



SOCI3070

Social Inequality

Session 1, Special circumstances 2021

Macquarie School of Social Sciences

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Notice

As part of [Phase 3 of our return to campus plan](#), most units will now run tutorials, seminars and other small group activities on campus, and most will keep an online version available to those students unable to return or those who choose to continue their studies online.

To check the availability of face-to-face activities for your unit, please go to [timetable viewer](#). To check detailed information on unit assessments visit your unit's iLearn space or consult your unit convenor.

General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Shaun Wilson

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Credit points

10

Prerequisites

130cp at 1000 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:

ULO1: demonstrate an advanced understanding of the foundations, generative mechanisms and multi-dimensional nature of social inequality

ULO2: demonstrate an understanding of the technical and sociological measurement of inequality

ULO3: demonstrate an ability to interpret debates and policy, political and social-movement responses to inequality

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due
<u>Assignment</u>	30%	No	Saturday April 24 at 9pm
<u>Weekly participation</u>	10%	No	weekly
<u>Examination</u>	60%	No	Formal examination period

Assignment

Assessment Type ¹: Problem set

Indicative Time on Task ²: 55 hours

Due: **Saturday April 24 at 9pm**

Weighting: **30%**

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

On successful completion you will be able to:

- demonstrate an advanced understanding of the foundations, generative mechanisms and multi-dimensional nature of social inequality
- demonstrate an understanding of the technical and sociological measurement of inequality
- demonstrate an ability to interpret debates and policy, political and social-movement responses to inequality

Weekly participation

Assessment Type ¹: Participatory task

Indicative Time on Task ²: 0 hours

Due: **weekly**

Weighting: **10%**

Participation in at least 8 weeks of lectures and tutorials across the Semester OR ONLINE PARTICIPATION for online students

On successful completion you will be able to:

- demonstrate an advanced understanding of the foundations, generative mechanisms and multi-dimensional nature of social inequality
- demonstrate an understanding of the technical and sociological measurement of inequality

- demonstrate an ability to interpret debates and policy, political and social-movement responses to inequality

Examination

Assessment Type ¹: Examination

Indicative Time on Task ²: 2 hours

Due: **Formal examination period**

Weighting: **60%**

Final examination at the end of Semester

On successful completion you will be able to:

- demonstrate an advanced understanding of the foundations, generative mechanisms and multi-dimensional nature of social inequality
- demonstrate an understanding of the technical and sociological measurement of inequality
- demonstrate an ability to interpret debates and policy, political and social-movement responses to inequality

¹ If you need help with your assignment, please contact:

- the academic teaching staff in your unit for guidance in understanding or completing this type of assessment
- the [Writing Centre](#) for academic skills support.

² Indicative time-on-task is an estimate of the time required for completion of the assessment task and is subject to individual variation

Delivery and Resources

SOCI 3070 has a weekly online lecture which will be posted on Tuesday morning so it can be watched at 2pm Mondays.

Tutorials follow on Tuesday afternoon.

There are no tutorials in the first week of classes, so tutorials start for Tuesday, 2 March.

There is an online tutorial for Special Circumstances students 1-2pm Tuesdays.

See <https://timetables.mq.edu.au/2021/> for details of classes.

There is an I-Learn page with readings and a guide to the tutorials.

Unit Schedule

week	Topic	Tutorial
1	Intro: the challenge of social inequality in the 21st century (23 Feb)	None
2	The economics and sociology of measuring inequality (2 Mar)	Discrimination as a sociological process
3	Better or worse? Trends in global inequality (9 Mar)	Should we focus on poverty or inequality? A look at current debate
4	Thomas Piketty on inequality: Trends and reactions (16 Mar)	Does inequality promote political authoritarianism?
5	Two concepts: exploitation and opportunity hoarding (23 Mar)	How does precarious employment contribute to inequality?
6	Status, hierarchy, and organisation (30 Mar) Mid semester break follows	Restorative justice and the prison system
7	Inequality and social justice--theory, equal opportunity & affirmative action (20 Apr)	How does work reinforce gender inequalities?
8	Inequality and the labour market (27 Apr)	How does social class shape life chances & Australian society?
9	Building blocks of mobility: secure work, housing and education (4 May)	Battle of the generations
10	Inequality and the politics of identity (11 May)	A look at contemporary social movements focused on inequality
11	Inequality and backlash movements (18 May)	The Trump electorate in the US. Trends in Australia
12	Social futures: AI, automation and the basic income (25 May)	Basic income trials around the world, the Jobs Guarantee
13	Unit revision and extensions (1 June)	Revision ahead of final exam

Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from [Policy Central \(https://policies.mq.edu.au\)](https://policies.mq.edu.au). 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](#)

Students seeking more policy resources can visit [Student Policies](https://students.mq.edu.au/support/study/policies) (<https://students.mq.edu.au/support/study/policies>). It is your one-stop-shop for the key policies you need to know about throughout your undergraduate student journey.

To find other policies relating to Teaching and Learning, visit [Policy Central](https://policies.mq.edu.au) (<https://policies.mq.edu.au>) and use the [search tool](#).

Student Code of Conduct

Macquarie University students have a responsibility to be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct: <https://students.mq.edu.au/admin/other-resources/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 help you improve your marks and take control of your study.

- [Getting help with your assignment](#)
- [Workshops](#)
- [StudyWise](#)
- [Academic Integrity Module](#)

The Library provides online and face to face support to help you find and use relevant information resources.

- [Subject and Research Guides](#)
- [Ask a Librarian](#)

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.

Changes from Previous Offering

New lectures, slightly revised assessment within advertised requirements