

Social and Spiritual Development Strand
Social Science

Unit 4: Contemporary Issues

Unit Guide



Lecturer Support Material

Acknowledgements

Materials written and compiled by Sue Lauer.

In consultation with:

Helen Walangu	HOS	PNGEI
Cornelius Gumbira	HOS	Madang TC
Lena Rifi (Wangiwan)	HOS (acting)	St Benedict's TC
Teng Waninga	Lecturer	Holy Trinity TC
Aloisia Maradangoi	Senior lecturer	Balob TC
Carol Cottingham	Lecturer	Balob TC
Pilari Hiraiya	HOS	OLSH TC - Kabaleo

Date: 27 March 2002



Primary and Secondary Teacher Education Project

Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID)
GRM International

Papua New Guinea-Australia Development Cooperation Program

Unit outline

Modules	Sample topics
4.1 Framework for Studying Issues (Core)	Identifying issues Investigating contemporary issues Processes for investigating issues Current affairs
4.2 Population Studies (Optional)	Population density and distribution Population change Measuring populations Population issues – social indicators Population policies in PNG
4.3 Disaster Management (Optional)	Types of disasters Impact of disasters Early warnings Risk management Disaster organisations
4.4 Women and Equity (Optional)	Human rights and the role of government Equity & culture Economics and equity Equity issues – health, violence, demographics
4.5 Crime, Punishment and Justice (Optional)	Why have laws? Crime, punishment and justice Facing the future Law in PNG

Links with the primary curriculum

Unit 4 contains content, skills and activities relevant to the following primary syllabuses.

Syllabus	Syllabus Strands/Themes
Community Living Grades 3-5	Rules & regulations, Leaders, Survival means, Traditional & modern customs, Population
Social Science Grades 6-8	Natural disasters, urbanisation, sustainable development, Traditional & contemporary family structures
Environmental Studies Grades 3-5	Population, Development, World food crisis, Looking after the environment
Personal Development Grades 6-8	Citizenship, Community health, Gender & equity, Law & order, Rights & responsibilities, Family & community relationships

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Contemporary Issues

The Social Science course seeks to develop pre-service teachers who are:

- Conscious that people are social beings who need to interact with others
- Aware of the value of democratic social structures
- Aware of contemporary national and international social, economic and political issues
- Socially concerned and able to recognise injustice
- Willing to take action which leads to a more just and equitable society
- Willing to participate in community and national development

Rationale

Contemporary issues are those which are discussed and debated widely in the community. Some issues are brought to notice by interest groups and others by the media. Issues can arise from events, results or consequences. Many are unresolved. The essence of an issue is that there are different, often opposing views, most of which are based on reason.

Unit objectives

Knowledge

Through the study of Contemporary Issues, students will gain knowledge about:

- Types of issues
- Reasons for existence of issues
- Basic / factual information about issues at local, provincial, regional, national and global level

Skills

Through the study of Contemporary Issues, students will develop skills needed to be able to:

- Collate, analyse and respond to the range of information
- Summarise information to find general conclusions
- Predict consequences
- Debate issues critically
- Analyse cause and effects of events / issues
- Think critically to come up with alternatives and solutions to problems.

Values/attitudes

Through the study of Contemporary Issues students will:

- Appreciate that issues have multiple facets
- Develop a concern for well-being of all people
- Use knowledge and skills to change situations
- Develop an ability to be open minded
- Promote just society
- Develop a willingness to discuss and make others aware of problems and issues

Access and equity

In order to provide for access, participation and equity within the curriculum we need to identify those areas which exclude many females and some males. Students not only require access to learning opportunities but need to be actively involved in them, and this is more likely to be achieved when the subject matter is relevant, interesting and includes the experiences of women and girls.

To provide for access, participation and equity, the curriculum needs to contain:

- Content which has women's and girls' experiences and achievements centrally placed as opposed to being omitted or undervalued.
- Contexts that value girls, including the classroom management of harassment and the equitable use of time, money, personnel and all resources
- Cooperative and collaborative teaching and learning styles which consider the need for both single-sex and mixed-sex groupings in the classroom
- Inclusive language
- A supportive learning environment
- Acknowledgement of both the diversity and similarity of female and male experiences

 It is important that you use inclusive strategies in your classroom. Groups should contain a mix of males and females. Girls should be encouraged to contribute in class discussions and to take leadership roles. Care should be taken that students with special needs are not disadvantaged by any activity and that resources are distributed evenly.

