School of Humanities Creative Industries SocialSci

SOCS2200: Social Analysis: Theorising Social Problems
Callaghan and Ourimbah
Semester 1 - 2024

OVERVIEW

Course Description

In this course students examine key topics and perspectives in the social sciences and apply these concepts to contemporary social problems and trends. The course covers theory and contemporary research on: class, culture and inequality; institutions and social control; concepts of identity including classed and gendered identities; the nature of embodied experience; globalisation and social change; the relationship between science and society; and other topics to be developed in collaboration with students.

Academic Progress Requirements

Nil

Assumed Knowledge

40 units of study at 1000 level.

Contact Hours

Callaghan
Lectorial
Face to Face On Campus
2 hour(s) per week(s) for 12 week(s) starting Week 1

Ourimbah
Lectorial
Face to Face On Campus
2 hour(s) per Week for 12 Weeks starting Week 1

Unit Weighting

10

Workload

Students are required to spend on average 120-140 hours of effort (contact and non-contact) including assessments per 10 unit course.

CONTACTS

Course Coordinator   **Callaghan and Ourimbah**
Dr Mitchell Taylor
Mitchell.Taylor@newcastle.edu.au
Consultation: Available on request - please email for an appointment (in-person or virtual).

School Office   **School of Humanities Creative Industries and Social Sciences (Callaghan)**
Social Sciences Building
Callaghan
HCISS@newcastle.edu.au
+61 4985 4500

SYLLABUS

Course Content   Topics in this course may include:
1.   Concepts of 'late modernity' examining globalisation, identity and social change.
2.   The relationship between social inequalities and culture, including distinctions between, popular / high culture and consumption patterns in food, music and other areas.
3.   The impact of institutional ideas on identities, including the role of expert ideas in the creation of identities and the practice of social control.
4.   A focus on the body, including how society shapes the sensations and tactile experiences of social life.
5.   A practical exploration of how sociological concepts apply to important social problems such as social inequality, unemployment, health and wellbeing, changing social and intimate relationships.

Course Learning Outcomes   **On successful completion of this course, students will be able to:**
1. Identify and describe a range of social theories and research relevant to the Social Sciences.

2. Compare and contrast social theories informed by the relevant literature.

3. Apply the insights of social theory to professional practice in the Social Sciences.

4. Demonstrate effective communication of social theories at an intermediate level.

Course Materials   There is no textbook for the course. Weekly readings will be made available online via the Canvas course website.

SCHEDULE

Week	Week Begins	Topic	Reading	Assessment Due
1	26 Feb	Introduction: understanding social theory	1. Matthewman, S. (2007). Pleasure and play. In S. Matthewman, C. L. West-Newman, & B. Curtis (Eds.), *Being sociological* (pp. 6–24). Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire ; New York: Palgrave Macmillian.	
2	4 Mar	Theorizing class (I): Bourdieu on symbolic domination	1. Webb, J. (2002). Cultural fields and the habitus. In *Understanding Bourdieu* (pp. 21–45). Sydney: Allen & Unwin.	
3	11 Mar	Theorizing class (II): Applications of Bourdieusian theory	1. Reay, D., Crozier, G., & Clayton, J. (2009). 'Strangers in paradise'?: working-class students in elite universities. *Sociology*, 43(6), 1103–1121. 2. Pini, B., McDonald, P., & Mayes, R. (2012). Class contestations and Australia's resource boom : the emergence of the 'cashed-up bogan'. *Sociology*, 46(1), 142–158.	
4	18 Mar	Theorizing power (I): Foucault on the mechanisms of social control	1. Schirato, T, Danaher, G, & Webb, J 2012, 'Power and knowledge' in *Understanding Foucault,* 2nd edition, (pp. 42-66), Allen & Unwin, Sydney.	**Quiz 1** (covers weeks 1-3) Opens: Mon 18/3, 9am Closes: Sun 24/3, 11:59pm
5	25 Mar	Theorizing power (II): Applications of Foucauldian theory	1. Gill, R., & Orad, S. (2015). The Confidence Cult(ure). *Australian Feminist Studies*, 30(86), 324–344. 2. Kelly, P. (2003). Growing up as risky business? Risks, surveillance and the institutionalized mistrust of youth. *Journal of Youth Studies*, 6(2), 165–180.	
6	1 Apr	Theorizing the body (I): Physiology and social power	1. Sullivan, S. (2015). Introduction. The physiology of sexist and racist oppression. In *The Physiology of Sexist and Racist Oppression* (pp. 1–27). Oxford: Oxford University Press. 2. Bartky, S. L. (1997). Foucault, femininity, and the modernization of patriarchal power. In D. T. Meyers (Ed.), *Feminist social thought: a reader* (pp. 92–111). New York: Routledge.	
7	8 Apr	Theorizing the body (II): Butler on sex and gender	1. Brady, A and Schirato, T. 2010, 'Gender', in *Understanding Judith Butler*, 1st edn, (pp. 27-47). SAGE Publications, London.	**Quiz 2** (covers weeks 4-6) Opens: Mon 8/4, 9am Closes: Sun 14/4 11:59pm

