



SSCI310

Evaluation and Applied Social Science

S1 Online 2019

Dept of Sociology

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Unit convenor

Adam Stebbing

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Contact via Email

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By appointment

Tutor

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Credit points

3

Prerequisites

SSCI100 and SSCI201 and SSCI202

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

This unit builds on core skills developed in the social science degree, focusing on developing practice-based skills for applied policy and research positions in the workplace. It dedicates particular attention to practical skills in evaluation and policy research, which apply social science methodologies to assess whether a program or policy intervention is working. The unit initially provides an overview of government structures at the Commonwealth, State and Local levels, to provide a context for the development of the core skills of the unit. These include: developing program logic models; reading and developing budget papers, writing briefs, conducting consultation processes, writing policy and funding proposals; commissioning and managing research and evaluations; and, developing strategies for grant writing. In doing this, we link the social science foundations and research methodologies established in the first and second year units with the vocational experience students receive through the internship program in their third year.

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. build on existing knowledge about social science applications of qualitative and quantitative methods
2. consider what a multi-disciplinary approach offers to our understanding of public policy and program evaluation
3. understand how to develop program logic models through critical analysis of public policy
4. competently access, use and synthesise information. This involves organising and summarising data efficiently, concisely and clearly.
5. display creative and critical thinking through workshop participation and written assessments
6. demonstrate effective time management and self organisation skills
7. develop applied skills relevant to policy workplaces
8. explain key research problems, research methodologies and theoretical approaches in a research proposal or grant application aimed at a non-expert audience

General Assessment Information

Academic Integrity

Academic Integrity is an intergral part of the core values and principles contained in the Macquarie University Ethics Statement. Its fundamental principle is that all staff and students act with integrity in the creation, development, application and use of ideas and information. This means that:

- All academic work claimed as original is the work of the author making the claim
- All academic collaborations are acknowledged
- Academic work is not falsified in any way
- When the ideas of others are used, these ideas are acknowledged appropriately
- Self-plagiarism is an unacceptable academic activity

More information is available from *Policy Central* [here](#).

University Grading Policy

The grade that a student receives will signify their overall performance in meeting the learning outcomes of the unit of study. Graded units will use the following grades

HD	High Distinction	85-100
D	Distinction	75-84

Cr	Credit	65-74
P	Pass	50-64
F	Fail	0-49

Return of Marked Work

As per university policy, written assessments will be returned to students within three weeks of the submission date. Early assignments will not be marked early. And, the short class test held during the examination period at the end of semester will not be returned to students.

Special Consideration (Extensions)

The University recognises that students may experience events or conditions that adversely affect their academic performance. If you experience serious and unavoidable difficulties at exam time or when assessment tasks are due, you can consider applying for Special Consideration.

You need to show that the circumstances:

1. were serious, unexpected and unavoidable
2. were beyond your control
3. caused substantial disruption to your academic work
4. substantially interfered with your otherwise satisfactory fulfilment of the unit requirements
5. lasted at least three consecutive days or a total of 5 days within the teaching period and prevented completion of an assessment task scheduled for a specific date.

More information about Special Consideration is available [here](#).

Late Penalties

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.

Campus Wellbeing

Macquarie University offers a range of wellbeing services (including [but not limited to]: health, welfare, counselling, disability and student advocacy services) that are available to you at any time during your studies. Campus Wellbeing is here to support you and help you succeed, both academically and personally. More information is available [here](#).

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due
Program Logic Task	30%	No	Friday of Week 6

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due
<u>Major Research Task</u>	60%	No	Friday of week 13
<u>Active Participation</u>	10%	No	Ongoing

Program Logic Task

Due: **Friday of Week 6**

Weighting: **30%**

This task requires you to develop a program logic model for ONE of the five programs identified in the Assessments tab on iLearn and to explain the theory of change that underpins it. Programs logics can be developed for multiple reasons. In this case, we want you to develop a program logic that provides an 'ideal-typical' representation of how the program intended to work by the organisation that runs it.

You should present the program logic model as a flow chart and outline its core components in a table. We highly recommend that you follow the template provided. At the very least, the program logic should outline: the issue; needs; desired outcomes; resources/inputs; activities/outputs; and actual outcomes of the policy or program. Make sure that you identify the same core components in both the diagram and table. You should also explain the program logic model in the text of your paper and briefly discuss the model's assumptions and limitations.

