

REGULATIONS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF SOCIAL SCIENCES (MSocSc)

(See also General Regulations and Regulations for Taught Postgraduate Curricula)

These regulations apply to candidates admitted to the Master of Social Sciences in the academic year 2026-27 and thereafter.

Any publication based on work approved for a higher degree should contain a reference to the effect that the work was submitted to the University of Hong Kong for the award of the degree.

The degree of Master of Social Sciences (MSocSc) is a postgraduate degree awarded for the satisfactory completion of a prescribed course of study in one of the following fields: Applied Psychology, Behavioral Health; Clinical Psychology; Counselling; Criminology; Educational Psychology; Gerontology; Media, Culture and Creative Cities; Mental Health; Nonprofit Management; Population and Policy Analysis; Psychology; Social Data Analytics; Social Service Management; Sociology; and Sustainability Leadership and Governance. These fields of study will not necessarily be offered every year.

Admission requirements

MSS 1. To be eligible for admission to the courses leading to the degree of Master of Social Sciences, candidates

- (a) shall comply with the General Regulations and the Regulations for Taught Postgraduate Curricula;
- (b) shall hold
 - (i) a Bachelor's degree of this University; or
 - (ii) another qualification of equivalent standard from this University or from another University or comparable institution accepted for this purpose;
- (c) for a candidate who is seeking admission on the basis of a qualification from a university or comparable institution outside Hong Kong of which the language of teaching and/or examination is not English, shall satisfy the University English language requirement applicable to higher degrees as prescribed under General Regulation G2(b);
- (d) shall satisfy any other admission requirements which may be specified for individual fields of study in the regulations below; and
- (e) shall satisfy the examiners in a qualifying examination if required.

MSS 1.1. To be eligible for admission to the courses leading to the degree of Master of Social Sciences in the fields of Behavioral Health, Counselling, Gerontology, Mental Health, and Social Service Management, candidates shall preferably have had a minimum of two years of post-qualification experience in the relevant fields, in addition to the requirements set out in Regulation MSS 1.

MSS 1.2. To be eligible for admission to the courses leading to the degree of Master of Social Sciences in the field of Clinical Psychology, candidates

- (a) shall hold a Bachelor's degree with a major in Psychology, or a recognised equivalent qualification;
- (b) shall have demonstrated empirical research experience in the form of a dissertation completed in the Bachelor's degree programme or another equivalent programme in

- psychology, or first-authorship in published journal article;
- (c) shall be eligible for the Graduate Membership of the Hong Kong Psychological Society; and
- (d) shall preferably have relevant working experience, in addition to the requirements set out in Regulation MSS 1.

MSS 1.3. To be eligible for admission to the courses leading to the degree of Master of Social Sciences in the field of Criminology, candidates

- (a) shall hold a Bachelor's degree preferably with a major in the social sciences or humanities discipline; or
 - (b) shall preferably have working experience in the criminal justice system, social welfare agencies, or in other work with offenders,
- in addition to the requirements set out in Regulation MSS 1.

MSS 1.4. To be eligible for admission to the courses leading to the degree of Master of Social Sciences in the field of Educational Psychology, candidates

- (a) shall hold a Bachelor's degree with a major in Psychology, or a recognised equivalent qualification;
 - (b) shall be eligible for the Graduate Membership of the Hong Kong Psychological Society; and
 - (c) shall preferably have relevant working experience in educational or related settings,
- in addition to the requirements set out in Regulation MSS 1.

MSS 1.5. To be eligible for admission to the courses leading to the degree of Master of Social Sciences in the field of Nonprofit Management, candidates shall preferably have three years of relevant working experience, in addition to the requirements set out in Regulation MSS 1.

MSS 1.6. To be eligible for admission to the courses leading to the degree of Master of Social Sciences in the field of Psychology, candidates shall satisfy the examiners in interview if deemed necessary, in addition to the requirements set out in Regulation MSS 1.

MSS 1.7. To be eligible for admission to the courses leading to the degree of Master of Social Sciences in the field of Social Data Analytics, candidates

- (a) shall preferably have a Bachelor's degree in one of the fields of social sciences: Anthropology, Cognitive Science, Communication, Economics, Education Studies, Ethnic Studies, Linguistics, Political Science, Psychology, Sociology, Urban Studies and Planning, or a closely related field; or a Bachelor's degree in Mathematics, Computer Science, or a related field with an additional major/minor or substantial advanced coursework in one or more social sciences domains; and
- (b) shall preferably have pre-existing training in statistics and/or formal logic or prior experience with one or more technical domains, including programming, statistics, formal logic, calculus, linear algebra, etc.

in addition to the requirements set out in Regulation MSS 1.

MSS 1.8. To be eligible for admission to the courses leading to the degree of Master of Social Sciences in the field of Population and Policy Analysis, candidates

- (a) shall preferably have a Bachelor's degree in one of the fields of social sciences: Anthropology, Cognitive Science, Communication, Economics, Education Studies, Ethnic Studies, Linguistics, Political Science, Psychology, Sociology, Urban Studies and Planning, or a closely related field; and
- (b) shall preferably have prior experience with applied statistics, mathematics, programming, and/or one or more technical domains (e.g. demographic methods); and
- (c) with a background in statistics, mathematics, computer science, or a related field may be considered if they have a minor or have completed substantial advanced coursework in one or more social sciences domains before admission; or if they commit to pursuing

additional domain-specific study upon admission
in addition to the requirements set out in Regulation MSS 1.

MSS 1.9. To be eligible for admission to the courses leading to the degree of Master of Social Sciences in the field of Sociology, candidates shall hold a Bachelor's degree preferably with a major in the social sciences or humanities discipline, in addition to the requirements set out in Regulation MSS 1.

MSS 1.10. To be eligible for admission to the courses leading to the degree of Master of Social Sciences in the field of Applied Psychology, candidates shall hold a Bachelor's degree with a major in Psychology, or a recognized equivalent qualification, in addition to the requirements set out in Regulation MSS 1.

MSS 2. An application for exemption from the above requirements shall be considered on a case by case basis.

Qualifying examination

MSS 3.

- (a) A qualifying examination may be set to test the candidates' formal academic ability or their ability to follow the courses of study prescribed. It shall consist of one or more written papers or their equivalent and may include a project report.
- (b) Candidates who are required to satisfy the examiners in a qualifying examination shall not be permitted to register until they have satisfied the examiners in the examination.

Award of degree

MSS 4. To be eligible for the award of the degree of Master of Social Sciences, candidates

- (a) shall comply with the General Regulations and the Regulations for Taught Postgraduate Curricula; and
- (b) shall complete the programme as prescribed in the syllabuses and satisfy the examiners in accordance with the regulations set out below.

Period of study

MSS 5. The curriculum shall normally extend over one academic year of full-time study; or two academic years of part-time study, with a maximum period of registration of two academic years of full-time study or three academic years of part-time study, unless otherwise specified for individual fields of study in the regulations below.

MSS 5.1. In the field of Clinical Psychology, the programme shall normally extend over two academic years of full-time study, with a maximum period of registration of four academic years of full-time study.

MSS 5.2. In the field of Counselling, the programme shall normally extend over two or three academic years of part-time study, with a maximum period of registration of three academic years for the two-year part-time study or four academic years for the three-year part-time study.

MSS 5.3. In the field of Criminology, the programme shall normally extend over one academic year of full-time study or two academic years of part-time study, with a maximum period of registration of two academic years of full-time study or four academic years of part-

time study.

MSS 5.4. In the field of Educational Psychology, the programme shall normally extend over two academic years of full-time study or three academic years of part-time study, with a maximum period of registration of four academic years for both full-time and part-time study.

MSS 5.5. In the fields of Media, Culture and Creative Cities, the programme shall normally extend over one academic year of full-time study or two academic years of part-time study, with a maximum period of registration of two academic years of full-time study or four academic years of part-time study.

MSS 5.6. In the field of Nonprofit Management, the programme shall normally extend over one academic year (three semesters) of full-time study or two academic years of part-time study, with a maximum period of registration of two academic years of full-time study or three academic years of part-time study.

MSS 5.7. In the fields of Mental Health and Social Service Management, the programme shall normally extend over two academic years of part-time study, with a maximum period of registration of three academic years of part-time study.

MSS 5.8. In the fields of Population and Policy Analysis and Applied Psychology, the programme shall normally extend over one academic year of full-time study, with a maximum period of registration of two academic years of full-time study.

MSS 5.9. In the field of Sociology, the programme shall normally extend over one academic year of full-time study or two academic years of part-time study, with a maximum period of registration of two academic years of full-time study or three academic years of part-time study.

MSS 6. Candidates shall not be permitted to extend their studies beyond the maximum period of registration specified in the above regulations, unless otherwise permitted or required by the Board of the Faculty.

Advanced Standing

MSS 7. Advanced Standing may be granted to candidates in recognition of studies completed successfully before admission to the curriculum. Candidates who are awarded Advanced Standing will not be granted any further credit transfer for those studies for which Advanced Standing has been granted. The amount of credits to be granted for Advanced Standing shall be determined by the Board of the Faculty, in accordance with the following principles:

- (a) a candidate may be granted a total of not more than 20% of the total credits normally required under a curriculum for Advanced Standing unless otherwise approved by the Senate; and
- (b) credits granted for Advanced Standing shall not normally be included in the calculation of the GPA unless permitted by the Board of the Faculty but will be recorded on the transcript of the candidate.

Exemption

MSS 8. Candidates may be exempted, with or without special conditions attached, from the requirement prescribed in the regulations and syllabuses governing the curriculum with the approval of the Board of the Faculty, except in the case of a capstone experience. Approval for

exemption of a capstone experience may be granted only by the Senate with good reasons. Candidates who are so exempted must replace the number of exempted credits with courses of the same credit value.

Progression in curriculum

MSS 9. Candidates may, with the approval of the Board of the Faculty, transfer credits for courses completed at other institutions during their candidature. The number of transferred credits may be recorded in the transcript of the candidate, but the results of courses completed at other institutions shall not be included in the calculation of the GPA. The combined total number of credits to be granted for Advanced Standing and credit transfer shall not exceed half of the total credits normally required under the curricula of the candidates during their candidature at the University.

Completion of curriculum

MSS 10. To complete the curriculum, candidates

- (a) shall satisfy the requirements prescribed in TPG 6 of the Regulations for Taught Postgraduate Curricula;
 - (b) shall follow courses of instruction and complete satisfactorily all prescribed written work and field work;
 - (c) shall complete and present a satisfactory dissertation or capstone project as prescribed in the syllabuses; and
 - (d) shall satisfy the examiners in all prescribed courses and in any prescribed form of examination.
-

Dissertation and Capstone project

MSS 11. Subject to the provisions of Regulation MSS 10(c), the title of the dissertation or capstone project shall be submitted for approval by not later than March 31 of the final academic year in which the teaching programme ends and the dissertation or capstone project shall be presented by a date as prescribed in the syllabuses for each field of study; candidates shall submit a statement that the dissertation or capstone project represents their own work (or in the case of conjoint work, a statement countersigned by their co-worker(s), which show their share of the work) undertaken after registration as candidates for the degree.

Assessment

MSS 12. Candidates shall be assessed for each of the courses for which they have registered, and assessment may be conducted in any combination of continuous assessment of coursework, written examinations and/or any other assessable activities. Only passed courses will earn credits.

MSS 13.

- (a) Where so prescribed in the syllabuses, coursework or a dissertation or a capstone project shall constitute part or whole of the examination for one or more courses.
- (b) An assessment of the candidates' coursework during their studies, including completion of written assignments and participation in field work or laboratory work, as the case may be, may be taken into account in determining the candidates' result in each written examination paper; or, where so prescribed in the syllabuses, may constitute the

examination of one or more courses.

MSS 14. Candidates shall not be permitted to repeat a course for which they have received a passing grade for the purpose of upgrading.

MSS 15. Candidates who have failed to satisfy the examiners at their first attempt in not more than half of the number of courses to be examined, whether by means of written examination papers or coursework assessment, during any of the academic years of study, may be permitted to make up for the failed course(s) in the following manner:

- (a) undergoing re-assessment/re-examination in the failed course; or
- (b) re-submitting failed coursework, without having to repeat the same course of instruction; or
- (c) repeating the failed course by undergoing instruction and satisfying the assessments; or
- (d) for elective courses, taking another course in lieu and satisfying the assessment requirements.

MSS 16. Subject to the provision of Regulation MSS 10(c), candidates who have failed to present a satisfactory dissertation or capstone project may be permitted to submit a new or revised dissertation or capstone project within a specified period.

MSS 17. Candidates who have failed to satisfy the examiners in any prescribed field work/practical work/internship may be permitted to present themselves for re-examination in field work/practical work/internship within a specified period.

MSS 18. Candidates who are unable because of their illness to be present at the written examination of any course may apply for permission to present themselves at a supplementary examination of the same course to be held before the beginning of the following academic year. Any such application shall be made on the form prescribed within seven calendar days of the first day of the candidate's absence from any examination. Any supplementary examination shall be part of that academic year's examinations, and the provision made in the regulations for failure at the first attempt shall apply accordingly.

MSS 19. There shall be no appeal against the results of examinations and all other forms of assessment.

MSS 20. Candidates who

- (a) are not permitted to present themselves for re-assessment/re-examination in any failed course(s) or to repeat the failed course(s) or take another course in lieu under Regulation MSS 15; or
 - (b) have failed to satisfy the examiners in any course(s) at a second attempt; or
 - (c) are not permitted to submit a new or revised dissertation or capstone project under Regulation MSS 16; or
 - (d) have failed to submit a satisfactory new or revised dissertation or capstone project under Regulation MSS 16; or
 - (e) have exceeded the maximum period of registration.
- may be required to discontinue their studies.

MSS 20.1. In the field of Clinical Psychology, candidates who have failed any two practicum courses at their first attempt (i.e. PSYC7029, 7030, 8011, 8012, 8013, 8014) may be required to discontinue their studies.

MSS 20.2. In the field of Educational Psychology, candidates who have failed any two practicum courses at their first attempt may be required to discontinue their studies.

Grading systems

MSS 21. Individual courses shall be graded according to the one of the following grading systems:

(a) Letter grades, their standards and the grade points for assessment as follows:

<i>Grade</i>	<i>Standard</i>	<i>Grade Point</i>
A+	} Excellent	4.3
A		4.0
A-		3.7
B+	} Good	3.3
B		3.0
B-		2.7
C+	} Satisfactory	2.3
C		2.0
C-		1.7
D+	} Pass	1.3
D		1.0
F	Fail	0

or

(b) 'Pass' or 'Fail'.

Courses graded according to (b) above shall not be included in the calculation of the GPA.

or

(c) 'Pass', 'Fail', or 'Distinction'.

Courses graded according to (b) or (c) above shall not be included in the calculation of the GPA.

Classification of awards

MSS 22. On successful completion of the curriculum, candidates who have shown exceptional merit may be awarded a mark of distinction, and this mark shall be recorded in the candidates' degree diploma.

SYLLABUSES FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

APPLIED PSYCHOLOGY [MSocSc(APsy)]

The Department of Psychology offers a postgraduate programme leading to the degree of Master of Social Sciences in the field of Applied Psychology. The mission of this MSocSc programme in Applied Psychology is to cultivate graduates with foundational knowledge and skills in psychological interventions for addressing complex cognitive and psychological health challenges. The programme will place strong emphasis on deepening students' understanding of psychological phenomena and principles through applied learning experience, the practical application of knowledge and skills in real-world contexts, and engagement with contemporary psychological scholarship. The programme provides a capstone experience for every student to better equip our graduates with a strong foundation in applied psychological science, critical thinking, and evidence-informed practice skills that are highly transferable across sectors.

CURRICULUM

The curriculum of the Master of Social Sciences in the field of Applied Psychology consists of a total of 60 credits. Candidates are required to complete six compulsory courses, three elective courses and one capstone experience course as listed below:

Compulsory Courses

Candidates shall complete all of the following six courses:

- PSYC7101. Introduction to concepts and approaches of psychological practice (6 credits)
- PSYC7102. Evidence-based psychotherapeutic practice (6 credits)
- PSYC7103. Psychological assessment (6 credits)
- PSYC7104. Introduction to psychological research (6 credits)
- PSYC7313. Introduction to health psychology and wellbeing (6 credits)
- PSYC7314. Professional ethics and issues in psychology (6 credits)

Elective Courses

Candidates shall complete three of the following courses:

- PSYC7106. Ageing and neurodegeneration (6 credits)
- PSYC7107. Forensic psychology (6 credits)
- PSYC7108. Special topics in applied psychology (6 credits)
- PSYC7109. Experiential learning (6 credits)
- PSYC7305. Developmental psychology (6 credits)
- PSYC7318. Introduction to educational psychology (6 credits)

(Note: Not all the elective courses listed will necessarily be offered every year)

Capstone Experience Course

Candidates shall complete the following capstone experience course:

- PSYC7120. Capstone project (6 credits)

For the compulsory and elective psychology courses, candidates are required to complete the assigned readings and are encouraged to engage in self-directed learning by reading additional self-selected relevant materials.

Candidates who are enrolled in a capstone experience course are required to conduct a capstone project on an approved topic under the supervision of an academic member in his/her final year of study. The capstone project report shall be presented not later than the last teaching day of the final academic year of study.

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

Compulsory Courses

PSYC7101. Introduction to concepts and approaches of psychological practice (6 credits)

This course provides an overview of key concepts, frameworks, and professional roles in psychological practice. Students will be introduced to foundational ideas across therapeutic approaches, psychological assessment, and ethical standards. Emphasis is placed on understanding how theory connects to practice and the diverse contexts in which psychologists work. This course prepares students for deeper exploration of therapy, assessment, and ethics in subsequent modules within the programme.

Assessment: 100% coursework.

PSYC7102. Evidence-based psychotherapeutic practice (6 credits)

This course introduces students to the theoretical foundations and practical applications of psychological interventions. The course offers learning in psychological intervention skills that facilitate clients' insight and underpin psychological change.

Assessment: 100% coursework

PSYC7103. Psychological assessment (6 credits)

This course offers a foundational overview of psychological assessment, introducing students to key concepts, methods, and ethical considerations in the field. Emphasis is placed on understanding the purposes and principles of assessment across cognitive, emotional, and behavioural domains. Students will explore commonly used assessment tools and develop basic skills in test selection, administration, and interpretation. This course serves as a preparatory platform for more specialized training in psychoeducational, cognitive, and personality assessment.

Assessment: 100% coursework

PSYC7104. Introduction to psychological research (6 credits)

This course adopts a practical approach to teaching the analytical aspects of research techniques in psychology. It is designed to provide students with the basic background in research design and data analysis. The logic of statistical inference and scientific explanation, the merits and limitations of quantitative approaches to the study of psychological phenomena, and research ethics will be discussed.

Assessment: 100% coursework

PSYC7313. Introduction to health psychology and wellbeing (6 credits)

This course will provide a critical overview of both the psychological and social aspects of human health and wellbeing. Students will gain a foundation for understanding the role of psychology in the health context. Topics covered in this course include health behaviours, coping with health-related stress, social support and health, psychoimmunology, management of chronic illnesses, and patient-practitioner interaction etc.

Assessment: 100% coursework

PSYC7314. Professional ethics and issues in psychology (6 credits)

The purpose of the course is to provide general ethical guidance to cover typical situations encountered by professional psychologists. Models of ethical decision making will be introduced, discussed, and applied. In addition to the Code of Professional Conduct published by local professional bodies (e.g., the Hong Kong Psychological Society), a number of ethical codes, guidelines, and standards of practice will be reviewed.

Assessment: 100% coursework

Elective Courses

PSYC7106. Ageing and neurodegeneration (6 credits)

This course explores the biological, psychological, and clinical aspects of ageing and neurodegenerative disorders. Students will examine the mechanisms of normal and pathological ageing. The course integrates current research on cognitive decline, brain plasticity, and neurobiological changes associated with ageing. Through case studies and critical analysis of contemporary literature, students will gain a comprehensive understanding of the challenges and opportunities in promoting healthy ageing.

Assessment: 100% coursework

PSYC7107. Forensic psychology (6 credits)

This course provides a comprehensive overview of the application of psychological principles for criminal behavioural analysis and risk assessment. Emphasis is placed on understanding the theoretical foundations, empirical research, and ethical considerations that inform forensic psychological work. The course is designed to equip students with foundational knowledge relevant to forensic settings and to foster critical thinking about the role of psychology in legal systems.

Assessment: 100% coursework

PSYC7108. Special topics in applied psychology (6 credits)

This course explores current and emerging issues, trends, and specialized areas within the field of applied psychology. The course aims to deepen students' understanding of complex challenges faced by psychologists and to foster critical thinking and adaptability in various professional contexts. Emphasis is placed on integrating theoretical knowledge with practical application to prepare students for specialized roles in the field. Individual topics may have special eligibility requirements.

Assessment: 100% coursework

PSYC7109. Experiential learning (6 credits)

Students will have an experiential learning opportunity to apply psychology knowledge to understand real-life psychological issues and reflect upon this experience. Learning experiences include demonstrations and observations, roleplay, and case discussion. Students are expected to meet with the teacher(s) regularly, reflect upon specific psychological knowledge applied and how they affect various practices and people's lives in society, and write a reflection paper to conclude the learning impact.

Assessment: 100% coursework

PSYC7305. Developmental psychology (6 credits)

This course covers current issues in developmental psychology and their applied implications. Students will actively solve problems and conduct small-scale projects related to selected topics in human development. There will be an emphasis on understanding basic concepts and theories of human development, research methodology and issues in developmental change, as well as biological, environmental and cognitive influences on development.

Assessment: 100% coursework

PSYC7318. Introduction to educational psychology (6 credits)

This course focuses on how psychological theories are applied to learning, teaching, and the facilitation of human growth. The topics include major developmental theories and their application to learning and instruction; learning theories from both behavioural and cognitive traditions; effective teaching methods and practices; learners' individual and group differences; achievement motivation; and assessment. Students will be involved in learning activities that require self-reflection and integration of daily life experiences.

Assessment: 100% coursework

Capstone Experience Course

PSYC7120. Capstone project (6 credits)

This course comprises an independent research study in an area of applied psychological science. Students will engage in supervised psychological research. They are required to write a review or report on a research project (e.g., a meta-analytic review or a small-scale empirical project). The write-up should be about 4,000 to 5,000 words in length (excluding tables, figures, bibliographies, and appendices).

Assessment: 100% coursework

SYLLABUSES FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF SOCIAL SCIENCES (MSocSc)

These syllabuses apply to candidates admitted to the Master of Social Sciences in the academic year 2026-27 and thereafter.

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH [MSocSc(BH)]

The Department of Social Work and Social Administration offers a postgraduate programme leading to the degree of Master of Social Sciences in the field of Behavioral Health. The programme provides systematic and comprehensive training in behavioral health with the integration of Eastern and Western holistic orientation for healthcare professionals such as medical doctors, nurses, social workers, psychologists, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, counsellors, counselling teachers, sports and fitness instructors, dieticians, Chinese medicine practitioners and complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) practitioners. The programme shall extend over not less than one and not more than two academic years of full-time study; or not less than two and not more than three academic years of part-time study, inclusive of intervening vacations.

EXEMPTION

Candidates may be granted exemption of up to three courses in recognition of studies completed in related areas. Exemption will only be considered in special circumstances and each application for exemption will be considered on its own merit. Candidates with exemption granted are required to take an additional elective course to replace the exempted course to meet the degree requirements.

ASSESSMENTS

To complete the programme, candidates shall satisfy the examiners in the assessment of courses as prescribed in the programme. Assessments of the courses may be conducted either by course assignments, by presentations, or by written tests, or a combination of both methods. The grading system follows the standard practice in the Faculty of Social Sciences.

CURRICULUM

The programme shall extend over not less than one and not more than two academic years of full-time study; or not less than two and not more than three academic years of part-time study, inclusive of intervening vacations.

Candidates are required to complete 60 credits, including 4 compulsory courses (6 credits each), 4 elective courses (6 credits each) and a practicum or dissertation (12 credits). Each course comprises the equivalent of at least 36 contact hours. They are expected to devote 220 hours on the practicum or dissertation and are required to present a progress report on their practicum or dissertation.

Candidates may be approved to enroll up to two courses offered by other postgraduate programmes of the Faculty as substitutes of elective courses in this programme. The substitute must be relevant to behavioral health and comprise the equivalent of at least 36 contact hours.

Compulsory courses

Candidates shall complete the following courses.

- MSBH6104. Spirituality in clinical practice (6 credits)
- MSBH7001. Introduction to behavioral health (6 credits)
- MSBH7005. Scientific inquiry and research methods in behavioral health (6 credits)
- MSBH7008. Integrative approaches to holistic well-being (6 credits)

Elective courses

Candidates shall complete four of the following courses.

- MSBH6101. Counselling and psychotherapy (6 credits)
- MSBH6106. Abnormal psychology (6 credits)
- MSBH6117. Working with special target populations (6 credits)
- MSBH6118. Selected topics (6 credits)
- MSBH7009. Contemplative practices in human services (6 credits)
- EXAT7101. Fundamentals of music therapy (6 credits)
- EXAT7102. Fundamentals of drama therapy (6 credits)
- EXAT7103. Fundamentals of art therapy (6 credits)
- EXAT7104. Fundamentals of dance and movement therapy (6 credits)
- EXAT7105. Assessment in clinical setting (6 credits)
- SOWK6206. Play Therapy (6 credits)
- SOWK6259. Contemporary perspectives on death, dying and bereavement (6 credits)
- SOWK6274. Theories and practices in positive psychology and strength-based interventions (6 credits)

Capstone experience courses

Candidates shall complete one of the following courses.

- MSBH6201. Practicum (12 credits)
- MSBH6202. Dissertation (12 credits)

(Note: not all courses will necessarily be offered in a given year.)

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

Compulsory Courses

MSBH6104. Spirituality in clinical practice (6 credits)

Illness is a subject experience that suggests malfunctioning of not just the physical body, but the mind and the spirit. This subjective understanding of illness calls for the re-examination of our existence, both materially and non-materially. As such, clinical intervention should extend its target beyond the physical realm and into the area of spirituality. Spirituality comes from the Latin word *spiritus*, which means soul, courage, vigor, and breath. Nowadays, the word has taken on the meaning of a quest for an ultimate/sacred meaning, an examination of one's experience on a sacred dimension. Understanding and acknowledging the spiritual meaning of one's illness experience has proven to be a vital component in restoring holistic well-being. Aside from theoretical knowledge, personal reflection and experience in spiritual practices are also emphasized in this course.

Assessment: 100% coursework

MSBH7001. Introduction to behavioral health (6 credits)

The course aims to orient students to the arts and science of different approaches to behavioral health. It covers the history of development, rationale, latest research, and strategies in behavioral health. To give students a multidisciplinary and culturally sensitive perspective on behavioral health, the Eastern and Western approaches to behavioral health will be considered. This course introduces graduate students to various principles, evidence-based approaches, and techniques in behavioral health. The theoretical framework and clinical efficacy of the approaches, as well as the implications and practical applications for helping professionals, will be discussed.

Assessment: 100% coursework

MSBH7005. Scientific inquiry and research methods in behavioral health (6 credits)

This course covers the basic principles of research methods in behavioral science and equips students with the basic knowledge to become critical consumers of scientific literature. It covers basic quantitative and qualitative research methods and research ethics using examples of real-life research projects. The latest development and trends in social science research methods and specific approaches in behavioral health will also be introduced. Students are expected to acquire the basic skills in offering critical appraisals on others' research work and drafting a research proposal in which classroom learning can be applied to practical examples in behavioral health.

Assessment: 100% coursework

MSBH7008. Integrative approaches to holistic well-being (6 credits)

This course aims to enhance students' personal wellness and sensitivity, as well as their competence in cultivating well-being through integrative approaches. This course is designed based on the principles of experiential learning. The course consists of a series of experiential workshops, short didactic seminars, and a student-led project. The workshop sessions give students hands-on experience integrating holistic wellness into real-life settings and help them reflect and build competence in using integrative approaches in their personal and professional lives. The didactic seminars introduce the students to the theoretical framework and philosophical underpinnings of designing a holistic well-being programme. Students are expected to show a deeper understanding and competence in developing their holistic healthcare practice models by integrating what they have learned in all preceding modules with their direct experience in this course.

Assessment: 100% coursework

Elective Courses

MSBH6101. Counselling and psychotherapy (6 credits)

This course examines the basic tenets and therapeutic processes of the major counselling and psychotherapy treatments available to modern-day practitioners. It covers basic counselling skills and core issues in clinical practice, such as values, ethics and therapeutic alliance. Major psychological treatments are introduced, including psychodynamic therapy, behavioural treatment, cognitive-behavioural therapy, humanistic/existential approaches and mind-body approach. Students are expected to be active knowledge seekers. They are encouraged to participate actively in group discussion and role-play. Emphasis is placed on the cultivation of independent, critical, and reflective thoughts through reading, discussion and experiential learning.

Assessment: 100% coursework

MSBH6106. Abnormal psychology (6 credits)

This graduate level course will discuss past and current research regarding theoretical, clinical and experimental perspectives of the study of psychological abnormality. Emphasis is on classification, etiology, assessment and accepted treatment of major categories of mental disorders described in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM) of the American Psychiatric Association, Version 5. In addition, the course also aims to provide an appreciation for the incomplete nature of our understanding of mental illness. A variety of in-class exercises – including small group discussions and video tapes are used to understand mental disorders. Controversial and culturally-relevant issues, especially with reference to the Chinese context, in abnormal psychology will also be explored and discussed. Case examples will be shared to enhance students' learning.

Assessment: 100% coursework

MSBH6117. Working with special target populations (6 credits)

This course covers selected topics that pertain to special populations or problems (e.g., cancer, AIDS, smoking, addictive gambling).

Assessment: 100% coursework

MSBH6118. Selected topics (6 credits)

This course covers selected topics that meet acute societal needs, or are of current interest or on the cutting edge of knowledge advancement in behavioral health. Examples are prevention and coping with pandemic crises; reproductive health; gender, sexuality, and well-being; domestic violence.

Assessment: 100% coursework

MSBH7009. Contemplative practices in human services (6 credits)

This course aims at providing students with a basic understanding of contemplative practices, including the historical roots and the scientific evidence, as shown in its application in healthcare, education, and other human service contexts in the past 40 years. Both theoretical and experiential learning will be included. Students will partake in a four-week mindfulness training program with in-class exercises and home practices. The potential risks and ethical considerations for application among different target groups will be examined. Students will then be guided to develop their approach in integrating the contemplative practice in their professional settings based on their personal experiences, understanding of the theoretical background, and adherence to the ethical guidelines.

Assessment: 100% coursework

EXAT7101. Fundamentals of music therapy (6 credits)

Through both listening to and actively making music, the intentional application of sound and music in therapy has been used for a variety of purposes. Expressive arts therapists who wish to use music in treatment have to become aware of how the properties of rhythm, tempo, pitch, harmony, contour of a melody, range, texture, timbre and so forth affect all levels of healing from expression to relaxation. By increasing comfort in playing a variety of musical instruments, genres and styles, students can identify when to offer specific interventions to advance therapy and healing. In becoming aware of the foundational theories of the field of music therapy, students can learn to locate their potential work in a larger theoretical context. Although this course does not qualify students to practice music therapy, students will gain awareness of the use of sound and music in therapeutic settings, as well as how to ethically apply sound and music in their work settings.

Assessment: 100% coursework

EXAT7102. Fundamentals of drama therapy (6 credits)

Theatre and dramatic activity have often been used to communicate essential truths and express particular values. Within the context of therapy, drama allows clients to recreate life experiences, imagine new ones, and experiment with alternate endings and choices. Through re-enactment or witnessing others tell one's story, acting is an essential healing modality. Understanding the history and theory of drama therapy, and considering activities such as improvisation or pantomime, can help individuals learn to offer drama in therapeutic and educational settings. Developing cultural sensitivity, self-awareness, and critical appreciation will allow students to be competent in offering drama activities to clients. Although this course does not qualify students to practice drama therapy, students will gain awareness of drama in therapeutic settings and how to ethically apply drama activities in their work settings.

Assessment: 100% coursework

EXAT7103. Fundamentals of art therapy (6 credits)

This course is multifaceted that emphasizes theories, building of hands-on techniques, and application of art therapy knowledge and skills. The course is designed for helping service professionals, educators, and artists to learn about the practice and profession of art therapy. Content area covered will focus on history, theories, and application of art therapy with various populations. Novel art therapy approaches, art materials not ordinarily used and could be applied in various professional work settings, and cutting-edge theories will be highlighted in different lectures to train up students in a key role of using visual art modality as a helping tool in their fields. In addition to lectures and discussions, students will have ample time that allows them to participate in experiential art workshops to immerse themselves in the creative and therapeutic process of artmaking. Although this course does not qualify students to practice art therapy, students will gain awareness of art in therapeutic settings and how to ethically apply art making in their work settings.

Assessment: 100% coursework

EXAT7104. Fundamentals of dance and movement therapy (6 credits)

Dance and movement allow individuals to express, communicate, and engage in healing through their bodies. Engaged in a variety of clinical and educational settings, dance and movement can be engaged as effective nonverbal interventions. In order to be able to use this art form effectively, practitioners must be grounded in the comfortability with their own body awareness, and attuned to the artistic, social, and cultural influences that affect movement. By exploring the history of the field of dance and movement therapy and the various ways to involve the body in therapy, students will be able to use dance and/or movement as a way to help facilitate the process during interventions with clinical and non-clinical populations. Although this course does not qualify students to practice dance/movement therapy, students will gain awareness of dance/movement in therapeutic settings and how to ethically apply the use of dance/movement in their work settings.

