



SOC 325

Understanding Contemporary Societies

S2 External 2018

Dept of Sociology

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Lecturer and course convenor

Dr Harry Blatterer

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Contact via Email

AHH Level 2

By appointment

Credit points

3

Prerequisites

39cp at 100 level or above 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:

1. A familiarity with key sociological concepts as they are applied to the study of contemporary societies.
4. Practicing how to think sociologically.
3. Reading, summarising and applying basic concepts of Sociology in order to understand contemporary societies.

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

General Assessment Information

Expectations

This is an upper-level unit, and you're expected to know what engaged participation entails. Please consider that this is a **reading-heavy** unit. Some of the readings will be complex. It's our collective task to clarify the complexities. But this requires of everyone to have done the mandatory readings. It's only on that basis that we are able to discuss the weekly topics in an informed manner.

Late Submission Penalty

"Unless a Special Consideration request has been submitted and approved, (a) a penalty for lateness will apply – two (2) marks out of 100 will be deducted per day for assignments submitted after the due date – and (b) no assignment will be accepted more than seven (7) days (incl. weekends) after the original submission deadline. No late submissions will be accepted for timed assessments – e.g. quizzes, online tests."

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due
<u>Participation</u>	30%	No	ongoing
<u>Guided Sociological Analysis 1</u>	30%	No	Friday of Week 8
<u>Sociological Analysis 2</u>	40%	No	Friday of Week 13

Participation

Due: **ongoing**

Weighting: **30%**

Participation requires you to **think about the topics and discuss them with others** in preparation for your written assessment tasks.

Your contribution will be assessed on the basis of your familiarity with and understanding of the weekly unit contents.

For **external/OUA students** participation requires going on the **weekly discussion boards** on iLearn where you will discuss the readings and their relevance to contemporary social issues. You are expected to post your contributions **during the same week in which a particular topic is discussed** (by Sunday evening of that week at the latest).

For **internal students** participation requires engaging in on-campus tutorial activities. This means you will have read the weekly readings and prepared notes about them to bring to the seminar.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- 1. A familiarity with key sociological concepts as they are applied to the study of contemporary societies.
- 4. Practicing how to think sociologically.
- 3. Reading, summarising and applying basic concepts of Sociology in order to understand contemporary societies.
- 2. An understanding of a range of sociological perspectives on social life from the 19th century to the present.

Guided Sociological Analysis 1

Due: **Friday of Week 8**

Weighting: **30%**

The aim of this assessment task is threefold: (1) to gauge your comprehension of the perspectives and concepts covered thus far; (2) to get you to think about connecting theoretical material to contemporary social issues; (3) to prepare you for your final assessment task.

Questions will be posted on iLearn by the end of **week 7**. Choose **ONE** question to answer.

Word limit: **1500** (+/- 10%)

****You are responsible for checking on iLearn for additional assessment information and any possible changes of the assessment requirements.***

On successful completion you will be able to:

- 1. A familiarity with key sociological concepts as they are applied to the study of contemporary societies.
- 4. Practicing how to think sociologically.
- 3. Reading, summarising and applying basic concepts of Sociology in order to understand contemporary societies.
- 2. An understanding of a range of sociological perspectives on social life from the 19th century to the present.

Sociological Analysis 2

Due: **Friday of Week 13**

Weighting: **40%**

The aim of this assessment task is for you to show your ability to apply the perspectives and concepts we have discussed to a **"real-life" issue**.

- a) pick a sociological concept or approach from one of the weeks and define it clearly.
- b) pick and briefly describe a social issue you would like to interpret and analyse.

c) interpret and analyse (b) with (a)

Your example can be sourced from a novel, an article, a video clip, film, etc. The most important point is **relevance** and a clear **connection** between the example and the sociological perspective you have chosen.

