SOC 830
Doing Social Survey Research
S1 Evening 2016
Dept of Sociology

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff
Unit Convenor
Markus Hadler
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Contact via markus.hadler@mq.edu.au
W6A 823

Credit points
4

Prerequisites
Admission to MPASR or PGDipPASR or PCCertPASR or GradCertPASR or GradDipPASR or MIntPubDip

Co-requisites

Co-badged status
SOCI 702

Unit description
Social surveys are now used widely in policymaking, public debate, and social research. This unit provides students with a practical and theoretical guide to the use of surveys in social research. We look closely at how to administer social surveys, how to write good survey questions, and some of the debates about the potentials and limits of this methodology in the social sciences. Social surveys are usually designed to enable statistical analysis of survey data, so the second half of the unit is dedicated to introducing students to a range of data techniques including multivariate analysis. Students will use SPSS in data analysis.

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:

  - a practical introduction to social survey methods
  - insight into theoretical accounts about survey responses
  - professionally useful skills in writing good survey questions
  - professionally useful skills in putting together questionnaires and advice about fieldwork
professionally useful data analysis skills including in bivariate and multivariate analysis

**General Assessment Information**

All assessments (except participation) are to be turned in online via ilearn.

Late submissions result in a 10% per day penalty.

Extensions due to medical and other reasons are possible and need to be submitted according to the disruption to studies policy.

**Assessment Tasks**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Weighting</th>
<th>Due</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Research Proposal</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>Week 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysis</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>Week 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quiz</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>Week 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>continuous</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Research Proposal**

**Due:** *Week 7*

**Weighting:** 40%

This task involves the preparation of a research proposal (research question, hypotheses, sampling plan, questionnaire, etc.). Detailed guidelines will be provided on ilearn.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- a practical introduction to social survey methods
- insight into theoretical accounts about survey responses
- professionally useful skills in writing good survey questions
- professionally useful skills in putting together questionnaires and advice about fieldwork decisions

**Analysis**

**Due:** *Week 13*

**Weighting:** 15%

This task comprises a brief statistical analysis and subsequent interpretation of social survey data using the software SPSS. Detailed guidelines will be available on ilearn.
On successful completion you will be able to:
- professionally useful skills in putting together questionnaires and advice about fieldwork decisions
- professionally useful data analysis skills including in bivariate and multivariate analysis

Quiz
Due: **Week 13**
Weighting: **30%**

This quiz will be administered in the last unit. It will cover the material discussed in the lectures and workshops. Detailed guidelines will be provided on ilearn.

On successful completion you will be able to:
- a practical introduction to social survey methods
- insight into theoretical accounts about survey responses
- professionally useful skills in putting together questionnaires and advice about fieldwork decisions
- professionally useful data analysis skills including in bivariate and multivariate analysis

Participation
Due: **continuous**
Weighting: **15%**

Active participation involves the attendance of at least 75% of the units (not counting excused absences) and an active engagement in the units. Further details will be provided on ilearn.

On successful completion you will be able to:
- a practical introduction to social survey methods
- insight into theoretical accounts about survey responses
- professionally useful skills in writing good survey questions

Delivery and Resources
The first half of the semester focuses on the research proposal and the second half on data analysis. Lectures and tutorials are mixed and we will meet TUE 6pm at **W6B 157 Faculty PC Lab**. The unit will run until 8pm (and longer if needed).

Unit Schedule
We will follow this tentative schedule:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction to social survey research: A look at opinion polls, with practical examples</td>
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<tr>
<td>Types of survey research and sampling for surveys</td>
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<tr>
<td>Writing social survey questions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Non-responses to survey questions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Survey methods - choosing the right vehicle</td>
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<tr>
<td>SPSS1: Introduction and Data Entry</td>
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<tr>
<td>SPSS2: Bread &amp; Butter of social research: frequencies and cross-tabs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPSS3: Measures of association and more on sampling error</td>
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<tr>
<td>SPSS4: Looking at relationships data - Correlation (Pearson’s r)</td>
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<tr>
<td>SPSS5: Using a simple regression model to further examine correlation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPSS6: Outlook: Multiple Regressions and Binary outcomes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Survey research wrap-up and Quiz</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Policies and Procedures**

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from [Policy Central](http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/). Students should be aware of the following policies in particular with regard to Learning and Teaching:


[https://unitguides.mq.edu.au/unit_offerings/60419/unit_guide/print](https://unitguides.mq.edu.au/unit_offerings/60419/unit_guide/print)

In addition, a number of other policies can be found in the Learning and Teaching Category of 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/support/student_conduct/](https://students.mq.edu.au/support/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.