Assessment: 100% coursework

EXAT7105. Assessment in clinical setting (6 credits)

The course equips students with a range of knowledge and essential skills in conducting clinical assessments. The course introduces students to the principles and techniques they require for history-taking, conducting mental state examinations, deriving evidence-based, multidimensional case formulations, and deploying strategic, holistic treatment plans for common mental health issues. To enhance students' awareness and critical appraisal of current assessment issues in clinical settings, professional issues related to assessment in clinical settings will be discussed with reference to up-to-date evidence in the field. Going beyond the medical model of assessment, this course adopts a systemic, bio-psycho-social perspective on mental health issues by considering factors predisposing, precipitating, and perpetuating the presenting problems. In addition, to broaden the students' understanding of clinical assessment, state-of-the-art and evidence-based assessment practices using different art modalities will also be introduced.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOWK6206. Play Therapy (6 credits)

The objective of the module is to introduce the student to the principles and practice of play therapy and its application to the counseling and psychotherapy for children, adolescents and families. At the end of the course, the students will have an introduction of the history and development of play therapy, an understanding of various theoretical models of play therapy, rationale for the use of play in therapy, and phrase of the client's progress in play therapy. Practice material will be provided including how to development therapeutic rapport, conduct a play based assessment, setting up of a playroom and the selection of therapeutic play materials. Best practice tips on engaging the client, recording keeping and other ethical issues will be discussed.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOWK6259. Contemporary perspectives on death, dying and bereavement (6 credits)

Death is an inevitable life experience for everyone. Death-related problem is one of the commonest issues that clients brought to counseling, but is also rated as the most uncomfortable scenario by beginning counselors. This course offers a basic orientation to the knowledge and intervention approaches in working with death-related situations, including end of life care and bereavement counseling. Major theories and models related to death, dying and bereavement would be introduced. Corresponding clinical implications and practical work approaches would also be highlighted. Apart from the knowledge and skills, the course also emphasizes on personal exploration and review on one's attitudes toward life and death issues. It is hoped that students are better equipped with knowledge competence, practice competence as well as self competence in working with death, dying and bereavement.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOWK6274. Theories and practices in positive psychology and strength-based interventions (6 credits)

Positive Psychology emphasizes the discovery and cultivation of human strengths and potential for a flourished life, and strength-based interventions include counseling and therapy models that foster psychological well-being and reduce distress and symptoms in clients. This course critically reviews the theory and practice of positive psychology, including the study of happiness, character strengths, optimism, resilience, compassion, meaning, goals, flow, creativity and hope and their relevance to psychological health and psychotherapy, as well as strength-oriented interventions which include mindfulness-based, compassion-based and valued-based models. The cultural relevance of Positive Psychology and strength-based interventions will also be examined.

Assessment: 100% coursework

Capstone Experience Courses

MSBH6201. Practicum (12 credits)

The practicum comprises 200 hours of prescribed work in healthcare settings under guidance by a supervisor, plus at least 20 hours of tutorials. A practicum report of not more than 10,000 words shall be submitted by not later than May 31 of the final academic year of study.

Assessment: 100% coursework

MSBH6202. Dissertation (12 credits)

The dissertation shall demonstrate the student's ability to apply sound research methodology to investigate problems relevant to the field of study. It shall not exceed 20,000 words in length. The title of the dissertation shall be submitted for approval by not later than March 31 of the final academic year of study, and the dissertation shall be presented by not later than August 1 of the final academic year of study.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SYLLABUSES FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY [MSocSc(CP)]

The Department of Psychology offers a postgraduate programme leading to the degree of Master of Social Sciences in the field of Clinical Psychology. The programme aims to train competent and professional clinical psychologists and has an emphasis on science-based practices.

STRUCTURE AND EVALUATION

The programme shall extend over two years and the intervening term breaks. The full-time programme consists of a total of 171 credits. Candidates are required to complete 22 compulsory courses, including 15 taught courses (6 credits each) (a total of 90 credits), 6 practicum courses (Practicum I to V) and an in-house practicum course with a total of 69 credits, and a dissertation research course given 12 credits (PSYC8006 Dissertation). Each credit-unit is roughly equivalent to 20 hours of student learning activities (including both contact hours and all other forms of student learning activities) for the taught courses and the dissertation, or 30 hours of work for practicum, under supervision of a clinical supervisor. Whereas the first year of the programme shall focus on the theoretical foundations and basic skills training in Clinical Psychology, the second year shall extend to include the application of the theories and assessment and treatment models to special populations in various clinical settings. The courses are as follows:

Compulsory courses

First year

PSYC7024.	Induction Programme (6 credits)
PSYC7029.	Practicum I (12 credits)
PSYC7030.	Practicum II (12 credits)
PSYC7002.	Assessment of personality and psychopathology (6 credits)
PSYC7003.	Individual psychotherapy I (6 credits)
PSYC7004.	Individual psychotherapy II (6 credits)
PSYC7005.	Psychopathology I (6 credits)
PSYC7006.	Psychopathology II (6 credits)
PSYC7018.	Cognitive assessment (6 credits)
PSYC7019.	Research methods and statistics I (6 credits)
PSYC7020.	Research methods and statistics II (6 credits)
PSYC7009.	Clinical seminar I (6 credits)

Second year

PSYC8011.	Practicum III (12 credits)
PSYC8012.	Practicum IV (12 credits)
PSYC8013.	Practicum V (12 credits)
PSYC8001.	Clinical seminar II (6 credits)
PSYC8003.	Family and group therapy (6 credits)
PSYC8004.	Clinical neuropsychology (6 credits)

First and/or Second year

- PSYC8002. Community and health psychology (6 credits)
- PSYC8005. Ethics and professional issues (6 credits)
- PSYC8014. Psychological Services Unit in-house practicum (9 credits)

Capstone experience course

- PSYC8006. Dissertation (12 credits)

The courses listed above may be offered at a different year of study.

EXAMINATIONS

Examinations of the courses followed by a candidate may be either by a written paper in the examination held in December or May of the academic year of study, or by continuous assessment of the candidates' performance in completing the requirements of these courses, or by a combination of these methods.

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

Compulsory Courses

PSYC7024. Induction Programme (6 credits)

This course aims at engaging trainees in a number of orientation activities designed to provide them with a preliminary understanding of the theoretical and practical issues addressed in the programme and to prepare them for their first placement beginning in December of the year of training.

Assessment: 100% coursework

This course will be assessed on a pass/fail basis and will not be counted in the calculation of the GPA. However, grades will be recorded on the official transcript.

PSYC7029. Practicum I (12 credits)

Practicum I is the first of the five practicum courses. It consists of a minimum of 44 days of on-site clinical placement. Through the on-site clinical placements, students will have the opportunity to learn and work under the direct supervision of experienced clinical psychologists who are providing services in different settings such as public hospitals, social services agencies, and government departments. They will gain practical experience in working with a variety of client groups with different problems across the life span. The training includes supervised practice in assessment, case formulation, and treatment. Involvement in case conferences, workshops, seminars, or projects within the placement settings may also form part of the training. Students will learn the professional ethics, service contexts and rules in different settings, and acquire knowledge and skills to work effectively in different teams or structures.

Assessment: 100% practicum

PSYC7030. Practicum II (12 credits)

Practicum II is the second of the five practicum courses. It consists of a minimum of 44 days of on-site clinical placement. Through the on-site clinical placements, students will have the opportunity to learn and work under the direct supervision of experienced clinical psychologists in different settings such as public hospitals, social services agencies, and government departments. They will gain practical experience in working with a variety of client groups with different problems across the life span. The training includes supervised practice in assessment, case formulation, and treatment. Involvement in case conferences, workshops, seminars, or projects within the placement settings may also form part of the training. Students will learn the professional ethics, service contexts and rules in different settings, and acquire knowledge and skills to work effectively in different teams or structures.

Assessment: 100% practicum

PSYC8011. Practicum III (12 credits)

Practicum III is the third of the five practicum courses. It consists of a minimum of 44 days of on-site clinical placement. Through the on-site clinical placements, students will have the opportunity to learn and work under the direct supervision of experienced clinical psychologists in different settings such as public hospitals, social services agencies, and government departments. They will gain practical experience in working with a variety of client groups with different problems across the life span. The training includes supervised practice in assessment, case formulation, and treatment. Involvement in case conferences, workshops, seminars, or projects within the placement settings may also form part of the training. Students will learn the professional ethics, service contexts and rules in different settings, and acquire knowledge and skills to work effectively in different teams or structures.

Assessment: 100% practicum

PSYC8012. Practicum IV (12 credits)

Practicum IV is the fourth of the five practicum courses. It consists of a minimum of 44 days of on-site clinical placement. Through the on-site clinical placements, students will have the opportunity to learn and work under the direct supervision of experienced clinical psychologists in different settings such as public hospitals, social services agencies, and government departments. They will gain practical experience in working with a variety of client groups with different problems across the life span. The training includes supervised practice in assessment, case formulation, and treatment. Involvement in case conferences, workshops, seminars, or projects within the placement settings may also form part of the training. Students will learn the professional ethics, service contexts and rules in different settings, and acquire knowledge and skills to work effectively in different teams or structures.

Assessment: 100% practicum

PSYC8013. Practicum V (12 credits)

Practicum V is the fifth of the five practicum courses. It consists of a minimum of 44 days of on-site clinical placement. Through the on-site clinical placements, students will have the opportunity to learn and work under the direct supervision of experienced clinical psychologists in different settings such as public hospitals, social services agencies, and government departments. They will gain practical experience in working with a variety of client groups with different problems across the life span. The training includes supervised practice in assessment, case formulation, and treatment. Involvement in case conferences, workshops, seminars, or projects within the placement settings may also form part of the training. Students will learn the professional ethics, service contexts and rules in different settings, and acquire knowledge and skills to work effectively in different teams or structures.

Assessment: 100% practicum

PSYC7002. Assessment of personality and psychopathology (6 credits)

This course focuses on the theoretical, practical, and cross-cultural issues related to the assessment of psychopathology and personality. Trainees will be exposed to a variety of clinical evaluation protocols in order to evaluate the level of functioning and symptomatology of an individual. They will also be exposed to the application of these techniques to a wide range of psychiatric problems as stipulated in DSM-5-tr. These include mental state examination, test administration and interpretation, diagnostic decision making, integration of material derived from patient history and other relevant sources, and comprehensive case conceptualization.

Assessment: 100% coursework

PSYC7003. Individual psychotherapy I (6 credits)

This course introduces the common principles and skills of psychotherapies. In addition to reviewing the theoretical rationale and recent research and clinical literature, this course also focuses on the application of the empirically-supported therapeutic techniques to clinical and special populations.

Assessment: 100% coursework

PSYC7004. Individual psychotherapy II (6 credits)

The course focuses on the application of evidence-based psychotherapeutic approaches to the treatment of specific psychological disorders in both adults and children. Cultural issues in the practice of psychotherapy will be discussed when appropriate. Experienced clinicians are invited to introduce common treatment approaches applied to different populations in Hong Kong. In addition, new developments and contemporary issues in psychotherapy will be critically examined.

Assessment: 100% coursework

PSYC7005. Psychopathology I (6 credits)

In this first course of Psychopathology, students will learn important theoretical concepts in the definition, aetiology, features and classification of mental disorders. Major disorders across the life span will be examined. Significant paradigms, such as biological, psychodynamic, cognitive – behavioural and relevant psychosocial theories will be discussed, together with special issues in the diagnosis and conceptualisation of specific mental disorders.

Assessment: 100% coursework

PSYC7006. Psychopathology II (6 credits)

This second course of Psychopathology uses a developmental psychopathology perspective to discuss major topics of mental health problems across the life span. It aims to enhance the conceptualisation and case formulation skills of trainees as scientist–practitioners. The topics will be examined in depth, with special emphasis on the integration of theoretical conceptualisation, research findings and clinical practice. Special attention will be given to current issues of concern in both the Eastern and Western contexts.

Assessment: 100% coursework

PSYC7018. Cognitive assessment (6 credits)

This course provides an introduction to the assessment of cognitive functioning. Students learn to administer, score, and interpret a number of commonly used cognitive tests. Students also learn to present test results in professional psychological reports. Related psychometric principles, professional ethics, and cultural issues will be discussed.

Assessment: 100% coursework

PSYC7019. Research methods and statistics I (6 credits)

The topics in this course include intermediate research methods and statistics. This course is designed to extend the knowledge and skills of students on research design and quantitative methods, using empirical examples in psychology to illustrate the key concepts and statistical reasoning involved. Students learn to become more intelligent consumers of research findings and more independent in conducting their own empirical studies.

Assessment: 100% coursework

PSYC7020. Research methods and statistics II (6 credits)

The topics in this course include intermediate research methods and statistics. This course is designed to extend the knowledge and skills of students on research design and quantitative methods, using empirical examples in psychology to illustrate the key concepts and statistical reasoning involved. Students learn to become more intelligent consumers of research findings and more independent in conducting their own empirical studies. At the end of this course, each student will have developed a viable research proposal in preparation for his/her thesis according to standards of the American Psychological Association.

Assessment: 100% coursework

PSYC7009. Clinical seminar I (6 credits)

A series of skill-training workshops will be offered to prepare students for further practical training in clinical placements. The course is composed of two arms: Assessment and Intervention. The Assessment arm covers core principles and strategies for intake interview with both adult and children populations. Intellectual assessment in the local context will be covered and commonly used tools for assessing a broad range of cognitive, behavioural, emotional, and social functions in children will also be introduced. The Treatment arm covers basic attitude and skills in counselling and forming therapeutic alliance, as well as specific skills used in cognitive and behavioural therapies.

Assessment: 100% coursework

PSYC8001. Clinical seminar II (6 credits)

The seminar provides in-depth clinical case discussions, with a focus on contemporary approaches to treatment planning and execution for a range of complex psychological problems. Emphasis is placed on integration of psychological theories and clinical practice, as well as training on therapeutic skills and treatment strategies for effective implementation. Students will get the chance to learn advanced knowledge and skills in specialist areas of psychological practice. Experienced clinicians and scholars will be invited to share their expertise on specialized topics.

Assessment: 100% coursework

PSYC8002. Community and health psychology (6 credits)

This course provides an overview of the history, context, and development of community psychology and health psychology. Students will be exposed to key concepts and values associated with the fields. They will also explore the application of community psychology and health psychology in the local context. The course provides ample opportunities for students to collectively develop and examine community-based initiatives to tackle mental health problems. Special emphasis is given to multicultural and diversity issues.

Assessment: 100% coursework

PSYC8003. Family and group therapy (6 credits)

This course provides an overview of the theories and practice of family and group interventions. For Family Intervention, it covers fundamental concepts, theories and frameworks in working with families and couples. Students will be able to develop basic knowledge and different theories of family therapy and how it can be applied in special populations. The course will be conducted in didactic lectures with case illustrations, videos and/or exercises.

The Group Intervention component aims to familiarize the trainees with the major theories, principles and techniques of group interventions through reading, discussion, videos and role plays. Group development, dynamics and different stages in the group processes will be examined. The empirical basis for efficacy of group interventions and group interventions for different populations and different psychological disorders will be addressed.

Assessment: 100% coursework

PSYC8004. Clinical neuropsychology (6 credits)

This course aims to provide an overview of basic functional neuroanatomy and clinical neuropathology. Literature in neuroscience and clinical neuropsychology will be reviewed and discussed. Neuropsychological assessment approaches will be introduced.

Assessment: 100% coursework

PSYC8005. Ethics and professional issues (6 credits)

The focus of this course is on the process of ethical decision making in the professional practice of clinical psychology. Models of ethical decision making will be introduced, discussed, and applied. In addition to the Code of Professional Conduct published by local professional bodies (e.g. the Hong Kong Psychological Society and the Hong Kong Institute of Clinical Psychologists), a number of ethical codes, guidelines, and standards of practice will be reviewed.

Assessment: 100% coursework

This course will be assessed on a pass/fail basis and will not be counted in the calculation of the GPA. However, grades will be recorded on the official transcript.

PSYC8014. Psychological Services Unit in-house practicum (9 credits)

This course provides students with hands-on clinical experience in assessment and treatment at the in-house Psychological Services Unit (PSU) at HKU. This course spans over the two years of the programme. Students will be given the opportunity to observe real cases, conduct assessments, therapeutic groups and individual therapies for clients from the university and the community, and engage in public education initiatives under the supervision of course instructors. The major emphasis for the in-house practicum is on developing students' Professional Conducts and Attributes via managing real-life cases under the close supervision of teachers.

Assessment: 100% coursework

This course will be assessed on a pass/fail/pass with distinction basis and will not be counted in the calculation of the GPA. However, grades will be recorded on the official transcript.

Capstone Experience Course

PSYC8006. Dissertation (12 credits)

While in residence, each student proposes and completes a substantive, scholarly work relevant to clinical psychology. The dissertation must represent a student's individual work. The examiners may also prescribe an oral examination on the subject of the dissertation. The title of the dissertation shall be submitted for approval on March 31 of the final academic year of study, and the dissertation shall be submitted by June 30 of the final academic year of study.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SYLLABUSES FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

COUNSELLING [MSocSc(Counsel)]

The Department of Social Work and Social Administration offers a postgraduate programme leading to the degree of Master of Social Sciences in the field of Counselling for professionals in the human services, such as social workers, teachers, managers, nurses, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, speech and hearing therapists and other related professionals who are interested in counselling. The programme shall extend over two academic years for the two-year part-time study or three academic years for the three-year part-time study. Candidates shall not be permitted to extend their studies beyond the maximum period of registration of three academic years for the two-year part-time study, or four academic years for the three-year part-time study, inclusive of intervening vacations.

EXEMPTION

Candidates may be granted exemption of up to two compulsory courses in recognition of studies completed in related areas. Exemption will only be considered in special circumstances and each application for exemption will be considered on its own merit. Candidates with exemption granted are required to take an additional elective course(s) to replace the exempted course(s) to meet the degree requirements.

EXAMINATIONS

To complete the programme, candidates shall satisfy the examiners in the assessment of courses and a practice-based project report as prescribed in the programme. Assessments of the courses may be conducted by ongoing coursework assignments, or by written tests, or by a combination of both.

CURRICULUM

Candidates are required to complete 66 credits, including 5 compulsory courses (6 credits each), and 3 elective courses (6 credits each) or 1 elective course (6 credits) with a dissertation (12 credits), a skills training laboratory (6 credits each) and a practicum (12 credits) that includes a practice-based project report. Elective courses are so designed that they can provide a focused study in one of three service settings: welfare, education, and health care. By selecting a particular combination of courses, candidates may (1) specialize in one stream from these three service settings; or (2) choose a more broad-based curriculum; or (3) choose to complete 1 elective course with a dissertation (equivalent to two courses) if candidates are interested in advancing their research skills.

Candidates can take elective courses in other fields of study under the Master of Social Sciences (Behavioral Health, Gerontology, Mental Health, Nonprofit Management, Social Service Management) and the Master of Social Work programmes. Special approval from the respective Programme Directors for the courses in the above-mentioned fields of study or programme is needed.

Candidates can also take a maximum of one elective course from the Master of Buddhist Counselling programme. Teachers from the Master of Buddhist Counselling programme may also serve as the co-supervisor in the Capstone Experience Courses if the area of study is relevant. The selection of cross-listed courses and co-supervision of Capstone Experience Courses shall be subject to the approval of the Programme Director/Chairman of the two respective programmes.

Compulsory courses

Candidates shall complete the following courses.

- SOWK6040. Practice research in human services (6 credits)
- SOWK6158. Critical issues in human development (6 credits)
- SOWK6159. Abnormal psychology (6 credits)
- SOWK6160. Assessment and testing (6 credits)
- SOWK6161. Theories and practices in counselling and professional ethics (6 credits)

Elective courses

Dissertation option: Candidates shall complete one of the following courses.

Non-dissertation option: Candidates shall complete three of the following courses.

- SOWK6022. Emotionally focused therapy (6 credits)
- SOWK6062. The Satir model and family reconstruction (6 credits)
- SOWK6127. Cognitive-behavioral interventions (6 credits)
- SOWK6162. Counselling in the welfare setting (6 credits)
- SOWK6163. Counselling in the health care setting (6 credits)
- SOWK6164. Counselling in the educational setting (6 credits)
- SOWK6166. Substance abuse counselling (6 credits)
- SOWK6168. Group counselling (6 credits)
- SOWK6188. The fundamentals of art therapy (6 credits)
- SOWK6204. Hypnotherapy (6 credits)
- SOWK6206. Play therapy (6 credits)
- SOWK6274. Theories and practices in positive psychology and strength-based interventions (6 credits)
- SOWK6299. Applied motivational interviewing in addiction recovery (6 credits)
- SOWK6314. Theories and practices in coaching in the workplace (6 credits)
- SOWK6317. Theories and practices in mindfulness, compassion and valued-based psychotherapies (6 credits)
- SOWK6330. Special topics in counselling I (6 credits)
- SOWK6331. Special topics in counselling II (6 credits)
- SOWK6349. Mental health recovery: Narrative and strengths-based practices (6 credits)
- SOWK7009. Online counselling and psychosocial interventions for digital generations (6 credits)
- SOWK7010. Bowen family systems theory and clinical applications (6 credits)
- SOWK7012. Theories and practices in animal assisted interactions (6 credits)

(Note: not all elective courses will necessarily be offered in a given year.)

Skills training (Compulsory)

Candidates shall complete the following course.

- SOWK6170. Skills training laboratory (6 credits)

Capstone experience courses

Practicum (Compulsory)

Candidates opt for either dissertation or non-dissertation option shall complete the following course.

- SOWK6171. Practicum and practice-based project report (12 credits)

Dissertation (Elective)

Candidates opt for dissertation option shall complete the following course.

SOWK6264. Dissertation (12 credits)

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

Compulsory Courses

SOWK6040. Practice research in human services (6 credits)

Social workers, teachers, nurses and counselors are guided by theories, research and practice wisdom in their work. It is important for students to be able to appraise, utilize, participate and contribute to research. In order to build evidenced and indigenous practice knowledge appropriate to local settings, this course aims to introduce students to principles and procedures of evidence-based practice. Specifically, it aims to help students in tracing research foundations in clinical practice, examining critical issues associated with evidence-based practice, accessing and evaluating new information related to practice and ultimately evaluating critically their practices. Through carrying out a mini-practice research as ongoing assignments, the students are expected to equip with hand-on experiences in planning, designing, implementing research and presenting its findings.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOWK6158. Critical issues in human development (6 credits)

This course examines factors affecting human development through an exploration of the normal patterns of growth from infancy to old age. Individual, social, and familial conditions affecting growth at different stages in the life cycle will be studied, together with related problems of adaptation and adjustment, with particular foci on current thinking in the field of developmental psychology.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOWK6159. Abnormal psychology (6 credits)

This course provides a broad exposure to both theory and practice in the understanding of mental disorders. A wide array of types of mental disorders will be examined. Important themes will be emphasized such as the continuum in behavior from normal behavior to mental illness, issues in diagnosis and classification, and the diathesis-stress and nature-nurture models of abnormal behaviour.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOWK6160. Assessment and testing (6 credits)

This course surveys the major concepts and techniques in the field of psychometrics and provides students with some hands-on experience with commonly used tests. Topics covered include: the context of testing and measurement, the testing process, test standardization, reliability and validity, the nature of intelligence and its appraisal, personality assessment, special domain testing, occupational applications, and ethics in testing.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOWK6161. Theories and practices in counselling and professional ethics (6 credits)

This course provides a theoretical foundation for the practice of counselling. Topics covered include the major approaches in counselling, counsellor dimensions, working with various clinical and non-clinical populations, professional ethics and limitations of counselling.

Assessment: 100% coursework

Elective Courses

SOWK6022. Emotionally focused therapy (6 credits)

Emotionally focused therapy (EFT) is an attachment based approach that utilizes the power of empathic attunement and experiential interventions to facilitate a felt sense of security with oneself and others. In the context of individual therapy in EFT, the therapist tunes into the emotion processes of the client and works to facilitate corrective emotional experiences. These new, healing emotional experiences build capacities in regulating emotions and shape a sense of trust in one's worthiness and competence.

This course provides a theoretical overview of the EFT approach in the context of individual therapy (EFIT) with an emphasis on the experiential practice of empathic attunement and EFT interventions. Students will learn the roadmap of EFT, apply practical interventions on how to attune to the here-and-now emotions, and facilitate processes that promote more secure and flexible models of self and others. Neuroscience is introduced to help students to understand its role played in emotional changes.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOWK6062. The Satir model and family reconstruction (6 credits)

Human behaviour is heavily influenced by family upbringing and socialization. This course, based on a marathon experiential training mode, aims to help students to achieve an understanding of their family. Virginia Satir's concepts of family rules, communication patterns, family mapping and self-esteem will be used to guide students through a process of self-discovery. Active participation will be essential.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOWK6127. Cognitive-behavioral interventions (6 credits)

The course introduces students to the Beck's cognitive-behaviour therapy model in working with people with depression and anxieties. A case process approach will be adopted to provide a stage-by-stage and step-by-step understanding of the theory and practice of Beck's CBT. Other CBT models for working with people with psychosis, OCD, pathological gambling, substance abuse and etc. will also be discussed in class.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOWK6162. Counselling in the welfare setting (6 credits)

This course introduces the various macro and micro intervention approaches in working with disadvantaged individuals who are users of social services in Hong Kong. Through a systems perspective, students will have the opportunity to examine various intervention approaches in helping disadvantaged groups, such as new arrivals, elderly people, at-risk youth, and mentally and physically handicapped persons to deal with their intra-personal, interpersonal and environmentally-induced difficulties. The course emphasizes the integration of micro and macro intervention approaches.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOWK6163. Counselling in the health care setting (6 credits)

Counselling approaches used in health care, such as crisis intervention, grief work, cognitive behavioural intervention, support groups, art therapy, psycho-education skills, bereavement counselling, pastoral care and peer counselling, will be examined. Students will be provided with experiential training on skills/ techniques in working with patients in hospitals and in the community.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOWK6164. Counselling in the educational setting (6 credits)

This course offers an understanding of the developmental characteristics, needs and struggles of students in schools (children and adolescents). To understand the counselling process and acquire necessary skills in offering counselling to students are the main foci, such that students may be helped to cope better with their school life.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOWK6166. Substance abuse counselling (6 credits)

This course examines the drug scene in Hong Kong and gives an overview of the problem of substance abuse in society. The different theoretical conceptualizations of substance abuse and theories of addiction are then reviewed as a prelude to devising intervention approaches to help drug-addicted persons.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOWK6168. Group counselling (6 credits)

This course provides an overview of the theories and practice of group counselling approaches. Applications include working with families, children, the elderly people, and medical/psychiatric patients. Cultural issues, current research and developments in group counselling will also be discussed.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOWK6188. The fundamentals of art therapy (6 credits)

This course introduces students to the philosophy and practice of Art Therapy, and how Art Therapy activities can be modified and used with potential clients under careful working guidelines. Students will also experience different art activities/philosophies, which are designed according to the various needs of potential clients. Lectures, participation in group workshops, and video and case presentations will form a part of this course.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOWK6204. Hypnotherapy (6 credits)

This course gives an overview of the historical development and domain of hypnosis, as well as contemporary approaches in hypnosis. A particular emphasis is placed on the fundamentals of hypnotherapy where particular skills will be of use in the counselling process. Lecture topics include the art of hypnotizing, styles of hypnotic suggestion, clinical applications, professional ethics and limitations of hypnotherapy.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOWK6206. Play therapy (6 credits)

The objective of the module is to introduce the student to the principles and practice of play therapy and its application to the counseling and psychotherapy for children, adolescents and families. At the end of the course, the students will have an introduction of the history and development of play therapy, an understanding of various theoretical models of play therapy, rationale for the use of play in therapy, and phrase of the client's progress in play therapy. Practice material will be provided including how to development therapeutic rapport, conduct a play based assessment, setting up of a playroom and the selection of therapeutic play materials. Best practice tips on engaging the client, recording keeping and other ethical issues will be discussed.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOWK6274. Theories and practices in positive psychology and strength-based interventions (6 credits)

Positive Psychology emphasizes the discovery and cultivation of human strengths and potential for a flourishing life, and strength-based interventions include counseling and therapy models that foster psychological well-being and reduce distress and symptoms in clients. This course critically reviews the theory and practice of positive psychology and positive interventions, including the study of happiness, character strengths, optimism, resilience, compassion, meaning, goals, flow, creativity and hope and their relevance to psychological health and psychotherapy, as well as strength-oriented interventions which include mindfulness-based, compassion-based and valued-based models. The cultural relevance of Positive Psychology and strength-based interventions will also be examined.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOWK6299. Applied motivational interviewing in addiction recovery (6 credits)

This course provides an overview of Motivational Interviewing (MI), an evidence-based counselling strategy for promoting behavioural change. MI originates from treating alcohol dependence, and was further extended to other settings, including health care, the criminal justice system, correctional and education, to mention just a few. Over 30 decades of evolution, MI has spread widely across many settings and cultures.

MI was developed from clinical observation, rather than theory. However, there are numbers of social psychology and counselling theories that can be used to explain the underlying mechanism of motivating strategies in the process of motivational interviewing, such as cognitive dissonance theory, self-determination theory, etc. Students are required to learn different social psychology theories and counselling theories to deconstruct MI. In addition, multifaceted unfolding of the concepts of addiction and recovery-oriented approach toward addiction treatment will be covered.

Students can be equipped with not only the knowledge and conceptual framework of motivational interviewing, but also practical experiences through group exercises and role-play. Active participation is expected in order to cultivate mutual learning communities and achieve better learning outcomes.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOWK6314. Theories and practices in coaching in the workplace (6 credits)

This course aims to introduce the basic theories and practices in coaching. Students will be able to distinguish coaching from other learning and development approaches such as mentoring, counselling, consulting, training, facilitating etc. Various theoretical approaches to coaching will be covered. This course also encourages students to evaluate the various coaching models and develop their own coaching model to be applied in their own coaching practice. The emphasis is also on using coaching as a management tool and conversational tool to enhance performance at work for higher motivation and retention. The topic on cross cultural coaching is also a relatively imminent area for further research.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOWK6317. Theories and practices in mindfulness, compassion and valued-based psychotherapies (6 credits)

This course will cover the most representative psychotherapies of such kind, including mindfulness-based psychotherapies, acceptance and commitment therapy, and compassion-focused therapy. All these therapies are transdiagnostic capable of treating different mental disorders and are evidence-based with proven treatment efficacy. They have a very different understanding of the nature of psychopathologies and human suffering from the traditional psychotherapies. Their theoretical frameworks, treatment principles and strategies, case conceptualization, and intervention skills will be demonstrated in this course, and the commonalities and differences among these therapy models will be reviewed. The benefits of practicing these therapies on the therapist and the therapeutic relationship will also be discussed. The students learning these contemporary psychotherapy models are expected to have advanced personal growth and gains in psychological well-being as well.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOWK6330. Special topics in counselling I (6 credits)

This course aims to walk with students through the latest knowledge on counselling practices individuals with mental health issues and the promotion of wellbeing. It will provide you with the evidence- and experienced-based knowledge of non-pharmacological approaches and practical skills relevant to counselling practices. You will be guided to see how these practices are not only applicable to counselling in mental health context but also to working with people coping with other issues and challenges in life.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOWK6331. Special topics in counselling II (6 credits)

This course aims to walk with students through the latest knowledge on counselling practices individuals with mental health issues and the promotion of wellbeing. It will provide you with the evidence- and experienced-based knowledge of non-pharmacological approaches and practical skills relevant to counselling practices. You will be guided to see how these practices are not only applicable to counselling in mental health context but also to working with people coping with other issues and challenges in life.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOWK6349. Mental health recovery: Narrative and strengths-based practices (6 credits)

Recovery is “A deeply personal, unique process of changing one’s attitudes, values, feelings, goals, skills and roles. It is a way of living a satisfying, hopeful and contributing life even with the limitation caused by illness.” (Anthony, 1993). Recovery-oriented practices are empowering approaches that embrace person-centered alternatives for promoting hope, self-determination, self-management, wellbeing and social inclusion of people in face of mental distress. Such humanistic approaches have been gaining international credence among mental health service users, service providers, professionals and policy makers in recent years.

Grounding on the recovery paradigm, this course aims to walk you through the re-authoring elements of recovery, and the latest knowledge on recovery-oriented practices for mental health counselling and the promotion of wellbeing. It will provide you with the evidence- and experienced-based knowledge of non-pharmacological approaches and postmodern practices including story-telling, narrative therapy, the strengths model assessment and intervention, Wellness Recovery Action Plan etc. You will be guided to see how these practices are not only applicable to counseling in mental health context but also to working with people coping with other issues and challenges in life. You will also have the opportunities to learn and practise the various conversation maps of narrative therapy through experiential exercises during the course.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOWK7009. Online counselling and psychosocial interventions for digital generations (6 credits)

This course brings together cutting-edge knowledge and discussions related to the online world, its impact on digital generations’ health and mental health, and the use of technology in psychosocial services both in the unique local and international contexts. Students will learn essential theories and research of cyberpsychology and online counselling. The content includes basic principles, assessment and evidence-based practices of professional counselling and psychosocial interventions for individuals and groups over the Internet, focusing on understanding and practising online counselling and crisis intervention with high-risk groups. Ethical practices are highly emphasized throughout the entire course. Our goal is to help students with background training in “human services (e.g., counselling, social work, academic advising, support for caregivers) to be capable of helping people with various psychosocial needs or mental health conditions and distress through both synchronous and asynchronous e-platforms.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOWK7010. Bowen family systems theory and clinical applications (6 credits)

This course will teach the fundamentals of Bowen family systems theory (or Bowen theory) and its application to clinical work. Bowen theory is one of the most well-established family therapy approaches. It views the family as an emotional unit and an emotional system, regulated by emotional processes found also in other living organisms. It adopts systems thinking (versus linear thinking) to viewing human behaviour, thus seeing symptoms not as the pathology of the individual, but as reflection of the dysfunctions of a family system.

