



1. General Course Information

1.1 Course Details

Course Code:	1008CCJ
Course Name:	Understanding Social Problems
Trimester:	Trimester 1, 2021
Program:	Diploma of Criminology and Criminal Justice
Credit Points:	10
Course Coordinator:	Sheena Fleming
Document modified:	06/12/2020

Course Description

This course introduces students to the importance of understanding social problems, such as crime, in social context. It addresses key questions about the society we live in and provides a critical analysis of the ways in which social problems become defined. This includes an exploration of the combination of objective and subjective criteria that vary across societies, among individuals and groups in society, and across historical time periods. In so doing, it will demonstrate that social problems may be seen as socially and historically constructed categories. Students will be introduced to different ways of thinking about social problems and these different perspectives will be applied to a variety of social concerns (for example, illegal drug use, domestic violence, terrorism, environmental pollution). Students will develop skills in understanding and analysing a range of concepts, theories and perspectives on social life. A key objective is to foster a critical and interpretive understanding of the dynamic relationship between the individual and society.

Assumed Knowledge

There are no prerequisites for this course

1.2 Teaching Team

Your lecturer/tutor can be contacted via the email system on the portal.

Name	Email
Sheena Fleming	sheena.fleming@staff.griffithcollege.edu.au

1.3 Staff Consultation

Your lecturer/tutor is available each week for consultation outside of normal class times. Times that your lecturer/tutor will be available for consultation will be found on the Moodle Course Site.

1.4 Timetable

Your timetable is available on the Griffith College Portal at Class Timetable in Student and Services.

1.5 Technical Specifications

All students must have access to a computer or suitable mobile device with internet access, as well as camera and microphone functionality.

2. Aims, Outcomes & Generic Skills

2.1 Course Aims

This course aims to introduce students to the broad spectrum of social theory and emphasises critical analysis of established theories that explain human experience. The course is divided into four parts. Part 1 (weeks 1-4) introduces the central themes and concerns that define ways of thinking about social problems. It explores competing definitions of social problems and outlines the major theoretical perspectives employed by sociologists to understand social life and problems in the social world. Part 2 (weeks 5-7) focuses on, and attempts to explain, the social problems that people experience in their day-to-days lives. This includes, problems of health and well-being, family problems and the so-called 'problem of crime'. Part 3 (weeks 8-10) explores social inequalities, examining how inequality pervades the social world and how this has an impact on people's lives.

Part 4 (weeks 11-12) explores the nature of social change in the 'global village'. It examines how and why our world is changing so rapidly and considers the implications of this for the future. Globalisation has complex consequences and the course will conclude with a critical consideration of how the sweeping forces of globalisation affect our everyday lives, for better or worse.



2.2 Learning Outcomes

After successfully completing this course you should be able to:

1. Demonstrate how a sociological imagination might be applied to key concerns within criminology and criminal justice
2. Demonstrate an understanding of key concepts in sociology and apply these concepts and sociological theories to an analysis of social problems in everyday life, problems of social inequality or problems associated with globalisation.
3. Provide evidence of effective research and information searching skills



2.3 Generic Skills and Capabilities

For further details on the Generic Skills please refer to the Graduate Generic Skills and Capabilities policy.

Griffith College aims to develop graduates who have an open and critical approach to learning and a capacity for lifelong learning. Through engagement in their studies, students are provided with opportunities to begin the development of these and other generic skills.

Studies in this course will give you opportunities to begin to develop the following skills:

Generic Skills and Capabilities		Taught	Practised	Assessed
Acquisition of discipline knowledge and skills with critical judgement		✓	✓	✓
Communication and collaboration		✓	✓	✓
Self-directed and active learning		✓	✓	✓
Creative and future thinking		✓	✓	✓
Social responsibility and ethical awareness		✓	✓	
Cultural competence and awareness in a culturally diverse environment		✓	✓	



3. Learning Resources

3.1 Required Learning Resources

Bessant, J and Watts, R (2007). *Sociology Australia*, 3rd edition. Crows Nest, NSW: Allen and Unwin.

