



SOC 325

Understanding Contemporary Societies

S2 Day 2015

Dept of Sociology

Contents

<u>General Information</u>	2
<u>Learning Outcomes</u>	3
<u>Assessment Tasks</u>	3
<u>Delivery and Resources</u>	4
<u>Unit Schedule</u>	4
<u>Policies and Procedures</u>	6
<u>Graduate Capabilities</u>	7

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Unit Convenor

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by appointment

Tutor

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W6A 836

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Credit points

3

Prerequisites

39cp including (12cp in SOC units and 3cp in SOC units at 300 level)

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:

A familiarity with key sociological concepts as they are applied to the study of contemporary societies.

An understanding of a range of theoretical perspectives on social life from the 19th century to the present.

Reading, summarising and applying basic concepts of Sociology in order to understand contemporary societies.

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Due
Participation	25%	ongoing
Log Book	35%	ongoing
Short essay	40%	03/11/2015

Participation

Due: **ongoing**

Weighting: **25%**

Students are required to participate in lectures and tutorials every week. Physical attendance in both is not enough. Active participation in class discussion is required on the basis of course material and topics. The participation mark is for participating in both, lectures and tutorials.

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Log Book

Due: **ongoing**

Weighting: **35%**

You are required to keep a log book of the readings from week 3-7 and 9-10. What this means is

that you need to write a 1 page summary of the reading(s) (one summary per reading if there is more than one) identifying the main topics, concept(s) and the main argument of the reading. Your own opinion is not required. The summary is to be submitted before the next lecture through turnitin. All readings are available through iLearn.

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Short essay

Due: **03/11/2015**

Weighting: **40%**

At the end of week 9, several essay questions will be made available out of which you have to choose and answer one. The questions will be related to the topics, readings, concepts discussed and explained in the course. The short essay is due in week 13 and has to be submitted through turnitin. You are required to use course readings mainly. There is no minimum or maximum number of references (quality over quantity). There is also no 10% rule for the word count (2000 means 2000).

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Delivery and Resources

This course will be delivered on campus and comprises a 2h lecture plus a 1h tutorial. Relevant information will be made available on iLearn.

Unit Schedule

1	28/7/ 2015	NO CLASS!
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2	04/8/ 2015	Introduction: Thinking Sociologically
3	11/8/ 2015	Sociology as a Science
		Elias N (1970) <i>What is Sociology?</i> Columbia University Press pp. 33-49. Mills C Wright (1959) <i>The Sociological Imagination</i> in Wrong D H and Gracey H L (eds) <i>Readings in Introductory Sociology</i> , Macmillan: London, pp.134-138.
4	18/8/ 2015	The Rise of Modernity and Capitalism
		Marx K and Engels F (1859) 'A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy' in Wrong D H and Gracey H L (eds) <i>Readings in Introductory Sociology</i> , Macmillan: London, pp. 196-205. Fromm E (1961) 'Marx's Concept of Man' in Wrong D H and Gracey H L (eds) <i>Readings in Introductory Sociology</i> , Macmillan: London, pp. 219-227.
5	25/8/ 2015	Characteristics of Modern Life
		Weber M (1967) <i>The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism</i> , in Wrong D H and Gracey H L (eds) <i>Readings in Introductory Sociology</i> , Macmillan: London, pp. 205-218. Weber M (1946) <i>Essays in Sociology</i> in Wrong D H and Gracey H L (eds) <i>Readings in Introductory Sociology</i> , Macmillan: London, pp. 246-252.
6	01/9/ 2015	Differentiation and Integration
		Durkheim E (1951) <i>Suicide</i> in Wrong D H and Gracey H L (eds) <i>Readings in Introductory Sociology</i> , Macmillan: London, pp. 238-246. Coser L (1984) <i>Introduction to The Division of Labour in Society</i> , Macmillan London, pp. ix-xxiv
7	08/9/ 2015	Individual and Society
		Elias N (1991) <i>The Society of Individuals Continuum</i> , New York / London, pp. vii-20. Mead G H (1934) <i>Mind, Self and Society</i> in Mizruchi E H <i>The Substance of Sociology</i> , Meredith Publishing Company: New York, pp. 182-189.
	15/9/ 2015	mid-session break
	22/9/ 2015	mid-session break
8	29/9/ 2015	Study Week
9	6/10/ 2015	Social Reality: Systems and Institutions
		Berger P. and Luckmann T. (1975) <i>The Social Construction of Reality</i> , Penguin University Books, Whitstable, pp. 64-109.
10	13/10/ 2015	Critical Theory

		Honneth, A. (2009) A Social Pathology of reason: On the Intellectual Legacy of Critical Theory, in <i>Pathologies of Reason</i> , Columbia University Press, p.19-42.
11	20/10/ 2015	Reading and Watching Society
12	27/10/ 2015	Understanding Contemporary Societies
13	03/11/ 2015	Essay (40%) is due

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/

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/>

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

- An understanding of a range of theoretical perspectives on social life from the 19th century to the present.
- Reading, summarising and applying basic concepts of Sociology in order to understand contemporary societies.

Assessment tasks

- Log Book
- Short essay

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:

Assessment tasks

- Participation
- Short essay

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:

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Assessment tasks

- Participation
- Log Book
- Short essay

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:

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Assessment tasks

- Participation
- Log Book
- Short essay

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 a range of theoretical perspectives on social life from the 19th century to the present.
- Reading, summarising and applying basic concepts of Sociology in order to understand contemporary societies.

Assessment tasks

- Participation
- Log Book
- Short essay

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:

Assessment task

- Participation