

CULT 1017 UNDERSTANDING SOCIETY

Credit Points 10

Legacy Code 101551

Coordinator Rachel Sharples ([https://directory.westernsydney.edu.au/search/name/Rachel Sharples/](https://directory.westernsydney.edu.au/search/name/Rachel%20Sharples/))

Description Understanding Society introduces first year students to key sociological concepts, methods and theories used for the examination of individuals, social interactions, institutions and structures. Students explore how individual experiences are connected to wider social patterns. Considering questions of power, students will be introduced to various debates concerning structure and agency, and will examine social inequality. With a focus on contemporary social life, the subject provides opportunity for students to consider current social issues and processes of social change. At the conclusion of their studies in this subject students will have been presented with opportunities to develop skills in critical reading and sociological analysis.

School Social Sciences

Discipline Society and Culture, Not Elsewhere Classified.

Student Contribution Band HECS Band 4 10cp

Check your fees via the Fees (https://www.westernsydney.edu.au/currentstudents/current_students/fees/) page.

Level Undergraduate Level 1 subject

Equivalent Subjects HUMN 1037 – Introduction to Sociology
CULT 1019 - Understanding Society (WSTC)

Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this subject, students should be able to:

1. Demonstrate their knowledge of key concepts and interpretive traditions in sociology.
2. Identify relevant sources, and assess approaches to and claims about social processes and institutions.
3. Analyse social processes and institutions from a broad understanding of contemporary society.
4. Demonstrate writing and referencing skills commensurate with university scholarship.
5. Explain key concepts in sociology.
6. Identify key characteristics of the major theoretical frameworks used in sociology.
7. Identify relevant sources, and assess approaches to and claims about social processes and institutions in contemporary society.
8. Apply a sociological understanding of power, social inequality and social change to case study materials.
9. Demonstrate reading, writing and referencing skills commensurate with university scholarship.

Subject Content

The Sociological Perspective
Groups and Social Control
Social Inequality
Social Institution
Social Change
Individual and social identities
Social groups and relationships

Social Institutions
Power, structure and agency

Assessment

The following table summarises the standard assessment tasks for this subject. Please note this is a guide only. Assessment tasks are regularly updated, where there is a difference your Learning Guide takes precedence.

Type	Length	Percent	Threshold	Individual/ Group Task	Mandatory
Log/ Workbook	500 words	25	N	Individual	N
Essay	1500 words	35	N	Individual	N
Case Study	1000 words	35	N	Individual	N
Participation	30 minutes	5	N	Individual	N

WSU Online

The following table summarises the standard assessment tasks for this subject. Please note this is a guide only. Assessment tasks are regularly updated, where there is a difference your Learning Guide takes precedence.

Type	Length	Percent	Threshold	Individual/ Group Task	Mandatory
Log/ Workbook	Part 1: 500 words plus Discussion Board contributions; Part 2: unspecified	30	N	Individual	N
Essay	1500 words	35	N	Individual	N
Case Study	1000 words	35	N	Individual	N

Prescribed Texts

- McCormack, M., Anderson, E., Jamie, K., and David, M. 2021. Discovering Sociology (2nd edition). Red Globe Press.

Teaching Periods

WSU Online TRI-1 (2025)

Wsu Online

Online

Subject Contact Rachel Sharples ([https://directory.westernsydney.edu.au/search/name/Rachel Sharples/](https://directory.westernsydney.edu.au/search/name/Rachel%20Sharples/))

View timetable (https://classregistration.westernsydney.edu.au/odd/timetable/?subject_code=CULT1017_25-OT1_OW_2#subjects)

Autumn (2025)

Penrith (Kingswood)

On-site

Subject Contact Rachel Sharples ([https://directory.westernsydney.edu.au/search/name/Rachel Sharples/](https://directory.westernsydney.edu.au/search/name/Rachel%20Sharples/))

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Liverpool

On-site

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Online

Online

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Parramatta - Victoria Rd

On-site

Subject Contact Rachel Sharples ([https://directory.westernsydney.edu.au/search/name/Rachel Sharples/](https://directory.westernsydney.edu.au/search/name/Rachel%20Sharples/))

View timetable (https://classregistration.westernsydney.edu.au/odd/timetable/?subject_code=CULT1017_25-AUT_PS_1#subjects)

Sydney City Campus - Term 1 (2025)

Sydney City

On-site

Subject Contact Alan Nixon ([https://directory.westernsydney.edu.au/search/name/Alan Nixon/](https://directory.westernsydney.edu.au/search/name/Alan%20Nixon/))

View timetable (https://classregistration.westernsydney.edu.au/odd/timetable/?subject_code=CULT1017_25-SC1_SC_1#subjects)

WSU Online TRI-3 (2025)

Wsu Online

Online

Subject Contact Rosalind Priestman ([https://directory.westernsydney.edu.au/search/name/Rosalind Priestman/](https://directory.westernsydney.edu.au/search/name/Rosalind%20Priestman/))

View timetable (https://classregistration.westernsydney.edu.au/odd/timetable/?subject_code=CULT1017_25-OT3_OW_2#subjects)

Summer (2025)

Liverpool

On-site

Subject Contact Rachel Sharples ([https://directory.westernsydney.edu.au/search/name/Rachel Sharples/](https://directory.westernsydney.edu.au/search/name/Rachel%20Sharples/))

View timetable (https://classregistration.westernsydney.edu.au/odd/timetable/?subject_code=CULT1017_25-SUM_LP_1#subjects)

Parramatta - Victoria Rd

On-site

Subject Contact Emily Wolfinger ([https://directory.westernsydney.edu.au/search/name/Emily Wolfinger/](https://directory.westernsydney.edu.au/search/name/Emily%20Wolfinger/))

View timetable (https://classregistration.westernsydney.edu.au/odd/timetable/?subject_code=CULT1017_25-SUM_PS_1#subjects)