This assignment will require you to undertake research and draw on course readings. In particular, please read and draw on the readings from week 3. It will also be necessary to do some secondary research on the program that you have selected for analysis. Please note, we encourage you to choose the same policy or program for this assessment and the major research task. Also, the word count does not include the diagram of the program logic or the table outlining its key elements.

N.B Please submit this assignment via Turnitin ONLY and take care to include a reference list.

On successful completion you will be able to:

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- 6. demonstrate effective time management and self organisation skills

- 7. develop applied skills relevant to policy workplaces

Major Research Task

Due: **Friday of week 13**

Weighting: **60%**

This research assignment is the major assessment task for SSCI310. It requires you to develop EITHER: (1) a *research proposal* to evaluate the program, OR (2) a *grant application* for an applied social research project that relates to the program or the social issue it seeks to address

Regardless of which option you choose, this assessment should build on the Program Logic Task by carrying out further research on the same program (or, if you choose the second option, you may choose to focus on the social issue the program you selected for the Program Logic Task seeks to address.

Although distinct writing formats, research proposals and grant applications have much in common. Both writing formats are about putting forward a robust research project to be undertaken - note the focus is on designing a research project, not actually undertaking it. Your assignment should provide the following information, but will be organised differently depending on which format you select: background information; an explanation of the program (or social issue); a brief literature review; the research questions; a methodology; discussion of ethical issues; a research timetable; and a budget.

Templates will be provided for both the research proposal and the grant application options during semester. We encourage you to look over both before selecting an option, particularly because both types of writing formats are used across the social sciences and related workplaces. Again, if you have any doubts about the suitability of a particular program or policy, please contact the unit convenor.

More information and resources will become available on the iLearn page during the semester.

N.B Please submit this assignment via Turnitin ONLY and include the reference list.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- 1. build on existing knowledge about social science applications of qualitative and quantitative methods
- 4. competently access, use and synthesise information. This involves organising and summarising data efficiently, concisely and clearly.
- 5. display creative and critical thinking through workshop participation and written assessments
- 6. demonstrate effective time management and self organisation skills
- 7. develop applied skills relevant to policy workplaces
- 8. explain key research problems, research methodologies and theoretical approaches in a research proposal or grant application aimed at a non-expert audience

Active Participation

Due: **Ongoing**

Weighting: **10%**

Online students are required to listen to the lectures online and submit 300 to 400 word summaries to iLearn. External students are welcome to attend lectures in person, in which case their attendance will be noted and they won't be required to submit a summary.

A dedicated iLearn forum is set up for online students to engage in discussion and activities. Specific questions and/or tasks will be posted in the weekly forum available via the 'Online Students Activities' tab under the topic description and resources for each week. These are designed to unpack key issues and give you a chance to practice aspects of applied social science first-hand. You can also pose your own questions about the weekly topic here and respond to other students' contributions.

Online student participation grade will be based on: - listening to and summarising at least 80% of lectures - engaging in at least 80% of the weekly forums - making an informed contribution to forum discussion (which requires doing the readings!) - completing set tasks and submitting exercises/summaries when required - engaging respectfully with other students

On successful completion you will be able to:

- 1. build on existing knowledge about social science applications of qualitative and quantitative methods
- 2. consider what a multi-disciplinary approach offers to our understanding of public policy and program evaluation
- 3. understand how to develop program logic models through critical analysis of public policy
- 5. display creative and critical thinking through workshop participation and written assessments
- 6. demonstrate effective time management and self organisation skills

Delivery and Resources

Unit Sessions

Lectures are at 10am to 12pm on Wednesdays in Tutorial room 220, 4 Western Rd from weeks 1 to 12 of semester (inclusive). They will be recorded and become available online via ECHO360's Active Learning Platform (accessible via iLearn).

Workshops (tutorials) will run between week 2 and 12 of semester (inclusive) and be 90 minutes in duration. Three tutorials will run on Thursdays in Tutorial room 221, 4 Western road at 10am, 11.30am and 2pm.

Technology used

The following technologies are used in SSCI310...

iLearn

Important information about the weekly schedule and topics, course readings and assessment are all available on the course *iLearn* page. If you do not have access, please contact IT help. You are required to check iLearn and your student email regularly for course updates and information.

iLab

iLab is the university's Remote Desktop system that allows you to connect to university computers remotely and access certain specialist software.