The structure of Unit 4

Unit 4 has only one core module. There are two main ways you can approach the study of this unit. One way is to use Module 4.1 as the basis of study and have student spend time researching and discussing a range of issues. The material in the other modules would simply become resource material for students who chose one of those issues. The second way is to provide students with skills and a framework through Module 4.1 and then select two other modules as case studies to help them understand the nature of contemporary issues.

These approaches are outlined in more detail in the section on programming.

Programming Unit 4 - selecting modules and topics

Before commencing the study of the unit or modules within the unit, it is recommended that you consider:

- Conducting a class survey to ascertain students background knowledge and experience
- Compiling a list of possible topics (based on your expertise and college resources)
- Allowing the students to select those topics in which they are interested. This will maximise student interest and participation

The main purpose of programming is to help you arrange the presentation of the Unit in an orderly manner. You will need to examine all the available modules for the Uni in order to make appropriate choices for study for the trimester/semester. It is recommended that you make plans with other lecturers teaching the same Unit.

This guide contains content, strategies and activities for four core and one optional module. To do your trimester/semester plan you need to:

- Select content from each of the core modules (and the optional module if you wish)
- Write down the number of weeks in the trimester/semester
- Write down the number of lectures/tutorials for each week
- Write down the content to be taught in each lecture/tutorial (page references)
- Select activities from the modules to match the content you have chosen. (When selecting activities be realistic about how much time you have and how long the activity might take to complete.)
- Select two/three assessment tasks that overlap across the modules to enable students to demonstrate skills that are applicable in more than one situation.

Because you are responsible for the development of beginning teachers, it is better that contact time is spent on the development of skills through whole class, group, paired or individual activities. Students should be given course material in advance and should be encouraged to read content before lectures/tutorials so that contact time is not wasted on reading/comprehension tasks.

Following are examples of three different program types – a sequential content-based program, an integrated skills-based program and a thematic program.

 It will not be possible to complete an activity every session, but you should try to do one activity each week. Make sure the activities are varied, that is, not all discussion or group presentations. There are plenty of choices in the modules.

A sample program: sequential, content-based

(12 weeks with 2 x 1 hour/lectures/tutorials per week)

Week	Lecture	Module	Topic	Strategies/Activities	Assessment	Resources
1	1	4.1	Identifying issues	Brainstorm & discuss local, national & global issues		Student support materials
	2	4.1	Identifying issues			
2	3	4.1	Viewpoints	Select one issue eg population & examine different viewpoints		Newspapers
	4	4.1	Viewpoints			
3	5	4.1	Media and interest groups	Promotion of viewpoints	Consequences chart	NGO & other specialist publications
	6	4.1	Investigating values	Case study eg disaster management		
4	7	4.1	Investigating consequences	Newspaper study		Government policies & regulations
	8	4.1	Problem-solving			
5	9	4.1	Current affairs	Act 1 - inequalities		
	10	4.1	Current affairs			
6	11	4.4	Social justice	Act 2 – stereotypes		
	12	4.4	Gender roles and issues			
7	13	4.4	Legislation	Act 3 – government strategies		
	14	4.4	Gender-based violence	Act 4 – analysing arguments		
8	15	4.4	Women & education	Act 7 – survey or observation	Survey girls' opportunities	
	16	4.4	Women & work	Act 8 - interviews		
9	17	4.5	Features & functions of laws	Act 5 –scenarios and group work		
	18	4.5	Traditional & modern law in PNG			
10	19	4.5	Traditional & modern law in PNG	Act 3 or 8 - consequences		
	20	4.5	Crime and punishment			
11	21	4.5	Law & order issues	Act 7 – legal issues	Commentary on law articles	
	22	4.5	Law & order issues			
12	23	4.5	Justice	Act 2 - scenarios		
	24	4.5	Justice			

Note 1: Students are expected to read relevant sections prior to lecture/tutorial Note 2: The first 10 minutes of each session will be spent on overview or clarification of home reading topics Note 3: It will not be possible to do an activity every session.

