



FOAR707

Neoliberalism and Its Discontents

S1 Day 2019

Dept of Sociology

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General Information

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TBC

Credit points

4

Prerequisites

Admission to MRes

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

This unit introduces key themes and theorists in contemporary social and political theory. In particular, it will explore competing diagnoses and responses to the winding back of the post-war compromises between democratic states and corporate capitalism. Rather than taking a serial approach to a study of social and political theories, the unit will focus on their, at times diametrically opposed, configurations of this broad problem complex. In an epoch in which neoliberal agendas have both provoked, and perhaps also been facilitated by, the surge of populist politics across the globe, we look to contemporary social and political theories to help us make sense of new developments, to diagnose their costs and unravel future potentials. Can social democratic reformism survive the era of Trump, Brexit and Hanson? Organised as a workshop series, the unit will draw from leading theorists such as: Agamben, Balibar, Boltanski, Brown, Chakrabarty, Fraser, Foucault, Habermas, Honneth. Examining a problematic that is of foundational importance in much current social and political research, this unit is relevant to students across the humanities and social sciences. It will extend and complement the existing Mres units SOCI703, 'Social Theory and Policy', POIR704 'Global Political Economy' and can be taken as a progression or stand-alone 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:

Articulate a clear and coherent argument in written form to a variety of audiences

Think critically and make informed judgements of the arguments of others to arrive and reasoned and meaningful arguments and apply new ideas to new contexts

Demonstrate the ability to apply accumulated knowledge and skills to make decisions in the context of professional practice and scholarship

Demonstrate high standards of ethical conduct in research activities and relationship

General Assessment Information

The unit will combine short lectures from each of three staff and inclusive seminar discussions on each of the topics. The assessment tasks follow a scaffolding design in which each task builds upon and extends the previous one.

As a graduate class, students will be expected to not only comprehend and have the capacity to reproduce complex theoretical approaches, they will be required to develop the capacity to rationally arbitrate on the value and the success of different theoretical approaches to the same 'problem complex': the rise of neoliberal market thinking and the demise of social democratic expectations. This capacity to critically evaluate and compare the success and worth of major social and political theories will be assessed in the major research essay.

Late Penalty Policy

Unless a Disruption to Studies 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 seven (7) days (incl. weekends) after the original submission deadline. No late submissions will be accepted for *timed* assessments – e.g. quizzes, online tests.

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due
Participation Assessment	20%	No	Weekly
Short piece	30%	No	Friday Week 6
Research Essay	50%	No	Friday Week 13

Participation Assessment

Due: **Weekly**

Weighting: **20%**

This assessment will be marked in two components. The first will be based on being a 'lead respondent' in one of the weeks of the course. Responding will involve leading the discussion by making a brief comment and/or asking a question based on the reading to draw out the discussion. The second component is active engagement in seminars across the semester.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Think critically and make informed judgements of the arguments of others to arrive and reasoned and meaningful arguments and apply new ideas to new contexts
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Short piece

Due: **Friday Week 6**

Weighting: **30%**

This assignment involves you exploring how neoliberalism is being used in public debate. You will write a blog post (**900 words**) or make a short podcast (**15 min**) where you engage with a piece of writing or media that applies the concept of neoliberalism, and reflect on how the term is being used drawing on the material in the first 5 weeks of the unit. This is not a traditional research essay, and we do not expect a full reference list or formal referencing. However, the piece should use links or (verbal) references to key thinkers or texts to guide the audience to see

the links between theories/theorists from the course and your analysis.

The focus here is on how people use the term neoliberalism. What do they mean by it? What ideas and concepts are they drawing on when they use the term? And how might we situate their use within the many uses and critiques of the term that we explore?

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Articulate a clear and coherent argument in written form to a variety of audiences
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- Demonstrate high standards of ethical conduct in research activities and relationship

Research Essay

Due: **Friday Week 13**

Weighting: **50%**

This is a more traditional research essay. The aim is to discuss the concept of neoliberalism and its utility within your home discipline. We will work with you across the semester to develop a specific question/focus, particularly after the semester break. This is also an opportunity to think about how the concept might or might not be useful for your Year 2 research project.

