SOC 182

Economy and Society

S1 Day 2017

Dept of Sociology

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General Information

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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	Hurdle	Due
Short Quiz	15%	No	Weeks 2-4
Major Assignment	40%	No	Week 12
Exam	35%	No	Exam Period
Tutorial Participation	10%	No	Weekly

Short Quiz

Due: **Weeks 2-4**
Weighting: **15%**

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 Weeks 2, 3, and 4 you will be asked to complete short multiple choice quizzes on the reading for that week. There will be 5 questions in each quiz, each worth 1 mark.

Each quiz will be available on-line through iLearn for about 48 hours, and are designed to be taken *after* you have had a chance to attend the lecture and the tutorial for the week. Details of how to access the quizzes will be given in the first lecture and in tutorials.

The purpose of the assignment is to ensure you are keeping up with the core readings and are comfortable with the concepts we will be discussing. Each quiz is not worth that much, so it is also designed to help identify any problems you may be having so you can discuss these with your tutor.

If you successfully complete the three quizzes you will be well prepared for the rest of 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
- Read critically

Major Assignment

Due: **Week 12**
Weighting: **40%**

This assignment brings together empiricial 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:

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- 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: **35%**

The final assignment is an exam during the formal exam period. The exam is 90 minutes, with 10 minutes reading time. It comprises a choice of 7 out of 10 short answer questions. Each question will be worth 5 marks.

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:

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- 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
- Identify important historical developments in market societies
- Identify key sociological concepts and categories
- Apply concepts from economic sociology to contemporary social and economic issues
- Recognise economic arguments used in public and civic debates (public sociology)
- Develop oral and written communication skills
- Critically engage and question different theoretical concepts and frameworks

Delivery and Resources

This course is based on **one two hour lecture** and a **one hour tutorial and discussion board each week**. 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 lecture class is Wednesday 11am-1pm. Tutorials are available at a number of times. **Please note that tutorials start in week 1**. 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 for internal students, 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 on the library website. 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	Lecture date	Topic
1	1st March	**L:** Understanding Market Society **T:** Introductions and questions
2	8th March	**L:** Prices and Competition **T:** How does competition promote efficiency? **First Quiz**
3	15th March	**L:** Markets and Society **T:** How does the market shape the way we live? **Second Quiz**
4	22nd March	**L:** Growth, Accumulation and Crisis **T:** Critiquing market society **Third Quiz**
5	29th March	**L** Inequality: Class, income and wealth **T:** Inequality in Australia
6	5th April	**L** Inequality beyond class: Unpaid work, discrimination and trade **T:** Global inequality
7	12th April	**L:** The State: property, work and welfare **T:** How does the state support and restrict the market?
Mid-Semester Break		
8	3rd May	**L:** The Market: Competition, finance and risk **T:** Understanding the financial crisis
9	10th May	**L:** The Corporation, Work and Consumerism **T:** Understanding consumers and the consumer society
10	17th May	**L:** The Family, Care and Social Reproduction **T:** The work/life balance
11	24th May	**L:** The Environment and Sustainability **T**: Can a growth economy be sustainable?

12	31st May	**L:** Civil Society and Economic Alternatives **T**: Assignment revision **Major Essay Due this Week**
13	7th June	**L:** Conclusion **T**: Exam preparation

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_2016.html

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

Complaint Management Procedure for Students and Members of the Public http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/complaint_management/procedure.html

Disruption to Studies Policy (in effect until Dec 4th, 2017): http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/disruption_studies/policy.html

Special Consideration Policy (in effect from Dec 4th, 2017): https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policies/special-consideration

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.

Referencing Policy

This unit follows the Sociology Department's referencing guide, which is available here:

http://www.mq.edu.au/about_us/faculties_and_departments/faculty_of_arts/department_of_sociology/current_students/undergraduate/useful_links/sociology_reference_guide/

Late Penalties and Grade Appeals

This unit follows the Sociology Department Learning and Teaching Code of Practice, which can be found here:

http://www.mq.edu.au/about_us/faculties_and_departments/faculty_of_arts/department_of_sociology/current_students/undergraduate/learning_teaching_code_of_practice/

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://www.mq.edu.au/about_us/offices_and_units/information_technology/help/.

When using the University's IT, you must adhere to the Acceptable Use of IT Resources 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 Quiz
- 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

- 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

- 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

Changes from Previous Offering

The first assignment has been changed from a short written commentary on one of the first 3 readings to 3 separate multiple choice quizzes on each of the first three readings. This is designed to give students feedback more quickly at the beginning of the course, and to ensure students are comfortable with a range of concepts, rather than just one reading. As a result, the early assignment is now worth 15% rather than 20%.

The final exam has also been changed to reflect the change in the first assignment. It will no longer have a multiple choice component, and will instead focus only on short answer questions. The exam will cover the same breadth of content, but allow for more depth in answers. The overall balance of multiple choice and short answer marks is broadly maintained.

The assignment with the highest weighting remains the written research report.

There is also a change to the content of Week 12, which will include discussion of economic alternatives, following student feedback from 2016.