		Mid-Semester Recess		
		Mid-Semester Recess		
8	29 Apr	Theorizing modernity (I): Beck on risk and globalization.	1. Beck, U. (2006). Living in the world risk society. *Economy and Society*, 35(3), 329–345.	**Essay** due Fri 3/5, 11:59pm
9	6 May	Theorizing modernity (II): Reflexivity and individualization	1. Giddens, A. (1991). 'The contours of high modernity' In *Modernity and self-identity : self and society in the late modern age* (pp. 10-34). Cambridge: Polity	
10	13 May	Theorizing social science (I): Latour and the meaning of sociology.	1. Latour, B. (2005). Introduction: how to resume the task of tracing associations. In *Reassembling the social: an introduction to Actor Network Theory* (pp. 1–17). Oxford University Press.	**Quiz 3** (covers weeks 7-9) Opens: Mon 13/5, 9am Closes: Sun 19/5, 11:59pm
11	20 May	Theorizing social science (II): Indigenous perspectives.	1. Petray, T., 2012. Can theory disempower? Making space for agency in theories of Indigenous issues, https://ses.library.usyd.edu.au/handle/2123/8791?show=full 2. Foley, D. 2003, "Indigenous epistemology and Indigenous standpoint theory", *Social Alternatives,* 22(1), 44-52.	
12	27 May	Conclusion: The place of theory in the contemporary world.	1. Burawoy, M. (2005). For public sociology. *American Sociological Review*, 70(1), 4–28	
13	3 Jun	*No classes this week*		**Quiz 4** (covers weeks 10-12) Opens: Mon 3/6, 9am Closes: Sun 9/6, 11:59pm
		Examination Period		**Podcast** due Fri 14/6, 11:59pm.

ASSESSMENTS

This course has 3 assessments. Each assessment is described in more detail in the sections below.

	Assessment Name	Due Date	Involvement	Weighting	Learning Outcomes

1	Online quizzes (40%)	Quiz 1 (covers weeks 1-3)
		    Opens: Mon 18th March, 9am.
		    Closes: Sun 24th March, 11:59pm.
		Quiz 2 (covers weeks 4-6)
		    Opens: Mon 8th April, 9am
		    Closes: Sun 14th April, 11:59pm.
		Quiz 3 (covers weeks 7-9):
		    Opens: Mon 13th May 9am.
		    Closes: Sun 19th May, 11:59pm.
		Quiz 4 (covers weeks 10-12)
		    Opens: Mon 3rd June, 9am,
		    Closes: Sun 9th June, 11:59pm.
			Individual	40%
				(4x10%)
					1

2	Essay (30%)	Fri 3rd May, 11:59pm	Individual	30%	2, 4
3	Podcast (30%)	Fri 14th June, 11:59pm.	Individual	30%	3, 4

Late Submissions   The mark for an assessment item submitted after the designated time on the due date, without an approved extension of time, will be reduced by 10% of the possible maximum mark for that assessment item for each day or part day that the assessment item is late. Note: this applies equally to week and weekend days.

Assessment 1 - Online quizzes

Assessment Type   Quiz
Description   There will be four multiple-choice quizzes throughout the semester. These quizzes run for one week, opening on Monday (9am) and closing on Sunday (11:59pm). You can do the quiz any time during this period; however once you start the quiz you will only have 30 minutes to complete it. The quiz questions are drawn from the readings and the lecture material.
Weighting   40% (4x10%)
Length   10 questions per quiz, 30 minutes of time
Due Date   Quiz 1 (covers weeks 1-3): Opens: 18/3, 9am. Closes: 24/3, 11:59pm.
    Quiz 2 (covers weeks 4-6): Opens: 8/4, 9am. Closes: 14/4, 11:59pm.
    Quiz 3 (covers weeks 7-9): Opens: 13/5 9am. Closes: 19/5, 11:59pm.
    Quiz 4 (covers weeks 10-12): Opens: 3/6, 9am, Closes: 9/6, 11:59pm
Submission Method   Online
Return Method   Online
Feedback Provided   Online

Assessment 2 - Essay

Assessment Type   Essay
Description   This critical essay will provide you with the opportunity to demonstrate an in-depth understanding of the sociological theories explored in the first half of the course. The essay will require you to demonstrate your knowledge of key concepts from Foucault's and Bourdieu's theoretical frameworks and apply them to a real world example.

Choose one of the following questions, and write 2000 words in response to the question. Read the question carefully and address each part. You will need to do further research in order to provide a strong response to these questions. This can take the form of research studies that use these theories, or research about the theories themselves. You should start with the relevant course readings and the suggestions for further reading. As part of your research it is expected that you will engage with some references written by the theorist you writing about (Bourdieu or Foucault).

ESSAY QUESTIONS

1. Bourdieu argues that symbolic power is a key mechanism by which social inequalities are maintained. <u>Explain this argument, including a discussion of the concepts of 'field', 'capital', and 'habitus'.</u> Your explanation should also include a real-world example, drawn from the academic literature.

