



SOCX810

Developing Social Policy

S2 OUA 2018

Dept of Sociology

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Disclaimer

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Unit Convenor

Emma Mitchell

emma.mitchell@mq.edu.au

Contact via Email

South Wing, Level 2, Australian Hearing Hub

By appointment

Prerequisites

Corequisites

Co-badged status

SOCI 704 Developing Social Policy SOC 810 Developing Social Policy

Unit description

Given the rapid expansion of social policy in recent decades, and its expected growth with an ageing population, this unit introduces students to analysing social policy. It aims to bring practical and theoretical knowledge about policy formation and development together. The unit will cover general frameworks for considering social policy and the welfare state and will foster an understanding of the debates, interests and problems that will shape the future of welfare states and social policy-making. The unit will analyse wider themes through the prism of concrete issues that have been thrown up for policy makers in contemporary Australia. All enrolment queries should be directed to Open Universities Australia (OUA): see

www.open.edu.au

Important Academic Dates

Information about important academic dates including deadlines for withdrawing from units are available at <https://www.open.edu.au/student-admin-and-support/key-dates/>

Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, you will be able to:

critically assess, use and synthesise information

discuss key social theories and frameworks used to understand the development of social policies

locate and retrieve reliable and high quality information and analysis through individual research

further develop communication skills to convey your own ideas simply, directly and

respectfully

challenge your preconceptions about welfare and other areas by engaging in policy debates

demonstrate effective time management and work organisation skills

apply and adapt knowledge to 'real world' problems in an ethical and consistent manner

develop vocational skills such as writing policy briefs for government departments

contextualise Australian social policy by reflecting on international developments

General Assessment Information

Academic Honesty

Academic Honesty 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

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.

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
Policy Brief	30%	No	17th September
Research essay	60%	No	12th November
Online Engagement	10%	No	Ongoing

Policy Brief

Due: **17th September**

Weighting: **30%**

The first assignment for SOC810 requires you to write a policy brief. Writing policy briefs is a particular skill, used widely in government and non-government agencies to provide guidance to policy makers. There are many types of brief - but we ask you to provide a brief intended for an internal audience (that is, for the Minister and senior staff within the department). This type of brief would generally not be published. The aim is to give a short summary of an issue (as it is discussed in a report), canvass arguments for and against, identify the parties involved and their opinions, to highlight any possible implications for government policy and recommend possible courses of action. The brief should strictly remain within the 1,500 word limit, but they may refer to additional material that can be supplied as an attachment.

For this brief, imagine that you work in the relevant government department. Do some research here - address the brief to the appropriate Minister and Department at State or Federal level. Your job is to read ONE report, provide a 'neutral' summary, and to let your Minister know if there is any action needed. You will find a list of reports to select between on the course iLearn page. This report selected (and the social policy issue it canvasses) should be the primary (but not only) focus of your brief.

In practice, an action could be as simple as advising the Minister to 'note' the report, but we want you to be more inventive here. It might involve some government action, such as putting together an advisory committee on the issue, organising meetings with stakeholders and/or considering whether a discussion paper should be commissioned to canvass funding or policy changes. You are welcome to choose your own report, but the issue needs to relate to social policy (such as housing, health, education, welfare, etc) and you need to email the unit convenor to ensure it is relevant before proceeding.

N.B. *While the policy brief is primarily concerned with one article on one issue, you need to read more widely to familiarise yourself with existing policies, the nature of reforms, current debates and the positions of key stakeholders. This is a research task and should involve consideration of relevant government policy. You should also select a different social policy issue for the two written assignments! And, please follow the format outlined in the template - it is closely adapted from the template from a department in the NSW public service.*

On successful completion you will be able to:

- critically assess, use and synthesise information
- locate and retrieve reliable and high quality information and analysis through individual research
- further develop communication skills to convey your own ideas simply, directly and respectfully
- challenge your preconceptions about welfare and other areas by engaging in policy

debates

- demonstrate effective time management and work organisation skills
- apply and adapt knowledge to 'real world' problems in an ethical and consistent manner
- develop vocational skills such as writing policy briefs for government departments

Research essay

Due: **12th November**

Weighting: **60%**

The major assignment for SOC810 is a research essay. This individual research task is designed to assess your ability to apply concepts taught in the unit to the essay question, your ability to find and use good evidence when discussing policy details, and your skills and efforts as a writer. You are required to provide a *critical* response to ONE of the essay questions that will be made available on iLearn from week 6. These questions will relate to broad themes that are central to this course and a specific social policy domain(s) that you will be required to undertake research on.

