation of knowledge acquired in previous studies in Sociology;
- an acquisition of theoretical and empirical knowledge in sociology that will serve as a foundation for post-graduate studies;
- and, an appreciation of the interdependence of fields of study in the discipline.

Assessment tasks

- Writing Exercise 1
- Writing Exercise 2

Critical, Analytical and Integrative Thinking

We want our graduates to be capable of reasoning, questioning and analysing, and to integrate and synthesise learning and knowledge from a range of sources and environments; to be able to critique constraints, assumptions and limitations; to be able to think independently and systemically in relation to scholarly activity, in the workplace, and in the world. We want them to have a level of scientific and information technology literacy.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- An understanding of the nature of contemporary societies and the issues surrounding the classification of such societies as modern, postmodern, information, risk and network societies;
- an appreciation of the similarities or differences between today's society and societies of the past;

- consolidation of knowledge acquired in previous studies in Sociology;
- an acquisition of theoretical and empirical knowledge in sociology that will serve as a foundation for post-graduate studies;
- and, an appreciation of the interdependence of fields of study in the discipline.

Assessment tasks

- Writing Exercise 1
- Writing Exercise 2
- Participation and Engagement

Problem Solving and Research Capability

Our graduates should be capable of researching; of analysing, and interpreting and assessing data and information in various forms; of drawing connections across fields of knowledge; and they should be able to relate their knowledge to complex situations at work or in the world, in order to diagnose and solve problems. We want them to have the confidence to take the initiative in doing so, within an awareness of their own limitations.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- an appreciation of the similarities or differences between today's society and societies of the past;
- an acquisition of theoretical and empirical knowledge in sociology that will serve as a foundation for post-graduate studies;
- and, an appreciation of the interdependence of fields of study in the discipline.

Assessment tasks

- Writing Exercise 1
- Writing Exercise 2

Creative and Innovative

Our graduates will also be capable of creative thinking and of creating knowledge. They will be imaginative and open to experience and capable of innovation at work and in the community. We want them to be engaged in applying their critical, creative thinking.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- an acquisition of theoretical and empirical knowledge in sociology that will serve as a foundation for post-graduate studies;
- and, an appreciation of the interdependence of fields of study in the discipline.

Assessment task

- Participation and Engagement

Effective Communication

We want to develop in our students the ability to communicate and convey their views in forms effective with different audiences. We want our graduates to take with them the capability to read, listen, question, gather and evaluate information resources in a variety of formats, assess, write clearly, speak effectively, and to use visual communication and communication technologies as appropriate.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- An understanding of the nature of contemporary societies and the issues surrounding the classification of such societies as modern, postmodern, information, risk and network societies;
- an appreciation of the similarities or differences between today's society and societies of the past;
- consolidation of knowledge acquired in previous studies in Sociology;
- an acquisition of theoretical and empirical knowledge in sociology that will serve as a foundation for post-graduate studies;
- and, an appreciation of the interdependence of fields of study in the discipline.

Assessment tasks

- Writing Exercise 1
- Writing Exercise 2
- Participation and Engagement

Engaged and Ethical Local and Global citizens

As local citizens our graduates will be aware of indigenous perspectives and of the nation's historical context. They will be engaged with the challenges of contemporary society and with knowledge and ideas. We want our graduates to have respect for diversity, to be open-minded, sensitive to others and inclusive, and to be open to other cultures and perspectives: they should have a level of cultural literacy. Our graduates should be aware of disadvantage and social justice, and be willing to participate to help create a wiser and better society.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- An understanding of the nature of contemporary societies and the issues surrounding the classification of such societies as modern, postmodern, information, risk and network

societies;

- an appreciation of the similarities or differences between today's society and societies of the past;
- an acquisition of theoretical and empirical knowledge in sociology that will serve as a foundation for post-graduate studies;
- and, an appreciation of the interdependence of fields of study in the discipline.

Assessment tasks

- Writing Exercise 1
- Writing Exercise 2
- Participation and Engagement

Socially and Environmentally Active and Responsible

We want our graduates to be aware of and have respect for self and others; to be able to work with others as a leader and a team player; to have a sense of connectedness with others and country; and to have a sense of mutual obligation. Our graduates should be informed and active participants in moving society towards sustainability.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- An understanding of the nature of contemporary societies and the issues surrounding the classification of such societies as modern, postmodern, information, risk and network societies;
- an appreciation of the similarities or differences between today's society and societies of the past;
- an acquisition of theoretical and empirical knowledge in sociology that will serve as a foundation for post-graduate studies;
- and, an appreciation of the interdependence of fields of study in the discipline.

Assessment task

- Participation and Engagement

Changes since First Published

Date	Description
30/07/2014	Correction made to Word Count in the description section of Assessment 2 (Writing Exercise 2). Change from 800 words to 1000 words.

Date	Description
16/01/ 2014	The Prerequisites was updated.
