



Module Descriptor

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| Title | The Embodiment of Social Inequality | | |
| Session | 2025/26 | Status | Proposal |
| Code | SOCY10035 | SCQF Level | 10 |
| Credit Points | 20 | ECTS (European Credit Transfer Scheme) | 10 |
| School | Education and Social Sciences | | |
| Module Co-ordinator | I Rafanell | | |

Summary of Module

In this module we explore different aspects related to the embodied nature of social life and embodied individual lived experiences. Contemporary debates have established Sociology of the Body as an emergent and central topic within Social Sciences. Previously ignored, contemporary sociology has had to incorporate into its analysis of society the fact that humans are embodied beings -- it is undeniable that we, as humans, experience and act in the world, first and foremost, in and through our bodies. Central aspects of class, gender, race, ethnicity and social inequality in general will be explored in this module throughout all the lectures and seminars provided.

The introductory lectures provide a general overview of the schools that emphasise the centrality of the body within sociological scholarship and why it has been neglected until recently. We introduce relevant historical and anthropological accounts which have highlighted that the body is central to human social activity and social organization.

Following this a series of lectures provide a more sociological focus on the embodied aspects of social life by exploring the very important work of Michel Foucault, Judith Butler and Pierre Bourdieu. These authors have been seminal in understanding the socially constructed nature of the human body as well as highlighting the 'political' dimensions of embodied practices and dynamics of social injustice and inequality linked to the human bodies. Substantive issues around the embodiment of class identities and practices, sex and gender identities and practices and the politics of the sexual orientation are central to the work of these schools and authors.

A more phenomenological approach to the embodied nature of practice and interpersonal dynamics will be explored by presenting the school of Symbolic Interactionism via the work of Goffman and how his work on 'the presentation of the self' places the body as central to social dynamics. This session is particularly directed to emphasise the role of emotions in social life and social dynamics, an area so far also rather neglected in sociological research and theory. We will explore how, our personal sense of self and social interactions with others are permeated by emotions and how such analysis is becoming a very important emerging area of research named the Sociology of Emotions.

We continue by introducing the wealth of research and literature linked to a Sociology of the Body which been particularly influential in guiding substantive empirical research on different areas highlighting the centrality of embodied forms of social dynamics. We provide insights into such research by focusing on a particular branch of sociology of the body in the guise of the important and emerging school of Sociology of Sport. This substantive area of research is complemented with a session on how a particular sport practice such as Karate can be fruitfully analysed in terms of the embodied emphasis provided in the previous sessions.

Underlying the sociological exploration of the body in this module there is a two-fold approach. One, it critically analyses two central binary oppositions within social sciences, those of nature/society and structure/individual. Two, it highlights and explores the significance and centrality of embodied forms of social life and individuals' practices underpinning dynamics of social inequality.

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|---|---|---|---|---|
| Module Delivery Method | On-Campus¹ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Hybrid² <input type="checkbox"/> | Online³ <input type="checkbox"/> | Work -Based Learning⁴ <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Campuses for Module Delivery | <input type="checkbox"/> Ayr <input type="checkbox"/> Dumfries | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lanarkshire <input type="checkbox"/> London <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Paisley | <input type="checkbox"/> Online / Distance Learning <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify) | |
| Terms for Module Delivery | Term 1 <input type="checkbox"/> | Term 2 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Term 3 <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| Long-thin Delivery over more than one Term | Term 1 – Term 2 <input type="checkbox"/> | Term 2 – Term 3 <input type="checkbox"/> | Term 3 – Term 1 <input type="checkbox"/> | |

Learning Outcomes

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| L1 | Become familiar with the major sociological schools that analyse the body in contemporary society. This debate is intimately linked with a discussion and understanding of current narratives around the nature/culture divide. |
| L2 | Be able to assess, in the light of this theory, the effects of assumptions about the body in specific areas of social life in general and in particular in relation to social difference and social inequality. |
| L3 | Gain familiarity with, and capacity to critically analyse, different social schools that highlight the relationship between the body, identity and social power. |
| L4 | Develop a sociological imagination by connecting apparently impersonal theoretical analysis to aspects of personal life. |
| L5 | Develop the capacity to explore, in written work, group discussion and oral presentation, the relationship between theory and substantive issues. |

Employability Skills and Personal Development Planning (PDP) Skills

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| SCQF Headings | During completion of this module, there will be an opportunity to achieve core skills in: |
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¹ Where contact hours are synchronous/ live and take place fully on campus. Campus-based learning is focused on providing an interactive learning experience supported by a range of digitally-enabled asynchronous learning opportunities including learning materials, resources, and opportunities provided via the virtual learning environment. On-campus contact hours will be clearly articulated to students.