Treatment is aimed at ameliorating the dysfunctional family relationship patterns and interaction processes.

Students will learn to make multigenerational and systemic assessment of families, to take a broad view, to practice objectivity and neutrality, to identify multigenerational relationship patterns and to work towards differentiation of self, a crucial factor for resilience, in their counselling work. Instructions on the theoretical concepts will be supported with ample illustrations of case examples with individual, couples and families facing problems such as eating disorder, marital difficulty, depression, and child behaviour/emotional problems. There will be videos, case presentations and discussions, and practice of questioning.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOWK7012. Theories and practices in animal assisted interactions (6 credits)

Human-Animal Interactions is a rapidly emerging field. Human services providers realized the power of the unconditional love offered by our non-judgmental animal partners to enhance the well-being of people interact with those animals. As the number of people in needs such as special educational needs (SEN), dementia, and mixed mood disorders, is increasing, the number of those who are non-responsive to the more traditional service formats is also increasing. Hence, animal assisted interaction (AAI) has become one of the most welcomed non-traditional interventions especially for those under-served or non-responsive individuals in the society. As one of the pioneering courses about AAI being taught at the post-graduate level, this course provides a comprehensive overview of the major theoretical orientations in AAI with a major focus on its application in counselling of people with common mental health needs. It aims to give students an appreciation of the general issues, problems encountered, and related ethical issues of applying AAI in the counselling process. It covers topics such as the basics of the human-animal relationship, ethics and professionalism, limitations of AAI etc. Students will also be introduced to the basic psychology and behaviour of animals, and the training philosophy since these will be incorporated into the design and practice of AAIs. Student learning will be facilitated by lectures, seminars, case studies, experiential exercises, group projects, and the completion of written assignments.

Assessment: 100% coursework

Skills training (Compulsory)

SOWK6170. Skills training laboratory (6 credits)

This laboratory provides training on basic relationship building strategies and methods. Counselling relies on an establishment of therapeutic relationship. Characteristics and dimensions related to such counsellor-client relationship will be introduced, and strategies and methods for building rapport will be practiced in the laboratory setting. Further, the course will also cover basic skills related to case and group counselling. Teaching is done via an experiential learning approach. Students are required to participate actively in class and complete practice assignments.

Assessment: 100% coursework

Capstone Experience Courses

SOWK6171. Practicum and practice-based project report (12 credits)

All students will have to be engaged in a total of 250 hours of clinical work, and to complete a practice-based project report of no more than 10,000 words. A practicum teacher will be assigned to supervise the student's clinical work and to facilitate his/her completion of the practice-based project report. The report should essentially be an evaluation of the clinical work performed by the student. Individual and group supervision will be provided. *Students must hand in their reports not later than June 30 of the same year when the practicum is undertaken.*

Prerequisite: Students who have completed and passed the following courses

SOWK6158. Critical issues in human development (6 credits)

SOWK6159. Abnormal psychology (6 credits)

SOWK6160. Assessment and testing (6 credits)

SOWK6161. Theories and practices in counselling and professional ethics (6 credits)

SOWK6170. Skills training laboratory (6 credits)

are permitted to take the practicum and practice-based project report course.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOWK6264. Dissertation (12 credits)

The dissertation is offered to students who have proven record to show their ability to conduct research. The dissertation shall be a critical study that demonstrates the application of sound research methodology to the investigation of problem(s) relevant to the field of counselling. The proposed topic of investigation has to be substantially different from the issues or problems covered in the practice-based project report (SOWK6171). The dissertation option is subject to approval of the Head of Department and relevant dissertation supervisor. The dissertation must represent a student's individual work and should not exceed 20,000 words in length. The title of the dissertation shall be submitted for approval not later than March 31 of the same academic year of study. The dissertation shall be presented by not later than **August 1** of the same academic year of study.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SYLLABUSES FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

CRIMINOLOGY [MSocSc(CRIM)]

The Department of Sociology offers a postgraduate programme leading to the degree of Master of Social Sciences in the field of Criminology.

ASSESSMENTS

Candidates are assessed for each compulsory course by way of a written examination that accounts for 30-40% of total marks and 60-70% by coursework assignments. However, candidates are assessed for each elective course by 100% coursework and that may include presentations, projects, essays and written tests.

CURRICULUM

The Master of Social Sciences in the field of Criminology requires students to complete the mandatory non-credit-bearing pre-session course 'Welcome to Sociology for Taught Postgraduates' prior to the commencement of the programme. The pre-session, self-paced course takes around 18 hours, and will be delivered via the HKU Online Learning platform. It will equip students with basic knowledge in key areas of the discipline, including sociological theories and concepts, social stratification, culture and society, sex/gender, identity, and social change. Students whose previous degree is in the discipline of Sociology may request a waiver for this requirement.

To receive the award of the degree of Master of Social Sciences in the field of Criminology, candidates must complete 8 courses (6 credits each) plus a dissertation (12 credits), with a total of 60 credits. All candidates are expected to do a group dissertation. The 8 courses include 4 compulsory courses and 4 courses from the list of elective courses.

Compulsory courses

Candidates shall complete all courses from the following list:

- SOCI7001. Criminal justice: Process and politics (6 credits)
- SOCI7002. Methods of research for criminology (6 credits)
- SOCI7004. Theoretical criminology (6 credits)
- SOCI7009. Global and comparative criminology (6 credits)

Elective courses

Candidates shall complete 4 courses from the following list:

- SOCI8002. Economic and organized crime (6 credits)
- SOCI8003. Law and society (6 credits)
- SOCI8004. Punishment and society (6 credits)
- SOCI8006. Youth and delinquency (6 credits)
- SOCI8008. Special topics in criminology (6 credits)
- SOCI8011. Media and crime (6 credits)
- SOCI8013. Gender, crime and social control (6 credits)
- SOCI8015. Crime and deviance in PR China (6 credits)
- SOCI8017. Cultural criminology (6 credits)

SOCI8018.	Policing in comparative perspective (6 credits)
SOCI8019.	Issues in police reform (6 credits)
SOCI8020.	White collar and corporate crime (6 credits)
SOCI8024.	Digital media, moralities and cultures (6 credits)
SOCI8032.	Drugs and society (6 credits)
SOCI8033.	Co-presence: Human-animal relationships in modern cities (6 credits)
SOCI8034.	Special topics in criminology II (6 credits)
SOCI8040.	Qualitative research methods (6 credits)
SOCI8041.	Quantitative research methods (6 credits)
SOCI8043.	Contemporary anti-corruption in a globalized world: The Hong Kong experience (6 credits)

Capstone experience course (Compulsory)

Candidates shall complete dissertation.

SOCI8022.	Dissertation in criminology (12 credits)
-----------	--

The compulsory courses provide candidates with a broad, integrated understanding of the social science approach to the study of crime and deviance. The elective courses, building upon that foundation, introduce the candidates to a variety of contemporary developments in criminology and related social policy issues. Classes are generally conducted during evenings and occasional weekends.

There are no prerequisites of all compulsory or elective courses. Not all the courses listed will necessarily be offered every year. While we try to ensure as broad a course offering to students as possible, courses offered each year do vary based on availability of teaching staff, departmental resources and student demand. In exceptional instances, it may be necessary to cancel a course at short notice because of insufficient student enrolment or other resource issues.

Candidates may apply to substitute for a listed course or courses in the syllabus of this programme with a course or courses offered by another Department in the University. Candidates may: (a) select courses from a list of pre-approved courses issued by the Department of Sociology; or (b) apply to be granted permission to take other postgraduate courses which are not listed as pre-approved courses. In both cases, the courses will have been approved by the Department and the Faculty as being of equivalent standard to that of those listed for the syllabus of this programme. Candidates shall normally be permitted to take not more than one course from another Department in the University. Permission normally will be granted only to take postgraduate courses, and only for those courses which can be shown to have relevance to the candidates' overall course of study. Permission shall not be granted to substitute any other course for a required course in the syllabus of this programme.

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

Compulsory Courses

SOCI7001. Criminal justice: Process and politics (6 credits)

This course critically reviews the process of law enforcement from initial contact with suspects through to prosecution and sentencing. The focus is on the ways criminal justice policies are developed and the problems and issues arising from the implementation of different approaches to crime control. Topics include: policing models (including private policing and crime prevention strategies); the effectiveness of policing; discretion and bias; due process and legal constraints in law enforcement; adjudication and sentencing; and policies toward victims.

Assessment: 60% coursework, 40% examination

SOCI7002 Methods of research for criminology (6 credits)

A robust understanding of the principles and practice of social research methods is central to postgraduate-level study in criminology. An ability to critically analyse previous academic research, identify gaps in the literature, and design novel and rigorous new studies are vital to a criminologists tool-kit – these skills form a foundation for a deeper knowledge and understanding of the discipline. In this course, students will learn core concepts and skills in research methods, and become equipped with the skills to pursue independent study.

Assessment: 70% coursework, 30% examination

SOCI7004. Theoretical criminology (6 credits)

This course comprises an introduction to major historical and contemporary theories of crime and deviance. The course covers: classical and positivist theories of crime; biological and psychological influences; social structural and social process theories of crime; Marxist and neo-Marxist explanations of crime and law; the emergence of neoclassic theories of crime (e.g., rational choice and routine activities); postmodern and restorative approaches to crime control.

Assessment: 60% coursework, 40% examination

SOCI7009. Global and comparative criminology (6 credits)

In recent years, increasing attention has been paid to the ‘global’ question in criminology. As people, money, culture and technology circulate and cross-cut the globe on a daily basis, so the traditional borders of criminology have become merged and blurred. Just as ‘global’ issues – human trafficking, the international drug trade, corporate harm and cyber-crime – must be understood in an international context, so too must traditionally ‘local’ arenas of criminological interest – youth gangs, policing, sex-work – be located within a comparative perspective, in particular those beyond traditional Anglo-American bases of power. This course discusses the concept of globalisation and its implications for the study of criminology, introducing students to key theoretical and methodological debates in the field of global and comparative criminology through analysis of both global and local case-study examples.

Assessment: 60% coursework, 40% examination.

Elective Courses

SOCI8002. Economic and organized crime (6 credits)

The course focuses on a range of criminal activities that occur within an organizational setting or are in accordance with established organizational goals, and which harms individuals or society at large. More specifically, the course will devote attention to such topics as economic and organized crime and discuss the ways in which they are interrelated and frequently overlap with political crime. Special consideration will be given to the ways in which the state may organize crime.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOCI8003. Law and society (6 credits)

This course will examine the relationship between law and society. It looks at the history and development of law in different cultures, examining the form and content of 'law' found in pre-industrial society, capitalist society and socialist society. Particular legal concepts such as the law of contract and the public/private distinction are placed in their socio-historic setting. Specific topics (e.g. law and domestic relations, rape in marriage, child abuse, homosexuality, artificial reproduction, and restrictions on pornography) are examined insofar as they are related to the application of these concepts.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOCI8004. Punishment and society (6 credits)

The course aims to explain punishment and society in a comparative and historical context. Popular conceptions and professional evidence about punishment will be compared. The social institution of punishment is in many ways a mirror of society and its norms. The course will look at the different functions of punishment, like retribution, deterrence, incapacitation, rehabilitation, and restoration. We will trace those functions historically and culturally, mapping vast cultural and social differences in the way in which punishment is practiced in America, Europe, the Islamic world, and in China.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOCI8006. Youth and delinquency (6 credits)

The problem of juvenile delinquency has influenced the formation of law and social policy in many societies. This course will use a wide variety of historical and comparative materials to analyze the response of social service agencies and the criminal justice system to juvenile delinquency. It will also examine various theoretical approaches that have been used in studying juvenile delinquency.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOCI8008. Special topics in criminology (6 credits)

A lecture and seminar programme designed to provide students with a course of study in current or newly emerging topics in criminology and criminal justice. The course enables, for example, new subject or sub-specialist areas to be offered. This may *inter alia*, include:

cyber crime and e-commerce crime
crime prevention
criminal intelligence analysis
criminal justice system administration and management
computer forensics
security and terrorism studies
criminal profiling
victimology (including trafficking, stalking and “hate” crimes)

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOCI8011. Media and crime (6 credits)

The media plays an extremely influential role in the public’s conceptions of crime and order. This course aims to provide students with a better understanding of theories about the media’s impact on crime, the news making process in relation to crime, and how the media shapes our ideas and responses to crime. The course also focuses on the representation of crime in popular culture, particularly in films and novels.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOCI8013. Gender, crime and social control (6 credits)

Understanding women’s experiences with crime and the criminal justice system requires an analysis of the normative ideas about gender that are constructed and utilized by the criminal justice system. Criminological research on women in crime and the criminal justice system have argued that interventions for women’s criminal offending are about regulating gender norms (or producing ‘good women’) as much as they are about responding to crime. This course examines these blurred boundaries between managing crime and managing gender. We will also explore the construction and treatment of gendered bodies as well as gendered forms of work, institutions and social processes. The gendered dimensions of central criminological processes such as criminalization, victimization, policing and the criminal justice system will also be examined, with a particular focus on the blurred boundaries between victimization and criminalization.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOCI8015. Crime and deviance in PR China (6 credits)

The course offers an overview and introduction to the developments of crime and deviance in China. The emphasis will be historical, comparative and contemporary. We look at Chinese definitions of deviance and crime from the past, the Communist period, and with a particular emphasis on the recent period of rapid modernization. The course will also review issues and problems in the control of crime and public order in the People's Republic of China. The content covers theories and practices of deviance, crime, discipline, policing, and punishment. Assessment: 100% coursework

SOCI8017. Cultural criminology (6 credits)

Cultural criminology comes as a reaction and interpretive alternative to normative analyses of social problems. Rather than ask questions about root causes of crime, cultural criminologists seek to explore the processes through which ascriptions of crime and criminality, and reactions to these ascriptions are promulgated within particular social and cultural contexts. The course will offer a comparative perspective contrasting North American 'cultures of control', with other 'welfare' and 'disciplinary welfare' contexts, including Hong Kong. Assessment: 100% coursework

SOCI8018. Policing in comparative perspective (6 credits)

This course examines policing in a broad social and cultural perspective. Our focus is the concept of the "police function": under what sorts of historical and socio-cultural conditions does the idea of the police function make sense? With this question as our guide, we will examine the maintenance of order in stateless societies, look at various historical moments in the emergence of police as an element of modern government, and finally take a survey of the novel policing formations emerging from the processes of decolonization, globalization and neo-liberalism.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOCI8019. Issues in police reform (6 credits)

When, why and how do police forces change? This course takes up these questions through case studies of exemplary events of police reform, such as: Robert Peel's formation of the London Metropolitan Police in 1829; William Parker's reform of the Los Angeles Police Department in the 1950s; William Bratton's reform of the New York Police Department in the 1990s; post-apartheid policing in South Africa; and post-Maoist policing in the People's Republic of China. Through comparative study and in-depth analysis, students will draw lessons about the general dynamics underlying police reform.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOCI8020. White collar and corporate crime (6 credits)

This course examines the topic of white-collar and corporate crime. Classic theoretical works will be considered as well as more contemporary writings. To illustrate these points we will explore important international case studies that shed light on how and why these offenses occur. We will begin with a general introduction to the field, including definitions, conceptual, and theoretical issues from the social sciences, law, and criminology regarding what has become known as white-collar, occupational, organizational, and corporate crime. Following this, we will discuss various forms of white-collar crime including: consumer crime, environmental crime, governmental crime, official corruption, computer crime, health care fraud, and financial fraud. The course will guide students in studying important questions, to critically think about issues, to research the topics discussed, and to become familiar with the literature on white-collar and corporate crime, through assigned readings, presentations, class discussion, a writing assignment and an in-class exam.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOCI8024. Digital media, moralities and cultures (6 credits)

The growth of digital media is fundamentally reshaping our culture. But how can we start to analyse and understand these changes sociologically? This course will attempt to address these issues through an examination of the moral and ethical issues underpinning a wide array of digital communications technologies. Morality provides a powerful tool for understanding technology, as it is able to encompass both the mundane (e.g., whether a 'selfie' is judged to be tasteful or crude) and the exceptional (i.e., the laws and regulations governing specific aspects of internet use). We examine how morality, social norms and behaviours are shaping technology use and how technology is, in turn, redefining the moral frameworks that exist in society. A broad range of existing theoretical standpoints for understanding the ethics of digital media will be introduced. These perspectives will be critiqued and challenged through reference to existing case studies and on-going innovative research projects from different academics and practitioners. This course adopts a truly global outlook, examining case studies from around the world to consider the moral dimensions of technology comparatively.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOCI8032. Drugs and society (6 credits)

Drug use is a significant feature of contemporary society and is a cause of concern in view of its impact on individuals and society, and its connectedness with crime. The overall objective of this course is to provide students with a better understanding of the ways in which drugs and society are interconnected. The aim of the course is to provide students with an integrative arena for the social understanding of drug use, why people use drugs, and the key epistemological (criminological, sociological and psychological) debates relating to the subject. It also focuses on the social, political and health factors that shape the control and treatment of drugs.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOCI8033. Co-presence: Human-animal relationships in modern cities (6 credits)

In a globalised world amidst environmental crisis, consumption ethics and justice, the entanglement and future of human-animal relationships have become an increasingly urgent topic of inquiry. This course covers the manifold of human-relationships from our food choices, pet-keeping practices, animals in media to violence and protection of animals.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOCI8034. Special topics in criminology II (6 credits)

A lecture and seminar programme designed to provide students with a course of study in current or newly emerging topics in criminology and criminal justice. The course enables, for example, new subject or sub-specialist areas to be offered. This may *inter alia*, include:

cyber crime and e-commerce crime

crime prevention

criminal intelligence analysis

criminal justice system administration and management

computer forensics

security and terrorism studies

criminal profiling

victimology (including trafficking, stalking and “hate” crimes)

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOCI8040. Qualitative research methods (6 credits)

This is a Master’s level course on qualitative methods in the sociological discipline. The goal of qualitative methods is to understand people’s practices, experiences, and meaning-making in everyday life, and the goal of this course is to provide students with the skills, knowledge, and practical experience necessary to conduct this research effectively. That is, rather than simply teaching students about the various qualitative methods available for sociological fieldwork, this course will help students conduct qualitative research that is rigorous, generative, follows best practices, and meets contemporary social scientific standards. A broad range of case studies from completed and ongoing sociological research projects will be drawn upon to discuss the challenges and opportunities involved in applying and selecting qualitative research methods to real-life problems, both empirical and theoretical. Beyond instruction, the focus of this course is to collect, analyze, write-up, and present qualitative evidence. By participating in the course and completing the assignments, you will develop the first and second-hand knowledge necessary to independently conduct high-quality qualitative research.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOCI8041. Quantitative research methods (6 credits)

This is a Master's level course on quantitative methods in the sociological discipline. It covers both fundamental theories and analytical skills, ranging from research design and hypothesis formulation to data collection (e.g., survey; experiments), data analysis (e.g., descriptive statistics; comparison of means; regressions, causal inference), and research writing. A broad range of case studies from completed and ongoing sociological research projects will be drawn upon to discuss the challenges and opportunities involved in applying and selecting quantitative research methods to real-life problems, both empirical and theoretical. This course will be highly interactive and collaborative. In each class, students will be required to contribute to discussions on various topics. The course also offers hands-on training to conduct an original research project including questionnaire surveys and statistical analysis.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOCI8043. Contemporary anti-corruption in a globalized world: The Hong Kong experience (6 credits)

Corruption undermines public trust, distorts markets, and erodes the rule of law. Yet its causes, forms, and consequences vary enormously across institutions, industries, and societies. This course takes Hong Kong as both a case study and a vantage point to examine corruption and anti-corruption in a globalized world. Taught jointly by HKU academic staff and practitioner experts from the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC), the course weaves together social-scientific theory and real-world enforcement and prevention practice. It pairs conceptual and theoretical introduction from the HKU instructor with direct practitioner input from ICAC officers, who draw on decades of experience in investigation, corruption prevention, and community education, and in specific regulated sectors. The course is structured in three parts: (1) foundational theories of corruption and anti-corruption; (2) Hong Kong's three-pronged model in practice; and (3) corruption and anti-corruption in the Chinese mainland and the transnational arena. The course will consist of a series of lectures, which will involve a mixture of teaching and class discussion. In addition, through two visits to ICAC Headquarters, students will gain an immersive understanding of the Commission's history and investigative work — from a guided tour of the Exhibition Hall and key operational facilities to a hands-on simulated corruption investigation that brings the realities of the profession to life. Students who attend this course will receive a signed Certificate of Attendance from the ICAC, providing a tangible credential for future careers in compliance, law enforcement, public administration, and civil society.

Assessment: 100% coursework

Capstone Experience Course

SOCI8022. Dissertation in criminology (12 credits)

This course aims to teach students how to integrate and apply the knowledge and skills they acquired through the programme. The dissertation is a component of the curriculum designed to foster small group research. Consequently, in addition to successfully completing eight taught courses, candidates must write a dissertation of a reasonable length (pending on actual group size) on an approved topic. Students have to develop a research topic and work on it over two semesters. Students will work in groups under the direction of a supervisor appointed by the Department. Assessment of the dissertation will be based on progress reports, oral presentation and a final written report. The final written report shall be submitted and presented not later than June 30 of the final academic year of study.

*Individual project will only be considered on an exceptional basis and approved by the programme director.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SYLLABUSES FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY [MSocSc(EP)]

The Department of Psychology offers a postgraduate programme leading to the degree of Master of Social Sciences in the field of Educational Psychology. The programme is designed to provide instruction and training in the theory and practice of educational psychology. To this end, emphasis will be placed on both academic studies and related practical experience in the field.

STRUCTURE AND EVALUATION

The period of study extends over two years full-time or three years part-time, commencing in September and including the intervening vacations. Throughout the programme, in both its theoretical and practical aspects, special attention will be paid to the needs and issues concerning educational psychology in the local setting.

The full time programme consists of a total of 156 credits. The quantitative value of a credit is equivalent to 20 hours of student learning activities (including both contact hours and all other forms of student learning activities) for taught course or 27 hours of work for practicum, under supervision of an experienced psychologist. Candidates are required to complete 21 compulsory courses, including 15 taught courses (6 credits each) (a total of 90 credits), 5 practicum courses (a total of 54 credits) and a 2-year dissertation research course (12 credits). 10 of the taught courses are normally taken in the first year and the remaining 5 in the second year. Duration of each taught course is normally one semester and consists of three hours of weekly lectures, discussions, seminars or workshops. The courses are as follows:

Compulsory courses (first year)

- | | |
|-----------|--|
| PSYC6002. | Research methods and statistics I (6 credits) |
| PSYC6003. | Research methods and statistics II (6 credits) |
| PSYC7010. | Psychoeducational assessment I: Foundation concepts, cognitive and learning assessment (6 credits) |
| PSYC7011. | Psychoeducational assessment II: Assessment on behavior and socioemotional functioning (6 credits) |
| PSYC7026. | Special educational needs I: Developmental and learning disabilities (6 credits) |
| PSYC7027. | Special educational needs II: Mental health and behavioral disorders (6 credits) |
| PSYC7014. | Psychoeducational intervention I: Fundamentals of intervention & behavioral modification (6 credits) |
| PSYC7015. | Psychoeducational intervention II: Social-emotional intervention methods and school consultation (6 credits) |
| PSYC7016. | Skill training seminars I: Cognitive assessments and basic interviewing techniques (6 credits) |
| PSYC7017. | Skill training seminars II: Psychoeducational assessments and intervention skills (6 credits) |
| PSYC6012. | Practicum I (9 credits) |
| PSYC6013. | Practicum II (3 credits) |
| PSYC6014. | Practicum III (6 credits) |

Capstone experience course (first year)

PSYC7028. Dissertation research (12 credits)

Compulsory courses (second year)

PSYC6004. Curriculum and instruction (6 credits)
PSYC6019. Professional ethics and issues in educational psychology (6 credits)
PSYC8010. Skill training seminars III: PBL in case work and advanced intervention skills (6 credits)
PSYC8007. Applied developmental psychology (6 credits)
PSYC8008. Motivation and learning (6 credits)
PSYC6015. Practicum IV (18 credits)
PSYC6016. Practicum V (18 credits)

Capstone experience course (second year)

PSYC7028. Dissertation research (12 credits)

The part-time programme consists of the same 15 compulsory courses, five practicum courses and a 2-year dissertation research course. Of the taught courses, seven are normally taken in the first year, five in the second and three in the third year. The courses are as follows:

Compulsory courses (first year)

PSYC7010. Psychoeducational assessment I: Foundational concepts, cognitive and learning assessment (6 credits)
PSYC7011. Psychoeducational assessment II: Assessment on behavior and socioemotional functioning (6 credits)
PSYC7026. Special educational needs I: Developmental and learning disabilities (6 credits)
PSYC7027. Special educational needs II: Mental health and behavioral disorders I (6 credits)
PSYC7014. Psychoeducational intervention I: Fundamentals of intervention & behavioral modification (6 credits)
PSYC7015. Psychoeducational intervention II: Social-emotional intervention methods and school consultation (6 credits)
PSYC7016. Skill training seminars I: Cognitive assessments and basic interviewing techniques (6 credits)
PSYC6012. Practicum I (9 credits)
PSYC6013. Practicum II (3 credits)
PSYC6014. Practicum III (6 credits)

Compulsory courses (second year)

PSYC8007. Applied developmental psychology (6 credits)
PSYC8008. Motivation and learning (6 credits)
PSYC6004. Curriculum and instruction (6 credits)
PSYC6019. Professional ethics and issues in educational psychology (6 credits)
PSYC7017. Skill training seminars II: Psychoeducational assessments and intervention skills (6 credits)
PSYC6015. Practicum IV (18 credits)

Capstone experience course (second year)

PSYC7028. Dissertation research (12 credits)

Compulsory courses (third year)

PSYC6002. Research methods and statistics I (6 credits)
PSYC6003. Research methods and statistics II (6 credits)

- PSYC8010. Skill training seminars III: PBL in case work and advanced intervention skills (6 credits)
PSYC6016. Practicum V (18 credits)

Capstone experience course (third year)

- PSYC7028. Dissertation research (12 credits)

The part-time programme may not be offered. An announcement would be made whenever it is available.

EXAMINATIONS

Examinations of the courses followed by a candidate may be either by a written paper in the examination held in December or May of the academic year of study, or by continuous assessment of the candidates' performance in completing the requirements of these courses, or by a combination of these methods.

A candidate's performance in the programme, whether full-time or part-time, is evaluated in three parts: (1) formal courses on the basis of written examination and/or continuous assessment of all written and practical work carried out during the year; (2) dissertation research and (3) practical training as set out below. Candidates must pass all three components of the programme.

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

PSYC6002. Research methods and statistics I (6 credits)

The topics in this course include intermediate research methods and statistics. This course is designed to extend the knowledge and skills of students on research design and quantitative methods, using empirical examples in psychology to illustrate the key concepts and statistical reasoning involved. Students learn to become more intelligent consumers of research findings and more independent in conducting their own empirical studies.

Assessment: 100% coursework

PSYC6003. Research methods and statistics II (6 credits)

The topics in this course include intermediate research methods and statistics. This course is designed to extend the knowledge and skills of students on research design and quantitative methods, using empirical examples in psychology to illustrate the key concepts and statistical reasoning involved. Students learn to become more intelligent consumers of research findings and more independent in conducting their own empirical studies. At the end of this course, each student will have developed a viable research proposal in preparation for his/her thesis according to standards of the American Psychological Association.

Assessment: 100% coursework

PSYC7010. Psychoeducational assessment I: Foundational concepts, cognitive and learning assessment (6 credits)

This course provides students with theoretical foundations of psychoeducational assessment and basic concepts in measurement. Starting with standards related to professional conduct and ethics in assessment, the course introduces students to formal and informal techniques and instruments used most frequently in the local setting. Focus will be put on the assessment of intelligence, achievement, and learning disabilities. The assessment of infants and young children is a special topic. The integration of assessment data into a comprehensive psychological report with associated recommendations for intervention is an essential component of this course.

Assessment: 100% coursework

PSYC7011. Psychoeducational assessment II: Assessment on behavior and socioemotional functioning (6 credits)

The focus of this course is on the assessment of behavioural and adjustment problems in children and adolescents. Using the problem-solving and systems approach as framework, students will be introduced to important concepts, procedures and instruments associated with the assessment of behaviour, personality, and social-emotional functioning in the school context.

Assessment: 100% coursework

PSYC7026. Special educational needs I: Developmental and learning disabilities (6 credits)

This course introduces some basic concepts and issues on educating students with special educational needs with focus on the characteristics, identification and intervention strategies for students with intellectual and learning related disabilities. The course covers the following topics: Historical background; inclusive education; early identification and early intervention; provisions for students with intellectual disability and learning disability.

Assessment: 100% coursework

PSYC7027. Special educational needs II: Mental health and behavioral disorders (6 credits)

This course focuses on the basic characteristics, identification and intervention measures for students with emotional and behavioural related disabilities. Topics include different classification systems, general remediation strategies and specific training programmes in mainstream and special educational settings for students with emotional and behavioural problems.

Assessment: 100% coursework

PSYC7014. Psychoeducational intervention I: Fundamentals of intervention & behavioral modification (6 credits)

The nature and basic principles of psychoeducational intervention are introduced. The first half of the course will cover the fundamentals of counselling and guidance. It focuses on the process and stages of counselling in a pan-theoretical way. The second half of the course will cover some of the major approaches in counselling and intervention (e.g., person-centred therapy and behavior modification). It aims at equipping the students with specific and useful techniques and procedures derived from these approaches. Students are expected to master both theories and practical skills. Practical training is an indispensable component of this course.

Assessment: 100% coursework

PSYC7015. Psychoeducational intervention II: Social-emotional intervention methods and school consultation (6 credits)

Major approaches and different levels of psychoeducational intervention are covered. The course emphasizes both direct and indirect intervention. Students are encouraged to go beyond the remedial model and are expected to work as an active agent with broader perspective in preventive intervention. Practical training is an indispensable component of this course. The students are expected to apply the acquired knowledge and practical skills to their work in educational settings. Topics include cognitive-behavioural intervention, systems and ecological approaches, school consultation, family work, psychodynamic approaches, alternative forms of therapy with children and adolescents, and career and vocational counselling.

Assessment: 100% coursework

PSYC7016. Skill training seminars I: Cognitive assessments and basic interviewing techniques (6 credits)

This course is the first in a series of practical skills training seminars. It provides an initial orientation programme immersing students into settings related to roles and functions of educational psychologists. Subsequently more intensive discussion and hands-on practice of assessment skills and intervention programmes are provided. Students observe and practise skills related to consultation and interviewing, observational techniques, testing procedures, reporting test results and recommending interventions.

Assessment: 100% coursework

PSYC7017. Skill training seminars II: Psychoeducational assessments and intervention skills (6 credits)

This course is the second in a series of practical skills training. It is offered when the students start their first practicum. It provides a platform for the students to polish the micro-skills that are required in their first practicum. These are the skills in assessment, counselling, consultation, inter-disciplinary collaboration, and systems-intervention. This course also provides a forum in which experienced educational psychologists from the field can share their specialities and expertise with the students.

Assessment: 100% coursework

PSYC8010. Skill training seminars III: PBL in case work and advanced intervention skills (6 credits)

This course is the last in a series of practical skills training seminars. It is offered in the second year when the students are immersed in practicums. It provides a platform for them to further polish the micro-skills that are required in field work. It also provides them with opportunities to seek support and guidance for the challenges they come across in practicum. In addition, it is a forum in which educational psychologists and allied professionals from the field can share with the students their experience in difficult cases and latest development in intervention.

Assessment: 100% coursework

PSYC6004. Curriculum and instruction (6 credits)

This course helps students understand and enact the principles of curriculum design, teaching, and assessment of learning, as they apply to the contexts and issues educational psychologists are likely to meet. A systemic view of children's learning problems will be emphasized. Curriculum and instructional issues for both mainstream and special schools in Hong Kong will be reviewed.

Assessment: 100% coursework

PSYC6019. Professional ethics and issues in educational psychology (6 credits)

This course prepares students for professional practice in educational psychology by examining the organizational, ethical, and legal considerations as well as current issues related to such practice in Hong Kong. Ethical and legal guidelines pertinent to the delivery of school psychological services will be introduced to enable students to make well-informed choices in resolving professional problems and ethical dilemmas when they occur. Students will also engage in discussion and analysis of contemporary issues related to educational psychology practice. Topics covered are broad and diversified and are highly relevant to the local context.

Assessment: 100% coursework

PSYC8007. Applied developmental psychology (6 credits)

This course focuses on an integrated study of human development across the life span with implications for educational psychology. It aims at familiarizing students with current state of knowledge and major theories of human development with particular emphasis on childhood and adolescence. The interrelationship among biological, cognitive, social, and educational factors that influence human development will be examined. In particular the influence of Chinese culture and context on development during the childhood and adolescence will be discussed.