A sample program: integrated, skills-based

(12 weeks with 2 x 1 hour/lectures/tutorials per week)

Week	Lecture	Topic & Module	Skills	Activity	Assessment	Resources
1	1	4.1 Identifying issues	Brainstorming & discussion	Select a variety of activities that contribute to the development of skills. It is not possible to do an activity each session		Student support materials Newspapers NGO & other specialist publications Government policies & regulations
	2					
2	3	4.5 Law & order issues	Understanding bias (influence of media and interest groups)			
	4					
3	5	4.4 Women & education	Analysing & clarifying values			
	6					
4	7	4.4 Women & work				
	8	4.4 Social justice				
5	9	4.3 Disaster management (impact of disasters)	Consequence charts Case studies		Survey girls' opportunities	
	10					
6	11	4.2 Population studies (birth & mortality rates, food security)	Problem-solving			
	12					
7	13	4.3 Disaster management (emergency planning)	Problem-solving			
	14					
8	15	4.4 Gender-based violence	Conflict resolution	Consequences chart		
	16					
9	17	4.5 Traditional & modern law in PNG	Analysing values			
	18					
10	19	4.5 Punishment & justice	Role plays			
	20					
11	21					
	22					
12	23			Commentary on law articles		
	24					

Note 1: Students are expected to read relevant sections prior to lecture/tutorial Note 2: The first 10 minutes of each session will be spent on overview or clarification of home reading topics. Note 3: Selected activities should be based on the topic - Processes for investigating issues from Module 4.1

A sample program: integrated, thematic

(12 weeks with 2 x 1 hour/lectures/tutorials per week)

Week	Lecture	Theme	Topic & Module	Activity	Assessment	Resources
1	1	Identifying issues	Types of issues – global, local, national	Select 2/3 significant issues and identify different stakeholders and their viewpoints. Module 1.3 Environmental Issues & modules in Unit 2 could be linked	Commentary on law & order articles	Student support materials
	2					
2	3					
	4					
3	5		Viewpoints, media and interest groups			
	6					
4	7					
	8					
5	9	Investigating issues	4.2 Population change & control	Select three or four activities which relate to the theme. Make sure activities require students to use a variety of skills from Module 1.1	Consequence charts	Newspapers
	10					
6	11		4.5 Law & order			
	12					
7	13		4.3 Impact of disasters			
	14					
8	15		4.4 Equity in PNG			
	16					
9	17	Finding solutions	4.4 Conventions & legislation, women in decision making	Select three or four activities which relate to the theme. Make sure activities require students to use a variety of skills from Module 1.1	Survey of opportunities for girls in PNG	NGO & other specialist publications
	18					
10	19		4.3 Emergency management strategies			
	20					
11	21		4.2 National population policy			
	22					
12	23		4.5 Justice			
	24					

Note 1: Students are expected to read relevant sections prior to lecture/tutorial Note 2: The first 10 minutes of each session will be spent on overview or clarification of home reading topics

Note 3: The topic – Processes for investigating issues from Module 4.1 is integrated into the themes as selected activities are based on key skills and processes.

Assessing Unit 4

Assessment is the process of identifying, gathering and interpreting information about student learning. The main purpose of assessment is to improve student learning and the quality of the learning programs. A variety of assessment strategies should be used and students should be given opportunities, in varying contexts, to demonstrate in an authentic manner what they know, understand and can do.

Assessment strategies should be sensitive to gender, disability, culture, background language and geographical location.

A single task can often measure achievement in relation to several objectives. Consider the nature and structure of the task so that

- The requirements of the task are as clear as possible
- Questions or activities are chosen that are relevant to the objectives and allow students to demonstrate appropriate outcomes
- Any sources or stimulus material used are clear and appropriate to the task
- The likely range of student responses are anticipated
- There is a balanced selection of skills and knowledge objectives being assessed
- Marks or grades reflect the relative importance of each part of the task
- Instructions are unambiguous
- The language level is appropriate
- Items are not too difficult or too easy
- It does not contain bias
- The marking scheme is applied consistently

 The focus in choosing assessment strategies should be the application and practice of skills. It is unlikely that there would be one task for each module, rather students/lecturers would choose from tasks across the whole unit to fulfill college requirements for number and weighting of assessment tasks. If there is a choice, all tasks should be equivalent in difficulty, weighting and time required for completion.

