SOCI703
Social Theory
S1 Evening 2015
Dept of Sociology

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**General Information**

Unit convenor and teaching staff  
Unit Convenor  
Norbert Ebert  
norbert.ebert@mq.edu.au  
Contact via norbert.ebert@mq.edu.au  
W6A 836

Credit points  
4

Prerequisites  
Admission to MRes

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description  
The unit examines social theory and how this can inform research and the critical project of the social sciences. The theoretical content may vary according to staff expertise and student interest. The unit also provides core theoretical training for those completing a PhD in Sociology. The candidate will acquire advanced disciplinary understanding, awareness of how research is carried out in a disciplinary area and will demonstrate competence in the application of research skills to the disciplinary area.

**Important Academic Dates**  
Information about important academic dates including deadlines for withdrawing from units are available at [http://students.mq.edu.au/student_admin/enrolmentguide/academicdates/](http://students.mq.edu.au/student_admin/enrolmentguide/academicdates/)

**Learning Outcomes**

1. Remember means to retrieve relevant knowledge to design research with the aid of social theory. Recognise which social theory is need for what topic and recall its main aspects.

2. Analyse means to break a research topic into parts and determine how they relate to each other and to the overall structure or purpose. Differentiate the appropriate or available theoretical approaches and learn how to organise an argument around them.

3. Engage students in learning activities and assessments that encourage clear and concise communication.
Assessment Tasks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Weighting</th>
<th>Due</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>participation</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>present essay topic / abstract</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>31/3/2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>draft essay</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>12/5/2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>final Essay</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>2/6/2015</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**participation**

Due: **ongoing**

Weighting: **15%**

Participation in this units is important. Often we only understand difficult and complex ideas by talking about them. In order to participate you need to do the weekly readings and be able to summarise them in a precise, accurate and concise manner.

This Assessment Task relates to the following Learning Outcomes:

- Remember means to retrieve relevant knowledge to design research with the aid of social theory. Recognise which social theory is need for what topic and recall its main aspects.
- Analyse means to break a research topic into parts and determine how they relate to each other and to the overall structure or purpose. Differentiate the appropriate or available theoretical approaches and learn how to organise an argument around them.
- Engage students in learning activities and assessments that encourage clear and concise communication.

**present essay topic / abstract**

Due: **31/3/2015**

Weighting: **15%**

Social theory can be confusing and overwhelming. One of the goals of this course is to develop strategies for dealing with complex topics and how to write about them. In week 6 we ask you to:

Develop / define a topic for your essay and write and present in class an abstract of 200 words in week 6.

This Assessment Task relates to the following Learning Outcomes:
• Remember means to retrieve relevant knowledge to design research with the aid of social theory. Recognise which social theory is need for what topic and recall its main aspects.

• Analyse means to break a research topic into parts and determine how they relate to each other and to the overall structure or purpose. Differentiate the appropriate or available theoretical approaches and learn how to organise an argument around them.

• Engage students in learning activities and assessments that encourage clear and concise communication.

draft essay

Due: 12/5/2015
Weighting: 30%

On the basis of your choice of topic and the presentation of your abstract we ask you to draft an essay of 3000 words. The draft essay is due in week 10.

This Assessment Task relates to the following Learning Outcomes:

• Remember means to retrieve relevant knowledge to design research with the aid of social theory. Recognise which social theory is need for what topic and recall its main aspects.

• Analyse means to break a research topic into parts and determine how they relate to each other and to the overall structure or purpose. Differentiate the appropriate or available theoretical approaches and learn how to organise an argument around them.

• Engage students in learning activities and assessments that encourage clear and concise communication.

final Essay

Due: 2/6/2015
Weighting: 40%

Based on the presentation and discussion of your essay topic / abstract in week 6 and the feedback on your first draft, we ask you to write a final essay of 3000 words. You are supposed to use course material and readings. It is due in week 13.

This Assessment Task relates to the following Learning Outcomes:

• Remember means to retrieve relevant knowledge to design research with the aid of social theory. Recognise which social theory is need for what topic and recall its main aspects.
• Analyse means to break a research topic into parts and determine how they relate to each other and to the overall structure or purpose. Differentiate the appropriate or available theoretical approaches and learn how to organise an argument around them.

• Engage students in learning activities and assessments that encourage clear and concise communication.

