



# SOC 182

## Economy and Society

S2 Day 2015

*Dept of Sociology*

### Contents

|                                |    |
|--------------------------------|----|
| <u>General Information</u>     | 2  |
| <u>Learning Outcomes</u>       | 2  |
| <u>Assessment Tasks</u>        | 3  |
| <u>Delivery and Resources</u>  | 6  |
| <u>Unit Schedule</u>           | 7  |
| <u>Policies and Procedures</u> | 8  |
| <u>Graduate Capabilities</u>   | 10 |

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## General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Unit Convenor

Ben Spies-Butcher

[ben.spies-butcher@mq.edu.au](mailto:ben.spies-butcher@mq.edu.au)

Contact via [ben.spies-butcher@mq.edu.au](mailto:ben.spies-butcher@mq.edu.au)

Room 840, W6A

3-4pm Monday or by appointment (except wk 8)

Credit points

3

Prerequisites

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

Markets profoundly influence our lives. Most of us gain our living from a labour market, our shelter from a housing market and many pleasures from consumer markets. Even markets we have never heard of, like the sub-prime mortgage market, can end up changing the way we live. This unit examines the market economy from a social perspective. It introduces students to concepts that are useful to understand economic activity, but without any requirement for past study in economics or mathematics. It also connects the economy to social and political life. It examines how social norms shape work and consumption, and how political decisions and institutions shape issues like inequality. We explore a range of contemporary issues from consumerism and ecological sustainability to the growing gap between rich and poor and financial instability.

## 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:

Understand key concepts in economic sociology and political economy

Identify important historical developments in market societies

Identify key sociological concepts and categories

Apply concepts from economic sociology to contemporary social and economic issues

Integrate theoretical and empirical approaches in social scientific research

Recognise economic arguments used in public and civic debates (public sociology)

Research and critique ideas and theories from economic sociology

Develop oral and written communication skills

Read critically

Critically engage and question different theoretical concepts and frameworks

## Assessment Tasks

| Name                          | Weighting | Due              |
|-------------------------------|-----------|------------------|
| <u>Short Exercise</u>         | 20%       | 2 September 2015 |
| <u>Major Assignment</u>       | 40%       | 4 November 2015  |
| <u>Exam</u>                   | 30%       | Exam Period      |
| <u>Tutorial Participation</u> | 10%       | Weekly           |

### Short Exercise

Due: **2 September 2015**

Weighting: **20%**

In the first part of the course we focus on how markets operate. We explore a number of different conceptions of markets, prices and the system of commodity exchange. In this assignment you will need to pick one of the readings from weeks 2 to 4 and discuss how the author views the market. You may wish to compare this to one of the other readings from these weeks, but this is not essential.

Some of the readings can be a little difficult. We encourage you to engage with these even if you find them challenging – we do understand and take this into account in marking. You might want to refer to the additional readings, and to the textbook, to help you interpret and analyse the readings.

This is not a research task. You are not required to read more broadly or to cite other references. However, you do need to cite any references you draw upon, including the reading you discuss. Even if you only refer to this one reading, you still need to include a reference list.

The aim of this assignment is to show your familiarity with key concepts in the course, to demonstrate you can critically analyse and assess social scientific concepts, and to demonstrate academic writing skills. You do not need to use complex sentences or overly academic language. The more direct and concise your writing, the better. But you do need to explain the concepts in the reading, and to assess how useful they are for understanding the modern economy.

This goes beyond simply summarizing the reading. You need to inject your views. This can be a difficult skill to master. It is not the same as just expressing your opinion. Academic writing requires reasoned argument and reference to evidence. You need to explain why you have come to the view that you have, and justify your position.

Remember, this is an early assessment. It is an opportunity for you to gain feedback on your writing and your progress in the course. It does not have a particularly high weight in your overall mark – so if there are areas where you are weak, you will have time to work on them and to lift your overall grade in the later assessments. If you have questions after you receive your mark and comments, you should talk to your tutor, or to the mentors who are helping with the course.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Understand key concepts in economic sociology and political economy
- Identify important historical developments in market societies
- Identify key sociological concepts and categories
- Develop oral and written communication skills
- Read critically
- Critically engage and question different theoretical concepts and frameworks

## Major Assignment

Due: **4 November 2015**

Weighting: **40%**

This assignment brings together empirical analysis and broader research skills. Students choose one of a number of tasks. In each they examine a key document or data source and analyse its implications for an important social or policy question. Students may also gather their own data as part of the assignment. The structure is similar to a research essay. Students are expected to go beyond the required readings and engage in their own library based research. However, for each task there is guidance provided on where to look for information and how to structure your analysis. The different questions focus on topics from inequality to climate change, and involve a combination of analysis of numerical (quantitative) data, qualitative data like interviews, as well as policy analysis and broader social and economic arguments.

