



SSCI3010

Evaluation and Applied Social Science

Session 1, Online-flexible 2024

Macquarie School of Social Sciences

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Disclaimer

Macquarie University has taken all reasonable measures to ensure the information in this publication is accurate and up-to-date. However, the information may change or become out-dated as a result of change in University policies, procedures or rules. The University reserves the right to make changes to any information in this publication without notice. Users of this publication are advised to check the website version of this publication [or the relevant faculty or department] before acting on any information in this publication.

General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Unit convenor

Adam Stebbing

adam.stebbing@mq.edu.au

Contact via Email

Room B272, Building B, Arts Precinct, 25 Wally's Walk

By appointment

Credit points

10

Prerequisites

(SSCI1000 or SSCI100) and (SSCI2010 or SSCI201) and (SSCI2020 or SSCI202)

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

Social science theories and methodologies have many practical and professional applications in the workplace, including positions in applied policy and research. What are the main applications of social science in today's workplace? This unit focuses on evaluation and policy research, which apply social science theories and methods to ascertain whether a program or policy intervention is making a difference. This unit has three parts. The first examines the policy context of evaluation and applied social science. In the second part, we survey influential research designs for evaluation and applied social science that incorporate qualitative and/or quantitative methods. And, in the third part, we consider ethical and practical issues that arise when designing and doing applied social science. Through these three parts, the unit aims to introduce students to the skills required to design ethical and robust evaluations and applied social science projects. By doing this, the unit applies knowledge and methodologies from earlier social science units to practical situations in order to prepare students for working on a professional social research project as part of the capstone unit.

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: apply existing knowledge of qualitative and quantitative social inquiry to evaluation problems and applied research

ULO2: design and evaluate how program logic models display the workings of a program or policy

ULO3: display knowledge of key evaluation and applied social science research approaches

ULO4: employ skills in interpreting and assessing data quality in evaluation and applied social science research

ULO5: explain key research problems, methodologies and evaluation approaches using professional writing formats.

General Assessment Information

Academic Integrity

Academic Integrity is an integral 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 (resubmitting your own work - including past assignments for this or other units - without attribution) is an unacceptable academic activity

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

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.

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.

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 in the Policies and Procedures section of the unit guide.

Late Penalties

Unless a Special Consideration request has been submitted and approved, a 5% penalty (of the total possible mark) will be applied each day a written assessment is not submitted, up until the 7th day (including weekends). After the 7th day, a mark of, 0 (zero) will be awarded even if the assessment is submitted. Submission time for all written assessments is set at 11.55pm. A 1-hour grace period is provided to students who experience a technical issue.

This late penalty will apply to non-timed sensitive assessment (incl essays, reports, posters, portfolios, journals, recordings etc). Late submission of time sensitive tasks (such as tests/exams, performance assessments/presentations, scheduled practical assessments/labs etc) will only be addressed by the unit convenor in a Special consideration application. Special Consideration outcome may result in a new question or topic.

Student 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. Student Wellbeing is here to support you and help you succeed, both academically and personally. More information is available in the Policies and Procedures section of the unit guide.

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due
<u>Program Logic Task</u>	30%	No	08/04/2024
<u>Research Proposal</u>	50%	No	29/05/2024
<u>Active Participation</u>	20%	No	Ongoing

Program Logic Task

Assessment Type ¹: Practice-based task

Indicative Time on Task ²: 21 hours

Due: **08/04/2024**

Weighting: **30%**

1,000 word paper

On successful completion you will be able to:

- design and evaluate how program logic models display the workings of a program or policy

Research Proposal

Assessment Type ¹: Design Task

Indicative Time on Task ²: 42 hours

Due: **29/05/2024**

Weighting: **50%**

2,000 word paper

On successful completion you will be able to:

- apply existing knowledge of qualitative and quantitative social inquiry to evaluation problems and applied research
- display knowledge of key evaluation and applied social science research approaches
- explain key research problems, methodologies and evaluation approaches using professional writing formats.