3.2 Recommended Learning Resources

Lecture notes, notices and other issues relating to the course will be made available through the Griffith College portal.

3.3 College Support Services and Learning Resources

The College provides many facilities and support services to assist students in their studies. Links to information about College support resources that are available to students are included below for easy reference.

[Digital Library](#) – Databases to which Griffith College students have access to through the Griffith Library Databases.

MyStudy – there is a dedicated website for this course via MyStudy on the Griffith College Portal.

[Academic Integrity Tutorial](#) - this tutorial helps students to understand what academic integrity is and why it matters. You will be able to identify types of breaches of academic integrity, understand what skills you will need in order to maintain academic integrity, and learn about the processes of referencing styles.

Services and Support provides a range of services to support students throughout their studies including academic advice and assignment help from Student Learning Advisors, and personal and welfare support from Student Counsellors.

Jobs and Employment in the [Student Hub](#) can assist students with career direction, resume and interview preparation, job search tips, and more.

[IT Support](#) provides details of accessing support, information on s numbers and internet access and computer lab rules.

3.4 Other Information about your Learning

Attendance

You are expected to actively engage in all learning experiences and learning activities which underpin the learning content in this course. You are expected to engage with the learning content and learning activities outside of timetabled class times. This requires you to be an active agent of your learning. You are expected to bring all necessary learning resources to class such as the required textbook and /or Workbook. In addition, you are encouraged to BYOD (bring your own device) to class such as a laptop or tablet. This is not a requirement as computer lab facilities are available on campus, however, the use of such devices in the classroom is encouraged with appropriate and considerate use principles being a priority.

Preparation and Participation in Learning

In order to enhance your learning, you need to prepare before participating in the learning experiences. Absorb the learning content and complete the learning activities that are provided online before you attend the scheduled learning experiences. Make sure you complete the learning activities set each week, they are designed to support your learning. Active participation in your learning will enhance your success. Ask questions when something is unclear or when you want to bring some issue to your lecturer or tutor's attention; respond to questions to test your knowledge and engage in discussion to help yourself and others learn.

Consultation Sessions

Teachers offer extra time each week to assist students outside the classroom. This is known as 'consultation time.' You may seek assistance from your teacher on email or in person according to how the teacher has explained this to the class. Attendance during consultation time is optional but you are encouraged to use this extra help to improve your learning outcomes.

Course Learning Materials

Learning materials are made available to you in MyStudy on the Griffith College Portal. The learning materials are arranged in Modules. In each Module you will find the learning content, learning activities and learning experiences. Actively working your way through these course learning materials together with your lecturer or tutor will prepare you to succeed when completing the evidence of learning (assessment).

Self-Directed Learning

You will be expected to learn independently. This means you must organise and engage with the course learning content even when you are not specifically asked to do so by your lecturer or tutor. The weekly guide will be helpful to organise your learning. This involves revising the weekly course learning material and completing the learning activities. It also means you will need to find additional information to evidence your learning (assessment) beyond that given to you, and to construct your own response to a question or topic. All of this requires careful planning of your time. Expect to spend, on average, at least 10 hours per week including class time for each of your courses.

Program Progression

You are reminded that satisfactory Program Progression requires that attendance in classes is maintained at equal to or greater than 80%, and that GPA is maintained at equal to or greater than 3.5 [please see Griffith College Policy Library - Program Progression Policy - for more information].






Teacher and Course Evaluation

Your feedback is respected and valued by your lecturers and tutors. You are encouraged to provide your thoughts on the course and teaching, both positive and critical, directly to your lecturer and tutor or by completing course and lecturer evaluations via Griffith College's evaluation tool whenever these are available.