This is a research assignment. You are expected to draw on reading and material beyond those supplied in the course. This can include some of the material listed as 'additional readings' and may also include other material you identify yourself. All material should be properly referenced.

For this assignment you have a choice of topics. In each case you will need to examine some empirical data. Part of the assignment is explaining what this data means and analysing it in terms of the categories and concepts we use in the course - such as gender norms, inequality, environmental sustainability or macro economic management. The second part of the assignment is to critically evaluate the information drawing on the broader literature.

In each case, we provide you with the initial data (or a framework for collecting it). There is a link to a report or reading that you should use as the starting point. A large part of the assignment is

demonstrating that you are familiar with reading this type of information and making sense of it. This is an important skill that will help you generally in analysing social scientific information and making sense of claims other people make about the economy. Options will be available through iLearn.

You may also wish to develop your own topic. This is fine - but if you do this you need to speak with your tutor about it **no later than week 8**.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Understand key concepts in economic sociology and political economy
- Identify key sociological concepts and categories
- Apply concepts from economic sociology to contemporary social and economic issues
- Integrate theoretical and empirical approaches in social scientific research
- Recognise economic arguments used in public and civic debates (public sociology)
- Research and critique ideas and theories from economic sociology
- Develop oral and written communication skills
- Read critically
- Critically engage and question different theoretical concepts and frameworks

## Exam

Due: **Exam Period**

Weighting: **30%**

The final assignment is an exam during the formal exam period. The exam is 90 minutes, with 10 minutes reading time. It will have two sections, the first comprising 10 multiple choice questions; the second a choice of 4 out of 5 short answer questions.

The exam will be based on material from the lectures, supported by the textbook readings that accompany each lecture. In the final lecture we will go through the exam content in some detail. The aim of this exercise is to ensure you are familiar with the key concepts from the course. We will let you know the topics you need to focus on in advance to help focus your study.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Understand key concepts in economic sociology and political economy
- Identify important historical developments in market societies
- Identify key sociological concepts and categories
- Develop oral and written communication skills

## Tutorial Participation

Due: **Weekly**

Weighting: **10%**

As part of your involvement in the course you are expected to actively participate in tutorials. For external students this involves discussion through iLearn, for internal students it requires tutorial attendance. Participation involves reading and thinking about the required readings each week. It also involves making some contribution to discussion. You will be assessed on the basis of your contributions in terms of both your understanding of the issues and your effort to engage with the subject matter. This is not a measure of *how much* you contribute, but of the *quality* of your contributions.

For external students, your mark will be based on three parts. The first is an original contributions to at least one week discussing the readings and the questions. The second is a response to post from another student, engaging in debate and discussion. The third is your general engagement in the discussion forums.

It is also important that everyone contributes in a way that promotes reasoned discussion and includes all. For both external and internal students, if you find it easy to contribute, be careful not to dominate debate. If you find it difficult, make an effort to get involved, or discuss the issue with your tutor so they can help you participate fully. Debating and discussing ideas is an important part of academic life and sociological inquiry.

Some of the tutorials in this course are designed to assist you with the assignments. Your participation mark will not be based on these weeks, but rather on the weeks where there are set readings in addition to the textbook.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Understand key concepts in economic sociology and political economy
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- Identify key sociological concepts and categories
- Apply concepts from economic sociology to contemporary social and economic issues
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- Develop oral and written communication skills
- Critically engage and question different theoretical concepts and frameworks

## Delivery and Resources

This course is based on **two one hour lectures** and a **one hour tutorial and discussion board**. Internal students are **required** to attend all tutorials. If you miss more than 2 tutorials during the semester you should provide your tutor with an explanation. External students are **required** to participate in on-line discussion through the weekly discussion boards.

The lectures are scheduled together, but are usually two distinct presentations. These classes are 11am - 12 noon and 12 noon - 1pm for 11am on Fridays. Tutorials are available at a number of times after the lectures on Friday afternoon. Please note that tutorials start in week 2. Internal students are encouraged to engage through the discussion forums even though face to face tutorials are also available and compulsory.

All lectures will be recorded through echo360, and there are discussion forums for each tutorial.

Attendance at lectures is strongly recommended, as this material will form the basis of the exam.

Both the lectures and the final exam are supported by a textbook available from the University Coop Bookstore:

*Spies-Butcher, Cahill & Paton 2012, Market Society: history, theory, practice, Cambridge University Press: Melbourne.*

There are also a number of tutorial readings available through e-reserve at the library. Some of these readings are also required for the first assignment.

All written assignments (the short assignment and research assignment) should be submitted electronically via iLearn.

