

United College, The Chinese University of Hong Kong
General Education Course
GEUC 2102A PUBLIC AFFAIRS: PARTICIPATION AND REFLECTION
2nd Term, 2024/25

Course Lecturer: Professor Annie TAM
Data Science and Policy Studies Programme (DSPS)
Faculty of Social Science

Office: c/o Data Science and Policy Studies Programme

Tel. No.: 9138 8050

Class Time and Venue: Monday evenings (7:00 p.m. – 9:30 p.m.); 20 Jan; 10 Feb; 7 Apr 2025
LSK514

Plus a compulsory experiential learning activity outside classroom between mid-February and March 2025

Course Overview: Care and Innovation - Fun, Wisdom, Result and Growth

As the whole world and our society have been becoming increasingly complex, there is no best way to rise to the multifarious challenges. The course will be themed on two dimensions: (1) the Government's pivotal role in policy leadership and in delivering effective governance (Policy Studies); and (2) the new opportunities made possible by data and technology etc. for improving human welfare (Data Science). The Lecturer and students will together, during the course journey, look for soil of Care and Innovation to nurture effective governance and good social policies in Hong Kong to keep pace with changes and challenges, leveraging on Data Science, so as to aspire to transformation of our society into a better one for all.

The course will focus on integration and interaction of theory and practice. During classes, there will be sharing of theories, models and analytical frameworks etc, complemented by case studies and various forms of interactive exercise. Students will experience their own "seeing is believing" and "believing is seeing" in an interactive learning mode. Students will form teams to experience team building dynamics. Each team of students will conduct an experiential activity outside the classroom to which students may apply the knowledge acquired from the classes and widen their horizons by interacting with people in the community. Such experimental activity will help demonstrate how "small things done with great love may change the world". (Remark: This course is not for students majoring in Government and Public Administration.)

Grade Descriptors:

P	All learning outcomes/assessment criteria have been met. The work demonstrates most or all of the following characteristics in relation to those expected at the given level of study within the discipline: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Adequate / good understanding and exploration2. No significant inaccuracies, misunderstandings or errors3. The specifications for the assessment task, including word limit/time limit where appropriate, have been adhered to4. The outside classroom activities are well organized and well presented, including referencing, where appropriate, is up to standard
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	<p>5. Appropriate contextualization, including relevant theory / literature / artefacts / performance</p> <p>6. Evidence of quality analysis, synthesis, reflection and critical appraisal</p>
F	<p>One or more than one key learning outcome/assessment criterion has / have not been met. The work fails to meet the requirements in relation to those expected at the given level of study within the discipline, exemplified by any of the followings:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Poor understanding and exploration of ideas 2. Some significant inaccuracies, misunderstandings or errors 3. Not participating in the required classroom activities, including group presentations 4. Not participating in the required outside classroom experiential activities 5. No evidence of analysis, synthesis, reflection and critical appraisal 6. Insufficient attention paid to some of the assessment criteria and/ or some significant aberrations from the specifications for the assessment task

Learning Objectives and Outcomes:

This course aims to nurture each of the students to become 3Rs: a Respectful policy analyst; a Responsible policy maker and a Responsive change agent, with focus on helping them develop 4A capacities as follows:

- 1.) Awareness of important social affairs and public policy issues;
- 2.) Ability to master the basic concepts in public policy making (Government, Social Needs, Interaction, Context and Process) and apply them to real world problems;
- 3.) Articulation as to how emergence of technologies related to data science such as AI and Big Data may interplay with care in policy making to derive innovative solutions, thus opening up new possibilities for human welfare; and
- 4.) Acumen in communicating complicated ideas and analytical results effectively in both verbal and written forms.

The course outcome will be: Fun, Wisdom, Result and Growth. After walking through the course journey, the Lecturer and students should become Better Persons.

Course Schedule and Arrangements:

Week One. Policy Studies: A Conceptual Framework: Government, Social Needs, Interaction, Context and Process

[20 January 2025]

This Lecture will introduce concepts, theories and analytical frameworks of policy making. It will cover Actors (Government and people in the society), Reality (changing social needs), Dynamics (process, interaction and politics) and Context (demographic situation; culture, tradition and value; crisis and disaster; and international trend etc.). There will be many case studies based on real life social issues and there will also be interactive exercises among students.