**Delivery and Resources**
All resources are available online through iLearn.

**Unit Schedule**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>24/2/2015</td>
<td>Introduction to SOCI703</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>3/3/2015</td>
<td>Developing a Sociological Tool Box for Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>10/3/2015</td>
<td>Sociology - The questions asked by Comte</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>17/3/2015</td>
<td>Weber, Marx and Durkheim</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>24/3/2015</td>
<td>The Social Construction of Reality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>31/3/2015</td>
<td>Topic &amp; abstract presentation 15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7/4/2015</td>
<td>mid-session break</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>14/4/2015</td>
<td>mid-session break</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>21/4/2015</td>
<td>Individual and Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>28/4/2015</td>
<td>Societies as Social Systems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>5/5/2015</td>
<td>Critical Theory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>12/5/2015</td>
<td>Self, Society and Recognition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>draft essay due 30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>19/5/2015</td>
<td>Economy, Work and Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>26/5/2015</td>
<td>What is sociological critique?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>2/6/2015</td>
<td>Conclusion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Final Essay due 40%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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:


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/](https://students.mq.edu.au/support/student_conduct/)

Results

Results shown in iLearn, or released directly by your Unit Convenor, are not confirmed as they are subject to final approval by the University. Once approved, final results will be sent to your student email address and will be made available in eStudent. For more information visit ask.mq.edu.au.

Student Support

Macquarie University provides a range of support services for students. For details, visit [http://students.mq.edu.au/support/](http://students.mq.edu.au/support/)

Learning Skills

Learning Skills ([mq.edu.au/learningskills](http://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 Enquiry Service

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

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

PG - Discipline Knowledge and Skills

Our postgraduates will be able to demonstrate a significantly enhanced depth and breadth of knowledge, scholarly understanding, and specific subject content knowledge in their chosen fields.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- Remember means to retrieve relevant knowledge to design research with the aid of social theory. Recognise which social theory is need for what topic and recall its main aspects.
- Analyse means to break a research topic into parts and determine how they relate to each other and to the overall structure or purpose. Differentiate the appropriate or available theoretical approaches and learn how to organise an argument around them.
- Engage students in learning activities and assessments that encourage clear and concise communication.

Assessment tasks

- participation
- present essay topic / abstract
- draft essay
- final Essay

PG - Research and Problem Solving Capability

Our postgraduates will be capable of systematic enquiry; able to use research skills to create new knowledge that can be applied to real world issues, or contribute to a field of study or practice to enhance society. They will be capable of creative questioning, problem finding and problem solving.
This graduate capability is supported by:

**Learning outcomes**

- Remember means to retrieve relevant knowledge to design research with the aid of social theory. Recognise which social theory is need for what topic and recall its main aspects.
- Analyse means to break a research topic into parts and determine how they relate to each other and to the overall structure or purpose. Differentiate the appropriate or available theoretical approaches and learn how to organise an argument around them.
- Engage students in learning activities and assessments that encourage clear and concise communication.

**Assessment tasks**

- participation
- present essay topic / abstract
- draft essay
- final Essay

**PG - Capable of Professional and Personal Judgment and Initiative**

Our postgraduates will demonstrate a high standard of discernment and common sense in their professional and personal judgment. They will have the ability to make informed choices and decisions that reflect both the nature of their professional work and their personal perspectives.

This graduate capability is supported by:

**Learning outcomes**

- Analyse means to break a research topic into parts and determine how they relate to each other and to the overall structure or purpose. Differentiate the appropriate or available theoretical approaches and learn how to organise an argument around them.
- Engage students in learning activities and assessments that encourage clear and concise communication.

**Assessment task**

- final Essay

**PG - Critical, Analytical and Integrative Thinking**

Our postgraduates will be capable of utilising and reflecting on prior knowledge and experience, of applying higher level critical thinking skills, and of integrating and synthesising learning and knowledge from a range of sources and environments. A characteristic of this form of thinking is
the generation of new, professionally oriented knowledge through personal or group-based critique of practice and theory.

This graduate capability is supported by:

**Learning outcomes**

- Remember means to retrieve relevant knowledge to design research with the aid of social theory. Recognise which social theory is need for what topic and recall its main aspects.
- Analyse means to break a research topic into parts and determine how they relate to each other and to the overall structure or purpose. Differentiate the appropriate or available theoretical approaches and learn how to organise an argument around them.
- Engage students in learning activities and assessments that encourage clear and concise communication.

**Assessment tasks**

- participation
- present essay topic / abstract
- draft essay
- final Essay

**PG - Effective Communication**

Our postgraduates will be able to communicate effectively and convey their views to different social, cultural, and professional audiences. They will be able to use a variety of technologically supported media to communicate with empathy using a range of written, spoken or visual formats.

This graduate capability is supported by:

**Learning outcomes**

- Remember means to retrieve relevant knowledge to design research with the aid of social theory. Recognise which social theory is need for what topic and recall its main aspects.
- Analyse means to break a research topic into parts and determine how they relate to each other and to the overall structure or purpose. Differentiate the appropriate or available theoretical approaches and learn how to organise an argument around them.
- Engage students in learning activities and assessments that encourage clear and concise communication.

**Assessment tasks**

- participation
PG - Engaged and Responsible, Active and Ethical Citizens

Our postgraduates will be ethically aware and capable of confident transformative action in relation to their professional responsibilities and the wider community. They will have a sense of connectedness with others and country and have a sense of mutual obligation. They will be able to appreciate the impact of their professional roles for social justice and inclusion related to national and global issues.

This graduate capability is supported by:

**Assessment task**

- final Essay