Assessment: 100% coursework

PSYC8008. Motivation and learning (6 credits)

This course aims at familiarizing students with theories, research, and practices in the field of motivation and learning. It focuses on how educational psychologists can use existing knowledge in motivation and learning to enhance teachers' instruction and students' learning. Topics include theories of motivation and learning; their application in educational settings; effects of social cognitions on motivation; instructional environment that fosters motivation; and biological, cultural and contextual factors of learning.

Assessment: 100% coursework

PSYC6012. Practicum I (9 credits)

PSYC6013. Practicum II (3 credits)

PSYC6014. Practicum III (6 credits)

PSYC6015. Practicum IV (18 credits)

PSYC6016. Practicum V (18 credits)

The programme considers practicum an important and indispensable part of the training and whenever possible tries to integrate theories discussed at the University with that of fieldwork practice. All students are required to do fieldwork for a total of 180 days in five practicums.

PSYC6012	Practicum I (9 credits)
PSYC6013	Practicum II (3 credits)
PSYC6014	Practicum III (6 credits)
PSYC6015	Practicum IV (18 credits)
PSYC6016	Practicum V (18 credits)

Each credit is equivalent to 27 hours of practical work. The total duration of the five practicum courses is 180 days (1,458 hours). Each practicum aims at providing the students with:

- (a) exposures to a broad spectrum of work of an EP working in a particular setting;
- (b) adequate hands-on experiences at different levels (such as individual casework, group work, consultations to parents and teachers, in-service training for teachers, etc.) in the development of the necessary practical knowledge and skills;
- (c) knowledge of different types of provisions and systems accessible to children with special educational needs and referral procedures; and
- (d) opportunities for collaborative work with other professionals.

Assessment: 100% practicum

Prerequisite requirements:

PSYC6014 prerequisite: PSYC6013

PSYC6015 prerequisite: PSYC6012

PSYC6016 prerequisite: PSYC6012

Capstone Experience Course

PSYC7028. Dissertation research (12 credits)

The dissertation should be a critical study within the field, normally including an empirical element, and should not exceed 20,000 words in length. Where appropriate, studies involving qualitative methodology and other approaches may also be included. The title of the dissertation shall be submitted for approval on March 31 of the final academic year of study, and the dissertation shall be presented by July 15 of the final academic year of study. The candidate shall submit a statement that the dissertation represents his own work (or in the case of conjoint work, a statement countersigned by his co-worker, which shows his share of the work) undertaken after registration as a candidate for the degree. The examiners may also prescribe an oral examination on the subject of the dissertation.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SYLLABUSES FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

GERONTOLOGY [MSocSc(Geron)]

The Department of Social Work and Social Administration offers a postgraduate programme leading to the degree of Master of Social Sciences in the field of Gerontology. This programme is designed for professionals who are interested in developing a career specialized in working with the elderly and who engage in elderly-related policy research. Applicants from a variety of professional backgrounds may apply for the programme which is designed to meet the diverse training needs of different professional disciplines including social workers, nurses, occupational therapists, physiotherapists and other health related workers who are interested in aged care policies and practices. The programme shall extend over not less than one and not more than two academic years of full-time study; or not less than two and not more than three academic years of part-time study, inclusive of intervening vacations.

EXEMPTION

Candidates may be granted exemption of up to three compulsory courses in recognition of studies completed in related areas. Exemption will only be considered in special circumstances and each application for exemption will be considered on its own merit. Candidates with exemption granted are required to take an additional elective course to replace the exempted compulsory course to meet the degree requirements.

ASSESSMENTS

To complete the programme, candidates shall satisfy the examiners in the assessment of courses as prescribed in the programme. Assessments of the courses may be conducted either by course assignments, by presentations, or by written tests, or a combination of both methods. The grading system follows the standard practice in the Faculty of Social Sciences.

CURRICULUM

Candidates are required to complete 60 credits, including 5 compulsory courses (6 credits each), and 5 elective courses (6 credits each) or 3 elective courses (6 credits each) with a dissertation (12 credits). Candidates can take elective courses in other fields of study under the Master of Social Sciences (Behavioral Health, Mental Health, Nonprofit Management, Social Service Management) and the Master of Social Work programmes. Special approval from the respective Programme Directors for the courses in the above-mentioned fields of study or programme is needed.

Compulsory courses

Candidates shall complete the following courses.

- SOWK6193. Social gerontology (6 credits)
- SOWK6207. Social policy and ageing (6 credits)
- SOWK6293. Ageing in global contexts (6 credits)
- SOWK6334. Applying comprehensive geriatric assessment for quality long-term care (6 credits)

Elective courses

Dissertation option: Candidates shall complete three of the following courses.

Non-dissertation option: Candidates shall complete five of the following courses.

- SOWK6127. Cognitive behavioral interventions (6 credits)
- SOWK6139. Theoretical foundation of human service practices (6 credits)
- SOWK6201. Mental health problems in old age (6 credits)
- SOWK6259. Contemporary perspectives on death, dying and bereavement (6 credits)
- SOWK6291. Advanced gerontological seminars (6 credits)
- SOWK6292. Ageing and health (6 credits)
- SOWK6318. Advanced gerontological seminars II (6 credits)
- SOWK6319. Advanced gerontological seminars III (6 credits)
- SOWK6320. Advanced gerontological seminars IV (6 credits)
- SOWK6336. Clinical consultation in psychogeriatric care (6 credits)
- SOWK6337. Evidence-based interventions and care for people with dementia (6 credits)
- SOWK6338. Programme evaluation (6 credits)
- SOWK7013. Ageing and technology (6 credits)
- SOWK7018. Smart Ageing (6 credits)
- SOWK7019. Non-pharmaceutical intervention for people with dementia and their family caregivers (6 credits)

and any other courses offered under the Master of Social Sciences (Behavioral Health, Mental Health, Nonprofit Management, Social Service Management) and the Master of Social Work programmes

(Note: not all elective courses will necessarily be offered in a given year.)

Capstone Experience Courses

Compulsory course

Candidates opt for either dissertation or non-dissertation option shall complete the following course.

- SOWK6265. Research methods in human service (6 credits)

Dissertation (Elective)

Candidates opt for dissertation option shall complete the following course.

- SOWK9002. Dissertation (12 credits)

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

Compulsory Courses

SOWK6193. Social gerontology (6 credits)

This course provides a comprehensive, holistic view of ageing that considers the implications for an older person's interactions with their social and physical environments, including the immediate environment of family, friends, and home, as well as the larger social structure of community, organizations, and society. It also aims to impart knowledge to students about the most important social theories on ageing and the time dimension in the ageing process and its relation to the evolution of larger society.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOWK6207. Social policy and ageing (6 credits)

The course is designed to examine the concepts of social policy and ageing, and the various models available for the analysis of social policy. By analyzing local and foreign services and policy regarding the elderly people, students will become familiar with the roles of government and non-government organizations in implementing public policies. This should further the understanding of the development of social services to meet the needs of the elderly in the context of economic and social change. Basic concepts of social planning, problem identification and programme implementation will be examined.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOWK6293. Ageing in global contexts (6 credits)

This course aims to help students understand the implications of population ageing and increasing life expectancy in both developed and developing countries although countries in the Asia-Pacific region will be our focus. Cross-national evidence-based programs will be selected from North America, Europe, Africa, Asia, and South America. Specifically, we will illustrate how population ageing varies across the globe and how it affects family support, living arrangements, and intergenerational transfer and relationships. Moreover, the policy and practice implications of population ageing in social, political, and economic dimensions will be discussed.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOWK6334. Applying comprehensive geriatric assessment for quality long-term care (6 credits)

This course provides students with competence, including values knowledge and skills in conducting comprehensive assessment on frail older people for psychogeriatric care. A government adopted assessment tool interRAI Home Care will be introduced to illustrate four interrelated area of assessment, consisting of functional well-being, cognitive and mental well-being, social well-being, and clinical well-being, together with popularly used clinical assessment in corresponding areas. Students will be introduced to understand rational, contents, assessment procedures, and comprehension of assessment results for clinical intervention.

Assessment: 100% coursework

Elective Courses

SOWK6127. Cognitive-behavioral interventions (6 credits)

The course introduces students to the Beck's cognitive-behaviour therapy model in working with people with depression and anxieties. A case process approach will be adopted to provide a stage-by-stage and step-by-step understanding of the theory and practice of Beck's CBT. Other CBT models for working with people with psychosis, OCD, pathological gambling, substance abuse and etc. will also be discussed in class.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOWK6139. Theoretical foundation of human service practices (6 credits)

The knowledge base of human service practices comes from a wide spectrum of social science disciplines including psychology, sociology and political science. This course will provide the philosophical and conceptual basis for analyzing social problems and issues and translating these theoretical constructs into human service practices.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOWK6201. Mental health problems in old age (6 credits)

This course explores the types of mental illnesses among the elderly in Hong Kong. Attention will be put towards the understanding of the causes and treatments of mental illness in the elderly population. A critical review of medical, psychological and social services for the elderly with mental illness will be conducted.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOWK6259. Contemporary perspectives on death, dying and bereavement (6 credits)

Death is an inevitable life experience for everyone. Death-related problem is one of the commonest issues that clients brought to counseling, but is also rated as the most uncomfortable scenario by beginning counselors. This course offers a basic orientation to the knowledge and intervention approaches in working with death-related situations, including end of life care and bereavement counseling. Major theories and models related to death, dying and bereavement would be introduced. Corresponding clinical implications and practical work approaches would also be highlighted. Apart from the knowledge and skills, the course also emphasizes on personal exploration and review on one's attitudes toward life and death issues. It is hoped that students are better equipped with knowledge competence, practice competence as well as self competence in working with death, dying and bereavement.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOWK6291. Advanced gerontological seminars (6 credits)

Globally, aging population leads to both threats and opportunities for social development. New issues relating to gerontology emerge from time to time. This course will bring students one or two emerging gerontological issues each time. For example, social security, housing, health and social care integration, mental health, community empowerment, death, dying and bereavement. Focuses will be put on cutting edge knowledge on selected issues, perspectives from policy, service delivery, and/or program levels.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOWK6292. Ageing and health (6 credits)

According to the WHO, health is a “complete state of physical, mental, and social well-being, and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.” As people age, they are increasingly facing challenges in their physical and mental health and in their social wellbeing. A better integrated health and social care system will help older people to better adjust to their aging processes and to minimize the negative impacts of aging to their wellbeing. This course is designed to help students from diverse academic backgrounds to understand the core values, conceptual models, intervention strategies, and service delivery systems of the integrated health and social care model. Building on the foundation values and knowledge of their own disciplines, students will learn how to effectively develop and implement a multi-disciplinary team in geriatric care settings.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOWK6318. Advanced gerontological seminars II (6 credits)

Globally, aging population leads to both threats and opportunities for social development. New issues relating to gerontology emerge from time to time. This course will bring students one or two emerging gerontological issues each time. For example, social security, housing, health and social care integration, mental health, community empowerment, death, dying and bereavement. Focuses will be put on cutting edge knowledge on selected issues, perspectives from policy, service delivery, and/or program levels.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOWK6319. Advanced gerontological seminars III (6 credits)

Globally, aging population leads to both threats and opportunities for social development. New issues relating to gerontology emerge from time to time. This course will bring students one or two emerging gerontological issues each time. For example, social security, housing, health and social care integration, mental health, community empowerment, death, dying and bereavement. Focuses will be put on cutting edge knowledge on selected issues, perspectives from policy, service delivery, and/or program levels.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOWK6320. Advanced gerontological seminars IV (6 credits)

Globally, aging population leads to both threats and opportunities for social development. New issues relating to gerontology emerge from time to time. This course will bring students one or two emerging gerontological issues each time. For example, social security, housing, health and social care integration, mental health, community empowerment, death, dying and bereavement. Focuses will be put on cutting edge knowledge on selected issues, perspectives from policy, service delivery, and/or program levels.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOWK6336. Clinical consultation in psychogeriatric care (6 credits)

The course provides opportunities to students to integrate knowledge gained over the course of the program and apply various psychotherapy models learned in working with clients under psychogeriatric care. Through case presentations by students, clinical feedbacks will be given in terms of case conceptualization, treatment direction, and actual application of psychotherapeutic techniques. The course will be conducted in didactic lectures, case illustrations, role plays exercises and/or demonstrations.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOWK6337. Evidence-based interventions and care for people with dementia (6 credits)

Dementia care and interventions can improve cognition, behavioural and psychological symptoms, and other outcomes in people with dementia and wellbeing of carers. This course equips current and future practitioners with the fundamental understanding and skills in delivering evidence-based non-pharmacological interventions in dementia, covering the entire course of illness from mild to severe, including Cognitive Stimulation Therapy (CST), Tailored Activity Program (TAP), multicomponent carer support programmes, and dementia care management; as well as case identification and evaluation of intervention outcomes.

Pre-requisite: SOWK6201. Mental health problems in old age

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOWK6338. Programme evaluation (6 credits)

This course is designed to equip you with knowledge and skills necessary to systematically develop, implement, and evaluate social policies and programs. Social program funders, providers, consumers, policymakers, and the general public are increasingly focused on assessing the costs, quality, and outcomes of social services. At the same time, social service systems are becoming more complex, serving increasingly diverse populations, and facing multiple and conflicting demands from various stakeholders. Calls for “empirically-based practice” are becoming strong determinants of the types of services that will, or will no longer, be provided as part of the delivery of human services in the world. Thus, evidence-based program development is potentially powerful in helping to legitimize and advance psychosocial practice and program in health and social services. This course will enhance students’ ability to provide leadership in advancing these issues in the practice communities where they may find themselves working. It will be imperative for them to be able to (1) conduct needs assessment, (2) plan and develop evidence-based intervention programs, (3) monitor the implementation of intervention programs, (4) evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of intervention programs, and (5) analyse research results as a basis in advocating for programs delivered by human service practitioners.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOWK7013. Ageing and technology (6 credits)

Technology is becoming an essential part of our lives and it is quickly shaping the world we live in with its rapid advancements in smart devices, systems and services. The impact of technology in the active ageing community is an area of increasing interest for scientific research in the field of social sciences. Throughout the world, seniors in various background and cultures like to lead an independent life in the community.

Due to the expanding ageing cohort in most countries, there is a growing demand for healthcare and social work practitioners in a tight labor market. This rising challenge can only be matched by more effective and efficient means of technology interventions which can complement the healthcare and social work systems.

A new approach which leverages on the widespread confluence of technology and service innovations will result in an outcome that can better align the financial incentives and cost improvements for both seniors and their service providers.

To bridge the digital divide, a humanizing technological framework which the seniors and their caregivers can enjoy improved intuitiveness and user-friendly interaction will enhance the well-being and quality of life of the seniors.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOWK7018. Smart Ageing (6 credits)

This course focuses on the latest and innovative technologies and strategies to promote healthy and active aging. It delves into the intersection of aging and technology, examining how advancements such as smart devices, digital health tools, and artificial intelligence can enhance the quality of life for older adults. It also addresses the complex societal, ethical, and economic challenges associated with these technologies.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOWK7019. Non-pharmaceutical intervention for people with dementia and their family caregivers (6 credits)

This course offers a comprehensive overview of non-pharmaceutical interventions for individuals with dementia and their family caregivers. It introduces a variety of evidence-based strategies and approaches aimed at improving the quality of life for those living with dementia as they traverse the stages of mild, moderate, and severe disease progression. It also delves into pertinent implementation issues, such as cultural sensitivity, ethical considerations, feasibility, cost-effectiveness, etc. Through a blend of theoretical knowledge and practical skills, students will learn how to customize interventions to diverse contexts and improve care practices for families living with dementia.

Assessment: 100% coursework

Capstone Experience Courses

SOWK6265. Research methods in human service (6 credits)

This course covers the whole research process from the development of research questions and hypotheses to the analysis of data as well as presentation of findings. Different data collection methods including qualitative data collection such as case study, interviews and focus groups; and quantitative data collection such as survey and experiment will be discussed. Data analysis on various types of data including secondary data will be examined. Students will be expected to integrate and apply the knowledge and skills they acquired through the programme by attending the - integrated seminars organized by the end of the first semester of the final academic year of study.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOWK9002. Dissertation (12 credits)

The title of the dissertation shall be submitted for approval not later than three months before the formal submission of the dissertation **or** not later than March 31 of the same academic year of study. The dissertation shall be presented by not later than **August 1** of the same academic year of study. The dissertation shall be a critical study that demonstrates the application of research methodology to the investigation of problems relevant to the field of study, and shall not exceed 20,000 words in length.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SYLLABUSES FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

MEDIA, CULTURE AND CREATIVE CITIES [MSocSc(MCCC)]

The Department of Sociology offers a postgraduate programme leading to the degree of Master of Social Sciences degree in the field of Media, Culture and Creative Cities. The programme shall extend over not less than one and not more than two academic years of full-time study or not less than two and not more than four academic years of part-time study, inclusive of intervening vacations. All courses are offered on both full-time and part-time basis. Classes are conducted during evenings and occasional weekends.

ASSESSMENTS

Candidates are assessed the courses by way of (1) a written examination that accounts for 40% of total marks and 60% by coursework assignments or (2) by 100% coursework and may include written tests.

CURRICULUM

The Master of Social Sciences in the field of Media, Culture and Creative Cities requires students to complete the mandatory non-credit-bearing pre-session course 'Welcome to Sociology for Taught Postgraduates' prior to the commencement of the programme. The pre-session, self-paced course takes around 18 hours, and will be delivered via the HKU Online Learning platform. It will equip students with basic knowledge in key areas of the discipline, including sociological theories and concepts, social stratification, culture and society, sex/gender, identity, and social change. Students whose previous degree is in the discipline of Sociology may request a waiver for this requirement.

To receive the award of Master of Social Sciences degree in the field of Media, Culture and Creative Cities, candidates have to complete 8 courses (6 credits each) and a capstone project (12 credits), with a total of 60 credits. The compulsory courses provide candidates with a broad, integrated understanding of the social science approach to the study of media, culture, and creative cities. The elective courses, building upon that foundation, introduce the candidates to a variety of contemporary developments in creative industries and related media and cultural issues.

Compulsory courses

Candidates shall complete all compulsory courses of the following list:

- | | |
|-----------|---|
| SOCI7005. | Theories of media, culture and creative cities (6 credits) |
| SOCI7006. | Research methods in media, culture and creative cities (6 credits) |
| SOCI7007. | Globalization and the cultural mosaic: An Asian perspective (6 credits) |
| SOCI7008. | Critical issues of media, culture and creative cities (6 credits) |

Elective courses

Candidates shall complete 4 of the following elective courses:

- | | |
|-----------|--|
| SOCI8011. | Media and crime (6 credits) |
| SOCI8023. | Media and popular culture in East Asian cities (6 credits) |
| SOCI8024. | Digital media, moralities and cultures (6 credits) |
| SOCI8025. | Consumer cultures and everyday life (6 credits) |

SOCI8026.	Culture and identity - Reflexivity and narratives in late-modern society (6 credits)
SOCI8027.	Body, intimacy and sexuality: Media narratives and lived experience in modern society (6 credits)
SOCI8028.	Cultural policies and global cities (6 credits)
SOCI8029.	Creative industries and creative cities (6 credits)
SOCI8031.	Special topics in media, culture and creative cities (6 credits)
SOCI8033.	Co-presence: Human-animal relationships in modern cities (6 credits)
SOCI8035.	Special topics in media, culture and creative cities II (6 credits)
SOCI8040.	Qualitative research methods (6 credits)
SOCI8041.	Quantitative research methods (6 credits)
SOCI8042.	Sociology of business, organizations, and institutions (6 credits)
SOCI8043.	Contemporary anti-corruption in a globalized world: The Hong Kong experience (6 credits)

Capstone experience course (compulsory)

Candidates shall complete the following capstone experience course:

SOCI8030.	Capstone project in Media, Culture and Creative Cities (12 credits)
-----------	---

There are no prerequisites of all compulsory or elective courses. Not all the courses listed will necessarily be offered every year. While we try to ensure as broad a course offering to students as possible, courses offered each year do vary based on availability of teaching staff, departmental resources and student demand. In exceptional instances, it may be necessary to cancel a course at short notice because of insufficient student enrolment or other resource issues.

Candidates may apply to substitute for a listed course or courses in the syllabus of this programme with a course or courses offered by other departments in the University. Candidates may: (a) select courses from a list of pre-approved courses issued by the Department of Sociology; or (b) apply to be granted permission to take other postgraduate courses which are not listed as pre-approved courses. In both cases, the courses will have been approved by the Department and the Faculty as being of equivalent standard to that of those listed for the syllabus of this programme. Candidates shall normally be permitted to take not more than two courses from other departments in the University. Permission normally will be granted only to take postgraduate courses, and only for those courses which can be shown to have relevance to the candidates' overall course of study.

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

Compulsory Courses

SOCI7005. Theories of media, culture and creative cities (6 credits)

This compulsory course introduces the key thinkers, traditions, and current debates in the sociology and cultural studies of media and culture in the world city context. It explores the centrality of the role of media, culture, and creativity in contemporary social life and its intricate relationships with the city at an advanced level. You will comprehend media and culture as an industry or institution with specific modes of production and ownership, consumption patterns and practices, and rules of control and regulation. You will examine media and cultural representations, as well as socially constructed identities. You will explore media and culture as a “way of life” comprised of social reflective practices that entail creativity and pleasure, as well as politics and resistance. In other words, this course will look into the key issues of political economy, representation, politics, and practices of media and culture, addressing the power dynamics and complexities of the city, and examining the importance of creativity in the context of globalization. This course serves as a roadmap to other courses in this programme. Assessment: 60% coursework, 40% examination

SOCI7006. Research methods in media, culture and creative cities (6 credits)

This course offers you the chance to look at different ways of researching media, culture, and creative cities through a range of disciplines, most notably sociology, anthropology, and media and cultural studies. It examines the whole research process, starting from research methodology, to research design, sampling and methods used, to data collection, data analysis and report writing. In particular, various methods will be introduced such as survey, content analysis, ethnography, in-depth interview, life history, reception studies, textual analysis, and deconstruction. Key debates in research methodology such as representation, legitimation, and reflexivity will be discussed. Students will learn the methods for analyzing the media, cultural industries and their products, studying audiences and consumers, charting broader cultural trends, and examining the cultural environment of creative cities. The course helps students put theory “to work” and trains students to become independent researchers who are well-informed at both the theoretical and methodological level. Assessment: 100% coursework

SOCI7007. Globalization and the cultural mosaic: An Asian perspective (6 credits)

Globalization refers to the increasing flow of people, goods, commodities, economic activity, technologies, media, values, and belief systems on a global scale. People are becoming more aware of the global connectivity of economic, cultural, political, and social activities in different parts of the world. Recent studies focus on the dynamics of this global flow in shaping the emerging world order. This course aims to provide students with a broader and deeper understanding of the issues related to globalization from an Asian perspective. It takes a serious look at this emerging global map by examining the social, cultural, and creative interface of global, domestic, and trans-border cultures in Asia. The discussions are arranged under three major themes, which included (1) city and state; (2) new communities and cultural exchanges; and (3) globalization vs. regionalization. Specific Asian cities such as Hong Kong, Beijing, Taipei, Seoul, Tokyo, and Singapore will be investigated.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOCI7008. Critical issues of media, culture and creative cities (6 credits)

This course examines critical issues of media, culture, and creative cities, with a particular focus on Hong Kong city. The purpose is to shed light on relevant issues of modern life by drawing on some of the key concepts and findings in the related fields. While the issues to be discussed will vary from year to year, they will all touch upon important facets of media operation, cultural dynamics, city regeneration, and creative development. In particular, the course will look at media regulation and freedom of speech, heritage and urban planning, time and collective memory, post-colonial identity and nationalist imaginations, youth cultures and lifestyles, global consumption and local community, new forms of intimacy, the beauty myth and diet culture, creative industries, city branding, the West Kowloon Cultural District, and Disneyland. Selected topics will be taught by different instructors with relevant special expertise. Students will form small groups to work on the presentation of a chosen topic. Emphasis will be put on using contemporary media, cultural, and urban theories to interpret and understand social and cultural phenomena in Hong Kong, and extend discussions to other Asian cities such as Beijing, Taipei, Seoul, Tokyo, and Singapore.

Assessment: 100% coursework

Elective Courses

SOCI8011. Media and crime (6 credits)

The media plays an extremely influential role in the public's conceptions of crime and order. This course aims to provide students with a better understanding of theories about the media's impact on crime, the news making process in relation to crime, and how the media shapes our ideas and responses to crime. The course also focuses on the relationship between crime and cultural dynamics with a focus on representations of crime in popular culture, particularly in films and novels.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOCI8023. Media and popular culture in East Asian cities (6 credits)

This course addresses the social, political, cultural, and creative dynamics of the modern communication media – TV, film, music, radio, the press, and other new media technologies – and their impacts on popular culture in Hong Kong and other Asian cities such as Beijing, Shanghai, Taipei, Seoul, Tokyo, and Singapore. It enables you to critically examine how media and popular culture construct our identities, shape everyday life, and generate public debates. Topics include the media; sex and violence; consumption and youth cultures, romance and gender identity; regimes of body management; desire and social identities; lifestyle distinctions and social hierarchy; on-line communication and cyber personas; media events and imagined communities; new media and technologies; and the commercialization of arts.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOCI8024. Digital media, moralities and cultures (6 credits)

The growth of digital media is fundamentally reshaping our culture. But how can we start to analyse and understand these changes sociologically? This course will attempt to address these issues through an examination of the moral and ethical issues underpinning a wide array of digital communications technologies. Morality provides a powerful tool for understanding technology, as it is able to encompass both the mundane (e.g., whether a 'selfie' is judged to be tasteful or crude) and the exceptional (i.e., the laws and regulations governing specific aspects of internet use). We examine how morality, social norms and behaviours are shaping technology use and how technology is, in turn, redefining the moral frameworks that exist in society. A broad range of existing theoretical standpoints for understanding the ethics of digital media will be introduced. These perspectives will be critiqued and challenged through reference to existing case studies and on-going innovative research projects from different academics and practitioners. This course adopts a truly global outlook, examining case studies from around the world to consider the moral dimensions of technology comparatively.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOCI8025. Consumer cultures and everyday life (6 credits)

Consumption is an important part of modern life. This course examines the role of consumer culture in the modern commodity economy. It offers you a chance to revisit classical theorists in the context of consumption (e.g., Marx, Weber, Campbell, Veblen, Simmel), as well as some more contemporary thinkers (e.g., Marcuse, Bourdieu, Baudrillard). It will look at the changing roles of street culture, department stores and shopping malls, theme parks, and urban and suburban ways of life in the context of recent discussions regarding the interactive media and global consumption politics. In particular, the course will show how consumption in everyday life generates a fascinating mix of homogeneity, difference, hybridity, commerce, and democratization for modern people in major creative cities.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOCI8026. Culture and identity - Reflexivity and narratives in late-modern society (6 credits)

This course traces the rise of the notion of self-identity in the modern era and follows it through to contemporary times. Various notions of identity and their relationships will be discussed: personal identity, social identity, cultural identity, collective identity, national identity, etc. We will explore the changing experiences and meanings of collective and personal identities in late modern culture in domains such as work, family, religion, society, and the nation. We pay particular attention to the emergence of various contemporary identities in relation to the formation of creative class and creative culture. This will enable us to rethink the distinction between the public and the private, explore the social construction of the life course, the notion of cultural identity, the relationship between identity and creativity, and the dynamics of identity politics and new social movements in terms of age, body, class, religion, gender, sexuality, race, ethnicity, and more. The focus is on contemporary Hong Kong and Chinese experiences as well as other cities in the Asia/Pacific region, such as Singapore, Seoul, and Tokyo.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOCI8027. Body, intimacy and sexuality: Media narratives and lived experience in modern society (6 credits)

This course aims to investigate the significant changes happening in the private sphere of intimacy in late-modern times, paying particular attention to Chinese cities such as Hong Kong, Beijing, Shanghai, Shenzhen, and other Asian cities such as Seoul, Taipei, Tokyo, Bangkok, and Singapore. Drawn from various disciplines such as feminism, gay and lesbian studies, queer theory, and contemporary theory of body, this course critically reviews a number of key issues: the debate of biological drive/social force in shaping sexual identity, gender difference and intimate behavior; the dynamics of agency/structure in understanding sexual performances and body practices; the development of sexual politics and movements; mainstreaming of sexuality and media representation; and commercialization of desires. This course also pays more attention to the newly emerging scripts that seem to shape femininity/masculinity, romantic love, intimate relationship, and family patterns.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOCI8028. Cultural policies and global cities (6 credits)

This course covers three different scopes of cultural policy, beginning with government supports for the arts, then the invention of creative industry policies and finally cultural citizenship. There has been an international trend of introducing entrepreneurialism into cultural policies in recent decades. Policies, involving both the government and civic organizations thus are formulated in order to enhance the competitiveness of nations and cities through various cultural projects. Global cities such as London, New York, Paris, Brussels, and Tokyo are seen to be capable of assuming a leading role in the cultural development and promotion of urban entrepreneurialism. This course examines comparatively how different policies evolve under different social and historical conditions, and how global cities redevelop their urban and cultural resources in order to sharpen their competitiveness in the context of the inter-city competition of a global economy, and explores how such experiences could be applied to Hong Kong. Topics to be covered in this course include entrepreneurialism, strategies of urban redevelopment, urban culture, and urban competitiveness. Students will also reflect on the problems associated with cultural, urban and creative development.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOCI8029. Creative industries and creative cities (6 credits)

This course explores the structures, processes, and cultural artifacts of the creative industries (performing arts, film and television, publishing, art and antique markets, music, architecture, digital entertainment, computer software development, animation production, fashion, and product design) and how they figure in the strategic repositioning of the city. It offers students a chance to critically examine the political economy and spatial organization of these industries of culture in different creative cities of the world. It also opens up debates generated by the intersection between culture, economy, and the city, such as high and low culture, innovation and standardization, capitalist dominance and democratic pluralism, authenticity and mechanical reproduction, power and resistance, the role of the creative class in city growth and regeneration, engineering and imagineering creative cities, cultural planning, and the city as a marketplace, sustaining the livable city.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOCI8031. Special topics in media, culture and creative cities (6 credits)

This course provides students with a comprehensive understanding of current or newly emerging topics in media, culture and creative city. The course enables new subject or sub-specialist areas to be offered. It also facilitates innovative modes of teaching and learning. Subjects may inter alia, include:

Visual sociology and anthropology
Sensory cultures
Emotion and affect
Posthumanities and ethics
Biomedicine and biotechnology
New media, subjectivity and performativity
New thinkers in cultural studies
Risk, reflexivity and sustainable development
Critical pedagogy in media and culture
Body, place and flow – new directions in cultural studies
Private self and public sphere
Workshops in presenting and representing culture

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOCI8033. Co-presence: Human-animal relationships in modern cities (6 credits)

In a globalised world amidst environmental crisis, consumption ethics and justice, the entanglement and future of human-animal relationships have become an increasingly urgent topic of inquiry. This course covers the manifold of human-relationships from our food choices, pet-keeping practices, animals in media to violence and protection of animals.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOCI8035. Special topics in media, culture and creative cities II (6 credits)

This course provides students with a comprehensive understanding of current or newly emerging topics in media, culture and creative city. The course enables new subject or sub-specialist areas to be offered. It also facilitates innovative modes of teaching and learning. Subjects may inter alia, include:

Visual sociology and anthropology
Sensory cultures
Emotion and affect
Posthumanities and ethics
Biomedicine and biotechnology
New media, subjectivity and performativity
New thinkers in cultural studies
Risk, reflexivity and sustainable development
Critical pedagogy in media and culture
Body, place and flow – new directions in cultural studies
Private self and public sphere
Workshops in presenting and representing culture

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOCI8040. Qualitative research methods (6 credits)

This is a Master's level course on qualitative methods in the sociological discipline. The goal of qualitative methods is to understand people's practices, experiences, and meaning-making in everyday life, and the goal of this course is to provide students with the skills, knowledge, and practical experience necessary to conduct this research effectively. That is, rather than simply teaching students about the various qualitative methods available for sociological fieldwork, this course will help students conduct qualitative research that is rigorous, generative, follows best practices, and meets contemporary social scientific standards. A broad range of case studies from completed and ongoing sociological research projects will be drawn upon to discuss the challenges and opportunities involved in applying and selecting qualitative research methods to real-life problems, both empirical and theoretical. Beyond instruction, the focus of this course is to collect, analyze, write-up, and present qualitative evidence. By participating in the course and completing the assignments, you will develop the first and second-hand knowledge necessary to independently conduct high-quality qualitative research.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOCI8041. Quantitative research methods (6 credits)

This is a Master's level course on quantitative methods in the sociological discipline. It covers both fundamental theories and analytical skills, ranging from research design and hypothesis formulation to data collection (e.g., survey; experiments), data analysis (e.g., descriptive statistics; comparison of means; regressions, causal inference), and research writing. A broad range of case studies from completed and ongoing sociological research projects will be drawn upon to discuss the challenges and opportunities involved in applying and selecting quantitative research methods to real-life problems, both empirical and theoretical. This course will be highly interactive and collaborative. In each class, students will be required to contribute to discussions on various topics. The course also offers hands-on training to conduct an original research project including questionnaire surveys and statistical analysis.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOCI8042. Sociology of business, organizations, and institutions (6 credits)

This course examines organizations as one of the central configurations of modern society, focusing on how they coordinate activities, structure decision-making, and sustain social order. Bridging the domains of business, organizations, and institutions, the course draws on empirical cases from creative and cultural industries, technology sectors, and criminal justice institutions to show how different forms of organization emerge, operate, and transform under varying social conditions. Rather than treating organizations as fixed entities, the course approaches them as evolving solutions to fundamental problems of coordination under conditions of complexity and uncertainty. Beginning with classical rational approaches, the course analyzes how organizations emerge and sustain large-scale coordination, while introducing key problem domains such as uncertainty and decision-making, and core analytical dimensions including formal and informal structure, institutional environments, power, inequality and culture. These perspectives are treated not as a linear progression, but as competing and overlapping attempts to address enduring organizational problems. In the final stage, the course turns to contemporary developments in organizational theory, examining perspectives such as fields, networks, communication systems, and materiality. These approaches do not merely extend earlier theories, but challenge the boundaries of organization itself, particularly in contexts where coordination increasingly relies on distributed, digital, and technological systems such as platforms, algorithms, and automated processes. Each theoretical perspective is presented both as a solution to specific coordination problems and as a critique that reveals the limits of earlier approaches. The course aims not only to equip students with major theoretical frameworks, but to train them to critically evaluate their explanatory scope and limitations in analyzing contemporary organizational phenomena.

