Diploma in Social Science – Fast Track

Subject Description

Tertiary Study Skills
This non-award subject introduces academic writing conventions and academic genres and teaches lecture note-taking, exam preparation and effective study and organisational skills.

Cultural and Social Geographies
This unit examines the nexus between culture and place. Contemporary cultural planning issues include; local community relations, social planning, place management, place redefinitions, selling place, ethnic concentration, cultural precincts, and the spatial politics of gender and sexuality. The roles of cultural products in carrying spatial information and reinforcing identity are examined. Introduction to cultural and social geography, and developments in cognate fields of cultural studies and anthropology. Key theories of identity. Case studies range across religion, gender, sexuality, class and nationalism. The analysis and assessment advances a politics of difference, anti-racist, social justice perspective.

Geographies of Social Difference
This unit focuses on the local experiences of cultural and socio-economic difference. This includes applied social science approaches to inequality, diversity, community, sense of place, and environmental sustainability in the urban setting. There is an emphasis upon spatial literacy for social scientists (fieldwork, mapping, data analysis and place description).

Inequalities and Difference
This unit builds on the content covered in ‘Understanding Society’. It is intended for students who wish to explore sociology in greater detail and depth, in particular to gain an understanding of those regional, national and global social forces which shape an individual’s life and life chances. Key debates to be considered include: is Australia a society of the ‘fair go’? What does colour gender and religious difference mean to Australians? Is there a ‘new global economy’ and in Australia, a ‘new poor’ and a ‘new rich’? In addressing these questions, this unit offers an analysis of social inequality, as it exists, and how it might be overcome. It utilises the insights of sociologists such as Bauman, Bourdieu, and Marx, and considers the most recent governmental and NGO reports on these issues.

Introduction to Criminology
This unit introduces major approaches within criminology offering explanations of the causes of crime, with consideration of the impact of such other fields as sociology and ethnography. Its scope ranges from the classicism and positivism to the rise of social perspectives in the twentieth century including the Chicago school, strain theory, labelling, Marxism and left realism, feminism, governmentality, risk theory and critical criminology. Final consideration will be given to psychosocial approaches to crime, and the revival of free will and rationality in neo-liberal analyses. These traditions and perspectives will be illustrated by consideration of key research examples.
Organisations, Communities and Communication
This unit introduces students to the foundational skills and knowledge required for professional practice in a range of social science related careers. It introduces students to a range of organisational structures, professional value frameworks, and skills in interpersonal and written communication within these contexts. It enable students to identify issues of power, interests, participation, representation, values, ethics, trust and collaboration; ways of working with others to achieve shared objectives; mechanisms for goal setting, issues identification, information and resource sharing that operate in everyday life.

The Individual in Society
This unit introduces the main theoretical perspectives for understanding the ‘individual in society’, including biological, cognitive, behavioural and personality explanations of individual behaviour. Students are guided and encouraged to explore relevance to everyday life and contemporary issues. Once established, these theories are extended to understanding individuals in society using a bio-psychosocial framework. Theoretical stances related to ‘levels of explanation’, ‘individualism vs. collectivism’, and ‘personality vs. situation’ are explored as are topics such as social cognition; social influence, and social relations, for example, social identity, prejudice, aggression, pro-social behaviours, attitude formation and change and relationships.

Tourism in Society
In this unit students study tourism as a cultural and social phenomenon and places tourism in its socio-cultural and geographic context. Various relationships are explored: the leisure society; the sociology of mobility; modernity, post-modernity and rapid change; desire, difference and the ‘other’; commodity culture and tourism; visual culture and tourism; tourism and developing countries; tourism and the media; tourism and geo-politics (the effects of war, terrorism, natural disasters and climate change).

Understanding Society
Understanding Society is a core unit offered by the School of Social Sciences which will introduce students in the first year of their studies to key concepts and theories used in examination of and for understanding social action, social policy, social institutions, social structure and social change. Students enrolled in the unit will be introduced to factual information concerning contemporary societies and the methods of interpreting such information. At the conclusion of their studies in this unit students will have been presented with opportunities to develop skills in critical reading and sociological analysis.