Week Two. Making Change through Innovation and Technology: Theory and Practice

[10 February 2025]

This Lecture will provide a general overview of how change in policy and society is possible as the two interact and co-evolve. New opportunities of social and policy change made possible by innovation and new technologies will also be discussed. Both theory and practice, including case studies, will be covered. Guest speakers may be invited for sharing their insights with students.

Experiential Activity outside the classroom (Mid-February to March 2025) (Students will form teams to experience team building dynamics, and prior consent of the team experiential activities and the outlines thereof will need to be sought from the Lecturer.)

Examples of experiential activities (these are no more examples; students are free to come up with other activities.)

1. Government Organisations, Government Boards and Think Tanks, e.g. Town Planning Board, CE's Policy Unit, Customs Department (Smart Customs Blueprint), ICAC Academy.
2. High-Technology and Innovation Organizations / Companies, e.g. Science Park, Cyberport, Logistics and Supply Chain MultiTech R&D Centre, GS1 (barcode organization), Hospital Authority Innovation Lab, The Henderson.
3. Non-Governmental Organisations, e.g. New Life Psychiatric Rehabilitation Association; Tung Wah Group of Hospitals, Sisters of Good Shepherd Marycove Centre (Girls Home), Connecting Hearts, Save the Children or their community service projects.
4. Urban Renewal Authority, e.g. Wing Lee Street project.
5. Hong Kong Housing Society, e.g. Elderly housing projects or other housing projects, intergenerational harmony projects, or MiC projects.
6. Arts, Culture and Green Organisations. e.g. Xiqu Centre or T- Park.
7. Social enterprises, e.g. Inno330 at CUHK or cafe330 at Kwong Wah Hospital, farmfresh 330 at MTR stations.
8. Private–NGO Collaborations, e.g. Transitional Housing, Community Living Room.
9. Field trip, e.g. New Life Farm, Tai O Hotel, an elderly home in Shenzhen or Foshan.
10. Public Policy Analysis, e.g. Youth Development Blueprint, Climate Action Plan, Hotline Services for Carers, Targeted Poverty Alleviation.

Alternatively, students may opt to do service learning e.g. devising innovative solutions for Government, Private Sector or NGOs or direct service to underprivileged groups.

Week Three. Group presentation and discussion

[7 April 2025]

Each team of students will make presentation of their project to the class. The focus will be on how students have applied what they have learned from the course to their experiential activities.

Language:

Cantonese (with English materials)

Assessment:

Class attendance and discussion:

Students will be required to attend the lectures, conduct the experimental activity, and make the presentation as described above. Students are also expected to actively participate in classroom exercises and exchange ideas with guest speakers (if any).

Self-reflection report:

At the end of the course, each student will submit a 500-word (in English) self-reflection report. In the report, the student is expected to reflect on their experience of the course: on what he/she has learnt from the course, inside and outside the classroom; and on the role he/she may play in contributing to making our society and the world a better one. The performance of students will not be judged on their opinions. Rather, the students will be assessed on their ability to reflect on their course experience and how they have enjoyed the course (Fun) and what they have harvested from it (Wisdom, Result and Growth).

Feedback for Evaluation:

1. Interaction and communication with Lecturer and students;
2. Participation in classes and experiential activities;
3. Group presentations, and engagement of fellow students;
4. Self-reflection reports; and

5. Course and teaching evaluation form.

Suggested Readings

Required Readings:

To be assigned

Optional Readings:

To be assigned

Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

Attention is drawn to University policy and regulations on honesty in academic work, and to the disciplinary guidelines and procedures applicable to breaches of such policy and regulations. Details may be found at <http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/> . With each assignment, students will be required to submit a signed declaration that they are aware of these policies, regulations, guidelines and procedures. For group projects, all students of the same group should be asked to sign the declaration.

For assignments in the form of a computer-generated document that is principally text-based and submitted via VeriGuide, the statement, in the form of a receipt, will be issued by the system upon students' uploading of the soft copy of the assignment. Assignments without the receipt will not be graded by teachers. Only the final version of the assignment should be submitted via VeriGuide.