SOC 818
Evaluation and the Policy Process
S1 Evening 2016
Dept of Sociology

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General Information

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

Credit points
4

Prerequisites
Admission to MPASR or PGDipPASR or PGCertPASR or GradCertPASR or GradDipPASR or MAppAnth or PGDipAppAnth or PGCertAppAnth or PGDipPP or PGCertPP or MIntPubDip or MPPP or GradCertPP or GradDipPP

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description
This unit introduces students to policy evaluation and accounts for its place in the policy process and social sciences respectively. Students will acquire a knowledge of different approaches to evaluation as well as the ethical and political issues surrounding this process. The unit also focuses on how trends informing public sector management have an influence on the evaluation process and the actual implementation of evaluations.

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 evaluation methods & policy
- Insight into theoretical accounts about evaluation and policy
- Professionally useful skills in writing evaluation reports
- Professionally useful data analysis skills

General Assessment Information
All written assessments 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**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Weighting</th>
<th>Due</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key Issues Task</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>Week 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation Proposal</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>Week 12 &amp; 13</td>
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**Participation**

Due: **Ongoing**  
Weighting: **30%**

This assignment consists of three separate tasks which are meant to encourage active participation and engagement with the course material.

10%: **Attendance**

Your grade is directly related to your presence in class. If you are unable to attend, you need to contact the convenor prior to class and submit documentation. You, however, can miss two units without providing documentation.

10%: **Being prepared + active participation in class**

This part of the assignment is designed to award those students who come prepared and who actively engage in class the course material and with each other.

10%: **Leading the discussion**

This part of the assignment requires students to engage in more detail with one of the readings during the course. Students will nominate themselves one week in advance of presentation. The task requires each student to prepare maximum 3 slides, and maximum 3 questions for the group to engage with (or alternatively a group exercise). The presentation and discussion should take maximum 20 minutes.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Insight into theoretical accounts about evaluation and policy
- Professionally useful data analysis skills

**Key Issues Task**

Due: **Week 7**  
Weighting: **30%**
The purpose of this assessment is to ensure that you understand the key principles of and discussions relating to evaluations. You are required to demonstrate a critical understanding of the readings and the issues they raise. It is intended to be an exercise that provides you with a clear overview of the field and the issues and discussions that take place. It is also intended to make you read all the course material. This exam will consist of a mix of open ended questions, short-answer questions, and multiple choice questions.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- A practical introduction to evaluation methods & policy
- Insight into theoretical accounts about evaluation and policy
- Professionally useful skills in writing evaluation reports

**Evaluation Proposal**

**Due:** **Week 12 & 13**  
**Weighting:** **40%**

This research assignment requires you to develop an evaluation proposal for a program. The purpose of this assignment is to make you able to enter the field (relatively) confident that you are able to undertake at least small scale evaluations. This assignment is designed to give you those skills. There are two components to this assignment:

**5%: A preliminary presentation in week 12**

In week 12, you will be able to present a preliminary outline of your research proposal and receive feedback, which can be used to improve your final report.

**35%: The proposal/report in week 13**

The final report is due in week 13. You should organise the proposal according to the template and guidelines that will be available on ilearn. As for the length, a total of 3000 words is expected.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- A practical introduction to evaluation methods & policy
- Insight into theoretical accounts about evaluation and policy
- Professionally useful skills in writing evaluation reports
- Professionally useful data analysis skills

**Delivery and Resources**

The course is offered in a two-hour seminar format, comprising a lecture, group discussion and practice based workshop each week.

The readings for each week can be accessed from e-reserve and/or iLearn. As a general background, we would recommend the following textbooks, that you may find useful for this course and as a resource for evaluation research more generally.
We are expecting to work with community partners and to have a few guest lectures. The schedule below thus offers only an overview of the topics covered in this course. The exact dates depend on the availability of our external guests and will be posted ilearn.

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<th>Evaluation Approaches</th>
<th>Wicked problems.</th>
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<td>Evaluation approaches.</td>
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<td>Truth and knowledge</td>
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<td>Old and new approaches.</td>
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<td>Performance and outcome evaluations</td>
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<th>Evaluation and policy processes</th>
<th>The Politics of Research Utilisation</th>
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<th>Evaluation and policy processes, continued.</th>
<th>The policy process</th>
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<td>Ethics</td>
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<td>Whose values?</td>
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<td>Stakeholders/participation</td>
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<th>Evidence based policy</th>
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<td>Catching up</td>
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<th>Managing small projects</th>
<th>Doing evaluations</th>
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<td>Program Logic.</td>
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<td>Small scale evaluations.</td>
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| Programs to evaluate for final assignment | Real wicked problems (for final assignment) |
Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from Policy Central. Students should be aware of the following policies in particular with regard to Learning and Teaching:

Academic Honesty Policy http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/academic_honesty/policy.html


Disruption to Studies Policy http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/disruption_studies/policy.html The Disruption to Studies Policy is effective from March 3 2014 and replaces the Special Consideration Policy.

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/
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 Penalties

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/

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

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 evaluation methods & policy
- Insight into theoretical accounts about evaluation and policy
- Professionally useful data analysis skills

**Assessment tasks**

- Key Issues Task
- Evaluation Proposal

**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 evaluation methods & policy
- Insight into theoretical accounts about evaluation and policy
- Professionally useful data analysis skills

**Assessment tasks**

- Key Issues Task
- Evaluation Proposal

**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 outcomes**

- A practical introduction to evaluation methods & policy
- Insight into theoretical accounts about evaluation and policy
- Professionally useful skills in writing evaluation reports
- Professionally useful data analysis skills
Assessment tasks

- Participation
- Key Issues Task
- Evaluation Proposal

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 evaluation methods & policy
- Professionally useful skills in writing evaluation reports
- Professionally useful data analysis skills

Assessment tasks

- Participation
- Key Issues Task
- Evaluation Proposal

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 outcome

- Professionally useful skills in writing evaluation reports

Assessment task

- 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
This graduate capability is supported by:

**Learning outcomes**

- A practical introduction to evaluation methods & policy
- Professionally useful skills in writing evaluation reports