Assessment: 60% coursework, 40% examination

SOCI8043. Contemporary anti-corruption in a globalized world: The Hong Kong experience (6 credits)

Corruption undermines public trust, distorts markets, and erodes the rule of law. Yet its causes, forms, and consequences vary enormously across institutions, industries, and societies. This course takes Hong Kong as both a case study and a vantage point to examine corruption and anti-corruption in a globalized world. Taught jointly by HKU academic staff and practitioner experts from the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC), the course weaves together social-scientific theory and real-world enforcement and prevention practice. It pairs conceptual and theoretical introduction from the HKU instructor with direct practitioner input from ICAC officers, who draw on decades of experience in investigation, corruption prevention, and community education, and in specific regulated sectors. The course is structured in three parts: (1) foundational theories of corruption and anti-corruption; (2) Hong Kong's three-pronged model in practice; and (3) corruption and anti-corruption in the Chinese mainland and the transnational arena. The course will consist of a series of lectures, which will involve a mixture of teaching and class discussion. In addition, through two visits to ICAC Headquarters, students will gain an immersive understanding of the Commission's history and investigative work — from a guided tour of the Exhibition Hall and key operational facilities to a hands-on simulated corruption investigation that brings the realities of the profession to life. Students who attend this course will receive a signed Certificate of Attendance from the ICAC, providing a tangible credential for future careers in compliance, law enforcement, public administration, and civil society.

Assessment: 100% coursework

Capstone Experience Course (Compulsory)

SOCI8030. Capstone project in Media, Culture and Creative Cities (12 credits)

This course aims to teach students how to integrate and apply the knowledge and skills they acquired through the programme. More specifically, it helps students develop skills to undertake cutting-edge research, applying sociological theories, methodologies and approaches to understand real-life phenomena in media, culture and creative cities. Students will conduct a research project in a group of two to four students under the guidance of an academic supervisor assigned by the department. Each group will develop a research topic related to the field of media, culture and creative cities and work on it over two semesters. The topics will relate to a variety of analytical, practical, and policy issues in the field. Students are also required to attend eligible seminars in the 'Media, Culture & Creative Cities Speaker Series' in which distinguished scholars and practitioners working at the forefront of the media and culture will be invited to talk to students. Assessment of the capstone project will be based on reflective memos, a research proposal, a project presentation and a final research report.

The capstone course should be undertaken in students' final academic year of study. Individual project will only be considered on an exceptional basis, subject to approval from the programme director.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SYLLABUSES FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

MENTAL HEALTH [MSocSc(MH)]

The Department of Social Work and Social Administration offers a postgraduate programme leading to the degree of Master of Social Sciences in the field of Mental Health for social workers, nurses, occupational therapists, physiotherapists and other health related workers who are interested in mental health issues and practices. The programme shall extend over not less than two and not more than three academic years of part-time study, inclusive of intervening vacations.

EXEMPTION

Candidates may be granted exemption of up to three compulsory courses in recognition of studies completed in related areas. Exemption will only be considered in special circumstances and each application for exemption will be considered on its own merit. Candidates with exemption granted are required to take an additional elective course to replace the exempted compulsory course to meet the degree requirements.

ASSESSMENTS

To complete the programme, candidates shall satisfy the examiners in the assessment of courses as prescribed in the programme. Assessments of the courses may be conducted either by course assignments, or by presentations, or written tests, or a combination of both methods. The grading system follows the standard practice in the Faculty of Social Sciences.

CURRICULUM

Candidates are required to complete 60 credits, including 5 compulsory courses (6 credits each), and four to five courses (6 or 12 credits each) or three elective courses (6 credits each) with a dissertation (12 credits). In the first year of study, students will acquire most current knowledge about the contexts, policies and practices in mental health. They will also be introduced to advanced and practical knowledge and skills in psychiatric assessment and mental health counselling. In the second year, students can choose to specialize in **four areas** in mental health (i.e. Integrative Mental Health, Children and Youth Mental Health, Psychogeriatric Care and Cognitive-Behaviour Therapy). Candidates can take elective courses in other fields of study under the Master of Social Sciences (Behavioral Health, Counselling, Gerontology, Nonprofit Management, Social Service Management) and the Master of Social Work programmes. Special approval from the respective Programme Directors for the courses in the above-mentioned fields of study or programme is needed.

Compulsory courses

Candidates shall complete the following courses.

- SOWK6309. Mental health: policies and practices (6 credits)
- SOWK6310. Psychosocial approaches in mental health care (6 credits)
- SOWK6328. Theory and practice in mental health counselling (6 credits)
- SOWK6329. Assessment in mental health: A bio-psychosocial approach (6 credits)

Elective courses

Dissertation option: Candidates shall complete three of the following courses (6 credits each).

Non-dissertation option: Candidates shall complete four to five courses (6 or 12 credits each).

If interested, candidates can choose courses to make up one of the four areas of concentration:

(1) Integrative Mental Health (2) Children and Youth Mental Health, (3) Psychogeriatric Care and (4) Cognitive-Behaviour Therapy.

- SOWK6022. Emotionally focused therapy (6 credits)
- SOWK6127. Cognitive-behavioral interventions (6 credits)
- SOWK6201. Mental health problems in old age (6 credits)
- SOWK6214. Youth Mental Health and Neurodiversity (6 credits)
- SOWK6311. Cognitive-behaviour therapy skills training (6 credits)
- SOWK6322. Special topics in mental health I (6 credits)
- SOWK6323. Special topics in mental health II (6 credits)
- SOWK6345. Mental health economics & policy (6 credits)
- SOWK6337. Evidence-based interventions and care for people with dementia (6 credits)
- SOWK6346. Cognitive-behaviour therapy supervised practice - Counsellor stream (12 credits)
- SOWK6347. Cognitive-behaviour therapy supervised practice - Practitioner stream (12 credits)
- SOWK6349. Mental health recovery: Narrative and strengths-based practices (6 credits)
- SOWK7011. Narrative therapy: A post-structuralist approach to life challenges (6 credits)
- SOWK7014. Early intervention in mental health (6 credits)
- SOWK7015. Early intervention in mental health for older adult (6 credits)
- SOWK7016. Early intervention in mental health for young person (6 credits)

and any other courses offered under the Master of Social Sciences (Behavioral Health, Counselling, Gerontology, Nonprofit Management, Social Service Management) and the Master of Social Work programmes

(Note: not all elective courses will necessarily be offered in a given year.)

Capstone Experience Courses

Compulsory course

Candidates opt for either dissertation or non-dissertation option shall complete the following course.

- SOWK6265. Research methods in human service (6 credits)

Dissertation (Elective)

Candidates opt for dissertation option shall complete the following course.

- SOWK9003. Dissertation (12 credits)

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

Compulsory Courses

SOWK6309. Mental health: policies and practices (6 credits)

As part of practice competence, mental health workers should be able to take a critical stance in understanding and analyzing the policy contexts that affect their practice. The first half of the course will provide a general understanding of selected social policies in Hong Kong. It will also offer students an understanding of certain policy analysis frameworks. The second half of the course focuses on critically examining policy issues relating to mental health care. Topics such as policy trends in mental health care, legal contexts of mental health care, stigma and discrimination, rights of persons with mental illness and etc. will be explored. Overseas examples in mental health policies will be used for comparison.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOWK6310. Psychosocial approaches in mental health care (6 credits)

This course critically examines current models of prevention, rehabilitation and treatments for people with mental illness. Topics such as prevention and rehabilitation, hospital and community care, models of social and vocational rehabilitation, models of psychological intervention, culture and mental health, multidisciplinary teamwork in mental health service, core competences of mental health workers/social workers and etc. By comparing these to overseas models of psychosocial approaches in mental health care, students can appreciate the strengths and weaknesses of the models that are at work in Hong Kong.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOWK6328. Theory and practice in mental health counselling (6 credits)

This course provides an overview on professional ethics and a theoretical foundation for the practices in mental health counselling. It has two major objectives: First, it intends to discuss key ethical issues in counselling, and to critically examine counsellors as persons guided by their value orientation, intentionality, and reflexivity. Second, it attempts to present a range of current evidence-based bio-psycho-social intervention approaches for working with people in face of mental distress and for nourishing people's positive mental health. As an overview, it covers some of the current and contemporary approaches stemming from various theoretical orientations such as body and mind, cognition and behavior, constructivism and post-modernism, and family systems. Their application and evidence of effectiveness in mental health counselling will be discussed. Some lectures may also involve reflection exercises, experiential learning and skills training.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOWK6329. Assessment in mental health: A bio-psychosocial approach (6 credits)

This course provides students with knowledge and skills in conducting psychiatric and psychosocial assessments on people with mental illness. Assessments on individual illnesses such as depression and psychosis will be taught using a bio-psychosocial perspective. The first 5 lectures cover the genetic and neurological bases of certain types of mental illness and the other 5 lectures will focus on the psychosocial factors in the etiology and development of certain types of mental illness. Students will be introduced to selected neurological, psychological and psychosocial assessment tools that are commonly used in measuring the mental health characteristics and statuses of a person with mental health concerns. Practical skills in using these assessment tools will be taught during classes.

Assessment: 100% coursework

Elective Courses

SOWK6022. Emotionally focused therapy (6 credits)

Emotionally focused therapy (EFT) is an attachment based approach that utilizes the power of empathic attunement and experiential interventions to facilitate a felt sense of security with oneself and others. In the context of individual therapy in EFT, the therapist tunes into the emotion processes of the client and works to facilitate corrective emotional experiences. These new, healing emotional experiences build capacities in regulating emotions and shape a sense of trust in one's worthiness and competence.

This course provides a theoretical overview of the EFT approach in the context of individual therapy (EFIT) with an emphasis on the experiential practice of empathic attunement and EFT interventions. Students will learn the roadmap of EFT, apply practical interventions on how to attune to the here-and-now emotions, and facilitate processes that promote more secure and flexible models of self and others. Neuroscience is introduced to help students to understand its role played in emotional changes.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOWK6127. Cognitive-behavioral interventions (6 credits)

The course introduces students to the Beck's cognitive-behaviour therapy model in working with people with depression and anxieties. A case process approach will be adopted to provide a stage-by-stage and step-by-step understanding of the theory and practice of Beck's CBT. Other CBT models for working with people with psychosis, OCD, pathological gambling, substance abuse and etc. will also be discussed in class.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOWK6201. Mental health problems in old age (6 credits)

This course explores the types of mental illnesses among the elderly in Hong Kong. Attention will be put towards the understanding of the causes and treatments of mental illness in the elderly population. A critical review of medical, psychological and social services for the elderly with mental illness will be conducted.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOWK6214. Youth Mental Health and Neurodiversity (6 credits)

This course focuses on an understanding of the mental health issues found among children and youth in Hong Kong. While it will introduce the developmental perspectives on child and adolescent development, it will also provide an overview of the prevalence and general features of different childhood and adolescent mental health problems. The course will also bear a practice focus and introduce to students the assessment, treatment and skills in engaging neurodivergent children and youth while appreciating their strength and embracing their uniqueness.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOWK6311. Cognitive-behaviour therapy skills training (6 credits)

This course adopts a CBT case process model and provides step-by-step intensive and hands-on training of cognitive-behaviour therapy skills for students who are interested in practicing CBT. Cognitive-oriented techniques such as thought stopping, cognitive restructuring, cognitive continuum and pie chart will be taught, while behavioural techniques such as activity ruler, activity chart, behavioural experiment and exposure will also be introduced to the students. It is expected that students would actively participate by practicing the various skills, engaging in role plays and other activities in class. Students who intend to enroll in this course must have taken SOWK6127 Cognitive-behavioral interventions or an equivalent. As it is an intensive skill-oriented training, the optimum class size is 12 students.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOWK6322. Special topics in mental health I (6 credits)

Mental health is an integral and essential component of health. There is no health without mental health. Various psychological, emotional, biological and socioeconomic factors determine the level of mental health of a person at any point of time. Mental well-being is associated with our rapid changing society. This course will introduce students to mental health topics or issues in our contemporary society. For example, mental health policy and services, maternal and child mental health, neurological issues and problems in mental health, and suicide prevention.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOWK6323. Special topics in mental health II (6 credits)

Mental health is an integral and essential component of health. There is no health without mental health. Various psychological, emotional, biological and socioeconomic factors determine the level of mental health of a person at any point of time. Mental well-being is associated with our rapid changing society. This course will introduce students to mental health topics or issues in our contemporary society. For example, mental health policy and services, maternal and child mental health, neurological issues and problems in mental health, and suicide prevention.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOWK6345. Mental health economics & policy (6 credits)

Mental health is closely associated with our rapidly changing society. This course will introduce students to mental health topics and issues in our contemporary society – including public policy; causes and prevention; treatment and support; resource allocation challenges; discrimination and stigma; and inequalities. These issues will be covered at different points across the life-course, with examples covering topics such as maternal mental health; child and adolescent mental illness and its adulthood consequences; recovery; workplace issues; family impacts and roles; suicide; and dementia. Students will gain in-depth understanding about mental health challenges and policy responses, especially from an economic perspective; risk factors for mental illness; economic evaluation of mental health interventions and policies, including methods and applications of cost-effectiveness and cost-utility analyses; policy analysis. Illustrative real-world examples will be used throughout the course, such as mental health policy in England today, economic evaluation of medication and nonpharmacological interventions for common mental disorders and severe mental illnesses, projection and other modelling to inform national dementia care policy.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOWK6337. Evidence-based interventions and care for people with dementia (6 credits)

Dementia care and interventions can improve cognition, behavioural and psychological symptoms, and other outcomes in people with dementia and wellbeing of carers. This course equips current and future practitioners with the fundamental understanding and skills in delivering evidence-based non-pharmacological interventions in dementia, covering the entire course of illness from mild to severe, including Cognitive Stimulation Therapy (CST), Tailored Activity Program (TAP), multicomponent carer support programmes, and dementia care management; as well as case identification and evaluation of intervention outcomes.

Pre-requisite: SOWK6201. Mental health problems in old age

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOWK6346. Cognitive-behaviour therapy supervised practice – Counsellor stream (12 credits)

The course adopts a case-study format in which students are required to provide counselling clients using cognitive-behavior interventions, over a period of two semesters. Students are required to complete 120 hours of direct client contact, 52 hours of individual and group supervision, 4 hours of briefing sessions and 32 hours of skill-based workshops. Students will have to report in class the progress of their treatment sessions. Through case discussion and group supervision, students will learn the process and techniques of cognitive-behavior interventions. Students who intend to enrol in this course must have taken SOWK6127 “Cognitive-behavioral interventions”, and SOWK6311 “Cognitive-behaviour therapy skills training”. As it is an intensive skills-oriented training, the optimum class size is 18 students. Upon completion of this course, students may be eligible for the membership of Hong Kong Professional Counselling Association.

Assessment of student practicum performance will mainly make reference to the student’s rating in (1) practicum assessment form and (2) Beck’s Cognitive Therapy Rating Scale, so as to assess the student’s ability in using CBI to guide the case assessment and intervention. The assessment will be conducted at mid-term and end of practicum, so that more concrete feedbacks and suggestions can be given to students to facilitate their learning and improvement. Pre-requisite: SOWK6127 Cognitive-behavioral interventions or an equivalent, and SOWK6311 Cognitive-behaviour therapy skills training.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOWK6347. Cognitive-behaviour therapy supervised practice – Practitioner stream (12 credits)

The course adopts a “case-study” format in which students are required to provide counselling for up to five clients using cognitive-behavior interventions, over a period of two semesters. Students will have to report in class the progress of their treatment sessions. Through case discussions and group supervision, students will learn the process and techniques of cognitive-behavior interventions. Upon completion of this course, students will be awarded a certificate equivalent to Level I Certificate Training in Cognitive Behaviour Therapy from Institute of Cognitive Therapy of Hong Kong.

Pre-requisite: SOWK6127 Cognitive-behavioral interventions or an equivalent, and SOWK6311 Cognitive-behaviour therapy skills training.

Assessment: 100% coursework

**SOWK6349. Mental health recovery: Narrative and strengths-based practices
(6 credits)**

Recovery is “A deeply personal, unique process of changing one’s attitudes, values, feelings, goals, skills and roles. It is a way of living a satisfying, hopeful and contributing life even with the limitation caused by illness.” (Anthony, 1993). Recovery-oriented practices are empowering approaches that embrace person-centered alternatives for promoting hope, self-determination, self-management, wellbeing and social inclusion of people in face of mental distress. Such humanistic approaches have been gaining international credence among mental health service users, service providers, professionals and policy makers in recent years.

Grounding on the recovery paradigm, this course aims to walk you through the re-authoring elements of recovery, and the latest knowledge on recovery-oriented practices for mental health counselling and the promotion of wellbeing. It will provide you with the evidence- and experienced-based knowledge of non-pharmacological approaches and postmodern practices including story-telling, narrative therapy, the strengths model assessment and intervention, Wellness Recovery Action Plan etc. You will be guided to see how these practices are not only applicable to counseling in mental health context but also to working with people coping with other issues and challenges in life. You will also have the opportunities to learn and practise the various conversation maps of narrative therapy through experiential exercises during the course.

Assessment: 100% coursework

**SOWK7011. Narrative therapy: A post-structuralist approach to life challenges
(6 credits)**

The course introduces students to the philosophical foundations and practice of narrative therapy for working with individuals, families, groups and communities. Students will have a chance to be engaged with narrative ideas and its application in counselling and human services contexts.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOWK7014. Early intervention in mental health (6 credits)

Early intervention in mental health refers to the early identification and treatment/care of people with mental illness, and prevention/delay of illness onset in subclinical populations. For common mental disorders and severe mental illness, early interventions are at the forefront of clinical and scientific advances, including therapy and service designs that improve access to evidence-based interventions. This course provides a systematic introduction to local and international developments in early intervention in mental health from a life course perspective, with a focus on youth and older people to illustrate early intervention modalities, such as the ‘third wave’ of cognitive behavioural therapy, peer support, digital, and low-intensity psychotherapies.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOWK7015. Early intervention in mental health for older adult (6 credits)

Mental health problems in old age are common and can have deleterious consequences, including disability and death. Age-appropriate early interventions can be effective in preventing or minimizing mental health problems and their complications in older people. Building on a foundation of knowledge and skills in early intervention in mental health, this course provides further insight into the tailoring, adaptation, and co-creation of interventions with older adults, applying in-depth knowledge about psychological ageing and lifespan development for key psychosocial interventions and care.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOWK7016. Early intervention in mental health for young person (6 credits)

Most adult mental illnesses onset before age 25 years. Adolescence is a window of opportunity for early interventions, which need to consider age-specific biopsychosocial development, system/context (family, school, social media), and risk/protective factors (peer relationship, bullying). Building on a foundation of knowledge and skills in early intervention in mental health, this course provides further insight into the tailoring, adaptation, and co-creation of interventions with young people, applying in-depth knowledge about developmental stage and life course determinants for key psychosocial interventions and care.

Assessment: 100% coursework

Capstone Experience Courses

SOWK6265. Research methods in human service (6 credits)

This course covers the whole research process from the development of research questions and hypotheses to the analysis of data as well as presentation of findings. Different data collection methods including qualitative data collection such as case study, interviews and focus groups; and quantitative data collection such as survey and experiment will be discussed. Data analysis on various types of data including secondary data will be examined. Students will be expected to integrate and apply the knowledge and skills they acquired through the programme by attending the integrated seminars organized by the end of the first semester of the final academic year of study.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOWK9003. Dissertation (12 credits)

The title of the dissertation shall be submitted for approval not later than five months before the formal submission of the dissertation **or** not later than March 31 of the same academic year of study. The dissertation shall be presented by not later than **August 1** of the same academic year of study. The dissertation shall be a critical study that demonstrates the application of research methodology to the investigation of problems relevant to the field of study, and shall not exceed 20,000 words in length.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SYLLABUSES FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

NONPROFIT MANAGEMENT [MSocSc(NPM)]

This programme provides an opportunity for leaders in the nonprofit sector in the Greater China and the world to develop enhanced capacity to lead the future development in civil society and the nonprofits sector. Our comprehensive and rigorous programme situates nonprofit management in a broader arena to include social, political and economic dimensions that will enable graduates to act as agents of change through policy advocacy, innovation, and other strategic actions as well as allow graduates to take on leadership positions in the sector. Through this programme, we will:

- extend students' knowledge of current critical issues in governance and leadership in the nonprofit sector, across sectors, as well as within relevant social services and public policy areas;
- enhance the capacity of the students in navigating the complex and dynamic social-economic-policy context to create positive changes in the sector;
- empower students with the state of art of innovations in the government, private and the nonprofit sectors, and create innovative competence in the sector;
- prepare students to integrate academic and professional knowledge to enhance their intellectual abilities and professional practice in order to achieve more effective and efficient leadership in the nonprofit sector; and
- create value for organisations as their staff members who join this programme can reflect on challenges and issues facing their organisations as well as apply newly developed competencies to mobilize resources and build new networks to transform their organisation.

ASSESSMENTS

To complete the programme, candidates shall satisfy the examiners in the assessments of courses. Candidates may be assessed by continual coursework assessment, written examinations, or a combination of both. The grading system with fine grades (i.e. A+, A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, D+, D and F) will be adopted for this programme.

CURRICULUM

Candidates are required to complete 60 credits, including 8 courses (6 credits each) and one capstone project (12 credits) in order to receive the Master of Social Sciences in the field of Nonprofit Management degree. Of the 8 courses needed to complete this degree, candidates are required to take 5 compulsory courses and may choose the remaining 3 courses from a list of pre-approved electives. Candidates can take a maximum of two elective courses in other fields of study under the Master of Social Sciences (Behavioral Health, Gerontology, Mental Health, Social Service Management, Sustainability Leadership and Governance) and the Master of Social Work programmes, and/or from other postgraduate programmes in the University which offer cross-listed courses to the Master of Social Sciences in the field of Nonprofit Management programme. Special approval from the Master of Social Sciences in the field of Nonprofit Management Programme Director and respective Programme Directors for the courses in the above-mentioned fields of study or programmes is needed.

Candidates can take a maximum of one elective course from the Master of Family Wealth Management programme. The selection of cross-listed courses shall be subject to the approval of the Programme Director/Chairman of the two respective programmes.

Compulsory courses

Candidates shall complete the following courses.

- MNPM7001. Public governance, structure and dynamics of the nonprofit sector in Greater China (6 credits)
- MNPM7002. Foundations of the nonprofit sector in comparative perspective (6 credits)
- MNPM7004. Performance measurement, assessment and programme evaluation (6 credits)
- MNPM7005. Strategic management of nonprofit organisations (6 credits)
- MNPM7009. Philanthropy: impact, strategic engagement and community support (6 credits)

Capstone experience course

Candidates shall complete the following course.

- MNPM7013. Capstone in nonprofit management (12 credits)

Elective courses

Candidates shall complete four courses from the following list.

- MNPM7003. Managing nonprofit organisations: issues, tools and challenges (6 credits)
 - MNPM7006. The law, nonprofit and philanthropy (6 credits)
 - MNPM7007. Talent management and strategic leadership for nonprofit organisations (6 credits)
 - MNPM7008. NGO Board governance and development (6 credits)
 - MNPM7010. Fund development and financial management for nonprofit organisations (6 credits)
 - MNPM7011. Social entrepreneurship and innovation (6 credits)
 - MNPM7012. Brand building and social marketing (6 credits)
 - MNPM7014. Organizational analysis and strategic development in changing context (6 credits)
 - MNPM7015. Current topics in nonprofit management (6 credits)
 - MNPM7016. Working toward sustainable development goals through experiential learning (6 credits)
 - MNPM7017. Nonprofit management programme internship (6 credits)
 - MNPM7018. Environmental, Social, Governance (ESG): the opportunities for nonprofits (6 credits)
-

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

Compulsory Courses

MNPM7001. Public governance, structure and dynamics of the nonprofit Sector in Greater China (6 credits)

This course provides an overview of the major issues in public governance, structure and dynamics of civil society, and the nonprofit sector in Greater China. It will examine the different modes of public governance and public-private interface through the development of civil society in Hong Kong, Mainland China, Macau and Taiwan. The existence, functions and contributions of nonprofit organisations to public governance will be explored. Students will gain a broader understanding of the mapping of nonprofit practices and the nature of current social issues in Greater China, such as online fundraising, social innovation, widening income disparity, ageing, poverty, climate change and migrant workers, in the context of recent reforms. Case studies will be used to demonstrate how change can be achieved and how to manage the dynamics of people and systems under different regimes.

Assessment: 100% coursework

MNPM7002. Foundations of the nonprofit sector in comparative perspective (6 credits)

This course examines the theories and concepts, roles and development of nonprofit organisations, voluntary associations, philanthropic organisations and social enterprises from an historical, political, social and economic perspective. It also examines the distinct scope, theories and functions of such organisations, and how they operate and impact on society, to equip students with a deep understanding of the complexity of the sector and its relationship to public governance.

Assessment: 100% coursework

MNPM7004. Performance measurement, assessment and programme evaluation (6 credits)

This course introduces on data collection, assessment, impact and performance appraisal systems that nonprofit can implement to measure and assess efficacy of policies and programmes. Performance measurement and programme evaluation are critical to improving the overall quality of programmes and services, gaining credibility with donors and demonstrating accountability and transparency to stakeholders. Topics also include: Social impact assessment (SIA) process, models and social variables for measuring social returns or social outputs especially in the fields of impact investing and social entrepreneurship, setting key performance indicators (KPIs); performance evaluation from a human capital perspective; and developing appropriate methods for communicating assessment results.

Assessment: 100% coursework

MNPM7005. Strategic management of nonprofit organisations (6 credits)

This course focuses on leadership and management of nonprofit organisations in the current context of resource scarcity and the blurring of boundaries between the private, public and nonprofit sectors. As there is increasing emphasis on corporate social responsibilities and collective share holding in for-profit businesses, case studies of effective businesses and witnessing transformation of corporations will empower students to appreciate Change Management in an ever changing socio-economic environment. The course aims to provide the necessary perspectives and tools for executing high-impact strategy, including the conceptual frameworks for understanding high-impact organisations and the role of strategic leadership; analytical tools for developing and evaluating strategy; issues around succession planning; risk assessment; systems thinking and sustainability; approaches to working with stakeholders to mobilise commitment; and methods for leading change and achieving goals.

Assessment: 100% coursework

MNPM7009. Philanthropy: impact, strategic engagement and community support (6 credits)

Philanthropy is essential for the vision and advancement strategy of NonProfits as individual, corporate, family and community foundations mushroom in a culture of communal altruism all over the world. Fundraising is important for NonProfit leaders as a tool in community engagement, branding and sharing of mission. The course examines the core values, methods and secrets of philanthropy and fundraising with in-depth analysis on the changing landscape, the global trends vis a vis cultural differences in the traditions of East and West. We examine case studies from the international arena, as well as those from Hong Kong and Asia, along with the contexts of ecological, historical, and social processes. Topics include issues and tensions around accountability and legitimacy; high-impact philanthropy; metrics for measuring impact; strategic philanthropy and the ethics of giving. Effective philanthropy inevitably looks for impactful investments with a desire for genuine social change.

In seminar and workshop mode, there will be active discussion and debates, hands-on presentations and group projects. Guest speakers from donors, community partners and NGO leaders will be invited, culminating in a field trip to complete the practical guide on fundraising proposals and protocols for solicitation and stewardship.

Assessment: 100% coursework

Elective Courses

MNPM7003. Managing nonprofit organisations: issues, tools and challenges (6 credits)

A major challenge facing the nonprofit sector today is to attain effective management in a complex, rapidly changing environment. This course provides an overview of the broad range of management tools, principles and practices on which nonprofit organisations rely as they seek to meet mission objectives, frame messages to attract public support, motivate volunteers, plan effectively, develop strong board leadership, connect with the other sectors, and set and meet performance objectives. The course also looks toward future trends and developments in the management of nonprofit organisations. Topics covered range from developing organisational capacity to leveraging stakeholder and community engagement.

Assessment: 100% coursework

MNPM7006. The law, nonprofit and philanthropy (6 credits)

This course covers the range of legal issues affecting civic engagement, volunteerism, human rights, international standards, nonprofit organisations and philanthropy. It examines and compares the evolution of the legal systems pertaining to those underlying policies and regulatory issues contained in constitutional, tax, contract, and trust laws that affect the set up and operation of charities, foundations, social enterprises and other philanthropic endeavours in Greater China with a comparison to Western legal frameworks. International best practices in policies, legal framework and systems on civil society, philanthropy, fund management, impact investing and NPOs will be examined.

Assessment: 100% coursework

MNPM7007. Talent management and strategic leadership for nonprofit organisations (6 credits)

Talent management has emerged in the field of human resources as a key strategy for improving how an organisation functions. It is a set of processes designed to manage, recruit, develop, motivate and retain a workforce with the goal of creating a sustainable, highly responsive and performance driven organisation. Topics covered include identifying a competency-based, integrated talent management system, volunteer recruitment and management, and promoting organisational values-based behavioral themes.

Assessment: 100% coursework

MNPM7008. NGO Board governance and development (6 credits)

This course presents an overview of nonprofit governance and issues of accountability that affect organisational performance from the structure, functions and composition of Boards to the individual fiduciary responsibility of each member. Topics covered include best practices on Board selection based on competency modelling; Board training and development, including working with cross-sectoral partners; collaboration and consensus building, how to assess Board performance and transformation of Boards.

Assessment: 100% coursework

MNPM7010. Fund development and financial management for nonprofit organisations (6 credits)

A major priority for nonprofit organisations is securing funds in support of noble goals and programmes. This course covers the fundamentals of fund development and diversifying sources of income as part of an organisation's strategy to build up capacity for sustainable, long-term growth. The use of financial information in organisational planning, implementation, control, reporting, and analysis are essential to the smooth operation of nonprofit organisations. Topics to be covered include techniques for developing successful fundraising strategies and campaigns; examination of donor behaviour and giving methodologies; assessing various potential sources and types of support; prospecting and building relationships; ethics and fund stewardship; and understanding external issues with potential to impact fund development and organisational performance; as well as accounting, budgeting, preparing and analysing financial statements, and using analytical tools in financial-decision making to improve organisational performance.

Assessment: 100% coursework

MNPM7011. Social entrepreneurship and innovation (6 credits)

Social entrepreneurship is about advancing long-term social change through technological innovative solutions and is a rapidly developing and changing field that constitutes different activities and goals depending on whether one is from the private, nonprofit or public sector. This course analyses the strengths and limitations of social entrepreneurship and social businesses, from a comparative perspective, as a tool for achieving significant lasting social change within nonprofit organisations. It explores the different theories, concepts, frameworks, guidelines and measurement tools, such as impact investing and SORI for effective social entrepreneurship and innovation with an eye towards sustainability of such solutions.

Assessment: 100% coursework

MNPM7012. Brand building and social marketing (6 credits)

Nonprofit organisations, characterised by having a wide range of stakeholders, rely heavily on community goodwill and public engagement to attain desirable social goals. Building a strong brand with appropriate marketing and public relations strategies can help nonprofit organisations strategically attract financial support, volunteers, beneficiaries, talents, as well as strengthen organisational identity, cohesion and capacity. Social marketing, which refers to the application of marketing concepts and techniques and integration with other social science approaches, can effectively help influence specific behaviours that benefit individuals and communities for social good. Successfully branded nonprofits enable themselves to gain greater attention and capacity to mobilise the community for creating greater social good when applying social marketing technique. This course adopts a mode of professional practicum to cover the essential concepts and tools for nonprofit to formulate branding and social marketing strategies, which synchronise with the social values and positioning of the organisation. Students will also learn the basic concepts of nonprofit marketing, digital marketing and PR functions as well as how to develop a marketing plan, conduct competitive analyses and market segmentation; understand target audience needs and how to adopt marketing philosophies to overcome threats and reap the opportunities in the current environment. Veteran professionals will be invited to share their invaluable experiences in class and students will be provided the opportunity to support a local nonprofit organisation in an actual marketing project through the course assignment.

Assessment: 100% coursework

MNPM7014. Organizational analysis and strategic development in changing context (6 credits)

This course targets at middle and senior managers of non-profit organizations, foundations and corporate social responsibility programs to be equipped with the core knowledge and cutting edge trends in strategizing organizational management and development. In confronting global challenges of rapid changes in public, business and social sectors, this course will offer deep analysis on organizational changes and learning to enhance students' knowledge and skills of multidisciplinary management. Topics may include change management, quality and performance monitoring systems, digital accountability and governance, strategic leadership, risk management, social economy and organizational innovations, etc.