4. Learning Content, Learning Activities and Learning Experiences

4.1 Modules for Learning and Weekly Learning Content, Learning Activities and Learning Experience




	Learning Content 	Learning experiences 	Learning activities 	Evidence of learning 	Learning outcome 
Week	Module1: Thinking about Social Problems				
1	What is a Social Problem?	Kaufman's application of the sociological imagination to a social problem Activity: Quiz	Activity: Topics for Assess 3		1
2	Functionalist Perspectives	Applying Functionalism to a social problem Activity: Quiz	Activity: Juvenile delinquency		2
3	Conflict Perspectives	Applying conflict theory to a social problem Activity: Quiz	Activity: Education inequality		2
4	Symbolic Interactionism Perspectives	Applying Symbolic Interactionism to a social problem Activity: Quiz	Activity: Case study	Online Moodle Quiz 20% of Course Grade	2
	Module 2: Social problems in everyday life				
5	Problems of health and well-being	Applying sociological theories to family problems Activity: Theory matchup	Activity: The obesity epidemic		2
6	Family problems	Applying sociological theories to Family problems Activity: Quiz	Activity: Essay writing		2
7	Crime and social control	Applying sociological theories to	Activity Case studies	Short Answer Response	2

		crime and deviance Activity: Quiz		20% of Course Grade	
Module 3: Problems of Social inequality					
8	Poverty and economic inequality	Research proposal: directions for research Activity: The injustice of inequality	Activity: Australia's working poor		2,3
9	'Gender', 'sexuality' and the problem of equality	Application of sociological theory to gender, sentencing and crime Activity:	Activity: Gender and imprisonment		2,3
10	'Race', ethnicity and marginalisation'	Indigenous over-representation in the CJS Activity: Kids doing time	Activity: The future of race in America	Research Policy Proposal Essay 40% of Course Grade	2,3
Module 4: Problems of Globalisation					
11	Environmental Problems	Applying theory to environmental issues Activity: Causes and consequences of environmental crimes	Activity: Horizon Deepwater Disaster		2
12	Conflict, War and Terrorism	Applying sociological theory to terrorism Activity: Causes and consequences of war	Activity: Assumptions of Terrorism	Short Answer Response 20% of Course Grade	2



5. Evidence of Learning (Assessment Plan)

5.1 Evidence of Learning Summary

	 Evidence of learning	 Weighting	 Learning outcome	 Due Date
1	Quiz	20%	1	Week 5
2	Short Answer Response	20%	2	Week 8
3	Policy Proposal Research Essay	40%	2,3	Week 11
4	Short Answer Response	20%	2	Exam Week

5.2 Evidence of Learning Task Detail

Quiz

Learning Objectives Assessed: 2

Due Date: Week 5

Weight: 20% Task Description:

Students will undertake an in-class quiz to test knowledge of sociological concepts and theories presented in Weeks 1-4

The quiz consists of multiple choice, true/false questions. Further information about the quiz will be provided in class.

Short Answer Response

Learning Objectives Assessed: 2

Due Date: Week 8

Weight: 20%

Task Description

Students will select TWO short-answer questions to respond to; these questions are from Module 2: Weeks 5-7 These questions have been designed to assess students' academic skills in applying theoretical concepts.

Word Limit: 500 words +/-10% per question

Policy Proposal and research essay

Learning Objectives Assessed: 2, 3

Due Date: Written Evidence of Learning (Assessment), policy/program proposal Weight: 40%

Due Date: Week 11

Word Length: 2000 words maximum

Task Description

Students are to suggest a policy, program and/or intervention for the Queensland government to trial that addresses their chosen social problem from the topics provided in class.

The Evidence of Learning (assessment) will consist of three parts.

Part 1: Discussion of the causes and consequences of the social problem and application of a sociological theory from the course to explain the behaviour.

Part 2: Explanation of the proposed policy, program, and/or intervention.

Part 3: Justification/Evidence of the policy, program, and/or interventions effectiveness.

Short Answer Response

Learning Objectives Assessed: 2

Due Date: Exam Week

Weight: 20%

Task Description

Students will answer TWO short-answer questions; these questions are from Module 4: Weeks 11 and 12. These questions have been designed to assess students' academic skills in applying theoretical concepts.

Word Limit: 500 words +/-10% per question

5.3 Late Submission

An evidence of learning (assessment) item submitted after the due date, without an approved extension from the Course Coordinator, will be penalised. The standard penalty is the reduction of the mark allocated to the assessment item by 5% of the maximum mark applicable for the assessment item, for each working day or part working day that the item is late. Evidence of learning items submitted more than five working days after the due date are awarded zero marks.