General assessment strategies include:

- Inquiry-based research assignments and projects
- Oral presentations eg seminars, debates, tutorials
- Essays – with a focus on inquiry, analysis and/or reflection
- Performance activities eg role play, dramatic presentations, simulations
- Short answers or paragraphs
- Case studies
- Practical exercises eg mapping
- Field work

- Teacher observations
- conferencing eg discussions/interviews between teacher and student
- Reflective journals
- Testing eg topic tests, examinations
- Developing resources eg class story books
- Lesson plans
- Peer assessment
- Self assessment and evaluation

Suggested assessment tasks

Assessment tasks should be developed at the unit level, recognising the development of knowledge, skills and attitudes across this module and others which make up the unit.

These tasks show some assessment possibilities. Each task assesses more than one objective. Some activities outlined in the modules could also be used as assessment tasks.

- Develop a consequence chart based on decisions made by government and community groups involved in an issue such as law and order
- Research the development of a local issue such as conflict over land use
- Outline the advantages and disadvantages of a particular course of action
- Develop an action plan to help reduce the impact of a national problem such as increasing urbanisation
- Design a poster to educate upper primary students about an issue such as gender-based violence

Teaching Unit 4

The main emphasis in the teaching of each module/topic is to include a range of strategies and activities and to develop skills which will be useful for beginning teachers in their own classrooms.

Teaching sequence

Introductory session	<p>At the beginning of each module or topic, establish student's prior knowledge and understanding by asking questions, brainstorming, and clarifying the meaning of important terms. Refer to module glossaries if available. (Student responses will help you decide how much time needs to be spent on basic content and how quickly you can proceed to skills development and activities)</p>
During the topic/module	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When setting group work make sure each group has the necessary equipment/resources and set a firm time limit. Do not set the same task for each group and avoid boredom by using different strategies for group presentations eg classroom display, question and answer session, summarising focus areas. • To cover the content in the limited time available students should be encouraged to read material for homework. This will enable more class time for discussion and activities.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remember – you are preparing students to teach in primary classrooms. Make students aware of the links between topics being studied and the primary curriculum. When setting activities or assessment tasks, discuss with students how their actions/findings will be useful for them in their own classrooms later.
Conclusion	At the end of a module or topic ask students to summarise the skills/knowledge learnt in this module. Encourage students to see how generic skills can be used in future Social Science modules, in modules for other subjects, and in their own teaching.

Teaching strategies

A comprehensive range of teaching strategies is presented in the following table. Suggested strategies and activities are also included with each module.

Strategy	Explanation
Analysing values	the gathering, analysing, organization and appraisal of facts in order to understand value positions held by individuals, groups and organizations.
Brainstorming	recording all the information already known on a topic to generate new ideas or stimulate creative thinking
Clarifying values	reflective and sharing process used to explore validity of values in a non-threatening environment
Classroom displays	provides a way of focusing on the current unit which provides a record of learning as well as encouraging students to respond to learning
Conflict resolution	analysing conflict situations in an objective and systematic way and being able to suggest a range of non-violent solutions
Consequence charts	enable the exploration of cause and effect relationships, alternatives consequences or likely consequences of alternative actions or decisions
Cultural activities	exposing students to a variety of activities that give them insight into their own culture or that of others
Current affairs	a valuable source for discussion and inquiry
Debates	formalised discussions in which opposing points of view are advanced. These allow students to take a position on an issues and justify that position, perceive other points of view and analyse relative strengths of arguments
Decision-making	the process of choosing from two or more alternatives
Diagrams	a visual text that provides a symbolic representation of the interrelationship of concepts or elements of a social or physical structure
Discussions	opportunities to express ideas and feelings and listen to others, to look at issues from other perspectives
Evaluating values	weighing options, consequences and evidence in decision-making contexts in order to make decisions and take actions in just, effective ways
Excursions	journey to a place to provide opportunities to respond to or interact with new environments or experience different activities
Family trees	diagrammatic representation of relationships which can depict change and the passing of time
Flow charts	visual text that provides a symbolic method of explaining and