Assessment: 100% coursework

MNPM7015. Current topics in nonprofit management (6 credits)

Effective nonprofit management requires students to be familiar with the often-complex issues created by a rapidly changing global environment and to understand the approaches being taken to address those challenges. This course provides the students with an opportunity to explore current and emerging issues in nonprofit management from both a theoretical and practical perspective.

The specific issues addressed will vary from year to year but may include such areas as nonprofit law and regulation; civic engagement, volunteering and volunteer management; new institutional forms and the blurring boundaries of the nonprofit sector; collaboration, networking and acquisition; interorganizational relations and public private partnership; challenges and opportunities in a digital environment; and the policy environment.

Assessment: 100% coursework

MNPM7016. Working toward sustainable development goals through experiential learning (6 credits)

This credit-bearing Experiential Learning course coalesces scholars and expert practitioners to offer a unique learning experience through a study trip that aims to empower students with strong entrepreneurial and humanitarian spirit to work towards the Sustainable Development Goals with new insight, skills, knowledge, and leadership. Specifically, the study trip will examine successful social innovation and startup models, conservation and development struggles, and other critical topics that harness social innovation, local and international nonprofits, and public-private partnerships for social good in developing countries. Students will also learn to solve problems using a set of tools, including design thinking, project management and leadership, and marketing. Students will also learn how to design and lead similar types of experiential learning in the future.

Assessment: 100% coursework

MNPM7017. Nonprofit management programme internship (6 credits)

The Nonprofit Management Programme Internship presents a unique opportunity for students who have limited experience working in nonprofit organizations. To fulfill the course requirements, students must complete a minimum of 100 internship hours in local or international nonprofits or nonprofit-related unit in private organizations. Students must seek approval from the internship coordinator for the suitability of the internship positions to fulfill the course requirement.

Before undertaking the internship, students need to attend the pre-internship workshops to be prepared for this experiential learning opportunity. During the internship, students need to maintain a logbook to document their experiences and obtain endorsements from their internship supervisors. Upon completion of the internship, students are expected to provide reflections on their internship experiences throughout the process.

Assessment: 100% coursework

MNPM7018. Environmental, Social, Governance (ESG): the opportunities for nonprofits (6 credits)

This course explores the emerging trend of Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG), with a focus on the unique opportunities it presents for the nonprofit sector. As the demand for sustainable development continues to grow, the holistic management of organizations, encompassing business and nonprofits alike, is becoming increasingly vital. Students will develop an understanding of ESG history, ESG principles, ESG practices, the global ESG landscape, and the drivers of adoption and promotion by both business and nonprofits. With the help of lectures, case studies, interactive discussions, guest speakers and group activities, students will learn how to embrace the new opportunities brought by ESG and how to effectively integrate ESG practices into nonprofits, creating lasting social and environmental impact and mitigating risks.

Assessment: 100% coursework

Capstone Experience Course

MNPM7013. Capstone in nonprofit management (12 credits)

The capstone project enables students to integrate what they have learned from the programme and demonstrate their ability to analyse critical issues, mobilise resources and build creative synergy in strategic nonprofit management. Students will attend a workshop as part of capstone and through active participation with distinguished academics, entrepreneurs and practitioners in the field, will develop expertise in those skills, tools and competencies essential to leading effective and efficient nonprofit organisations. Topics covered in the workshop include managing interpersonal and group conflicts; advocating for social change; information strategy in the digital age; and the art of networking and forming strategic alliances. Students will then work in small groups or on individual basis to complete a professional project. A topic is selected in consultation with relevant teaching staff by the end of the first month of the final academic year of study. The project is then researched, written and submitted for examination by the end of the final academic year.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SYLLABUSES FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

POPULATION AND POLICY ANALYSIS [MSocSc(Pop&PA)]

The Faculty of Social Sciences offers a postgraduate programme leading to the degree of Master of Social Sciences in the field of Population and Policy Analysis. The programme shall extend over not less than one and not more than two academic years of full-time study.

ASSESSMENTS

To complete the programme, candidates shall satisfy the examiners in the assessment of courses as prescribed in the programme. Assessments of the courses may be conducted either by course assignments, by presentations, or by written tests, or a combination of both methods. The grading system follows the standard practice in the Faculty of Social Sciences.

CURRICULUM

To complete the Master of Social Sciences in the field of Population and Policy Analysis programme, candidates must complete 8 courses (6 credits each) and a capstone project (12 credits), with a total of 60 credits. The compulsory courses provide candidates with a broad, integrated understanding of the social sciences approach to demography, population and policy analysis. The elective courses, building upon that foundation, introduce the candidates to a variety of developments in population and related social policy issues.

Compulsory courses

Candidates shall complete all compulsory courses of the following list:

- MPOP7001. Demographic theory (6 credits)
- MPOP7002. Demographic methods (6 credits)
- MPOP7003. Population policy (6 credits)
- MPOP7004. Methods for policy evaluation (6 credits)
- MPOP7005. Statistical computing for social science (6 credits)

Elective courses

Candidates shall complete at least two elective courses from the following list:

- MPOP7101. Fertility and family change (6 credits)
- MPOP7102. Health, ageing and mortality (6 credits)
- MPOP7103. Migration and urbanisation (6 credits)
- MPOP7104. Spatial population analysis (6 credits)
- MPOP7105. Demography of Greater China (6 credits)
- MPOP7106. Population and economy in historical perspective (6 credits)
- MPOP7107. Applied policy design and strategy (6 credits)
- SOWK6207. Social policy and ageing (6 credits)

Candidates shall complete not more than one elective course from the following list:

- MSDA7003. Machine learning (6 credits)
- MSDA7101. Big data solutions to social problems (6 credits)
- MSDA7102. Simulating human behaviors with agent-based models (6 credits)
- MSDA7104. Social network analysis (6 credits)

POLI7003.	Public policy: issues and approaches (6 credits)
POLI8009.	Policy design and analysis (6 credits)
SOWK6193.	Social gerontology (6 credits)
SOWK6201.	Mental health problems in old age (6 credits)
SOWK6259.	Contemporary perspectives on death, dying and bereavement (6 credits)
SOWK6292.	Ageing and health (6 credits)
URBP8002.	International planning policy and practices (6 credits)

Capstone experience course

Candidates shall complete the following capstone experience course:

MPOP8001.	Capstone project (12 credits)
-----------	-------------------------------

Not all elective courses will necessarily be offered in a given year. While we try to ensure as broad a course offering to students as possible, courses offered each year do vary based on availability of teaching staff, departmental resources and student demand. In exceptional instances, it may be necessary to cancel a course at short notice because of insufficient student enrolment or other resource issues.

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

Compulsory Courses

MPOP7001. Demographic theory (6 credits)

Demographic theories have produced some of the best-documented generalisations in social sciences. This module offers a comprehensive exploration of demographic theories, building upon the foundational concepts of cohort versus period analysis. The course will first focus on the predominant demographic theory of demographic transition, as well as the associated explanation of the outcome of demographic change such as demographic dividend and metabolism. We will then extend our focus to encompass theories on the transition in changes in fertility, mortality and migration that have played key roles in the demographic transition. We will cover how these processes of population change have evolved by core demographic characteristics such as age, sex, education, and location. Finally, we will discuss various approaches to forecasting future population sizes and structures, complemented by illustrative scenarios at regional, national, and global levels, and discuss their possibilities and limitations in projection future population levels and structures in the short, medium, and long range. Through a series of lectures, discussions, and practical applications, students will gain insights into the power of demographic theories and examine their implications for past and future population and development.

Assessment: 60% coursework; 40% examination

MPOP7002. Demographic methods (6 credits)

Demography as a scientific discipline began over 350 years ago when statistical patterns for births and deaths were first systematically analysed. The extensive development and widespread application of technical methods have been at the core of demography ever since. This module introduces key demographic concepts and methods, to allow students to define, interpret, and analyse population change. Students will engage with key concepts such as the stable population and demographic accounting, laying the groundwork for a nuanced understanding of population dynamics. Through a combination of theoretical understanding and practical skills development, students will be empowered to critically interpret demographic measures, engage in population analysis, and contribute to demographic research. Throughout the course, we will use the R statistical software to carry out calculations and visualise our results.

The course will begin by discussing common types of demographic data, such as censuses, surveys, and administrative sources. Emphasising hands-on experience and practical application, the course covers techniques for measuring and comparing changes in population size, composition, and growth. We then focus on a range of topics on demographic rates and measures, direct and indirect standardisations, the Lexis diagram, life tables and decomposition analysis, before concentrating on methods for analysing the components of population change (fertility, mortality, and migration). Finally, we will turn our attention to the fundamental concepts of cohort component population projections including Leslie matrices to model future age structures in population growth, and methods for forecasting population sizes with uncertainty and developing scenario-based projections often used by policymakers in studying the potential impact of demographic changes in the future.

Pre-requisite: MPOP7005. Statistical computing for social science

Assessment: 100% coursework

MPOP7003. Population policy (6 credits)

For centuries, policymakers have sought to influence the size and structure of their populations. This course explores the dynamic field of population policies and the rationales behind them, examining their profound impacts on demography, societal structures, and economic development.

Students will explore critical contemporary issues, including ageing societies, low fertility rates, labour shortages, retirement protection, economic migration, talent development, the integration of new arrivals, and the demographic impacts of climate change.

Emphasising a data-driven approach, the course utilises global case studies with a special focus on Hong Kong. Students will learn how to analyse demographic data and current events to identify emerging challenges, evaluate existing policies, and propose areas for improvement. Furthermore, to prepare students for a rapidly evolving landscape, the curriculum explores how technological solutions—such as Gerontechnology and Artificial Intelligence—can be leveraged to address these population challenges.

Through interactive in-class discussions, policy simulations, and critical analyses, students will gain deep insights into the complexities of designing effective population policies amidst diverse socio-economic challenges.

Assessment: 100% coursework

MPOP7004. Methods for policy evaluation (6 credits)

This module offers a deep dive into the intricate world of evaluating population policies, employing cutting-edge quantitative causal inference methods with both experimental and non-experimental data. Students will grapple with fundamental questions: How can we rigorously assess the impact of policies or events? How do we discern causal relationships within observational data? The course extensively employs real-world examples to elucidate various statistical methods for causal inference, encompassing Rubin's Causal Model, regression fundamentals, standard error calculations, analysing naturally occurring "quasi-experiments", instrumental variable estimation, difference-in-differences estimation, and regression discontinuity design. Students will gain hands-on experience, mastering these techniques to conduct robust and insightful evaluations of population policies and programs. Throughout the course we will use the R statistical software to carry out calculations and visualise our results.

Pre-requisite: MPOP7005. Statistical computing for social science

Assessment: 100% coursework

MPOP7005. Statistical computing for social science (6 credits)

The volume of data produced by society continues to grow at an exponential pace. Tools that harness the increasing amounts of data are providing new insights into ongoing changes in our societies. This course builds the foundational data skills and visualisation techniques necessary for modern social research, providing the tools to transform raw information into compelling insights about human behaviour and societal trends.

The course begins with an introduction to R, a popular open-source programming language, and the RStudio environment. Students will learn the key principles for effective data handling: how to write code to import, clean, and reshape messy real-world data into structured formats. A core focus is placed on reproducible research, ensuring that data processes are transparent, professional, and easy to share.

As the course progresses, the focus shifts to data storytelling. Students will move beyond basic charts to master the principles of effective visualisation, create animated plots, and build interactive web applications, all in R. Through hands-on exercises, participants will gain the practical skills needed to turn complex datasets into interactive "data products," enabling them to communicate findings to both academic and public audiences with clarity and impact.

No prior experience in programming is required.

Assessment: 40% coursework; 60% examination

Elective Courses

MPOP7101. Fertility and family change (6 credits)

In recent years, the number of children in the world began to decline for the first time in centuries. Combined with increasing life expectancies, the size and structures of families are undergoing unprecedented changes. This course delves into the intricate dynamics of fertility and family structures, introducing fundamental concepts and measures essential for a comprehensive demographic study. We explore key theories and empirical observations to illuminate fertility changes and family formation patterns by key demographic variables such as gender, age and education. Topics covered include reproductive health, family planning, changing family patterns, intergenerational relationships, and the impact of demographic and socio-economic factors on fertility decisions. We will pay particular attention to the cause and impact of fertility changes in the East Asian context, where levels are among the lowest in the world. Through a blend of theoretical discussions, empirical research, and case studies, students will gain a nuanced understanding of the complex relationships between fertility choices, family dynamics, and broader societal trends. The course also equips students with the ability to analyse fertility and family differences across countries and regions, considering various stages of the demographic transition.

Assessment: 100% coursework

MPOP7102. Health, ageing and mortality (6 credits)

As the global living standards continue to rise, understanding the intricate relationship between increased longevity and public health challenges has become an essential policy issue. This course comprehensively explores mortality patterns and health dynamics, focusing on their interdependence across time and space. Students will delve into the micro-level drivers and macro-level consequences of the mortality transition, understanding its linkage to better public health policies, increasing life expectancies and ageing populations. Students will explore various measures for mortality, health and population age structures and analyse relevant data sources to gain practical insights into current trends. Using a demographic perspective, we will study past and emerging issues in public health, such as chronic diseases, obesity, environmental health and infectious diseases. The course will conclude with critical reflections on strategies to overcome challenges in public health and demographic ageing in both low- and high-income countries, including in the East Asian context, home to some of the eldest populations in the world.

Assessment: 100% coursework

MPOP7103. Migration and urbanisation (6 credits)

Migration is becoming the prominent driver of population change in many regions and countries, as fertility and mortality rates decline to low levels. This course provides an in-depth exploration of migration and urbanisation, offering a holistic perspective on these dynamic phenomena. Students will gain a comprehensive understanding of migration concepts, migration and urbanisation theories, and the main past and current migration trends globally and in Asia. The course demonstrates how and where migration is becoming a pivotal force in demographic change, impacting population size, distribution, and characteristics, as well as the socio-economic characteristics of both origin and destination. Moreover, we will delve into the complexities of measuring and defining migration and urban areas, highlighting how these factors can make cross-country comparisons more challenging than other demographic processes such as fertility and mortality. Finally, we will discuss the evolution of migration policies, their effectiveness, and their impact on development in both the sending and receiving areas. The course will facilitate learning about key migration measures and data sources, fostering the ability to comprehend common myths on the scale of migration and its impact.

Assessment: 100% coursework

MPOP7104. Spatial population analysis (6 credits)

To understand changes occurring in populations and societies, one needs to examine the space in which people are interacting. This course examines local populations and their relation to demographic factors by exploring the theory, tools and analytical frameworks for dealing with spatial population and public health data. We will investigate some key spatial issues for population analyses, including the Modifiable Area Unit Problem, whereby the variation in administrative areas can greatly influence our analysis outcomes. Throughout the course, students will learn the theoretical foundations, tools, and analytical frameworks essential for handling spatial data using packages in the R statistical software. We will explore how to visualise spatial data, and how to create “good” maps that are easy to interpret spatial data without bias. Further, we will examine common sources of geospatial demographic data, as well as methods for managing, mapping and modelling spatial data in R using the sf, terra and spgwr packages. These R package environments implement many functions of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) including methods for describing, analysing, and modelling spatial data, including geographically weighted regression.

Pre-requisite: MPOP7005. Statistical computing for social science

Assessment: 100% coursework

MPOP7105. Demography of Greater China (6 credits)

This module provides a focused exploration of the demographic landscape in Greater China, encompassing mainland China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Macau. Students will delve into the unique demographic patterns, trends, and challenges shaping this dynamic region. The course begins with an exploration of past and current key demographic indicators, including fertility rates, mortality trends, and migration patterns, providing a comprehensive overview of population dynamics. Students will examine the impact of historical political and cultural factors on demographic changes and explore the implications for social and economic development in Greater China. We will also reflect on expected future challenges for society and policymakers, including low fertility rates, changing household structures, ageing populations and population decline. Through case studies, discussions, and practical applications, students will gain a nuanced understanding of the complex interplay between current demographic shifts and the emerging challenges in Greater China.

Assessment: 100% coursework

MPOP7106. Population and economic in historical perspective (6 credits)

This course examines the long-run interaction between population dynamics and economic change from a historical perspective, with particular emphasis on the period before the First Demographic Transition. It introduces classic and frontier research on economic historical demography to demonstrate how economic and demographic shocks, institutions, and behavioural responses shaped both population outcomes and economic development in the pre-industrial world. Core topics include the Black Death, the European Marriage Pattern, the Irish Famine, the Columbian Exchange, the Atlantic slave trade, apprenticeship systems, child and female labour during early industrialisation, and large-scale internal and international migration before the First World War. These cases are used to analyse how mortality crises, fertility control, household formation, and labour-market adjustment influenced long-run economic trajectories.

Moreover, the course familiarises students with the main historical sources used in economic-demographic research, such as parish registers, household registers, genealogies, and censuses. Emphasis is placed on the strengths and limitations of these sources, including issues of selection, under-registration, and representativeness. By combining historical analysis with careful attention to empirical evidence, the course equips students to critically evaluate economic explanations of demographic change and the origins of modern economic growth.

Assessment: 50% coursework; 50% examination

MPOP7107. Applied policy design and strategy (6 credits)

This course introduces students to the principles and practices of policy design and evaluation, with a particular emphasis on population-related issues. It provides a non-technical overview of how policies are conceived, formulated, and assessed, equipping students with practical skills for drafting proposals and evaluating policy outcomes in accessible terms. Through comparative case studies from Hong Kong, Mainland China, and the wider Asia-Pacific region, students will learn to identify policy problems, articulate objectives, consider stakeholder perspectives, and apply evaluation frameworks such as logic models, feasibility analysis, and cost-benefit reasoning. The course prepares students for professional roles in government, NGOs, and research institutions by bridging conceptual foundations with applied policy practice in the population domain.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOWK6207. Social policy and ageing (6 credits)

The course is designed to examine the concepts of social policy and ageing, and the various models available for the analysis of social policy. By analyzing local and foreign services and policy regarding the elderly people, students will become familiar with the roles of government and non-government organizations in implementing public policies. This should further the understanding of the development of social services to meet the needs of the elderly in the context of economic and social change. Basic concepts of social planning, problem identification and programme implementation will be examined.

Assessment: 100% coursework

MSDA7003. Machine learning (6 credits)

This course explores machine learning as the algorithmic approach to learning from data. The course also covers key aspects of data mining, which is understood as the application of machine learning tools to obtain insight from data. Algorithms are placed in the context of their theoretical foundations in order to understand their derivation and correct application. Topics include linear models for regression and classification, local methods (nearest neighbor), neural networks, tree learning, kernel machines, unsupervised learning, ensemble learning, computational and statistical learning theory, and Bayesian learning. To expand and extend the development of theory and algorithms presented in lectures, practical applications will be given in tutorials and programming tasks during the project.

Assessment: 100% coursework

MSDA7101. Big data solutions to social problems (6 credits)

Do Google and Facebook understand us better than we do ourselves? Are we becoming lab rats every time we go online? Is the impartially designed algorithm for predicting the probability of recidivism truly fair for sentencing individuals? What are the ethical issues underpinning big data science? When big data analytics are routinely applied in our daily lives, the ability to audit the adopted algorithms becomes crucial. This course aims to build students' big data literacy through three major areas of focus: (1) Defining what big data is; (2) Providing an overview of existing big data analytical techniques; and (3) Discussing opportunities and challenges of big data analytics in tackling social problems.

The course will focus on elaborating the core principles of a variety of techniques adopted when predicting future phenomena through the lens of big data. We will use a case study approach to provide an in-depth understanding of various big data analytics, with the goal inspiring the students to think creatively and critically about how big data analytics can be used to making scientific discoveries and do social good.

Assessment: 100% coursework

MSDA7102. Simulating human behaviours with agent-based models (6 credits)

Despite its contributions to scientific development, traditional positivist, quantitative approaches (e.g., traditional variable-based statistical equations) have often been criticised for their over-simplification and decontextualisation of real-world phenomena in analysis. In contrast, systems science aims to understand complex relationships and their adaptive interactions among various elements within varying environments and systems. Systems science has been instrumental in breaking new scientific ground in diverse fields, including but not limited to engineering, decision analysis, transportation, public health, and urban sciences.

This course will pursue a solid understanding of systems science by exploring the latest advances in agent-based modelling (ABM) and the related analysis methods. ABM, a class of systems science, is an in-silico modelling to examine and predict 'what-if' conditions by simulating social behaviours and interactions among individual entities embedded in social structures.

This course is designed to introduce students to basic tools of theory building and data analysis in ABM to apply those tools to better understand social problems in human populations. Students will learn to use agent-based modelling on standard (free) software, paying attention to feedback processes, multilevel interactions, and the phenomenon of emergence. You will enrich your understanding of the problems people have when they share and cooperate, and examine essential models that can support you in your future career in social sciences and beyond.

This course is designed for anyone interested in understanding human behaviours, especially when sharing and cooperation are involved. It will be particularly useful for professionals dealing with challenges related to public goods, common resources, and cooperation. If you are studying social sciences and are curious about how a computational approach works, this course will be particularly helpful.

Assessment: 100% coursework

MSDA7104. Social network analysis (6 credits)

The basic premise of this course is that the social world is relational. We can not ignore that we are influenced by people we know, have met and respect; ideas and allegiances are formed and maintained in social settings and organisations; not all people have equal opportunities when it comes to finding a job; we communicate over networks, be they online or offline; etc. In this course we aim to produce a detailed understanding of the web of social contacts that structure our daily life and society. We will consider the network both as an object that is interesting in its own right and as something that creates co-dependencies between social units in terms of outcomes and properties of these social units themselves.

The overarching goal of the course is to provide us with tools that bridge theories on the one hand, and what we can actually observe in observational and archival empirics on the other. Put another way, we aim to avail ourselves of approaches that permits us to test if our theoretical ideas about social interaction are supported by what people, organisations and countries actually do. The course is structured around a collection of themes based on such theoretical concepts such as cohesion, embeddedness, homophily, transitivity, the Mathew effect, structural holes, influence, selection. We will examine these both from the perspective of how they structure the network and how these network effects structure behaviour, opinions and beliefs.

For the purposes of getting some practical understanding of the approaches presented, we will also explore analytic methods using block models, stochastic actor-oriented models, exponential random graph models, network autocorrelation and network effects models. It is not expected that the students become expert users in any of these methods but to appreciate the common goal across these models, namely to model and take into account the interdependencies. Data will mostly be handled in R but orientation to other analysis packages will be given.

Assessment: 100% coursework

POLI7003. Public policy: issues and approaches (6 credits)

This course introduces students to the key concepts and theoretical approaches in the study of public policy process. The course is organised into three parts. Part one examines the basic concepts used in analysing the policy process and the political and institutional contexts of policy making. Part two discusses the major theoretical approaches to the study of policy making and policy implementation and assesses their strengths and limitations. Part three analyses the politics of policy making in Hong Kong and discusses the applicability of the concepts and theories in public policy studies to the real world. Selected policy issues will also be examined to illustrate the dynamics of the policy process in Hong Kong and other areas.

Assessment: 60% coursework, 40% examination

POLI8009. Policy design and analysis (6 credits)

This course focuses on conceptual and analytical skills and techniques required for understanding, and suggesting solutions to, policy problems. It examines major components of public policy analysis – problem definition, policy design, and policy assessment.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOWK6193. Social gerontology (6 credits)

This course provides a comprehensive, holistic view of ageing that considers the implications for an older person's interactions with their social and physical environments, including the immediate environment of family, friends, and home, as well as the larger social structure of community, organizations, and society. It also aims to impart knowledge to students about the most important social theories on ageing and the time dimension in the ageing process and its relation to the evolution of larger society.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOWK6201. Mental health problems in old age (6 credits)

This course explores the types of mental illnesses among the elderly in Hong Kong. Attention will be put towards the understanding of the causes and treatments of mental illness in the elderly population. A critical review of medical, psychological and social services for the elderly with mental illness will be conducted.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOWK6259. Contemporary perspectives on death, dying and bereavement (6 credits)

Death is an inevitable life experience for everyone. Death-related problem is one of the commonest issues that clients brought to counseling, but is also rated as the most uncomfortable scenario by beginning counselors. This course offers a basic orientation to the knowledge and intervention approaches in working with death-related situations, including end of life care and bereavement counseling. Major theories and models related to death, dying and bereavement would be introduced. Corresponding clinical implications and practical work approaches would also be highlighted. Apart from the knowledge and skills, the course also emphasises on personal exploration and review on one's attitudes toward life and death issues. It is hoped that students are better equipped with knowledge competence, practice competence as well as self competence in working with death, dying and bereavement.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOWK6292. Ageing and health (6 credits)

According to the WHO, health is a "complete state of physical, mental, and social well-being, and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity." As people age, they are increasingly facing challenges in their physical and mental health and in their social wellbeing. A better integrated health and social care system will help older people to better adjust to their aging processes and to minimise the negative impacts of aging to their wellbeing. This course is designed to help students from diverse academic backgrounds to understand the core values, conceptual models, intervention strategies, and service delivery systems of the integrated health and social care model. Building on the foundation values and knowledge of their own disciplines, students will learn how to effectively develop and implement a multi-disciplinary team in geriatric care settings.

Assessment: 100% coursework

URBP8002. International planning policy and practice (6 credits)

This course examines different planning system across the world and the ideologies and values behind the planning process and approaches. Understanding the key approaches to urban planning in different countries and regions of different governance regimes is important in developing an appreciation of how different ideologies and political economies give rise to different planning policies and practices to shape the urban landscape of various localities within their own contexts. The course takes a comparative approach to understand and evaluate planning policy and practices and the planning outcomes across a spectrum of international case studies, and attempts to explain their differences and similarities by probing into the dynamics between government intervention and market freedom, diversity in development certainty vis-à-vis land use controls and planning governance modes.

Assessment: 100% coursework

Capstone Experience Course (Compulsory)

MPOP8001. Capstone project (12 credits)

This course aims to teach students how to integrate and apply the knowledge and skills they acquired through the programme. Students will articulate their research objectives, conduct a relevant literature review and develop indicative methodology. The course provides students with the opportunity to undertake a major piece of supported independent research. It is an opportunity to apply skills and techniques learned during the taught component of this programme to develop substantive original research of interest to the student. Projects will be supervised by academic staff affiliated with the Population and Policy Analysis programme.

Individual projects and research questions are chosen and formulated by students, and supported during the research process by one-to-one or small group meetings with a nominated member of academic staff, and student-led group meetings to seek peer support. The project may address a methodological or practical issue using desk-based research and secondary data sources or may involve primary data collection. It may also be carried out in conjunction with an external organisation (such as a local government, a charitable association or a commercial organisation) to address a relevant research or practical issue of interest to them (such as assessing potential impacts of policy changes) and make use of their data or other inputs. Regardless of the nature of the project itself, all projects must have a clearly defined aim and set of specific objectives that are novel or original and which relate to this programme of study. All projects should be written up as an academic piece of work, using the guidance provided during the module.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SYLLABUSES FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

PSYCHOLOGY [MSocSc(Psy)]

The Department of Psychology offers a postgraduate programme leading to the degree of Master of Social Sciences in the field of Psychology. The mission of this MSocSc programme in Psychology is to provide high quality postgraduate education in psychology. The programme incorporates intensive research training, adopts a fit-for-purpose problem-based learning approach, and makes a capstone experience for every student in this programme so as to better equip our graduates for further studies or future career in psychology.

CURRICULUM

Candidates are required to complete 60 credits. For the “dissertation” option, candidates are required to complete seven compulsory courses (6 credits each), a dissertation (12 credits) and an elective course (6 credits). For the “non-dissertation” option, candidates are required to complete seven compulsory courses (6 credits each), a capstone project in psychology (6 credits) and two elective courses (6 credits each) from the elective course list of this programme.

Compulsory courses

- PSYC7301. Introduction to research methods in psychology (6 credits)
- PSYC7302. Research and quantitative methods in psychology (6 credits)
- PSYC7303. Biological psychology (6 credits)
- PSYC7304. Cognitive psychology (6 credits)
- PSYC7305. Developmental psychology (6 credits)
- PSYC7306. Personality psychology (6 credits)
- PSYC7307. Social psychology (6 credits)

Elective courses

- PSYC7310. Human neuropsychology (6 credits)
- PSYC7311. Internship in psychology (6 credits)
- PSYC7312. Introduction to concepts and approaches of therapeutic psychology (6 credits)
- PSYC7313. Introduction to health psychology and wellbeing (6 credits)
- PSYC7314. Professional ethics and issues in psychology (6 credits)
- PSYC7315. Psychological testing and measurement (6 credits)
- PSYC7316. Special topics in psychology (6 credits)
- PSYC7318. Introduction to educational psychology (6 credits)
- PSYC7319. Introduction to psychopathology (6 credits)

(Note: Not all the elective courses listed will necessarily be offered every year)

Capstone experience courses

- PSYC7308. Dissertation in psychology (12 credits)
- PSYC7317. Capstone project in psychology (6 credits)

Dissertation option: Full-time candidates are required to take four courses in each of the 1st and 2nd semesters, in addition to a full-year dissertation course. Part-time candidates are required

to take five courses in the 1st year and, in addition to the dissertation course, three courses in the 2nd year of study. Any variations from this pattern are subject to the approval of the Programme Director.

Non-dissertation option: Full-time candidates are required to take five courses in each of the 1st and 2nd semesters. Part-time candidates are required to take five courses in the 1st year and five courses in the 2nd year of study. Any variations from this pattern are subject to the approval of the Programme Director.

For the compulsory and elective psychology courses, candidates are required to participate in the problem-based inquiry for each course. In preparation, they should complete the required assigned readings and are encouraged to engage in self-directed learning by reading additional self-selected relevant materials.

Candidates who are enrolled in a capstone experience course are required to conduct a capstone project or write a dissertation on an approved topic under the supervision of a faculty member in his/her final year of study. Both the dissertation and the capstone project report shall be presented not later than June 15 of the final academic year of study.

Candidates who had taken similar courses in a programme which is designed to bring the degree holder up to the standard of a graduate majoring in psychology may not be approved to take similar courses listed under (1). Candidates may be granted exemption of up to three courses with either one course from each of the following combinations:

- PSYC7303 / PSYC7304,

- PSYC7305

- PSYC7306 / PSYC7307, and

no exemption is allowed for the research methods courses, i.e., PSYC7301 and PSYC7302.

Exemption will only be considered in special circumstances and each application for exemption will be considered on its own merit. Candidates with exemption granted are required to take one elective course from the elective course list of this programme or one of the postgraduate seminar courses (PSYC7021, PSYC7022, PSYC7023, PSYC6025) in lieu of each exempted course to meet the degree requirements.

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

Compulsory Courses

PSYC7301. Introduction to research methods in psychology (6 credits)

This course adopts a practical approach to teaching the analytical aspects of research techniques in psychology. It is designed to provide students with the basic background in research design and data analysis. The logic of statistical inference and scientific explanation, the merits and limitations of quantitative approaches to the study of psychological phenomena, and research ethics will be discussed.

Assessment: 100% coursework

PSYC7302. Research and quantitative methods in psychology (6 credits)

This course is designed to extend students' quantitative and research skills so that they are prepared to conduct their own independent empirical research. It will build on what students already learned in PSYC7301 to cover more advanced quantitative methods commonly used in Psychology.

Assessment: 100% coursework

Prerequisites: PSYC7301.

PSYC7303. Biological psychology (6 credits)

This course provides an introduction to biological aspects of behaviour. The topics include: biological bases of behaviour, development, learning, memory, and psychopathology; the nervous system; processes of brain maturation; psychophysiology.

Assessment: 100% coursework

PSYC7304. Cognitive psychology (6 credits)

This course covers how humans learn to deal with information from the environment in everyday life. Topics include various aspects of perception, attention, memory, and language. Students will be involved in conducting experiments on cognitive functioning as part of the coursework.

Assessment: 100% coursework

PSYC7305. Developmental psychology (6 credits)

This course covers current issues in developmental psychology and their applied implications. Students will actively solve problems and conduct mini projects related to selected topics in human development. There will be an emphasis on understanding basic concepts and theories of human development, research methodology and issues in developmental change, as well as biological, environmental and cognitive influences on development.

Assessment: 100% coursework

PSYC7306. Personality psychology (6 credits)

This course will critically examine a number of theories. The relationship of specific theories to practical applications, personality assessment and psychotherapeutic techniques may be included. The major aims of the course are to provide a survey of the breadth and complexity of this field and to provide a perspective from which to examine assumptions about human nature and the evaluation of behaviour.

Assessment: 100% coursework

PSYC7307. Social psychology (6 credits)

This course gives an overview of the field which studies the behaviour of individuals in social contexts. It covers topics in social thinking (e.g., social perception, social judgement, relationship between attitude and behaviour), social influence (e.g., cultural influence, conformity and obedience, persuasion, and group dynamics), and social relations (e.g., prejudice, aggression, interpersonal attraction, and altruistic behaviour). Current research issues in social psychology will form part of the discussion, and students will be guided to apply the knowledge in real-life situations.

Assessment: 100% coursework

Elective Courses

PSYC7310. Human neuropsychology (6 credits)

This course introduces basic principles of brain-behaviour relationships. Research methods for investigating brain-behavior relationships are reviewed. The neuro-anatomical and neuropsychological mechanisms underpinning various cognitive and affective processes as well as how these processes are dysregulated in some common brain disorders are discussed. Students will participate in an independent empirical research project.

