



SOCI399

Social Inequality

S1 External 2018

Dept of Sociology

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff
Assoc Prof of Sociology and convenor
Shaun Wilson
shaun.wilson@mq.edu.au
Contact via Email answered within 24 hours
AHH level 2
12pm Wednesdays (organise by email)

Credit points
3

Prerequisites
39cp at 100 level or above

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

The organisational and institutional dynamics of modern societies are powerful generators of social inequality and yet they equally generate resources through which inequalities can be identified and challenged. This unit explores the social mechanisms that drive inequalities and surveys the impact of socio-economic inequality on a wide range of areas of social life (gender, culture, employment, and the economy). The unit considers how sociological theory can explain the emergence and persistence of social inequalities, the normative conflicts and struggles that inequalities produce, and the ways social institutions overcome, respond or merely adapt to inequality. We conclude the unit by looking at whether democratic societies can survive widening socio-economic inequalities and how we might explain the improvement in some types of inequality and discrimination and the curious persistence of others.

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. An advanced understanding of the foundations, generative mechanisms and multi-dimensional nature of social inequality.
2. An understanding of the technical and sociological measurement of inequality.

3. An ability to interpret debates and policy, political and social-movement responses to inequality.

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due
<u>Weekly participation</u>	15%	No	weekly
<u>Class test</u>	15%	No	Week 6
<u>Exam</u>	55%	No	End of semester
<u>Assignment</u>	15%	No	Week 9

Weekly participation

Due: **weekly**

Weighting: **15%**

ONLINE participation: assessed out of a total 15 marks based on (i) evidence of reading (ii) contributions to online discussion and (iii) responses to comments and contributions of others.

For now, let's try and run participation via a centralised blog, **the Inequality Blog**. See the I-Learn website.

If we need an alternative forum, I will advise via Announcements -- but for now, let's see how the Inequality Blog goes!

On successful completion you will be able to:

- 1. An advanced understanding of the foundations, generative mechanisms and multi-dimensional nature of social inequality.
- 3. An ability to interpret debates and policy, political and social-movement responses to inequality.

Class test

Due: **Week 6**

Weighting: **15%**

A quick 30 minute class test covering definitions and problems of inequality.

Multiple choice and short answer format.

For external students, this Test will be conducted via to I-Learn page at **11-11.30am on April 4**.

Details will be posted on I-Learn in the week before (i.e. late March).

On successful completion you will be able to:

- 1. An advanced understanding of the foundations, generative mechanisms and multi-dimensional nature of social inequality.
- 2. An understanding of the technical and sociological measurement of inequality.

Exam

Due: **End of semester**

Weighting: **55%**

Final exam of 2 hours consisting of multiple choice responses and longer answers.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- 1. An advanced understanding of the foundations, generative mechanisms and multi-dimensional nature of social inequality.
- 2. An understanding of the technical and sociological measurement of inequality.

Assignment

Due: **Week 9**

Weighting: **15%**

Responses to three questions about interesting readings and problems in the field of social inequality.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- 1. An advanced understanding of the foundations, generative mechanisms and multi-dimensional nature of social inequality.
- 3. An ability to interpret debates and policy, political and social-movement responses to inequality.

Delivery and Resources

Readings will be available via the SOCI399 I-Learn webpage (and shortly) a Library web-page dedicated to readings for this Unit.

Unit Schedule

Week	Topic	Seminar/tutorial/online discussion
week 1 (28 February)	Intro: the challenge of inequality in the era of Trump	No tutorial/seminar this week

week 2 (7 March)	The economics and sociology of measuring inequality	Processes of 'active discrimination'
week 3 (14 March)	Better or worse? Trends in global inequality	The global politics of same sex rights
week 4 (21 March)	Piketty's <i>Capital in the 21st Century</i> : Trends and reactions	Countries with very high inequalities
week 5 (28 March)	Two concepts: exploitation and opportunity hoarding	Precarious workers
week 6 (4 April)	Inequality and theories of justice	Class Test (11am) - Restorative justice and prisoners
week 7 (11 April)	Equality of opportunity and outcomes, affirmative action	Work, the labour market and gender inequality
week 8 (18 April)	Inequality and the labour market	Class structures of Australian society
week 9 (2 May)	Predistribution and redistribution as mechanisms of equalisation	No tutorial/seminar this week
week 10 (9 May)	Inequality and the politics of identity	Black Lives Matter and #MeToo
week 11 (16 May)	Inequality and the politics of retribution	One Nation and voting in Australia -- Is there a 'white backlash'?
week 12 (23 May)	Jobless futures: AI, automation and the basic income	Basic income trials around the world
week 13 (30 May)	Can social democracy be renewed?	Unit review + study guide

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](https://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](#)

[s://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)).

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

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. An advanced understanding of the foundations, generative mechanisms and multi-dimensional nature of social inequality.
- 2. An understanding of the technical and sociological measurement of inequality.

Assessment tasks

- Class test
- Exam
- Assignment

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 outcome

- 3. An ability to interpret debates and policy, political and social-movement responses to inequality.

Assessment tasks

- Exam
- Assignment

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

- 3. An ability to interpret debates and policy, political and social-movement responses to inequality.

Assessment task

- 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:

Assessment task

- Weekly 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 outcomes

- 1. An advanced understanding of the foundations, generative mechanisms and multi-dimensional nature of social inequality.
- 3. An ability to interpret debates and policy, political and social-movement responses to inequality.

Changes since First Published

Date	Description
09/03/2018	Clarification of assessment + further details on tutorial program. thanks Shaun