This assignment should be written in the format of an academic essay, which require an 'argument' (a direct response to the research essay question) that is coherent and supported by evidence. We will assess how your essay balances theoretical explanation with policy description when presenting the argument. Academic essays should have a clearly defined introduction, body and conclusion. You should write in paragraphs and double-space your work. You also need to write clearly and use formal language. Take care to use jargon and headings appropriately.

This is a research assignment. Course materials should be your starting point. But, you are expected to draw on readings and material beyond course readings. This should include some of the material listed as 'additional readings' and also include other material you identify yourself. All material should be properly referenced, preferably using the Harvard style of referencing. Please do not draw directly on lecture notes (rather consult the sources that they draw on).

N.B. *More information will be provided on the course iLearn page over the semester.*

On successful completion you will be able to:

- critically assess, use and synthesise information
- discuss key social theories and frameworks used to understand the development of social policies
- locate and retrieve reliable and high quality information and analysis through individual research
- further develop communication skills to convey your own ideas simply, directly and respectfully
- challenge your preconceptions about welfare and other areas by engaging in policy debates

- demonstrate effective time management and work organisation skills
- apply and adapt knowledge to 'real world' problems in an ethical and consistent manner
- contextualise Australian social policy by reflecting on international developments

Online Engagement

Due: **Ongoing**

Weighting: **10%**

The weekly online discussions are compulsory. To meet the requirements of this course, you are required to participate in at least 80 per cent of weekly forums. For participation to count, you will need to do this before the Wednesday of the next week. We will look for evidence that you have done the readings, engaged with social policy theories and debates as well as your ability to discuss social policy topics respectfully with other students (by initiating and responding to online posts). As an incentive, 10 percent of your final mark will be awarded for your participation.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- discuss key social theories and frameworks used to understand the development of social policies
- further develop communication skills to convey your own ideas simply, directly and respectfully
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- apply and adapt knowledge to 'real world' problems in an ethical and consistent manner
- contextualise Australian social policy by reflecting on international developments

Delivery and Resources

Delivery

This course is delivered as a two-hour seminar on Wednesday evenings. Slides and audio recordings of the lecture will be made available on ilearn each week. You are also expected to do the readings and participate in the online discussion forums dedicated to students enrolled in SOCX810. A new forum will open up under the topic description and resources for that week, where the convenor will lead discussion and activities. In order to count towards participation, you need to contribute to the discussion forum before Wednesday of the following week.

Required and recommended resources

There is no required textbook for SOCX810. The following text is recommended, particularly if you are finding the course difficult.

McClelland, A. and P. Smyth (eds.) (2014) *Social Policy in Australia: Understanding for Action*, 3rd Edition, Cambridge University Press: Melbourne.

Other required readings will be available via the 'unit reading' tab on the Library webpage,

online thru the Library webpage or on the world wide web. Most are already available.

Before contacting teaching staff, make sure that you try searching for the course code 'SOC810', 'SOCL 704' and the author's surname of the relevant reading in Unit Readings (search for each separately) on the library website.

Other recommended texts that should help you throughout the semester. These sources are online and can also be ordered through the Co-op bookshop:

Alcock, P. and G. Craig (2009) *International Social Policy: Welfare regimes in the developed world*, Palgrave Macmillan: Basingstoke.

Fawcett, B., Goodwin, S., Meagher, G. and R. Phillips (2010) *Social Policy for Social Change*, Palgrave Macmillan: Melbourne.

Marston, G., Macdonald, C. and L. Bryson (2013) *The Australian Welfare State: Who Benefits Now?* Palgrave Macmillan: South Yarra.

Pierson, C. and F.G. Castles (2010) *The Welfare State Reader*, 2nd Edition, Polity Press: Cambridge.

Technology used

The following technologies are used in this course...