² The module includes a combination of synchronous/ live on-campus and online learning events. These will be supported by a range of digitally-enabled asynchronous learning opportunities including learning materials, resources, and opportunities provided via the virtual learning environment. On-campus and online contact hours will be clearly articulated to students.

³ Where all learning is solely delivered by web-based or internet-based technologies and the participants can engage in all learning activities through these means. All required contact hours will be clearly articulated to students.

⁴ Learning activities where the main location for the learning experience is in the workplace. All required contact hours, whether online or on campus, will be clearly articulated to students

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| Knowledge and Understanding (K and U) | <p>SCQF 10</p> <p>Gaining a broad knowledge and understanding of the significance of the body and its impact on social life; develop an understanding of the conventional and historical emergence of sociological accounts of the body; develop analysis and the development of awareness of the role of the body in society.</p> |
| Practice: Applied Knowledge and Understanding | <p>SCQF 10</p> <p>Being able to interpret, explain and critically analyse complex analytical terms and theoretical perspectives which will become a valuable tool and ground base for future substantive and empirical endeavours.</p> <p>Interpreting, explaining, critically analyse and debate complex theoretical terms and ideas.</p> <p>Developing and presenting a coherent analysis of the arguments, explanations and prescriptions of major sociological views of a topic relevant to many areas of social policy and teaching practices.</p> <p>Retrieving, interpreting and manipulating primary and secondary information from a variety of sources including electronic sources</p> |
| Generic Cognitive skills | <p>SCQF 10</p> <p>Giving coherent and reasoned arguments and opinions, identifying the strengths and weaknesses of different substantial topics and theoretical analysis.</p> <p>Evaluate, criticize and debate, in oral and written form, specific theoretical position and analytical arguments relevant to the discipline.</p> <p>Become familiar with, adopt and use academic and conceptual terminology useful and transferable to a variety of different academic disciplines and jobs</p> |
| Communication, ICT and Numeracy Skills | <p>SCQF 10</p> <p>Communicating effectively and appropriately in speech and writing.</p> <p>Interpreting complex theoretical and substantial data and material.</p> <p>To present documents in an appropriate form.</p> |
| Autonomy, Accountability and Working with Others | <p>SCQF 10</p> <p>Developing an independent capacity of learning, retrieving information from library resources, electronic resources and tutoring facilities.</p> <p>Developing an independent responsibility for personal time management, learning needs and dynamics, addressing their own needs and strengths and demanding support when necessary.</p> <p>Develop the capacity to explore, in written work, group discussion and oral presentation, this relationship between theory and substantive issues</p> |

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| Prerequisites | Module Code | Module Title |
| | Other | |
| Co-requisites | Module Code | Module Title |

Learning and Teaching

In line with current learning and teaching principles, a 20-credit module includes 200 learning hours, normally including a minimum of 36 contact hours and maximum of 48 contact hours.

| Learning Activities During completion of this module, the learning activities undertaken to achieve the module learning outcomes are stated below: | Student Learning Hours (Note: Learning hours include both contact hours and hours spent on other learning activities) |
|--|---|
| Lecture / Core Content Delivery | 24 |
| Tutorial / Synchronous Support Activity | 12 |
| Independent Study | 164 |
| n/a | |
| n/a | |
| n/a | |
| TOTAL | 200 |

Indicative Resources

The following materials form essential underpinning for the module content and ultimately for the learning outcomes:

Boero, N. & Mason, K. (2019). The Oxford Handbook of the Sociology of Body and Embodiment. Oxford: Oxford University Press

Cregan, K. (2006) The Sociology of the body: mapping the abstraction of embodiment. London: Sage

Demello, M. (2014) Body Studies. An Introduction. New York: Routledge.