Assessment: 100% coursework

PSYC7311. Internship in psychology (6 credits)

Students will have an opportunity to i) learn to do research as an intern in ongoing empirical research projects under a teacher's supervision in the Department of Psychology, OR ii) under special circumstances, engage in an approved non-paid student-initiated internship in local organizations that can provide students an experience that is relevant to the skills and knowledge of the discipline of Psychology. The non-paid student-initiated internship is subject to the approval of the Department. For research internship in campus, students are required to spent 10-12 hours per week assisting various research activities. The internship includes participating in lab meetings or meeting individually with the supervisor, reading relevant theoretical and empirical articles, assisting in ongoing empirical research projects, and writing an internship report. Information about research projects offering internship placements and application procedure will be available in the Psychology Department webpage. For internship in local organizations, students are expected to apply psychology knowledge (including models, theories and/or concepts), critical thinking, and analytical skills acquired at the University to analyze real-life situations.

Assessment: 100% coursework.

PSYC7312. Introduction to concepts and approaches of therapeutic psychology (6 credits)

This course provides a theoretical and experiential foundation for counselling and further training in the mental health profession. Major theoretical approaches in psychotherapy are surveyed and critiqued. Experiential learning is used to help elucidate some of the course material and facilitate reflection. Topics covered also include basic counseling skills and practice, ethics, diversity and cultural values, indigenous and community-based models, and outcome and process research.

Assessment: 100% coursework

PSYC7313. Introduction to health psychology and wellbeing (6 credits)

This course will provide a critical overview of both the psychological and social aspects of human health and wellbeing. Students will gain some foundations in understanding the role of psychology in the health context. Topics covered in this course include health behaviors, coping with health-related stress, social support and health, psychoimmunology, management of chronic illnesses, and patient-practitioner interaction etc.

Assessment: 100% coursework

PSYC7314. Professional ethics and issues in psychology (6 credits)

The purpose of the course is to provide a general ethical guidance to cover typical situations encountered by professional psychologists. Models of ethical decision making will be introduced, discussed, and applied. In addition to the Code of Professional Conduct published by local professional bodies (e.g. the Hong Kong Psychological Society), a number of ethical codes, guidelines, and standards of practice will be reviewed.

Assessment: 100% coursework

PSYC7315. Psychological testing and measurement (6 credits)

This course surveys the major concepts and techniques in the field of psychometrics, and provides students with some hands-on experience with commonly used tests. Topics covered include: the context of testing and measurement; the testing process; test standardization; reliability and validity; intelligence and its appraisal; personality assessment; special domain testing; occupational applications; large-scale measurements; ethics and prospects.

Assessment: 100% coursework

PSYC7316. Special topics in psychology (6 credits)

This course provides an opportunity to study in some depth an area of psychology of interest to students and a staff member alike. Individual topics may have special requirements for eligibility. Students taking this course may select one topic from a list of topics to be announced in the semester immediately prior to that in which they are taken.

Assessment: 100% coursework

PSYC7318. Introduction to educational psychology (6 credits)

This course focuses on how psychological theories are applied to learning, teaching, and the facilitation of human growth. The topics include major developmental theories and their application to learning and instruction, learning theories from both behavioral and cognitive traditions, effective teaching methods and practices, learners' individual and group differences, achievement motivation, and assessment. Students will be involved in learning activities that require self-reflection and integration of daily life experience.

Assessment: 100% coursework

PSYC7319. Introduction to psychopathology (6 credits)

This course provides an introduction to the modern concepts of psychopathology. It covers topics on the core features, conceptualization, and treatment of major groups of mental disorders. Relevance in everyday life, cultural issues and ethical dilemmas will form part of the discussion.

Assessment: 100% coursework.

Capstone Experience courses

PSYC7308. Dissertation in psychology (12 credits)

A candidate should conduct an independent empirical investigation of a psychological problem under the supervision of a faculty member. A successful dissertation should represent the result of the candidate's research which displays some originality and demonstrates a sound understanding of the field of study and the appropriate research methods. The dissertation should be about 8,000 to 10,000 words in length (excluding tables, figures, bibliographies, and appendices). The title of the dissertation shall be submitted for approval not later than March 31 of the final academic year of study, and the dissertation shall be presented not later than June 15 of the final academic year of study. Candidates shall submit a statement that the dissertation represents their own work undertaken after registration as candidates for the degree.

Assessment: 100% coursework

PSYC7317. Capstone project in psychology (6 credits)

This course comprises an independent research study in an area of psychology of the candidates' choice, subject to availability of supervision. Students will conduct a research project or read within an area of study, to be agreed with their instructor, and write an extended essay or research project report. The essay or project write-up should be about 4,000 to 5,000 words in length (excluding tables, figures, bibliographies, and appendices) and should follow the practice of communication in top psychology journals.

Assessment: 100% coursework

Replacement Courses (as replacement for the exempted courses only)

PSYC7021. Postgraduate seminar in cognitive psychology (6 credits)

This seminar course will cover recent developments in the field of Cognitive Psychology, concentrating particularly on theoretical debates and empirical results that are likely to have considerable impact on the field. Theoretical and empirical articles will be read each week, and discussed in class. Discussions will be led by both the instructor and students in the class.

Assessment: 100% coursework

PSYC7022. Postgraduate seminar in social psychology (6 credits)

This seminar course will cover recent developments in the field of Social Psychology, concentrating particularly on theoretical debates and empirical results that are likely to have considerable impact on the field. Theoretical and empirical articles will be read each week, and discussed in class. Discussions will be led by both the instructor and students in the class.

Assessment: 100% coursework

PSYC7023. Postgraduate seminar in developmental psychology (6 credits)

This seminar course will cover recent developments in the field of Developmental Psychology, concentrating particularly on theoretical debates and empirical results that are likely to have considerable impact on the field. Theoretical and empirical articles will be read each week, and discussed in class. Discussions will be led by both the instructor and students in the class.

Assessment: 100% coursework

PSYC6025. Postgraduate seminar in scientific writing for psychology (6 credits)

This seminar course addresses writing skills in relation to Psychological research. Students will engage in a series of assignments designed to improve the fluency and quality of their writing. Particular efforts will be focused on improving the conceptual clarity of writing. Regular feedback will help students improve upon their writing skills.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SYLLABUSES FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

SOCIAL DATA ANALYTICS [MSocSc(SDA)]

The Faculty of Social Sciences offers a postgraduate programme leading to the degree of Master of Social Sciences in the field of Social Data Analytics. The programme shall extend over not less than one and not more than two academic years of full-time study or not less than two and not more than three academic years of part-time study, inclusive of intervening vacations. All courses are offered on both full-time and part-time basis. Classes are conducted during daytimes, evenings and occasional weekends.

ASSESSMENTS

To complete the programme, candidates shall satisfy the examiners in the assessment of courses as prescribed in the programme. Assessments of the courses may be conducted either by course assignments, by presentations, or by written tests, examinations, or a combination of both methods. The grading system follows the standard practice in the Faculty of Social Sciences.

CURRICULUM

Before the commencement of the programme, all candidates must complete a mandatory social data analytics boot camp. The boot camp training programme is designed to provide candidates with beginner-level skills in social data analytics so that they can follow the more advanced curriculum for the degree of Master of Social Sciences in the field of Social Data Analytics. The boot camp will be taught using a combination of in-person and online teaching sessions, organised around the following topics:

1. Welcome to the Boot Camp in Social Data Analytics: pedagogical approach, how to get started; an introduction to open-source software R and RStudio and how to customize the interface
2. Introductory/refresher course in algebra, probability and statistics
3. Using objects (e.g. vectors and dataframes) and different classes of objects (e.g. numeric vs. string) in R-Studio
4. How to clean, reshape, and restructure data with the tidyverse
5. Data Visualization with ggplot
6. Basic Programming: write functions, loops, and learn how to debug your code
7. Communicating and Collaborating with RMarkdown, Rpres, Shiny and Github

To receive the award of the degree of Master of Social Sciences in the field of Social Data Analytics, candidates have to complete 8 courses (6 credits each) and a capstone project (12 credits), with a total of 60 credits. The compulsory courses provide candidates with a broad, integrated understanding of the social sciences approach to data science and data analytics. The elective courses, building upon that foundation, introduce the candidates to a variety of developments in computational social sciences methods.

Compulsory courses

Candidates shall complete all compulsory courses of the following list:

- MSDA7001. Introduction to social data analytics (6 credits)
- MSDA7002. Statistical foundations (6 credits)
- MSDA7004. Research design and inference in the social sciences (6 credits)
- MSDA7005. Programming for social scientists (6 credits)
- MSDA7103. Text as data: Natural language processing and social research (6 credits)

Elective courses

Candidates shall complete at least two of the following elective courses:

- MSDA7003. Machine learning (6 credits)
- MSDA7101. Big data solutions to social problems (6 credits)
- MSDA7102. Simulating human behaviours with agent-based models (6 credits)
- MSDA7104. Social network analysis (6 credits)
- MSDA7105. Media data analysis (6 credits)
- MSDA7106. Casual inference for social sciences (6 credits)
- MSDA7107. Artificial Intelligence for social scientists (6 credits)

One additional elective course can also be taken from other programmes:

- GEOG7308. Machine learning for geospatial data (6 credits)
- GEOG7310. Cloud computing for geospatial data analytics (6 credits)
- GEOG7311. Web GIS (6 credits)
- MSBH7005. Scientific inquiry and research methods in behavioral health (6 credits)
- SOCI7006. Research methods in media, culture and creative cities (6 credits)
- SOWK6185. Qualitative research methods (6 credits)
- MPOP7101. Fertility and family change (6 credits)
- MPOP7102. Health, ageing and mortality (6 credits)
- MPOP7103. Migration and urbanisation (6 credits)
- MPOP7105. Demography of Greater China (6 credits)

Capstone experience course (compulsory)

Candidates shall complete the following capstone experience course:

- MSDA8001. Capstone project (12 credits)

There are no prerequisites of all compulsory or elective courses. Not all the courses listed will necessarily be offered every year. While we try to ensure as broad a course offering to students as possible, courses offered each year do vary based on availability of teaching staff, departmental resources and student demand. In exceptional instances, it may be necessary to cancel a course at short notice because of insufficient student enrolment or other resource issues.

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

Compulsory Courses

MSDA7001. Introduction to social data analytics (6 credits)

This course aims to help students make sense of “big data.” It guides students to ask and answer the following questions: What are big data? With big data, what questions can policymakers and researchers ask and answer? How to collect and analyze big data? This course introduces students to basic data science techniques and demonstrate how they can be applied to various formats of social data. Upon completion, students are expected to master basic concepts of data science and acquire hands-on experience with social data analytics.

Assessment: 100% coursework

MSDA7002. Statistical foundations (6 credits)

It is quite common for social scientists to use mathematical and statistical techniques to describe and analyse social phenomena. Mathematics and statistics provide the foundations for empirical propositions about relationships between social variables. Social scientists typically transform raw data from the real world into numerical generalisations using statistics. The role of mathematics in social science, though, is not restricted to the domain of statistical technique. Many social scientists also construct mathematical representations of social institutions to understand how they work. Building these formal model entails picking out the most important aspects of a situation and then trying to express them mathematically. Over the years, though, the mathematical demands of modern social science has scaled up considerably.

Assessment: 100% coursework

MSDA7004. Research design and inference in the social sciences (6 credits)

This course introduces key methodological concepts and practices in the social sciences. It is especially useful to students without any background in the social sciences, but will also enable students with a background in the social sciences to develop their methodological practice and skills. The key aim of the course is to get students to develop a social science research proposal and to plan the research project successfully. The course is based around three broad topics: (i) philosophy of social science; (ii) research methodology, ethics and practical research strategies; and (iii) research design, with an emphasis on comparative and longitudinal research, and causal inference.

Assessment: 100% coursework

MSDA7005. Programming for social scientists (6 credits)

The course provides an introduction to the basic computational tools, skills, and methods used in Computational Social Science using Python. Python is the most popular programming language for data science, used widely in both academia and the industry. Students will learn to use common workflow and collaboration tools, design, write, and debug simple computer programs, and manage, summarize, and visualize data with common Python libraries. The course will employ interactive tutorials and hands-on exercises using real social data. Participants will work independently and in groups with guidance and support from the lecturers. The practical exercises are designed to demand more autonomy and initiative as the course progresses, culminating in an open-ended group project.

This is an introductory course and no prior experience with programming is required. A basic understanding of statistics and some scripting experience (e.g., from building web pages or statistical analysis programs such as R or Stata) will be helpful but not needed.

Assessment: 100% coursework

MSDA7103. Text as data: Natural language processing and social research (6 credits)

From historical archive to social media discourse, text data are among the most widely available format of social data. Natural Language Processing (NLP) tools help social analysts to use large volume of text to understand social phenomena. This course gives an overview of NLP methods from social sciences' perspective. It discusses how to use NLP tools to discover interesting patterns, create reliable measurement, and make robust inference. It also introduces state-of-the-art generative language models and discusses their promises, limitations, and threats for social data analytics.

Assessment: 100% coursework

Elective Courses

MSDA7003. Machine learning (6 credits)

This course explores machine learning as the algorithmic approach to learning from data. The course also covers key aspects of data mining, which is understood as the application of machine learning tools to obtain insight from data. Algorithms are placed in the context of their theoretical foundations in order to understand their derivation and correct application. Topics include linear models for regression and classification, local methods (nearest neighbor), neural networks, tree learning, kernel machines, unsupervised learning, ensemble learning, computational and statistical learning theory, and Bayesian learning. To expand and extend the development of theory and algorithms presented in lectures, practical applications will be given in tutorials and programming tasks during the project.

Assessment: 100% coursework

MSDA7101. Big data solutions to social problems (6 credits)

Do Google and Facebook understand us better than we do ourselves? Are we becoming lab rats every time we go online? Is the impartially designed algorithm for predicting the probability of recidivism truly fair for sentencing individuals? What are the ethical issues underpinning big data science? When big data analytics are routinely applied in our daily lives, the ability to audit the adopted algorithms becomes crucial. This course aims to build students' big data literacy through three major areas of focus: (1) Defining what big data is; (2) Providing an overview of existing big data analytical techniques; and (3) Discussing opportunities and challenges of big data analytics in tackling social problems.

The course will focus on elaborating the core principles of a variety of techniques adopted when predicting future phenomena through the lens of big data. We will use a case study approach to provide an in-depth understanding of various big data analytics, with the goal inspiring the students to think creatively and critically about how big data analytics can be used to making scientific discoveries and do social good.

Assessment: 100% coursework

MSDA7102. Simulating human behaviours with agent-based models (6 credits)

Despite its contributions to scientific development, traditional positivist, quantitative approaches (e.g., traditional variable-based statistical equations) have often been criticised for their over-simplification and decontextualisation of real-world phenomena in analysis. In contrast, systems science aims to understand complex relationships and their adaptive interactions among various elements within varying environments and systems. Systems science has been instrumental in breaking new scientific ground in diverse fields, including but not limited to engineering, decision analysis, transportation, public health, and urban sciences.

This course will pursue a solid understanding of systems science by exploring the latest advances in agent-based modelling (ABM) and the related analysis methods. ABM, a class of systems science, is an in-silico modelling to examine and predict 'what-if' conditions by simulating social behaviours and interactions among individual entities embedded in social structures.

This course is designed to introduce students to basic tools of theory building and data analysis in ABM to apply those tools to better understand social problems in human populations. Students will learn to use agent-based modelling on standard (free) software, paying attention to feedback processes, multilevel interactions, and the phenomenon of emergence. You will enrich your understanding of the problems people have when they share and cooperate, and examine essential models that can support you in your future career in social sciences and beyond.

This course is designed for anyone interested in understanding human behaviours, especially when sharing and cooperation are involved. It will be particularly useful for professionals dealing with challenges related to public goods, common resources, and cooperation. If you are studying social sciences and are curious about how a computational approach works, this course will be particularly helpful.

Assessment: 100% coursework

MSDA7104. Social network analysis (6 credits)

The basic premise of this course is that the social world is relational. We cannot ignore that we are influenced by people we know, have met and respect; ideas and allegiances are formed and maintained in social settings and organisations; not all people have equal opportunities when it comes to finding a job; we communicate over networks, be they online or offline; etc. In this course we aim to produce a detailed understanding of the web of social contacts that structure our daily life and society. We will consider the network both as an object that is interesting in its own right and as something that creates co-dependencies between social units in terms of outcomes and properties of these social units themselves.

The overarching goal of the course is to provide us with tools that bridge theories on the one hand, and what we can actually observe in observational and archival empirics on the other. Put another way, we aim to avail ourselves of approaches that permits us to test if our theoretical ideas about social interaction are supported by what people, organisations and countries actually do. The course is structured around a collection of themes based on such theoretical concepts such as cohesion, embeddedness, homophily, transitivity, the Mathew effect, structural holes, influence, selection. We will examine these both from the perspective of how they structure the network and how these network effects structure behaviour, opinions and beliefs.

For the purposes of getting some practical understanding of the approaches presented, we will also explore analytic methods using block models, stochastic actor-oriented models, exponential random graph models, network autocorrelation and network effects models. It is not expected that the students become expert users in any of these methods but to appreciate the common goal across these models, namely to model and take into account the interdependencies. Data will mostly be handled in R but orientation to other analysis packages will be given.

Assessment: 100% coursework

MSDA7105. Media data analysis (6 credits)

This course is designed to train students to familiarize a list of essential techniques for media data and social media analytics. It covers a variety of tools that help the learner conduct a range of applications independently, including web scraping, API programming, natural language processing, sentiment analysis, network analysis, digital map, web app development, as well as data visualization. The course is designed and taught in problem-based or project-driven mode which aims to facilitate real life applications in a variety of scenarios in social data analysis.

Assessment: 100% coursework

MSDA7106. Causal inference for social sciences (6 credits)

This course introduces modern approaches to causal inference used in social science research. Topics cover formal definitions of causation, identification strategies, estimation methods, sensitivity analysis, and practical implementation in R (or Python). Emphasis is on understanding assumptions, diagnostics, and applying appropriate methods to social science data to yield convincing causal inference.

Assessment: 100% coursework

MSDA7107. Artificial Intelligence for social scientists (6 credits)

Artificial Intelligence for Social Scientists introduces students to deep learning, transformers, and large language models as both research tools and social phenomena. The course develops a rigorous understanding of neural networks, representation learning, self-attention, pretraining, fine-tuning, embeddings, retrieval, and prompt-based inference, while also teaching students how to build, train, and evaluate neural language models in practice. Students work with social science data such as surveys, interviews, speeches, policy documents, and media corpora, using contemporary AI methods for classification, coding, extraction, summarisation, and comparative analysis. Through labs and projects, they implement core models, adapt pretrained transformers, and design LLM-based research workflows. Equal emphasis is placed on methodological validity, reproducibility, and the distinction between fluent output and credible evidence. The course also examines bias, hallucination, privacy, governance, and the political economy of foundation models, preparing students to use, build, and critically assess AI in social research.

Assessment: 10% coursework, 90% examination

Additional elective courses can be taken from other programmes

GEOG7308. Machine learning for geospatial data (6 credits)

This course provides an in-depth understanding of machine learning algorithms and techniques for geospatial data analysis. The course covers the fundamentals of machine learning and its application in geospatial data analysis, including feature extraction, data preprocessing, and model selection. It also covers various machine learning algorithms, such as random forest and neural networks, and their application in geospatial data analysis. The course provides hands-on experience with real-world geospatial datasets and tools, such as Python and its relevant libraries, and Google Earth Engine. Upon completion of the course, students will have the skills and knowledge to apply machine learning algorithms to geospatial data analysis and solve real-world problems.

Assessment: 100% coursework

GEOG7310. Cloud computing for geospatial data analytics (6 credits)

This course provides an in-depth exploration of cloud computing with a focus on geospatial data analytics. Students will learn about cloud computing concepts, platforms, and services, and how they can be used to manage and analyze large geospatial datasets. Topics covered include cloud architecture, data storage and retrieval, processing and analysis, and visualization. Students will also gain hands-on experience with cloud-based tools and technologies, and develop skills for building and deploying cloud-based geospatial data applications.

Assessment: 100% coursework

GEOG7311. Web GIS (6 credits)

This course is designed to: (1) introduce the concepts and theories that are related to an increasingly important technology – Internet/Web GIS; (2) introduce various technologies or techniques for creating, analyzing, and disseminating GIS data and services via the Internet. The topics covered include the hardware/software structure of the Internet (e.g., server-client model, TCP/IP protocol), the evolution of Web GIS, and most importantly, different technology options. Students will be required to practice almost all of the Web GIS tools including Google Map API, ArcGIS Server, JavaScript API, GeoJSON, Mapbox, and Leaflet. Students will also be exposed to the experience of working with the cloud environment such as AWS EC2 and ArcGIS Online.

Assessment: 100% coursework

MSBH7005. Scientific inquiry and research methods in behavioral health (6 credits)

This course covers the nature and logic of scientific inquiry, and fundamental concepts like truth, reality, knowledge, and theory. Basic quantitative and qualitative research methods are covered; advanced research methods and specific approaches in behavioral health i.e., biofeedback, use of images and movement in research etc. will also be introduced. Students will learn to be critical consumers of the scientific literature. Towards the end of the course, students are required to prepare a research proposal in which classroom learning can be applied to practical examples in behavioral health.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOCI7006. Research methods in media, culture and creative cities (6 credits)

This course offers you the chance to look at different ways of researching media, culture, and creative cities through a range of disciplines, most notably sociology, anthropology, and media and cultural studies. It examines the whole research process, starting from research methodology, to research design, sampling and methods used, to data collection, data analysis and report writing. In particular, various methods will be introduced such as survey, content analysis, ethnography, in-depth interview, life history, reception studies, textual analysis, and deconstruction. Key debates in research methodology such as representation, legitimation, and reflexivity will be discussed. Students will learn the methods for analyzing the media, cultural industries and their products, studying audiences and consumers, charting broader cultural trends, and examining the cultural environment of creative cities. The course helps students put theory “to work” and trains students to become independent researchers who are well-informed at both the theoretical and methodological level.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOWK6185. Qualitative research methods (6 credits)

This course is designed for students with an interest in understanding all aspects of social life and social relations especially those who will undertake a dissertation study. Starting with the question what is reality, the course begins with an introduction to different perspectives on approaching reality, followed by an assessment of the general strengths and weaknesses of qualitative research in comparison with other conventions such as quantitative surveys. The lectures will focus on introducing the general process of ethnographic research and the variety of methods for data collection and analysis including ethnography, grounded theory, observation, interviewing, focus groups and narrative analysis, etc. Various cases will be used to demonstrate how qualitative research helps make meaningful policy and social work practice. Seminars will be organized around practical methodological issues with the objective of helping students proceed with their own research projects. Hands-on experience of a range of research techniques will also be provided.

Assessment: 100% coursework

MPOP7101. Fertility and family change (6 credits)

In recent years, the number of children in the world began to decline for the first time in centuries. Combined with increasing life expectancies, the size and structures of families are undergoing unprecedented changes. This course delves into the intricate dynamics of fertility and family structures, introducing fundamental concepts and measures essential for a comprehensive demographic study. We explore key theories and empirical observations to illuminate fertility changes and family formation patterns by key demographic variables such as gender, age and education. Topics covered include reproductive health, family planning, changing family patterns, intergenerational relationships, and the impact of demographic and socio-economic factors on fertility decisions. We will pay particular attention to the cause and impact of fertility changes in the East Asian context, where levels are among the lowest in the world. Through a blend of theoretical discussions, empirical research, and case studies, students will gain a nuanced understanding of the complex relationships between fertility choices, family dynamics, and broader societal trends. The course also equips students with the ability to analyse fertility and family differences across countries and regions, considering various stages of the demographic transition.

Assessment: 100% coursework

MPOP7102. Health, ageing and mortality (6 credits)

As the global living standards continue to rise, understanding the intricate relationship between increased longevity and public health challenges has become an essential policy issue. This course comprehensively explores mortality patterns and health dynamics, focusing on their interdependence across time and space. Students will delve into the micro-level drivers and macro-level consequences of the mortality transition, understanding its linkage to better public health policies, increasing life expectancies and ageing populations. Students will explore various measures for mortality, health and population age structures and analyse relevant data sources to gain practical insights into current trends. Using a demographic perspective, we will study past and emerging issues in public health, such as chronic diseases, obesity, environmental health and infectious diseases. The course will conclude with critical reflections on strategies to overcome challenges in public health and demographic ageing in both low- and high-income countries, including in the East Asian context, home to some of the eldest populations in the world.

Assessment: 100% coursework

MPOP7103. Migration and urbanisation (6 credits)

Migration is becoming the prominent driver of population change in many regions and countries, as fertility and mortality rates decline to low levels. This course provides an in-depth exploration of migration and urbanisation, offering a holistic perspective on these dynamic phenomena. Students will gain a comprehensive understanding of migration concepts, migration and urbanisation theories, and the main past and current migration trends globally and in Asia. The course demonstrates how and where migration is becoming a pivotal force in demographic change, impacting population size, distribution, and characteristics, as well as the socio-economic characteristics of both origin and destination. Moreover, we will delve into the complexities of measuring and defining migration and urban areas, highlighting how these factors can make cross-country comparisons more challenging than other demographic processes such as fertility and mortality. Finally, we will discuss the evolution of migration policies, their effectiveness, and their impact on development in both the sending and receiving areas. The course will facilitate learning about key migration measures and data sources, fostering the ability to comprehend common myths on the scale of migration and its impact.

Assessment: 100% coursework

MPOP7105. Demography of Greater China (6 credits)

This module provides a focused exploration of the demographic landscape in Greater China, encompassing mainland China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Macau. Students will delve into the unique demographic patterns, trends, and challenges shaping this dynamic region. The course begins with an exploration of past and current key demographic indicators, including fertility rates, mortality trends, and migration patterns, providing a comprehensive overview of population dynamics. Students will examine the impact of historical political and cultural factors on demographic changes and explore the implications for social and economic development in Greater China. We will also reflect on expected future challenges for society and policymakers, including low fertility rates, changing household structures, ageing populations and population decline. Through case studies, discussions, and practical applications, students will gain a nuanced understanding of the complex interplay between current demographic shifts and the emerging challenges in Greater China.

Assessment: 100% coursework

Capstone Experience Course (Compulsory)

MSDA8001. Capstone project (12 credits)

This course aims to teach students how to integrate and apply the knowledge and skills they acquired through the programme. Students will conduct a research project in close collaboration with supervisors from the programme. Students will articulate their research objectives, conduct a relevant literature review and develop indicative methodology. The course provides students with the opportunity to undertake a major piece of supported independent research. It is an opportunity to apply skills and techniques learned during the taught component of this programme to a substantive original research or industry focused problem of interest to the student. Projects will be supervised by academic staff affiliated with the Social Data Analytics programme.

Individual projects and research questions are chosen and formulated by students, and supported during the research process by one-to-one or small group meetings with a nominated member of academic staff, and student-led group meetings to seek peer support. The project may address a methodological or practical issue using desk based research and secondary data sources or may involve primary data collection. It may also be carried out in conjunction with an external organisation (such as local government, a charitable organisation or a commercial organisation) in order to address a relevant research or practical issue of interest to them, and making use of their data or other input. Regardless of the nature of the project itself, all projects must have a clearly defined aim and set of specific objectives that are novel or original and which relate to this programme of study. All projects should be written up as an academic piece of work, using the guidance provided during the module.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SYLLABUSES FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

SOCIAL SERVICE MANAGEMENT [MSocSc(SSM)]

The Department of Social Work and Social Administration offers a postgraduate programme leading to the degree of Master of Social Sciences in the field of Social Service Management. The programme shall extend over not less than two and not more than three academic years of part-time study, inclusive of intervening vacations.

EXEMPTION

Candidates may be granted exemption of up to three compulsory courses in recognition of studies completed in related areas. Exemption will only be considered in special circumstances and each application for exemption will be considered on its own merit. Candidates with exemption granted are required to take an additional elective course to replace the exempted compulsory course to meet the degree requirements.

ASSESSMENTS

To complete the programme, candidates shall satisfy the examiners in the assessment of courses as prescribed in the programme. Assessments of the courses may be conducted either by course assignments, or by presentation, or written tests, or a combination of both methods. The grading system follows the standard practice in the Faculty of Social Sciences.

CURRICULUM

Candidates are required to complete 60 credits, including 6 compulsory courses (6 credits each), and 4 elective courses (6 credits each) or 2 elective courses (6 credits each) with a dissertation (12 credits). Candidates can take elective courses in other fields of study under the Master of Social Sciences (Behavioral Health, Gerontology, Mental Health, Nonprofit Management) and the Master of Social Work programmes. Special approval from the respective Programme Directors for the courses in the above-mentioned fields of study or programme is needed.

Compulsory courses

Candidates shall complete the following courses.

- SOWK6139. Theoretical foundation of human service practices (6 credits)
- SOWK6156. Financial planning and management for social service organizations (6 credits)
- SOWK6217. Current social welfare policy issues (6 credits)
- SOWK6289. Organizational analysis and strategic organizational management (6 credits)
- SOWK6339. Human resources management and development in social service organizations (6 credits)

Elective courses

Dissertation option: Candidates shall complete two of the following courses.

Non-dissertation option: Candidates shall complete four of the following courses.

- SOWK6185. Qualitative research methods (6 credits)
 - SOWK6263. Quantitative research methods and statistical analysis (6 credits)
 - SOWK6290. Social innovation and enterprise (6 credits)
 - SOWK6324. Special topics in social service management I (6 credits)
 - SOWK6325. Special topics in social service management II (6 credits)
 - SOWK6340. Marketing strategies and applications for social service organizations (6 credits)
 - SOWK6341. Fundraising and resources development: Effective strategies and practice (6 credits)
 - SOWK6342. Corporate governance for the management in social service organization (6 credits)
 - SOWK6348. Information and communication technology in human service organizations (6 credits)
- and any other courses offered under the Master of Social Sciences (Behavioral Health, Gerontology, Mental Health, Nonprofit Management) and the Master of Social Work programmes

(Note: not all elective courses will necessarily be offered in a given year.)

Capstone Experience Courses

Compulsory course

Candidates opt for either dissertation or non-dissertation option shall complete the following course.

- SOWK6265. Research methods in human service (6 credits)

Dissertation

Candidates opt for dissertation option shall complete the following course.

- SOWK9004. Dissertation (12 credits)

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

Compulsory Courses

SOWK6139. Theoretical foundation of human service practices (6 credits)

The knowledge base of human service practice comes from a wide spectrum of social science disciplines including psychology, sociology and political science. This course will provide the philosophical and conceptual basis for analyzing social problems and issues and translating these theoretical constructs into human service practice.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOWK6156. Financial planning and management for social service organizations (6 credits)

The course introduces and examines concepts and practices critical to good financial planning and management. The objective is to enable students to learn skills and strategies for budgeting. Emphasis will be given to the understanding of the financial activities and reports essential to management, as well as analysis and use of financial information in planning, budgeting and measuring results to promote the organization's mission and goals.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOWK6217. Current social welfare policy issues (6 credits)

This course provides a framework of analyzing and formulating social policy in the current social, political and economic environment. Current social welfare policy issues including social welfare planning mechanisms, welfare blue print, strategic framework for social welfare, district planning, and other relevant issues will be examined.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOWK6289. Organizational analysis and strategic organizational management (6 credits)

This course aims at helping managers of human service organizations to be equipped with the knowledge in strategic management to deal with the current challenges arising from the rapidly changing public and social service scene. Topics may include strategic planning, quality management, risk management, change management, business process re-engineering, etc.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOWK6339. Human resources management and development in social service organizations (6 credits)

The course aims to equip students with knowledge and skills in managing and developing human resources in social service organizations, and examining related current issues, and to stimulate applications in local context. Issues related to the human resources management and development including recruitment, selection, performance management, training and development, and succession planning will be covered, and topics on personal efficacy as a leader will also be examined with practical examples. Upon completion of the course, students will be able to master the basic principles of HR management and development and apply them in social service context.