Turnitin and GradeMark

Written assessments need to be submitted via Turnitin. Links to Turnitin is available via the Assessments tab on the iLearn page. Please contact the convenor if you cannot find it (do not leave it until the day the assessment is due). Assessments will be marked via GradeMark and returned to students electronically.

Readings on Leganto

Unit readings should be available online via Leganto or URLs on the SSCI310 iLearn page. A link to Leganto and the readings for the unit is on iLearn. There is no textbook for this unit.

Unit Schedule

The following table identifies the weekly topics for SSCI310. More information can be found about the weekly topics and required readings on the unit iLearn page. Lectures will be held from weeks 1 to 12 (inclusive), whilst tutorials will run from weeks 2 to 12.

Week	Topic
1	Introducing evaluation and applied social science
2	Understanding social issues, programs and public policies
3	Program logic models: A critical appreciation
4	What is credible evidence? The politics of evidence-based policy
5	Designing evaluation as applied social research
6	Uses and misuses of quantitative methods in evaluation
7	Participatory and qualitative methods for evaluation
8	Developing indicators and instruments
9	Applying unobtrusive methods: From policy documents to big data
10	Beyond 'gold standards': Demystifying mixed methods research

Week	Topic
11	The ethics of applied social science: Case studies
12	Designing research proposals & grant applications
13	Revision week

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 \(https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policy-central\)](https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policy-central).

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 published on platform other than [eStudent](#), (eg. iLearn, Coursera etc.) 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 or if you are a Global MBA student contact globalmba.support@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

If you are a Global MBA student contact globalmba.support@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

- 3. understand how to develop program logic models through critical analysis of public policy
- 5. display creative and critical thinking through workshop participation and written assessments

- 8. explain key research problems, research methodologies and theoretical approaches in a research proposal or grant application aimed at a non-expert audience

Assessment task

- Program Logic Task

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

- 1. build on existing knowledge about social science applications of qualitative and quantitative methods
- 3. understand how to develop program logic models through critical analysis of public policy
- 4. competently access, use and synthesise information. This involves organising and summarising data efficiently, concisely and clearly.
- 6. demonstrate effective time management and self organisation skills
- 7. develop applied skills relevant to policy workplaces
- 8. explain key research problems, research methodologies and theoretical approaches in a research proposal or grant application aimed at a non-expert audience

Assessment tasks

- Program Logic Task
- Major Research Task

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

- 2. consider what a multi-disciplinary approach offers to our understanding of public policy

and program evaluation

- 5. display creative and critical thinking through workshop participation and written assessments
- 6. demonstrate effective time management and self organisation skills

Assessment task

- Active 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

- 1. build on existing knowledge about social science applications of qualitative and quantitative methods
- 2. consider what a multi-disciplinary approach offers to our understanding of public policy and program evaluation
- 7. develop applied skills relevant to policy workplaces

Assessment tasks

- Program Logic Task
- Active 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

- 2. consider what a multi-disciplinary approach offers to our understanding of public policy and program evaluation

- 3. understand how to develop program logic models through critical analysis of public policy
- 4. competently access, use and synthesise information. This involves organising and summarising data efficiently, concisely and clearly.
- 5. display creative and critical thinking through workshop participation and written assessments
- 8. explain key research problems, research methodologies and theoretical approaches in a research proposal or grant application aimed at a non-expert audience

Assessment task

- Program Logic Task

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. build on existing knowledge about social science applications of qualitative and quantitative methods
- 3. understand how to develop program logic models through critical analysis of public policy
- 4. competently access, use and synthesise information. This involves organising and summarising data efficiently, concisely and clearly.
- 5. display creative and critical thinking through workshop participation and written assessments
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Assessment tasks

- Major Research Task
- Active Participation

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

- 3. understand how to develop program logic models through critical analysis of public policy
- 4. competently access, use and synthesise information. This involves organising and summarising data efficiently, concisely and clearly.
- 5. display creative and critical thinking through workshop participation and written assessments
- 8. explain key research problems, research methodologies and theoretical approaches in a research proposal or grant application aimed at a non-expert audience

Assessment tasks

- Program Logic Task
- Major Research Task

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

- 3. understand how to develop program logic models through critical analysis of public policy

Assessment tasks

- Major Research Task
- Active 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

- 3. understand how to develop program logic models through critical analysis of public policy

Assessment task

- Active Participation