SOC 295
Work and Employment
S1 Day 2015
Dept of Sociology

Contents

General Information ........................................... 2
Learning Outcomes ........................................... 3
Assessment Tasks ............................................. 3
Delivery and Resources ...................................... 6
Unit Schedule .................................................. 6
Policies and Procedures ...................................... 7
Graduate Capabilities ........................................ 8
Additional Readings ........................................... 11
Assignment submission ..................................... 13
How to get the most out of SOC295 .................. 13
Info for External Students .................................. 13
Reading(s) per week ......................................... 14
Changes since First Published ............................. 15
General Information

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Credit points
3

Prerequisites
12cp

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description
Work and employment are basic social experiences. How can we understand them and why are they so important to us? This unit searches for answers by applying sociological key concepts to contemporary work and employment issues. The unit is made up of three parts. The first part examines the relevance of work for individuals and society. In the second part we investigate the organisation of work and employment on a political, organisational and individual level. The final part deals with our experience of work. It contemplates the future of work in terms of work-life balance and the chances for individuals’ self-realisation. On the basis of those three parts you will gain a clear understanding of work and employment in contemporary societies.

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/
Learning Outcomes

1. Identify the characteristics of contemporary work societies and the prevalence of work and employment for individual, organisational and social wellbeing.
2. Recognise the risks and opportunities originating in the organisation, structures and processes characterising work societies.
3. Integrate and synthesise learning and knowledge from a range of sources and environments to understand the link between economic and social roles of work and employment for individuals and societies.
4. Student will learn how to think sociologically.

Assessment Tasks

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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Weighting</th>
<th>Due</th>
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<tr>
<td>My Work Experience</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>16. March 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing Exercise 1</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>27. April 2015</td>
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<tr>
<td>Writing Exercise 2</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>25. May 2015</td>
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My Work Experience

Due: 16. March 2015  
Weighting: 20%

This course on Work and Employment offers you ideas and concepts with which you can reflect on your own work experience, analyse contemporary work societies and the organisations we work in. Thus, it is important to be able to connect the ideas we discuss to your own work experience.

In this first assignment we ask you, therefore, to write 600 words on any kind of work experience that you have had in your life so far. It is a first exercise with which we learn to reflect on work and employment and our own experiences are always a good and important starting point for Sociologists.

To give you an example I have written a "my Work Experience" report myself. Here it is:

Overall I have had 24 years of work experience. The very first paid job was a casual job as a gardener for a very small company. The task at hand was to fix and repaint a wooden fence. Because I had to organise the material for the job as well as manage my own time, I enjoyed the realisation of this little project enormously.

A few years after that I worked night shifts on an assembly-line. It was an exhausting job because I had no autonomy at all. The machine determined everything from eating breaks to
going to the bathroom. I only lasted six weeks in this job before I quit. The best thing about that job was that it was paid very well and that I had a boss with whom I got along very well.

Next I worked in a hospital as a nurse's aid, a shift job again. Although I tremendously enjoyed working with people and being able to help people, it was emotionally very taxing. Pay does not compensate very well for coping with the emotional needs of a dying person or for seeing people in excruciating pain without being able to do anything. I decide to leave this job too in order to work as a construction worker.

Again, this was a very well paid job but after about 5 months I felt that it was physically too exhausting and lacked intellectual stimulus. That is when I decided to do an apprenticeship as a business administrator in an office furniture company. Apprenticeship meant that my job changed every two months in order to learn about every aspect of the business from HR to assembly to accounting. Three days of the week I was in the company and two days I was at school learning the theoretical basics about how to run a business.

While I learned the basics about how a business ticks, I also learned a lot about myself. After finishing the apprenticeship I worked my way up into management over 12 years. During that time I had already started studying philosophy, sociology and business administration. This enabled me to to a PhD and become a lecturer in Sociology, which is my current job.

I think it was the apprenticeship that enabled me to find out what I really wanted to do and what job satisfaction means for me. It was my favorite job before I became a lecturer.

When I read through my little report on my work experience I can identify important topics like autonomy, physical, emotional and intellectual aspects of work. I can see that what is important to me about my jobs is linked to people, even the wider society. From all those jobs I learned that it is important to me to work with people, to have a job that is not just about earning money and that my job gives me a sense of being able to realise myself but also to shape society, the world we all live in.

This Assessment Task relates to the following Learning Outcomes:

- Identify the characteristics of contemporary work societies and the prevalence of work and employment for individual, organisational and social wellbeing.
- Integrate and synthesise learning and knowledge from a range of sources and environments to understand the link between economic and social roles of work and employment for individuals and societies.
- Student will learn how to think sociologically.

Writing Exercise 1

Due: 27. April 2015
Weighting: 40%

The point of the Writing Exercises is that you engage in depth with ONE of the weekly topics that has been covered before the due date (you cannot choose the same topic for your second exercise). Your exercise should:
Unit guide SOC 295 Work and Employment

a) answer the weekly key question form the lecture by

b) defining and explaining in your own words the key concepts of the chosen week

c) refer to the reading(s) of the chosen week to back up your key points

Your reflection exercise is not allowed to exceed 800 words. The 10% rule does NOT apply! Do not reference the lecturer or the lecture slides!