## Unit Schedule

This course has 2 one hour lectures each week. For the first few weeks, the classes will be taken by the course convener. However, for most of the course there will be a guest lecturer for the second hour. Guests are specialists in their field and often draw on their current research. The aim is to expose students to the diversity of research in the area and to give students a taste of second and third year courses that build on themes from SOC182. The availability of guest lecturers may mean some change to the schedule provided below. The convener will provide you with an update in the first lecture (and possibly further updates later).

| Week | Date           | Topic  |
|------|----------------|--|
| 1    | 31st July      | L: Understanding Market Society  |
| 2    | 7th August     | L: Prices and Competition<br>T: How does competition promote efficiency?   |
| 3    | 14th August    | L: Markets and Society<br>T: How does the market shape the way we live?  |
| 4    | 21st August    | L: Growth, Accumulation and Crisis<br>T: Critiquing market society   |
| 5    | 28th August    | L Inequality: Class, income and wealth<br>T: Preparing for first assignment  |
| 6    | 4th September  | L Inequality beyond class: Unpaid work, discrimination and trade<br>T: Trade and inequality<br><b>Short Assignment Due this Week</b> |
| 7    | 11th September | L: The State: property, work and welfare<br>T: How does the state support and restrict the market?                                   |

| Mid-Semester Break |              |  |
|--------------------|--------------|--|
| 8                  | 2nd October  | <p>L: The Market: Competition, finance and risk</p> <p>T: Understanding the financial crisis</p>               |
| 9                  | 9th October  | <p>L: The Corporation, Work and Consumerism</p> <p>T: Understanding consumers and the consumer society</p>     |
| 10                 | 16th October | <p>L: The Family, Care and Social Reproduction</p> <p>T: How do we balance work and care responsibilities?</p> |
| 11                 | 23rd October | <p>L: The Environment and Sustainability</p> <p>T: Can a growth economy be sustainable?</p>                    |
| 12                 | 30th October | <p>L: Civil Society and Questioning the Economy</p> <p>Study Week</p>  |
| 13                 | 6th November | <p>L: Conclusion</p> <p>Study Week</p> <p><b>Major Essay Due this Week</b></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](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](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](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/](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](#).

## Sociology Policies

Referencing guide [http://www.mq.edu.au/about\\_us/faculties\\_and\\_departments/faculty\\_of\\_arts/departments/sociology/current\\_students/undergraduate/useful\\_links/sociology\\_reference\\_guide/](http://www.mq.edu.au/about_us/faculties_and_departments/faculty_of_arts/departments/sociology/current_students/undergraduate/useful_links/sociology_reference_guide/)

## Late Submission of Work

To help students submit their work on time, staff will endeavour to hand out essay and assignment questions at least three weeks in advance of the due date.

All assignments which are officially received after the due date, and where no extension has been granted by the course convenor or tutor, will incur a deduction of 5% for the first day, and 1% for each subsequent day including the actual day on which the work is received. Weekends and public holidays are included.

## 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](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 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](http://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**

### **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**

- Research and critique ideas and theories from economic sociology
- Critically engage and question different theoretical concepts and frameworks

### **Assessment task**

- Tutorial Participation

### **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**

- Apply concepts from economic sociology to contemporary social and economic issues
- Recognise economic arguments used in public and civic debates (public sociology)

### **Assessment tasks**

- Major Assignment
- Tutorial Participation

### **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**

- Understand key concepts in economic sociology and political economy
- Identify important historical developments in market societies
- Identify key sociological concepts and categories
- Integrate theoretical and empirical approaches in social scientific research

## **Assessment tasks**

- Short Exercise
- Major Assignment
- Exam
- Tutorial Participation

## **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**

- Identify key sociological concepts and categories
- Apply concepts from economic sociology to contemporary social and economic issues
- Integrate theoretical and empirical approaches in social scientific research
- Research and critique ideas and theories from economic sociology
- Read critically
- Critically engage and question different theoretical concepts and frameworks

## **Assessment tasks**

- Short Exercise
- Major Assignment
- Tutorial Participation

## **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**

- Apply concepts from economic sociology to contemporary social and economic issues
- Integrate theoretical and empirical approaches in social scientific research
- Research and critique ideas and theories from economic sociology
- Critically engage and question different theoretical concepts and frameworks

### **Assessment task**

- Major Assignment

## **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**

- Develop oral and written communication skills
- Critically engage and question different theoretical concepts and frameworks

### **Assessment tasks**

- Short Exercise
- Major Assignment
- Exam
- Tutorial Participation

## **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

- Recognise economic arguments used in public and civic debates (public sociology)
- Critically engage and question different theoretical concepts and frameworks

## Assessment tasks

- Major Assignment
- Tutorial Participation

## 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 outcome

- Recognise economic arguments used in public and civic debates (public sociology)

## Assessment tasks

- Major Assignment
- Tutorial Participation