Word limit: **2000** (+/- 10%)

****You are responsible for checking on iLearn for additional assessment information and any possible changes of the assessment requirements.***

On successful completion you will be able to:

- 1. A familiarity with key sociological concepts as they are applied to the study of contemporary societies.
- 4. Practicing how to think sociologically.
- 3. Reading, summarising and applying basic concepts of Sociology in order to understand contemporary societies.
- 2. An understanding of a range of sociological perspectives on social life from the 19th century to the present.

Delivery and Resources

The unit is run as a **2 hour seminar**. Each seminar is comprised of an introductory 'mini lecture' to orient the discussion.

All course material will be provided through iLearn including discussion tools.

Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from [Policy Central](https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policy-central) (<https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policy-central>). Students should be aware of the following policies in particular with regard to Learning and Teaching:

- [Academic Appeals Policy](#)
- [Academic Integrity Policy](#)
- [Academic Progression Policy](#)
- [Assessment Policy](#)
- [Fitness to Practice Procedure](#)
- [Grade Appeal Policy](#)
- [Complaint Management Procedure for Students and Members of the Public](#)
- [Special Consideration Policy](#) (**Note:** *The Special Consideration Policy is effective from 4 December 2017 and replaces the Disruption to Studies Policy.*)

Undergraduate students seeking more policy resources can visit the [Student Policy Gateway](#) ([htt](#)

[ps://students.mq.edu.au/support/study/student-policy-gateway](https://students.mq.edu.au/support/study/student-policy-gateway)). It is your one-stop-shop for the key policies you need to know about throughout your undergraduate student journey.

If you would like to see all the policies relevant to Learning and Teaching visit [Policy Central](http://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policy-central) (<http://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/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/study/getting-started/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://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

- 1. A familiarity with key sociological concepts as they are applied to the study of contemporary societies.
- 4. Practicing how to think sociologically.
- 3. Reading, summarising and applying basic concepts of Sociology in order to understand contemporary societies.

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

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

Assessment task

- Sociological Analysis 2

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

- 1. A familiarity with key sociological concepts as they are applied to the study of

contemporary societies.

- 4. Practicing how to think sociologically.
- 3. Reading, summarising and applying basic concepts of Sociology in order to understand contemporary societies.
- 2. An understanding of a range of sociological perspectives on social life from the 19th century to the present.

Assessment tasks

- Participation
- Guided Sociological Analysis 1
- Sociological Analysis 2

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

- 1. A familiarity with key sociological concepts as they are applied to the study of contemporary societies.
- 4. Practicing how to think sociologically.
- 3. Reading, summarising and applying basic concepts of Sociology in order to understand contemporary societies.
- 2. An understanding of a range of sociological perspectives on social life from the 19th century to the present.

Assessment tasks

- Participation
- Guided Sociological Analysis 1
- Sociological Analysis 2

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

- 1. A familiarity with key sociological concepts as they are applied to the study of contemporary societies.
- 4. Practicing how to think sociologically.
- 3. Reading, summarising and applying basic concepts of Sociology in order to understand contemporary societies.
- 2. An understanding of a range of sociological perspectives on social life from the 19th century to the present.

Assessment tasks

- Participation
- Guided Sociological Analysis 1
- Sociological Analysis 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 outcomes

- 1. A familiarity with key sociological concepts as they are applied to the study of contemporary societies.
- 4. Practicing how to think sociologically.
- 3. Reading, summarising and applying basic concepts of Sociology in order to understand contemporary societies.

Assessment tasks

- Participation
- Sociological Analysis 2

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

- 1. A familiarity with key sociological concepts as they are applied to the study of contemporary societies.
- 4. Practicing how to think sociologically.
- 3. Reading, summarising and applying basic concepts of Sociology in order to understand contemporary societies.
- 2. An understanding of a range of sociological perspectives on social life from the 19th century to the present.

Assessment tasks

- Participation
- Sociological Analysis 2

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

- 4. Practicing how to think sociologically.
- 2. An understanding of a range of sociological perspectives on social life from the 19th century to the present.

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 outcomes

- 4. Practicing how to think sociologically.
- 2. An understanding of a range of sociological perspectives on social life from the 19th century to the present.