Fraser, M. & Greco, M. (Eds) (2005) The Two Bodies. In The body: a reader. Abingdon: Routledge.

Howson, A. (2004) The Body in Society. An Introduction. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Petersen, A. (2007) The Body in Question. A Socio-Cultural Approach. London: Routledge.

Price, J. and Shildrick, M. (Ed) (1999) Feminist Theory and the Body. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Shilling, C. (2005) The Body and Social Theory. London: Sage. (Printed copy in the library)

Shilling, C (2007) Sociology and the body: classical traditions new agendas. In Embodying Sociology: Retrospect, Progress, and Prospects. Malden Blackwell

(N.B. Although reading lists should include current publications, students are advised (particularly for material marked with an asterisk*) to wait until the start of session for confirmation of the most up-to-date material)

Attendance and Engagement Requirements

In line with the [Student Attendance and Engagement Procedure](#), Students are academically engaged if they are regularly attending and participating in timetabled on-

campus and online teaching sessions, asynchronous online learning activities, course-related learning resources, and complete assessments and submit these on time.

For the purposes of this module, academic engagement equates to the following:

All fulltime students (part-time and distant learning students should check with their programme leader for any queries) are required to attend all scheduled classes and participate with all delivered elements of the module as part of their engagement with their programme of study. Consideration will be given to students who have protection under the appropriate equality law. Please refer to UWS Regulations, Chapter 1, 1.64 – 1.67, available at the following link:

<http://www.uws.ac.uk/current-students/rights-andregulations/regulatory-framework/>

Equality and Diversity

The University's Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Procedure can be accessed at the following link: [UWS Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Code](#).

(N.B. Every effort will be made by the University to accommodate any equality and diversity issues brought to the attention of the School)

Supplemental Information

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| Divisional Programme Board | Social Sciences |
| Overall Assessment Results | <input type="checkbox"/> Pass / Fail <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Graded |
| Module Eligible for Compensation | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No If this module is eligible for compensation, there may be cases where compensation is not permitted due to programme accreditation requirements. Please check the associated programme specification for details. |
| School Assessment Board | UG Social Sciences |
| Moderator | C MacLean |
| External Examiner | E Matchett |
| Accreditation Details | |
| Module Appears in CPD catalogue | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No |
| Changes / Version Number | 1 |

Assessment (also refer to Assessment Outcomes Grids below)

Assessment 1

Assessment 1: Open Book Essay.

The first assignment will consist in an Open Book Essay. Students will have 5 days to answer 2 of 4 essay-style questions which will be provided at the start of the week on the day and an hour earlier of the opening of the 5-day period for submission”

Assessment 2

Assessment 2: Embodied reflections.

Students should submit a single word document containing two 500-word reflections on their own experiences of embodiment in reflection to the theories developed in this module. This assessment aims to enable students to reflect on, analyse and understand their own experiences in relation to theoretical work on embodiment. It also enables students to practice their sociological ‘imagination’ and to link structural and societal factors to individual practice and agency.

Assessment 3

(N.B. (i) Assessment Outcomes Grids for the module (one for each component) can be found below which clearly demonstrate how the learning outcomes of the module will be assessed.

(ii) An indicative schedule listing approximate times within the academic calendar when assessment is likely to feature will be provided within the Student Module Handbook.)

Component 1

| Assessment Type | LO1 | LO2 | LO3 | LO4 | LO5 | Weighting of Assessment Element (%) | Timetabled Contact Hours |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Open essay test (written) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | 60 | 0 |

Component 2

| Assessment Type | LO1 | LO2 | LO3 | LO4 | LO5 | Weighting of Assessment Element (%) | Timetabled Contact Hours |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Reflective essay (written) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | 40 | 0 |

Component 3

| Assessment Type | LO1 | LO2 | LO3 | LO4 | LO5 | Weighting of Assessment Element (%) | Timetabled Contact Hours |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | | |
| Combined total for all components | | | | | | 100% | hours |

Change Control

| What | When | Who |
|--------------------------------------|----------|------------|
| Transferred to new 202526 Descriptor | 03-02/25 | I Rafanell |
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