Word length: **4,000 words**

Essay Format: Formal essay in style. **Font:** Times New Roman or Palatino Linotype; **Font size:** 12; **Line spacing:** min 1.5; **Margins:** Left: 3cm; Right: 3cm; Top: 2.5cm; Bottom: 2.5cm.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Articulate a clear and coherent argument in written form to a variety of audiences
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- Demonstrate the ability to apply accumulated knowledge and skills to make decisions in the context of professional practice and scholarship
- Demonstrate high standards of ethical conduct in research activities and relationship

Delivery and Resources

Technologies used. This unit has a presence on iLearn (ilearn.mq.edu.au) and you will be required to have regular access to a reliable broadband internet connection and a computer.

Format: The unit will combine short lectures from each of three staff and inclusive seminar discussions on each of the topics. The assessment tasks follow a scaffolding design in which each task builds upon and extends the previous one.

Workbook: a workbook/blog is set up under Assessments for you to use. Your entries will not be visible to any other student.

Readings: You will find these listed on the unit's iLearn page. Where possible, readings will be provided through **Unit Readings** in the Library, or will be directly made available in the required session on the iLearn page.

Unit Schedule

Weekly schedule

SECTION 1: What is Neoliberalism? Where does it come from? How did it emerge? What does it look like?	
Session 1	'Neoliberal' thinkers - Noah and Ben in conversation
Session 2	The power of ideas or institutions? - Ben
Session 3	Neoliberalism, religion and moral conservatism - Marion Maddox
SECTION 2: Logics of neoliberalism	
Session 4	Crisis and the Global South - Noah
Session 5	Bio-politics and the prison complex - Lara Palombo
Session 6	Risk and insecurity - Ben
Session 7	Finance, money and time - Ben
SECTION 3: Living neoliberalism	
Session 8	Women and Neoliberalism - Sabine Krajewski
Session 9	Environment and neoliberalism - Jon Symons
Session 10	PRace and neoliberalism - Noah
Session 11	Welfare reform - Eve Vincent
Session 12	Populism - Noah
Session 13	Beyond neoliberalism - Noah

Policies and Procedures

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](http://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policy-central) (<http://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 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 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

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.

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

- Articulate a clear and coherent argument in written form to a variety of audiences
- Think critically and make informed judgements of the arguments of others to arrive and reasoned and meaningful arguments and apply new ideas to new contexts
- Demonstrate the ability to apply accumulated knowledge and skills to make decisions in the context of professional practice and scholarship
- Demonstrate high standards of ethical conduct in research activities and relationship

Assessment tasks

- Participation Assessment
- Short piece
- 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

- Demonstrate the ability to apply accumulated knowledge and skills to make decisions in the context of professional practice and scholarship
- Demonstrate high standards of ethical conduct in research activities and relationship

Assessment tasks

- Participation Assessment
- Short piece
- 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

- Articulate a clear and coherent argument in written form to a variety of audiences
- Think critically and make informed judgements of the arguments of others to arrive and reasoned and meaningful arguments and apply new ideas to new contexts
- Demonstrate the ability to apply accumulated knowledge and skills to make decisions in the context of professional practice and scholarship
- Demonstrate high standards of ethical conduct in research activities and relationship

Assessment tasks

- Participation Assessment
- Short piece
- 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

- Articulate a clear and coherent argument in written form to a variety of audiences
- Think critically and make informed judgements of the arguments of others to arrive and reasoned and meaningful arguments and apply new ideas to new contexts
- Demonstrate high standards of ethical conduct in research activities and relationship

Assessment tasks

- Short piece
- 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

- Articulate a clear and coherent argument in written form to a variety of audiences
- Think critically and make informed judgements of the arguments of others to arrive and reasoned and meaningful arguments and apply new ideas to new contexts

Assessment tasks

- Participation Assessment
- Short piece
- Research Essay

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

- Demonstrate the ability to apply accumulated knowledge and skills to make decisions in the context of professional practice and scholarship

- Demonstrate high standards of ethical conduct in research activities and relationship

Assessment task

- Research Essay