This Assessment Task relates to the following Learning Outcomes:

• Identify the characteristics of contemporary work societies and the prevalence of work and employment for individual, organisational and social wellbeing.
• Recognise the risks and opportunities originating in the organisation, structures and processes characterising work societies.
• Integrate and synthesise learning and knowledge from a range of sources and environments to understand the link between economic and social roles of work and employment for individuals and societies.
• Student will learn how to think sociologically.

Writing Exercise 2
Due: 25. May 2015
Weighting: 40%

The point of the Writing Exercises is that you engage in depth with ONE of the weekly topics that has been covered before the due date (you cannot choose the wee you have covered in your first writing exercise). Your exercise should:

a) answer the weekly key question form the lecture by

b) defining and explaining in your own words the key concepts of the chosen week

c) refer to the reading(s) of the chosen week to back up your key points

Your reflection exercise is not allowed to exceed 800 words. The 10% rule does NOT apply! Do not reference the lecturer or the lecture slides!

This Assessment Task relates to the following Learning Outcomes:

• Identify the characteristics of contemporary work societies and the prevalence of work and employment for individual, organisational and social wellbeing.
• Recognise the risks and opportunities originating in the organisation, structures and processes characterising work societies.
• Integrate and synthesise learning and knowledge from a range of sources and environments to understand the link between economic and social roles of work and employment for individuals and societies.
• Student will learn how to think sociologically.

**Delivery and Resources**

All lectures will be recorded on iLecture and available through iLearn. The readings used in this course are available through e-reserve or a link on iLearn. The delivery of the unit for external students occurs through iLearn.

**Unit Schedule**

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<th>Course Calendar:</th>
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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
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
Graduate Capabilities

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 the characteristics of contemporary work societies and the prevalence of work and employment for individual, organisational and social wellbeing.
- Integrate and synthesise learning and knowledge from a range of sources and environments to understand the link between economic and social roles of work and employment for individuals and societies.
- Student will learn how to think sociologically.

Assessment tasks

- My Work Experience
- Writing Exercise 1
- Writing Exercise 2

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**

- Integrate and synthesise learning and knowledge from a range of sources and environments to understand the link between economic and social roles of work and employment for individuals and societies.

**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**

- Recognise the risks and opportunities originating in the organisation, structures and processes characterising work societies.
- Integrate and synthesise learning and knowledge from a range of sources and environments to understand the link between economic and social roles of work and employment for individuals and societies.
- Student will learn how to think sociologically.

**Assessment tasks**

- My Work Experience
- Writing Exercise 1
- Writing Exercise 2

**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 outcome

• Recognise the risks and opportunities originating in the organisation, structures and processes characterising work societies.

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 outcome

• Recognise the risks and opportunities originating in the organisation, structures and processes characterising work societies.

Assessment task

• Writing Exercise 1

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 outcome

• Integrate and synthesise learning and knowledge from a range of sources and environments to understand the link between economic and social roles of work and employment for individuals and societies.

Assessment tasks

• My Work Experience
• Writing Exercise 1
• Writing Exercise 2
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 outcome

• Student will learn how to think sociologically.

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

• Integrate and synthesise learning and knowledge from a range of sources and environments to understand the link between economic and social roles of work and employment for individuals and societies.
• Student will learn how to think sociologically.

Assessment tasks

• My Work Experience
• Writing Exercise 1
• Writing Exercise 2

Additional Readings

The following readings are not compulsory readings for this unit. It is a selection of readings that you might find helpful for further studies in Sociology or the Sociology of Work and Employment. Enjoy!


see http://norbertebert.webs.com/publications


Assignment submission

All assignment must be submitted online through turnitin.

How to get the most out of SOC295

In order to get the most out of SOC295 without drowning in work, the following three recommendations will help you:

1. Do the readings before the lecture. While you read highlight important or problematic passages, take notes, make brief but concise summary of the reading. This will prepare you for your reflection exercises, allows you to quickly revisit a reading without having to re-read the whole piece.

2. Attend (or listen on iLearn to) the lectures every week. Without the lectures you will not get anything out of this course. They are the centrepiece. Do not waste your time with copying the lecture notes from the screen. Listen and write down key words and concepts in your own words. Write down questions that you want to discuss in the tutorial.

3. Attend the tutorial (External students please use the discussion boards on iLearn).

   Tutorial attendance is not compulsory, but highly recommended if you want to do well. You will do a lot better in your assignments if you come to the tutorials. If you want to seriously learn something the tutorials are without alternative! Do not come to the tutorials without having done the readings or having been to the lectures.

Enjoy your work :-)
In order to get the most out of SOC295 AS AN EXTERNAL STUDENT without drowning in work, the following three recommendations will help you:

1. Do the readings before you listen to the lecture. While you read highlight important or problematic passages, take notes, make brief but concise summary of the reading. This will prepare you for your reflection exercises, allows you to quickly revisit a reading without having to re-read the whole piece.

2. Listen to the lectures every week. Without the lectures you will not get anything out of this course. They are the centrepiece. Do not waste your time with copying the lecture notes from the screen. Listen and write down key words and concepts in your own words. Write down questions that you want to discuss on the weekly discussion boards on iLearn.

3. Use the weekly discussion boards on iLearn. This is highly recommended. You will do a lot better in your assignments if you discuss with other students. If you want to seriously learn something discussion is without alternative!

Enjoy your work :-)

**Reading(s) per week**

The readings for SOC295 are available through e-reserve (http://www.library.mq.edu.au/borrowing/ereserve.php) or weekly links on iLearn.

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### Changes since First Published

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