Active Participation

Assessment Type ¹: Participatory task

Indicative Time on Task ²: 11 hours

Due: **Ongoing**

Weighting: **20%**

Active participation in unit learning exercises.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- apply existing knowledge of qualitative and quantitative social inquiry to evaluation problems and applied research
- display knowledge of key evaluation and applied social science research approaches
- employ skills in interpreting and assessing data quality in evaluation and applied social science research

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

Unit Sessions

There are no compulsory scheduled sessions for the online flexible offering of SSCI3010.

Lectures will run from weeks 1 to 13 of semester, except for week 7. Lectures will be live streamed and recorded. They will be available via the ECHO360 platform.

Weekly Online Discussion forums will run online via the unit iLearn page in lieu of face-to-face tutorials. Please see the weekly tabs for more information.

Required and recommended resources

There is no required textbook for SSCI3010. Required readings are online available via Leganto (see below).

Technology used

The following technologies are used in this unit...

Email

Make sure that you regularly check your student email for correspondence with teaching staff and course announcements.

iLearn

Important information about the weekly schedule, 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.

Turnitin

All written assessments need to be submitted online via Turnitin only. A link 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 of the assessment). There is no need to submit a hard copy of the assessment or to include a cover sheet.

Grademark

Feedback will be made available online via GradeMark. It will take four forms (in no particular order): specific comments in the text of your paper; overall comments; a score on a qualitative rubric (that cannot be used to calculate your mark numerically); and a numeric score. Once you have received your assignment back, please make sure that you have access to these forms of feedback.

Leganto

Leganto is the electronic system for accessing unit readings that can be accessed via the iLearn page. Readings are allocated via topic. As well as the required readings for each topic, you will find recommended and optional readings. The required readings are available in pdf or electronic format. If you are not able to access the readings, please contact the unit convenor via email.

Unit Schedule

Unit Schedule

The following table identifies the weekly topics for SSCI3010. 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 13 and online discussion forums will run from weeks 2 to 13 (except for week 7 due to the Easter Monday public holiday).

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

Week	Topic
7	Public Holiday - No classes
8	Participatory and qualitative methods for evaluation
9	Developing indicators and instruments
10	Designing research proposals
11	Applying unobtrusive methods: From policy documents to big data
12	Beyond 'gold standards': Demystifying mixed methods research
13	The ethics of applied social science: Case studies

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](#)
- [Assessment Procedure](#)
- [Complaints Resolution 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

Academic Integrity

At Macquarie, we believe [academic integrity](#) – honesty, respect, trust, responsibility, fairness and courage – is at the core of learning, teaching and research. We recognise that meeting the expectations required to complete your assessments can be challenging. So, we offer you a range of resources and services to help you reach your potential, including free [online writing and maths support](#), [academic skills development](#) and [wellbeing consultations](#).

Student Support

Macquarie University provides a range of support services for students. For details, visit <http://students.mq.edu.au/support/>

The Writing Centre

[The Writing Centre](#) provides resources to develop your English language proficiency, academic writing, and communication skills.

- [Workshops](#)
- [Chat with a WriteWISE peer writing leader](#)
- [Access StudyWISE](#)
- [Upload an assignment to Studiosity](#)
- [Complete the 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

Macquarie University offers a range of [Student Support Services](#) including:

- [IT Support](#)
- [Accessibility and disability support](#) with study
- Mental health [support](#)
- [Safety support](#) to respond to bullying, harassment, sexual harassment and sexual assault
- [Social support including information about finances, tenancy and legal issues](#)
- [Student Advocacy](#) provides independent advice on MQ policies, procedures, and processes

Student Enquiries

Got a question? Ask us via [AskMQ](#), or contact [Service Connect](#).

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

Lectures will be delivered online only.

Readings have been revised and updated where appropriate.

Assessment topics have been revised.

Weekly schedule has been revised.

Unit information based on version 2024.01 of the [Handbook](#)