**Late Work**

Turning in work late results in a penalty of 10 per cent per day.

**Student Support**

Macquarie University provides a range of support services for students. For details, visit [http://students.mq.edu.au/support/](http://students.mq.edu.au/support/)

**Learning Skills**

Learning Skills ([mq.edu.au/learningskills](http://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/](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**

**PG - Capable of Professional and Personal Judgment and Initiative**

Our postgraduates will demonstrate a high standard of discernment and common sense in their professional and personal judgment. They will have the ability to make informed choices and decisions that reflect both the nature of their professional work and their personal perspectives.

This graduate capability is supported by:

**Learning outcomes**

- a practical introduction to social survey methods
- professionally useful data analysis skills including in bivariate and multivariate analysis

**Assessment tasks**

- Research Proposal
- Analysis
- Quiz
- Participation

**PG - Discipline Knowledge and Skills**

Our postgraduates will be able to demonstrate a significantly enhanced depth and breadth of knowledge, scholarly understanding, and specific subject content knowledge in their chosen fields.

This graduate capability is supported by:

**Learning outcomes**

- a practical introduction to social survey methods
- insight into theoretical accounts about survey responses

**Assessment tasks**

- Research Proposal
- Quiz
- Participation

**PG - Critical, Analytical and Integrative Thinking**

Our postgraduates will be capable of utilising and reflecting on prior knowledge and experience, of applying higher level critical thinking skills, and of integrating and synthesising learning and knowledge from a range of sources and environments. A characteristic of this form of thinking is the generation of new, professionally oriented knowledge through personal or group-based
critique of practice and theory.

This graduate capability is supported by:

**Learning outcome**
- a practical introduction to social survey methods

**Assessment tasks**
- Research Proposal
- Quiz
- Participation

**PG - Research and Problem Solving Capability**

Our postgraduates will be capable of systematic enquiry; able to use research skills to create new knowledge that can be applied to real world issues, or contribute to a field of study or practice to enhance society. They will be capable of creative questioning, problem finding and problem solving.

This graduate capability is supported by:

**Learning outcomes**
- a practical introduction to social survey methods
- insight into theoretical accounts about survey responses
- professionally useful skills in writing good survey questions
- professionally useful skills in putting together questionnaires and advice about fieldwork decisions

**Assessment tasks**
- Research Proposal
- Analysis
- Quiz
- Participation

**PG - Effective Communication**

Our postgraduates will be able to communicate effectively and convey their views to different social, cultural, and professional audiences. They will be able to use a variety of technologically supported media to communicate with empathy using a range of written, spoken or visual formats.

This graduate capability is supported by:

**Learning outcomes**
- professionally useful skills in writing good survey questions
- professionally useful skills in putting together questionnaires and advice about fieldwork decisions
- professionally useful data analysis skills including in bivariate and multivariate analysis

**Assessment tasks**

- Research Proposal
- Analysis
- Quiz
- Participation

**PG - Engaged and Responsible, Active and Ethical Citizens**

Our postgraduates will be ethically aware and capable of confident transformative action in relation to their professional responsibilities and the wider community. They will have a sense of connectedness with others and country and have a sense of mutual obligation. They will be able to appreciate the impact of their professional roles for social justice and inclusion related to national and global issues.

This graduate capability is supported by:

**Learning outcomes**

- insight into theoretical accounts about survey responses
- professionally useful skills in writing good survey questions
- professionally useful skills in putting together questionnaires and advice about fieldwork decisions
- professionally useful data analysis skills including in bivariate and multivariate analysis

**Assessment tasks**

- Research Proposal
- Analysis
- Quiz
- Participation