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 majors 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.

Unit Schedule

Wk	Seminar Topics	Date
1	Introduction to <i>Developing Social Policy</i>	1 Aug
2	An Australian Story: From the wage-earner's welfare state to beyond	8 Aug
3	Alleviating Poverty? The 'functions' of poverty and welfare	15 Aug
4	On Work & Welfare: Social policy for full employment?	22 Aug
5	Social Policy for Social Citizenship? Rights, obligations and solidarity	29 Aug
6	Managing Social Risk? Dealing with state and market failures	5 Sep
7	Understanding Social Policy Developments: From structural functionalism to historical institutionalism	12 Sep
Mid-semester study period		
8	The Macro Dynamics of Welfare State Change: Contesting welfare, markets & the state	3 Oct
9	The Micro Dynamics of Welfare State Change: Policy cycles or 'muddling through'?	10 Oct
10	The Rise of Conditionality: 'Workfare' vs. the 'new paternalism'	17 Oct
11	The Shift to Markets: Neoliberalism, marketisation and financialisation	24 Oct
12	Closing the Gap? Persistent inequalities and Indigenous social policy	31 Oct
13	Course Conclusion	7 Nov

Policies and Procedures

Late Submission - applies unless otherwise stated elsewhere in the unit guide

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.

Extension Request

Special Consideration Policy and Procedure (<https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policies/special-consideration>)

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.

If you feel that your studies have been impacted submit an application as follows:

1. Visit [Ask MQ](#) and use your OneID to log in
2. Fill in your relevant details
3. Attach supporting documents by clicking 'Add a reply', click 'Browse' and navigating to the files you want to attach, then click 'Submit Form' to send your notification and supporting documents
4. Please keep copies of your original documents, as they may be requested in the future as part of the assessment process

Outcome

Once your submission is assessed, an appropriate outcome will be organised.

OUA Specific Policies and Procedures

Withdrawal from a unit after the census date

You can withdraw from your subjects prior to [the census date](#) (last day to withdraw). If you successfully withdraw before the census date, you won't need to apply for Special Circumstances. If you find yourself unable to withdraw from your subjects before the

census date - you might be able to [apply for Special Circumstances](#). If you're eligible, we can refund your fees and overturn your fail grade.

If you're studying Single Subjects using FEE-HELP or paying up front, you can [apply online](#).

If you're studying a degree using HECS-HELP, you'll need to [apply directly to Macquarie University](#).

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 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.

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](#)

Macquarie University provides a range of health and wellbeing services for students. For details, visit:

http://students.mq.edu.au/support/health_and_wellbeing/

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

- critically assess, use and synthesise information

- demonstrate effective time management and work organisation skills
- develop vocational skills such as writing policy briefs for government departments

Assessment tasks

- Policy Brief
- Research essay

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

- discuss key social theories and frameworks used to understand the development of social policies
- challenge your preconceptions about welfare and other areas by engaging in policy debates
- develop vocational skills such as writing policy briefs for government departments
- contextualise Australian social policy by reflecting on international developments

Assessment tasks

- Policy Brief
- Research essay

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

- critically assess, use and synthesise information
- discuss key social theories and frameworks used to understand the development of social policies
- locate and retrieve reliable and high quality information and analysis through individual research

Assessment tasks

- Policy Brief
- Research essay

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

- critically assess, use and synthesise information
- locate and retrieve reliable and high quality information and analysis through individual research
- challenge your preconceptions about welfare and other areas by engaging in policy debates
- apply and adapt knowledge to 'real world' problems in an ethical and consistent manner

Assessment tasks

- Policy Brief
- Research essay

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

- discuss key social theories and frameworks used to understand the development of social policies
- further develop communication skills to convey your own ideas simply, directly and respectfully
- demonstrate effective time management and work organisation skills
- develop vocational skills such as writing policy briefs for government departments

Assessment tasks

- Research essay
- Online Engagement

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

- challenge your preconceptions about welfare and other areas by engaging in policy debates
- apply and adapt knowledge to 'real world' problems in an ethical and consistent manner
- contextualise Australian social policy by reflecting on international developments

Assessment tasks

- Research essay
- Online Engagement