Please refer to the Griffith College website - Policy Library > Assessment Policy for guidelines and penalties for late submission.

5.4 Other Information about Evidence of Learning

Retention of Originals

You must be able to produce a copy of all work submitted if so requested. Copies should be retained until after the release of final results for the course.

Requests for extension

To apply for an extension of time for an evidence of learning item, you must submit an [Application for Extension of Assignment](#) form to your teacher at least 24 hours before the date the assignment is due. Grounds for extensions are usually: serious illness, accident, disability, bereavement or other compassionate circumstances and must be able to be substantiated with relevant documentation [e.g. [Griffith College Student Medical Certificate](#)]. Please refer to the Griffith College website - Policy Library - for guidelines regarding extensions and deferred assessment.

Return of Evidence of Learning Items

1. Marks awarded for in-trimester evidence of learning items, except those being moderated externally with Griffith University, will be available on the Student Portal within fourteen [14] days of the due date. This does not apply to the final evidence of learning item in this course (marks for this item will be provided with the final course result).
2. Students will be advised of their final grade through the Student Portal. Students can review their final exam papers after student grades have been published. Review of final exam papers will not be permitted after the final date to enrol.
3. Marks for **all** evidence of learning items including the final exam (if applicable) will be recorded in the Moodle Course Site and made available to students through the Moodle Course Site.

The sum of your marks of evidence of learning items in this course does not necessarily imply your final grade for the course. Standard grade cut off scores can be varied for particular courses, so you need to wait for the official release of grades to be sure of your grade for this course.

6. Policies & Guidelines

Griffith College assessment-related policies can be found in the [Griffith College Policy Library](#) which include the following policies:

Assessment Policy, Special Consideration, Deferred Assessment, Alternate Exam Sitting, Medical Certificates, Academic Integrity, Finalisation of Results, Review of Marks, Moderation of Assessment, Turn-it-in Software Use. These policies can be accessed using the 'Document Search' feature within the [Policy Library](#)

Academic Integrity Griffith College is committed to maintaining high academic standards to protect the value of its qualifications. Academic integrity means acting with the values of honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility in learning, teaching and research. It is important for students, teachers, researchers and all staff to act in an honest way, be responsible for their actions, and show fairness in every part of their work. Academic integrity is important for an individual's and the College's reputation.

All staff and students of the College are responsible for academic integrity. As a student, you are expected to conduct your studies honestly, ethically and in accordance with accepted standards of academic conduct. Any form of academic conduct that is contrary to these standards is considered a breach of academic integrity and is unacceptable.

Some students deliberately breach academic integrity standards with intent to deceive. This conscious, pre-meditated form of cheating is considered to be one of the most serious forms of fraudulent academic behaviour, for which the College has zero tolerance and for which penalties, including exclusion from the College, will be applied.

However, Griffith College also recognises many students breach academic integrity standards without intent to deceive. In these cases, students may be required to undertake additional educational activities to remediate their behaviour and may also be provided appropriate advice by academic staff.

As you undertake your studies at Griffith College, your lecturers, tutors and academic advisors will provide you with guidance to understand and maintain academic integrity; however, it is also your responsibility to seek out guidance if and when you are unsure about appropriate academic conduct.

In the case of an allegation of a breach of academic integrity being made against a student he or she may request the guidance and support of a Griffith College Student Learning Advisor or Student Counsellor.

Please ensure that you are familiar with the Griffith College Academic Integrity Policy; this policy provides an overview of some of the behaviours that are considered breaches of academic integrity, as well as the penalties and processes involved when a breach is identified.

For further information please refer to the Griffith College website - Policy Library > Academic Integrity Policy

Reasonable Adjustments for Assessment – The Disability Services policy

The Disability Services policy (accessed using the Document Search' feature with the [Policy Library](#)) outlines the principles and processes that guide the College in making reasonable adjustments to assessment for students with disabilities while maintaining academic robustness of its programs.

Risk Assessment Statement

There are no out of the ordinary risks associated with this course.

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