2. Foucault argues that modern forms of power do not just operate through 'repression', but through 'production' as well. <u>Explain this argument, including a discussion of the concepts of 'discourse', 'power', and 'subjectivity'.</u> Your explanation should include a real-world example, drawn from the academic literature.

Further information about the essay, including criteria, will be available on Canvas and discussed in the lectorials.

Weighting	30%
Length	2000 words (+/- 10%). The reference list is not included in the word count.
Referencing System	Harvard or APA
Due Date	Fri 3rd May, 11:59pm
Submission Method	Online. The essay will go through Turnitin.
Assessment Criteria	A rubric is available on Canvas
Return Method	Online
Feedback Provided	Online

Assessment 3 - Podcast

Assessment Type	Podcast

Description

In this task you will be making a 'podcast' (i.e. a recorded oral presentation), targeted to a public audience. In this podcast you will introduce a real-world issue or social problem, and explain how sociological theories can help us to understand this issue. You will also be asked to suggest some 'public sociology' style interventions that we might undertake in order to address the issue, using theoretical insights.

For this podcast you need to choose ONE theorist or theoretical idea discussed in the course, OTHER than Foucault or Bourdieu. For example you may chose Butler, Latour, Bartky, Beck, or something like 'individualization theory' or 'indigenous standpoint theory'.

You must also choose ONE contemporary social issue, debate, or problem. Here you have free choice: focus on something that interests you, and that feels relevant to the theorist's ideas. Your task is to apply the insights of your chosen theorist/theory to your chosen social issue. Further information about the podcast, including criteria, will be available on Canvas and discussed in the seminars.

Weighting	30%
Length	7 minutes (+/- 1 minute)
Referencing System	References do not need to be submitted for this task.
Due Date	Fri 14th June, 11:59pm.
Submission Method	Online. Only an audio file is to be submitted.
Assessment Criteria	A rubric is available on Canvas
Return Method	Online
Feedback Provided	Online

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Grading Scheme

This course is graded as follows:

Range of Marks	Grade	Description
85-100	High Distinction (HD)	Outstanding standard indicating comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the relevant materials; demonstration of an outstanding level of academic achievement; mastery of skills*; and achievement of all assessment objectives.
75-84	Distinction (D)	Excellent standard indicating a very high level of knowledge and understanding of the relevant materials; demonstration of a very high level of academic ability; sound development of skills*; and achievement of all assessment objectives.
65-74	Credit (C)	Good standard indicating a high level of knowledge and understanding of the relevant materials; demonstration of a high level of academic achievement; reasonable development of skills*; and achievement of all learning outcomes.
50-64	Pass (P)	Satisfactory standard indicating an adequate knowledge and understanding of the relevant materials; demonstration of an adequate level of academic achievement; satisfactory development of skills*; and achievement of all learning outcomes.
0-49	Fail (FF)	Failure to satisfactorily achieve learning outcomes. If all compulsory course components are not completed the mark will be zero. A fail grade may also be awarded following disciplinary action.

*Skills are those identified for the purposes of assessment task(s).

Communication Methods

Communication methods used in this course include:
-        Canvas Course Site: Students will receive communications via the posting of content or announcements on the Canvas course site.
-        Email: Students will receive communications via their student email account.

Course Evaluation

Each year feedback is sought from students and other stakeholders about the courses offered in the University for the purposes of identifying areas of excellence and potential improvement.

Oral Interviews (Vivas)

As part of the evaluation process of any assessment item in this course an oral examination (viva) may be conducted. The purpose of the oral examination is to verify the authorship of the material submitted in response to the assessment task. The oral examination will be conducted in accordance with the principles set out in the Oral Examination (viva) Procedure. In cases where the oral examination reveals the assessment item may not be the student's own work the case will be dealt with under the Student Conduct Rule.

Academic Misconduct

All students are required to meet the academic integrity standards of the University. These standards reinforce the importance of integrity and honesty in an academic environment. Academic Integrity policies apply to all students of the University in all modes of study and in all locations. For the Student Academic Integrity Policy, refer to https://policies.newcastle.edu.au/document/view-current.php?id=35 .

Adverse Circumstances	The University acknowledges the right of students to seek consideration for the impact of allowable adverse circumstances that may affect their performance in assessment item(s). Applications for special consideration due to adverse circumstances will be made using the online Adverse Circumstances system where: 1. the assessment item is a major assessment item; or 2. the assessment item is a minor assessment item and the Course Co-ordinator has specified in the Course Outline that students may apply the online Adverse Circumstances system; 3. you are requesting a change of placement; or 4. the course has a compulsory attendance requirement. Before applying you must refer to the Adverse Circumstance Affecting Assessment Items Procedure available at: https://policies.newcastle.edu.au/document/view-current.php?id=236
Important Policy Information	The Help button in the Canvas Navigation menu contains helpful information for using the Learning Management System. Students should familiarise themselves with the policies and procedures at https://www.newcastle.edu.au/current-students/respect-at-uni/policies-and-procedures that support a safe and respectful environment at the University.

This course outline was approved by the Head of School. No alteration of this course outline is permitted without Head of School approval. If a change is approved, students will be notified and an amended course outline will be provided in the same manner as the original.