Strategy	Explanation
	recording a chain of events in a sequence. They also examine processes and stages within a structure
Graphs	diagrammatic method of displaying the relationship between facts
Group work	encourages students to participate in achieving a shared goal. Allows students to interact with each other and to value each member's contribution
Guest speaker or visitor	a person who shares his/her knowledge and skills with the students
Interviews	a method of gaining information about people, their attitudes and lifestyles. Can be part of a survey or open-ended
Jigsaw groups	analysing and breaking down topics into discrete research tasks or activities undertaken by different groups, then reported to the whole class gradually building up a detailed and complete 'picture' of the topic
Learning games	devices which involve students in simulated experiences to develop concepts and understandings, record information or demonstrate knowledge. These can be made by teachers or students
Mapping	constructing, reading or interpreting symbolic representations of the Earth's surface
Matrix	a concise classification of numbers, words or symbols assembled in a grid layout to facilitate analysis and predictions
Mind maps/concept maps	used for drawing connections between ideas and concepts. Often associated with brainstorming
Models	demonstration of a concept in concrete form eg items made from play dough, relief maps, mobiles, murals, dioramas
Moral dilemmas	a real or imaginary situation depicting an apparent conflict between two or more courses of right action, discussed in a supportive atmosphere. Dilemmas may be set in past, present or future contexts
Oral history	students listen and gather information as an individual recounts life experiences or describes events
Photographs	visual texts which can be used to develop skills such as observing, classifying, grouping, comparing and contrasting. Photographs also allow reinvestigation of first-hand experiences at a later date
Pictures	visual texts which enhance understanding of written and spoken texts as well as being used to acquire information etc
Presentations	sharing of information obtained through individual and group research or study. These can be spoken, written or multimedia and provide experience in organising, planning and presenting information and material to a particular audience
Problem-solving	finding answers to questions and difficulties which arise in many and varied contexts
Questioning	involves students in asking questions and responding to them. Questions can be used for developing thinking and learning, stimulating and directing inquiry, assessing student learning.
Role-play	taking on and acting out roles of real or imaginary individuals in varied, non-threatening simulated situations in order to clarify values and develop empathy with other people
Simulation	assuming roles according to specified rules and procedures. These can be role plays or games
Surveys	method of gathering information for a specific purpose eg data collection, questionnaire, interview
Task cards	defined activities or pieces of research presented in written form to individual students or groups. They are a method of directing student learning
Texts	using a range of texts to expand and develop student knowledge and

Strategy	Explanation
	understandings
Timelines	lists of events set out diagrammatically in chronological order
Using artefacts	by examining objects made by humans, students are able to gain an insight into the technology and lifestyles of people from particular cultural groups or times

Fieldwork

Fieldwork is an essential part of the study of Social Science. It is a means of understanding natural and cultural environments and the nature of inquiry. Fieldwork can enhance learning opportunities for a wide range of students because it caters for a variety of teaching and learning styles

Fieldwork enables students to:

- Acquire knowledge about environments by observing, mapping and recording phenomena in the real world in a variety of places, including the college environs
- Use different types of social science tools to assist in interpretation of and decision-making about phenomena
- Understand the spatial and ecological dimensions of the environment
- To explore processes that form and transform environments

Current events

The study of current affairs and special events adds relevance, reality and immediacy to the Social Science program. Meaningful bridges can be built between life in and out of college and between the past and present. Student's interests can be extended and deepened as they investigate events and issues related to their own concerns, to long-term social trends, and to actions of individuals and groups.

Events which are part of the news, provide a valuable source for discussion and inquiry.

It is recommended that module content be reinforced through discussion of relevant current events. Events should be selected by students who should be encouraged not only to describe the event but also to explain why it was selected.

Techniques could include:

- A bulletin board containing articles which are changed each week and one discussed each lesson
- A three minute talk at the beginning of each lesson
- A presentation at the weekly assembly
- A longer session once a fortnight

 Newspaper articles used in this unit were current at the time of writing. It is important that students be aware of the need to be up-to-date with resources they use in schools. Model this awareness by substituting similar, more recent articles each time you teach this or other Social Science units.

Resources

Newspapers – articles, reports, graphs and statistics, cartoons

Atlases and maps

The local area – college grounds, nearby landform features

Professional journals

Documentaries and television programs

Videos

Magazines

CD-ROMS

The Internet

Databases

Government departments

Non-government agencies

The local community – families, workers, artists, businesses, industries

Colleagues

Business and companies eg mining, oil palm, sugar, construction

Books

Abaijah, J. (1991). *A Thousand Coloured Dreams*, Dellasta Pacific

Adeola, J. (1996). *PNG Women Writers: An Anthology*, Longman: Melbourne,

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