Assessment: 100% coursework

Elective Courses

SOWK6185. Qualitative research methods (6 credits)

This course is designed for students with an interest in understanding all aspects of social life and social relations especially those who will undertake a dissertation study. Starting with the question what is reality, the course begins with an introduction to different perspectives on approaching reality, followed by an assessment of the general strengths and weaknesses of qualitative research in comparison with other conventions such as quantitative surveys. The lectures will focus on introducing the general process of ethnographic research and the variety of methods for data collection and analysis including ethnography, grounded theory, observation, interviewing, focus groups and narrative analysis, etc. Various cases will be used to demonstrate how qualitative research helps make meaningful policy and social work practice. Seminars will be organized around practical methodological issues with the objective of helping students proceed with their own research projects. Hands-on experience of a range of research techniques will also be provided.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOWK6263. Quantitative research methods and statistical analysis (6 credits)

This course covers various statistical analyses include single variable, bivariate, and multivariate analyses. Appropriate analyses for different types of data will be discussed and various techniques in scale development including reliability and factor analysis will be introduced. Apart from various multivariate linear modeling and path analysis, non-parametric analyses will also be introduced.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOWK6290. Social innovation and enterprise (6 credits)

The Hong Kong society and the world at large have unfolded multifarious new social phenomena that pose new challenges to professional social work practice. The social work professional community has to develop new insights in understanding the nature of such problems and challenges, and to accordingly devise timely and appropriate intervention to address these issues. This course aims at introducing the concept of social entrepreneurship and how it creates social change. We will examine the current global development of social entrepreneurship as well as local development and its development in Greater China and South East Asian countries. We will inspire our students to become an active agent in addressing the pressing social issues and making social change.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOWK6324. Special topics in social service management I (6 credits)

There are emerging new issues and problems as well as challenges in the social service sector that require managers and practitioners to be equipped with updated knowledge and skills in tackling such problems and facing such challenges. This course will bring in the most contemporary issues, problems and challenges, with reference to updated research findings and innovative practices in the field, to enable students to be well prepared for performing their managerial duties in the social service sector.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOWK6325. Special topics in social service management II (6 credits)

There are emerging new issues and problems as well as challenges in the social service sector that require managers and practitioners to be equipped with updated knowledge and skills in tackling such problems and facing such challenges. This course will bring in the most contemporary issues, problems and challenges, with reference to updated research findings and innovative practices in the field, to enable students to be well prepared for performing their managerial duties in the social service sector.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOWK6340. Marketing strategies and applications for social service organizations (6 credits)

Social service organisations operate in an environment with various stakeholders, like service users, service purchasers, volunteers, donors, funders, neighbours, policymakers and press, etc., who have different exchange relationships with them. Marketing is about the effective management of an organisation's exchange relationships with its various markets and publics. This course provides students with the theoretical concepts and skills in marketing that are applicable in the social service sector with an emphasis both on using traditional and digital techniques. Upon completion of the course, students will be able to master the basic and latest principles of marketing and apply them in social service context.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOWK6341. Fundraising and resources development: Effective strategies and practice (6 credits)

Resource is necessary for an NGO to support its means and services in actualizing the mission. Securing funds have become more and more competitive and NGOs have attempted to diversify sources of funding. Raising funds, writing proposals and developing innovative ways to generate resources have become regular activities of NGOs. This course covers topics such as understanding of giving behaviour and the current trend of philanthropy, cost-effectiveness of various fundraising activities, effective strategies including building a prospective relationship, essential elements in a grant proposal and pitching, presentation of results and impacts, accountability and report, handling of ethical issues and risk management etc.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOWK6342. Corporate governance for the management in social service organization (6 credits)

There are emerging new issues and problems as well as challenges in the social service sector that require managers and practitioners to be equipped with updated knowledge and skills in tackling such problems and facing such challenges. This course will bring in the most contemporary issues, problems and challenges, with reference to updated research findings and innovative practices in the field, to enable students to be well prepared for performing their managerial duties in the social service sector. This course introduces concepts and system for better understanding and in-depth analysis on practice of corporate governance of social service organization receiving public funding. It emphasizes, from the management perspective on the leadership of board and senior management/social work professionals for effective service and achievement of mission of the organization. It takes reference to real life cases and issues. It stimulates development of a framework to understand perspectives of different stakeholders and for ongoing application and developing effective intervention.

This course is suitable for candidates who are in position, from frontline team leader to senior supervisor, or aim to become future leaders in social service organization with management responsibility.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOWK6348. Information and communication technology in human service organizations (6 credits)

This course aims to equip students with knowledge and skills in handling and utilizing information and communication technology in managing social service organizations and service delivery. The course content includes: Trends and issues of technological development in society and human services, process of developing and managing IT projects, use of ICT and social media in direct services, Assistive technology and gerontechnology, Security and ethical use of ICT and social media, and Emerging trends and its future use in human services.

Assessment: 100% coursework

Capstone Experience Courses

SOWK6265. Research methods in human service (6 credits)

This course covers the whole research process from the development of research questions and hypotheses to the analysis of data as well as presentation of findings. Different data collection methods including qualitative data collection such as case study, interviews and focus groups; and quantitative data collection such as survey and experiment will be discussed. Data analysis on various types of data including secondary data will be examined. Students will be expected to integrate and apply the knowledge and skills they acquired through the programme by attending the integrated seminars organized by the end of the first semester of the final academic year of study.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOWK9004. Dissertation (12 credits)

The title of the dissertation shall be submitted for approval not later than five months before the formal submission of the dissertation **or** not later than March 31 of the same academic year of study. The dissertation shall be presented by not later than **August 1** of the same academic year of study. The dissertation shall be a critical study that demonstrates the application of research methodology to the investigation of problems relevant to the field of study, and shall not exceed 20,000 words in length.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SYLLABUSES FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

SOCIOLOGY [MSocSc(Sociology)]

The Department of Sociology offers a postgraduate programme leading to the degree of Master of Social Sciences in the field of Sociology. The programme shall extend over not less than one and not more than two academic years of full-time study or not less than two and not more than three academic years of part-time study. All courses are offered on both full-time and part-time basis. Classes are conducted during daytimes, evenings and occasional weekends.

ASSESSMENTS

Candidates are assessed the courses by way of (1) a written examination that accounts for 40-60% of total marks and 40-60% by coursework assignments or (2) by 100% coursework and may include written tests.

CURRICULUM

The Master of Social Sciences in the field of Sociology requires students to complete the mandatory non-credit-bearing pre-session course 'Welcome to Sociology for Taught Postgraduates' prior to the commencement of the programme. The pre-session, self-paced course takes around 18 hours, and will be delivered via the HKU Online Learning platform. It will equip students with basic knowledge in key areas of the discipline, including sociological theories and concepts, social stratification, culture and society, sex/gender, identity, and social change. Students whose previous degree is in the discipline of Sociology may request a waiver for this requirement.

To receive the award of the degree of Master of Social Sciences in the field of Sociology, candidates have to complete 8 courses (6 credits each) and a capstone project (12 credits), with a total of 60 credits. The compulsory courses provide candidates with a broad, integrated understanding of the social sciences approach to the study of sociology. The elective courses, building upon that foundation, introduce the candidates to a variety of developments in sociology and related sociological issues. There are no prerequisites of all compulsory or elective courses.

Compulsory courses (18 credits)

Candidates shall complete three compulsory courses of the following list:

- SOCI7013. Social theory and social challenges (6 credits)
- SOCI7014. Sociological research design and fundamental methods (6 credits)
- and either:
 - SOCI8040. Qualitative research methods (6 credits); or
 - SOCI8041. Quantitative research methods (6 credits)

Students may optionally choose to take both 'SOCI8040. Qualitative research methods' and 'SOCI8041. Quantitative research methods', with the additional course counting towards an elective course.

Elective courses (30 credits)

Candidates shall complete five elective courses. To facilitate students making their choices, courses are grouped under four indicative themes. Students may enrol in courses from different themes, if so desired.

Students are allowed to take a maximum of two undergraduate (SOCI3xxx) sociology courses during their programme of study. Course registration on SOCI3xxx courses is subject to the approval of Programme Director and the relevant course teacher. Students will not be permitted to re-enrol in the same undergraduate elective if they previously enrolled in it whilst studying for any undergraduate degree at HKU.

(i) Perspectives on society

- SOCI3002. Social stratification and social class: Finding and knowing your place (6 credits)
- SOCI3010. Education and society (6 credits)
- SOCI3012. Gender and society (6 credits)
- SOCI3021. Marriage and the family (6 credits)
- SOCI3027. Politics and society (6 credits)
- SOCI3041. Social problems (6 credits)
- SOCI3044. Economic sociology (6 credits)
- SOCI8036. Special topics in sociology I (6 credits)
- SOCI8037. Special topics in sociology II (6 credits)
- SOCI8038. Special topics in sociology III (6 credits)
- SOCI8042. Sociology for business, organizations, and institutions (6 credits)

(ii) Criminology

- SOCI8002. Economic and organized crime (6 credits)
- SOCI8003. Law and society (6 credits)
- SOCI8004. Punishment and society (6 credits)
- SOCI8006. Youth and delinquency (6 credits)
- SOCI8008. Special topics in criminology (6 credits)
- SOCI8011. Media and crime (6 credits)
- SOCI8013. Gender, crime and social control (6 credits)
- SOCI8015. Crime and deviance in PR China (6 credits)
- SOCI8017. Cultural criminology (6 credits)
- SOCI8018. Policing in comparative perspective (6 credits)
- SOCI8019. Issues in police reform (6 credits)
- SOCI8020. White collar and corporate crime (6 credits)
- SOCI8032. Drugs and society (6 credits)
- SOCI8034. Special topics in criminology II (6 credits)
- SOCI8043. Contemporary anti-corruption in a globalized world: The Hong Kong experience (6 credits)

(iii) Media and culture

- SOCI8023. Media and popular culture in East Asian cities (6 credits)
- SOCI8024. Digital media, moralities and cultures (6 credits)
- SOCI8025. Consumer cultures and everyday life (6 credits)
- SOCI8026. Culture and Identity - Reflexivity and narratives in late-modern society (6 credits)
- SOCI8027. Body, intimacy and sexuality: Media narratives and lived experience in modern society (6 credits)
- SOCI8028. Cultural policies and global cities (6 credits)
- SOCI8029. Creative industries and creative cities (6 credits)
- SOCI8031. Special topics in media, culture and creative cities (6 credits)

- SOCI8033. Co-presence: Human-animal relationships in modern cities (6 credits)
SOCI8035. Special topics in media, culture and creative cities II (6 credits)

(iv) Population and policy analysis

- MPOP7101. Fertility and family change (6 credits)
MPOP7102. Health, ageing and mortality (6 credits)
MPOP7103. Migration and urbanisation (6 credits)
MPOP7105. Demography of Greater China (6 credits)

Note: Not all the courses listed will necessarily be offered every year. While we try to ensure as broad a course offering to students as possible, courses offered each year do vary based on availability of teaching staff, departmental resources and student demand. In exceptional instances, it may be necessary to cancel a course at short notice because of insufficient student enrolment or other resource issues.

Capstone experience course (12 credits)

Candidates shall complete the following compulsory capstone experience course:

- SOCI8039. Capstone project in Sociology (12 credits)
-

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

Compulsory Courses

SOCI7013. Social theory and social challenges (6 credits)

This course reimagines sociology as a transformative force – one that does not stop at explaining the world, but dares to change it. By reclaiming sociology’s activist roots, we move beyond passive observation to purposeful engagement, equipping students with the tools to confront the world not only as it is, but as it could be. ‘Social theory and social challenges’ bridges the gap between social theory and everyday experience, making sociology a living, breathing field of study. In a world marked by complexity and rapid transformation, we need a sociology that is as dynamic and adaptive as the challenges it confronts. This course answers the call by offering a flexible, evidence-driven framework for tackling global problems that moves beyond linear thinking and recycled solutions. By situating students at the intersection of critical inquiry and creative problem-solving, this course demonstrates how sociology informs public policy, shapes cultural discourse, and ignites social transformation. Guided by the foundational truth that knowledge exists to be questioned, tested, and put into action, students will engage in critical reflection and collaborative problem-solving throughout the semester. Together, we will challenge assumptions, think boldly, and co-create transformative ideas to build a more just and equitable world.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOCI7014. Sociological research design and fundamental methods (6 credits)

This course looks at different ways of conducting research in the sociological discipline. It examines the whole research process, starting from research methodology to research design, sampling and methods used, to data collection, data analysis and report writing. Key debates in research methodology such as generalization, representation, and reflexivity will be discussed. As such, this course will provide a basic familiarity with research methods that students will be able to build upon throughout their Master’s programme. You will have the opportunity to interact with and learn from students designing a diverse range of research projects. The course helps students put theory ‘to work’ and to become independent researchers who are well-informed at both the theoretical and methodological levels. A theme running throughout this course will be to consider how research can be designed to address a wide range of real-life problems, both empirical and theoretical. The knowledge and skills learnt will crucially contribute to the work on the Capstone Project of their Master’s degree programme. Assessment: 100% coursework

SOCI8040. Qualitative research methods (6 credits)

This is a Master's level course on qualitative methods in the sociological discipline. The goal of qualitative methods is to understand people's practices, experiences, and meaning-making in everyday life, and the goal of this course is to provide students with the skills, knowledge, and practical experience necessary to conduct this research effectively. That is, rather than simply teaching students about the various qualitative methods available for sociological fieldwork, this course will help students conduct qualitative research that is rigorous, generative, follows best practices, and meets contemporary social scientific standards. A broad range of case studies from completed and ongoing sociological research projects will be drawn upon to discuss the challenges and opportunities involved in applying and selecting qualitative research methods to real-life problems, both empirical and theoretical. Beyond instruction, the focus of this course is to collect, analyze, write-up, and present qualitative evidence. By participating in the course and completing the assignments, you will develop the first and second-hand knowledge necessary to independently conduct high-quality qualitative research.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOCI8041. Quantitative research methods (6 credits)

This is a Master's level course on quantitative methods in the sociological discipline. It covers both fundamental theories and analytical skills, ranging from research design and hypothesis formulation to data collection (e.g., survey; experiments), data analysis (e.g., descriptive statistics; comparison of means; regressions, causal inference), and research writing. A broad range of case studies from completed and ongoing sociological research projects will be drawn upon to discuss the challenges and opportunities involved in applying and selecting quantitative research methods to real-life problems, both empirical and theoretical. This course will be highly interactive and collaborative. In each class, students will be required to contribute to discussions on various topics. The course also offers hands-on training to conduct an original research project including questionnaire surveys and statistical analysis.

Assessment: 100% coursework

Elective Courses

(i) Perspectives on society

SOCI3002. Social stratification and social class: Finding and knowing your place (6 credits)

This course deals with the phenomenon of social inequality. It will cover topics such as theoretical explanations of this phenomenon; the methodological problems involved; how inequality in social position and resources arise, and how they are patterned; how class inequalities relate to broader processes of social division and cultural differentiation; how class is experienced in ordinary, everyday activities, and its psycho-social landscape; how class is gendered and intersects racial and ethnic divisions; the consequences of stratification and social mobility.

Assessment: 60% coursework, 40% examination.

SOCI3010. Education and society (6 credits)

Formal educational institutions in society will be examined, using the major concepts and theories of sociology. Emphasis is placed on the relationship between education and other important social institutions such as the family, the polity, and the economy. The questions of equality of educational opportunity and the potential role of education in fostering social change will also be analysed.

Assessment: 60% coursework, 40% examination.

SOCI3012. Gender and society (6 credits)

This course will focus on the social construction of gender and the patterns of inequality that result from this process. Themes to be examined are: biology and destiny; social definitions of masculinity and femininity; sex role socialization; consequences of gender differentiation; theoretical perspectives. In addition, the contribution that social theory has to make to the question of the origins of sex inequalities will also be examined.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOCI3021. Marriage and the family (6 credits)

Marriage and the family are viewed comparatively, using historical and cross-cultural data. Included are the impact of industrialization and urbanization on family life, different forms of family organization and the societal conditions under which they occur, theories of mate selection, recent changes in dating and premarital sexual involvement, parenthood, and marital adjustment.

Assessment: 50% coursework, 50% examination.

SOCI3027. Politics and society (6 credits)

This course offers a sociological discussion of political power, political institutions, political processes, and political behaviour. It examines the role of the state in constituting various activities in the society. Different theoretical perspectives will be introduced and empirical cases will be used to illustrate various concepts and ideas.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOCI3041. Social problems (6 credits)

This course examines the historical, political, economic, and cultural dynamics that shape what are considered “social problems” around the world, with particular attention to Asia. Through discussions of issues such as economic systems, governance, demographic change, migration, development, urban poverty, group identity, and climate change, the course explores how pathologies of modern social life relate to sociological theories about their causes. Students will analyze the interactions among the evolving global economy, historical legacies, and systems of governance, and connect these dynamics to policy debates and patterns of social inequality.

Assessment 100% coursework

SOCI3044. Economic sociology (6 credits)

Economic Sociology is concerned with the relations between the economic and non-economic aspects of social life. It challenges the basic assumptions that economic action is universally rational on which neo-classical economics is based. This course begins with an introduction of the key ideas of “new economic sociology.” It followed by some selected topics that apply the new economic sociology perspective to understand a wide range of economic activities, including culture and market, social network and economic transactions, the role of the state, money and consumption, investment and firm, corporation, labor management, organizational culture, and the cultural impacts of economic globalization.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOCI8036. Special topics in sociology I (6 credits)

A ‘special topics’ course is offered to provide areas of study in addition to what is covered in courses regularly offered by the Department of Sociology. Special topics may involve cutting edge theory or practice, trialling innovative teaching pedagogies, or may be suggested by a faculty member. More details on the topics to be covered by this course in a specific semester can be found at <https://sociology.hku.hk/courses>

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOCI8037. Special topics in sociology II (6 credits)

A ‘special topics’ course is offered to provide areas of study in addition to what is covered in courses regularly offered by the Department of Sociology. Special topics may involve cutting edge theory or practice, trialling innovative teaching pedagogies, or may be suggested by a faculty member. More details on the topics to be covered by this course in a specific semester can be found at <https://sociology.hku.hk/courses>

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOCI8038. Special topics in sociology III (6 credits)

A ‘special topics’ course is offered to provide areas of study in addition to what is covered in courses regularly offered by the Department of Sociology. Special topics may involve cutting edge theory or practice, trialling innovative teaching pedagogies, or may be suggested by a faculty member. More details on the topics to be covered by this course in a specific semester can be found at <https://sociology.hku.hk/courses>

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOCI8042. Sociology of business, organizations, and institutions (6 credits)

This course examines organizations as one of the central configurations of modern society, focusing on how they coordinate activities, structure decision-making, and sustain social order. Bridging the domains of business, organizations, and institutions, the course draws on empirical cases from creative and cultural industries, technology sectors, and criminal justice institutions to show how different forms of organization emerge, operate, and transform under varying social conditions. Rather than treating organizations as fixed entities, the course approaches them as evolving solutions to fundamental problems of coordination under conditions of complexity and uncertainty. Beginning with classical rational approaches, the course analyzes how organizations emerge and sustain large-scale coordination, while introducing key problem domains such as uncertainty and decision-making, and core analytical dimensions including formal and informal structure, institutional environments, power, inequality and culture. These perspectives are treated not as a linear progression, but as competing and overlapping attempts to address enduring organizational problems. In the final stage, the course turns to contemporary developments in organizational theory, examining perspectives such as fields, networks, communication systems, and materiality. These approaches do not merely extend earlier theories, but challenge the boundaries of organization itself, particularly in contexts where coordination increasingly relies on distributed, digital, and technological systems such as platforms, algorithms, and automated processes. Each theoretical perspective is presented both as a solution to specific coordination problems and as a critique that reveals the limits of earlier approaches. The course aims not only to equip students with major theoretical frameworks, but to train them to critically evaluate their explanatory scope and limitations in analyzing contemporary organizational phenomena.

Assessment: 60% coursework, 40% examination

(ii) **Criminology**

SOCI8002. Economic and organized crime (6 credits)

The course focuses on a range of criminal activities that occur within an organizational setting or are in accordance with established organizational goals, and which harms individuals or society at large. More specifically, the course will devote attention to such topics as economic and organized crime and discuss the ways in which they are interrelated and frequently overlap with political crime. Special consideration will be given to the ways in which the state may organize crime.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOCI8003. Law and society (6 credits)

This course will examine the relationship between law and society. It looks at the history and development of law in different cultures, examining the form and content of 'law' found in pre-industrial society, capitalist society and socialist society. Particular legal concepts such as the law of contract and the public/private distinction are placed in their socio-historic setting. Specific topics (e.g. law and domestic relations, rape in marriage, child abuse, homosexuality, artificial reproduction, and restrictions on pornography) are examined insofar as they are related to the application of these concepts.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOCI8004. Punishment and society (6 credits)

The course aims to explain punishment and society in a comparative and historical context. Popular conceptions and professional evidence about punishment will be compared. The social institution of punishment is in many ways a mirror of society and its norms. The course will look at the different functions of punishment, like retribution, deterrence, incapacitation, rehabilitation, and restoration. We will trace those functions historically and culturally, mapping vast cultural and social differences in the way in which punishment is practiced in America, Europe, the Islamic world, and in China.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOCI8006. Youth and delinquency (6 credits)

The problem of juvenile delinquency has influenced the formation of law and social policy in many societies. This course will use a wide variety of historical and comparative materials to analyze the response of social service agencies and the criminal justice system to juvenile delinquency. It will also examine various theoretical approaches that have been used in studying juvenile delinquency.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOCI8008. Special topics in criminology (6 credits)

A lecture and seminar programme designed to provide students with a course of study in current or newly emerging topics in criminology and criminal justice. The course enables, for example, new subject or sub-specialist areas to be offered. This may inter alia, include:

cyber crime and e-commerce crime
crime prevention
criminal intelligence analysis
criminal justice system administration and management
computer forensics
security and terrorism studies
criminal profiling
victimology (including trafficking, stalking and "hate" crimes)

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOCI8011. Media and crime (6 credits)

The media plays an extremely influential role in the public's conceptions of crime and order. This course aims to provide students with a better understanding of theories about the media's impact on crime, the news making process in relation to crime, and how the media shapes our ideas and responses to crime. The course also focuses on the representation of crime in popular culture, particularly in films and novels.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOCI8013. Gender, crime and social control (6 credits)

Understanding women's experiences with crime and the criminal justice system requires an analysis of the normative ideas about gender that are constructed and utilized by the criminal justice system. Criminological research on women in crime and the criminal justice system have argued that interventions for women's criminal offending are about regulating gender norms (or producing 'good women') as much as they are about responding to crime. This course examines these blurred boundaries between managing crime and managing gender. We will also explore the construction and treatment of gendered bodies as well as gendered forms of work, institutions and social processes. The gendered dimensions of central criminological processes such as criminalization, victimization, policing and the criminal justice system will also be examined, with a particular focus on the blurred boundaries between victimization and criminalization.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOCI8015. Crime and deviance in PR China (6 credits)

The course offers an overview and introduction to the developments of crime and deviance in China. The emphasis will be historical, comparative and contemporary. We look at Chinese definitions of deviance and crime from the past, the Communist period, and with a particular emphasis on the recent period of rapid modernization. The course will also review issues and problems in the control of crime and public order in the People's Republic of China. The content covers theories and practices of deviance, crime, discipline, policing, and punishment.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOCI8017. Cultural criminology (6 credits)

Cultural criminology comes as a reaction and interpretive alternative to normative analyses of social problems. Rather than ask questions about root causes of crime, cultural criminologists seek to explore the processes through which ascriptions of crime and criminality, and reactions to these ascriptions are promulgated within particular social and cultural contexts. The course will offer a comparative perspective contrasting North American 'cultures of control', with other 'welfare' and 'disciplinary welfare' contexts, including Hong Kong.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOCI8018. Policing in comparative perspective (6 credits)

This course examines policing in a broad social and cultural perspective. Our focus is the concept of the “police function”: under what sorts of historical and socio-cultural conditions does the idea of the police function make sense? With this question as our guide, we will examine the maintenance of order in stateless societies, look at various historical moments in the emergence of police as an element of modern government, and finally take a survey of the novel policing formations emerging from the processes of decolonization, globalization and neo-liberalism.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOCI8019. Issues in police reform (6 credits)

When, why and how do police forces change? This course takes up these questions through case studies of exemplary events of police reform, such as: Robert Peel’s formation of the London Metropolitan Police in 1829; William Parker’s reform of the Los Angeles Police Department in the 1950s; William Bratton’s reform of the New York Police Department in the 1990s; post-apartheid policing in South Africa; and post-Maoist policing in the People’s Republic of China. Through comparative study and in-depth analysis, students will draw lessons about the general dynamics underlying police reform.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOCI8020. White collar and corporate crime (6 credits)

This course examines the topic of white-collar and corporate crime. Classic theoretical works will be considered as well as more contemporary writings. To illustrate these points we will explore important international case studies that shed light on how and why these offenses occur. We will begin with a general introduction to the field, including definitions, conceptual, and theoretical issues from the social sciences, law, and criminology regarding what has become known as white-collar, occupational, organizational, and corporate crime. Following this, we will discuss various forms of white-collar crime including: consumer crime, environmental crime, governmental crime, official corruption, computer crime, health care fraud, and financial fraud. The course will guide students in studying important questions, to critically think about issues, to research the topics discussed, and to become familiar with the literature on white-collar and corporate crime, through assigned readings, presentations, class discussion, a writing assignment and an in-class exam.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOCI8032. Drugs and society (6 credits)

Drug use is a significant feature of contemporary society and is a cause of concern in view of its impact on individuals and society, and its connectedness with crime. The overall objective of this course is to provide students with a better understanding of the ways in which drugs and society are interconnected. The aim of the course is to provide students with an integrative arena for the social understanding of drug use, why people use drugs, and the key epistemological (criminological, sociological and psychological) debates relating to the subject. It also focuses on the social, political and health factors that shape the control and treatment of drugs.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOCI8034. Special topics in criminology II (6 credits)

A lecture and seminar programme designed to provide students with a course of study in current or newly emerging topics in criminology and criminal justice. The course enables, for example, new subject or sub-specialist areas to be offered. This may inter alia, include:

cyber crime and e-commerce crime

crime prevention

criminal intelligence analysis

criminal justice system administration and management

computer forensics

security and terrorism studies

criminal profiling

victimology (including trafficking, stalking and “hate” crimes)

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOCI8043. Contemporary anti-corruption in a globalized world: The Hong Kong experience (6 credits)

Corruption undermines public trust, distorts markets, and erodes the rule of law. Yet its causes, forms, and consequences vary enormously across institutions, industries, and societies. This course takes Hong Kong as both a case study and a vantage point to examine corruption and anti-corruption in a globalized world. Taught jointly by HKU academic staff and practitioner experts from the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC), the course weaves together social-scientific theory and real-world enforcement and prevention practice. It pairs conceptual and theoretical introduction from the HKU instructor with direct practitioner input from ICAC officers, who draw on decades of experience in investigation, corruption prevention, and community education, and in specific regulated sectors. The course is structured in three parts: (1) foundational theories of corruption and anti-corruption; (2) Hong Kong's three-pronged model in practice; and (3) corruption and anti-corruption in the Chinese mainland and the transnational arena. The course will consist of a series of lectures, which will involve a mixture of teaching and class discussion. In addition, through two visits to ICAC Headquarters, students will gain an immersive understanding of the Commission's history and investigative work — from a guided tour of the Exhibition Hall and key operational facilities to a hands-on simulated corruption investigation that brings the realities of the profession to life. Students who attend this course will receive a signed Certificate of Attendance from the ICAC, providing a tangible credential for future careers in compliance, law enforcement, public administration, and civil society.

Assessment: 100% coursework

(iii) Media and Culture

SOCI8023. Media and popular culture in East Asian cities (6 credits)

This course addresses the social, political, cultural, and creative dynamics of the modern communication media – TV, film, music, radio, the press, and other new media technologies – and their impacts on popular culture in Hong Kong and other Asian cities such as Beijing, Shanghai, Taipei, Seoul, Tokyo, and Singapore. It enables you to critically examine how media and popular culture construct our identities, shape everyday life, and generate public debates. Topics include the media; sex and violence; consumption and youth cultures, romance and gender identity; regimes of body management; desire and social identities; lifestyle distinctions and social hierarchy; on-line communication and cyber personas; media events and imagined communities; new media and technologies; and the commercialization of arts.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOCI8024. Digital media, moralities and cultures (6 credits)

The growth of digital media is fundamentally reshaping our culture. But how can we start to analyse and understand these changes sociologically? This course will attempt to address these issues through an examination of the moral and ethical issues underpinning a wide array of digital communications technologies. Morality provides a powerful tool for understanding technology, as it is able to encompass both the mundane (e.g., whether a 'selfie' is judged to be tasteful or crude) and the exceptional (i.e., the laws and regulations governing specific aspects of internet use). We examine how morality, social norms and behaviours are shaping technology use and how technology is, in turn, redefining the moral frameworks that exist in society. A broad range of existing theoretical standpoints for understanding the ethics of digital media will be introduced. These perspectives will be critiqued and challenged through reference to existing case studies and on-going innovative research projects from different academics and practitioners. This course adopts a truly global outlook, examining case studies from around the world to consider the moral dimensions of technology comparatively.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOCI8025. Consumer cultures and everyday life (6 credits)

Consumption is an important part of modern life. This course examines the role of consumer culture in the modern commodity economy. It offers you a chance to revisit classical theorists in the context of consumption (e.g., Marx, Weber, Campbell, Veblen, Simmel), as well as some more contemporary thinkers (e.g., Marcuse, Bourdieu, Baudrillard). It will look at the changing roles of street culture, department stores and shopping malls, theme parks, and urban and suburban ways of life in the context of recent discussions regarding the interactive media and global consumption politics. In particular, the course will show how consumption in everyday life generates a fascinating mix of homogeneity, difference, hybridity, commerce, and democratization for modern people in major creative cities.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOCI8026. Culture and identity - Reflexivity and narratives in late-modern society (6 credits)

This course traces the rise of the notion of self-identity in the modern era and follows it through to contemporary times. Various notions of identity and their relationships will be discussed: personal identity, social identity, cultural identity, collective identity, national identity, etc. We will explore the changing experiences and meanings of collective and personal identities in late modern culture in domains such as work, family, religion, society, and the nation. We pay particular attention to the emergence of various contemporary identities in relation to the formation of creative class and creative culture. This will enable us to rethink the distinction between the public and the private, explore the social construction of the life course, the notion of cultural identity, the relationship between identity and creativity, and the dynamics of identity politics and new social movements in terms of age, body, class, religion, gender, sexuality, race, ethnicity, and more. The focus is on contemporary Hong Kong and Chinese experiences as well as other cities in the Asia/Pacific region, such as Singapore, Seoul, and Tokyo.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOCI8027. Body, intimacy and sexuality: Media narratives and lived experience in modern society (6 credits)

This course aims to investigate the significant changes happening in the private sphere of intimacy in late-modern times, paying particular attention to Chinese cities such as Hong Kong, Beijing, Shanghai, Shenzhen, and other Asian cities such as Seoul, Taipei, Tokyo, Bangkok, and Singapore. Drawn from various disciplines such as feminism, gay and lesbian studies, queer theory, and contemporary theory of body, this course critically reviews a number of key issues: the debate of biological drive/social force in shaping sexual identity, gender difference and intimate behavior; the dynamics of agency/structure in understanding sexual performances and body practices; the development of sexual politics and movements; mainstreaming of sexuality and media representation; and commercialization of desires. This course also pays more attention to the newly emerging scripts that seem to shape femininity/masculinity, romantic love, intimate relationship, and family patterns.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOCI8028. Cultural policies and global cities (6 credits)

This course covers three different scopes of cultural policy, beginning with government supports for the arts, then the invention of creative industry policies and finally cultural citizenship. There has been an international trend of introducing entrepreneurialism into cultural policies in recent decades. Policies, involving both the government and civic organizations thus are formulated in order to enhance the competitiveness of nations and cities through various cultural projects. Global cities such as London, New York, Paris, Brussels, and Tokyo are seen to be capable of assuming a leading role in the cultural development and promotion of urban entrepreneurialism. This course examines comparatively how different policies evolve under different social and historical conditions, and how global cities redevelop their urban and cultural resources in order to sharpen their competitiveness in the context of the inter-city competition of a global economy, and explores how such experiences could be applied to Hong Kong. Topics to be covered in this course include entrepreneurialism, strategies of urban redevelopment, urban culture, and urban competitiveness. Students will also reflect on the problems associated with cultural, urban and creative development.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOCI8029. Creative industries and creative cities (6 credits)

This course explores the structures, processes, and cultural artifacts of the creative industries (performing arts, film and television, publishing, art and antique markets, music, architecture, digital entertainment, computer software development, animation production, fashion, and product design) and how they figure in the strategic repositioning of the city. It offers students a chance to critically examine the political economy and spatial organization of these industries of culture in different creative cities of the world. It also opens up debates generated by the intersection between culture, economy, and the city, such as high and low culture, innovation and standardization, capitalist dominance and democratic pluralism, authenticity and mechanical reproduction, power and resistance, the role of the creative class in city growth and regeneration, engineering and imagineering creative cities, cultural planning, and the city as a marketplace, sustaining the livable city.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOCI8031. Special topics in media, culture and creative cities (6 credits)

This course provides students with a comprehensive understanding of current or newly emerging topics in media, culture and creative city. The course enables new subject or sub-specialist areas to be offered. It also facilitates innovative modes of teaching and learning.

Subjects may inter alia, include:

Visual sociology and anthropology

Sensory cultures

Emotion and affect

Posthumanities and ethics

Biomedicine and biotechnology

New media, subjectivity and performativity

New thinkers in cultural studies

Risk, reflexivity and sustainable development

Critical pedagogy in media and culture

Body, place and flow – new directions in cultural studies

Private self and public sphere

Workshops in presenting and representing culture

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOCI8033. Co-presence: Human-animal relationships in modern cities (6 credits)

In a globalised world amidst environmental crisis, consumption ethics and justice, the entanglement and future of human-animal relationships have become an increasingly urgent topic of inquiry. This course covers the manifold of human-relationships from our food choices, pet-keeping practices, animals in media to violence and protection of animals.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SOCI8035. Special topics in media, culture and creative cities II (6 credits)

This course provides students with a comprehensive understanding of current or newly emerging topics in media, culture and creative city. The course enables new subject or sub-specialist areas to be offered. It also facilitates innovative modes of teaching and learning.

Subjects may inter alia, include:

Visual sociology and anthropology

Sensory cultures

Emotion and affect

Posthumanities and ethics

Biomedicine and biotechnology

New media, subjectivity and performativity

New thinkers in cultural studies

Risk, reflexivity and sustainable development

Critical pedagogy in media and culture

Body, place and flow – new directions in cultural studies

Private self and public sphere

Workshops in presenting and representing culture

Assessment: 100% coursework

(iv) **Population and policy analysis**

MPOP7101. Fertility and family change (6 credits)

In recent years, the number of children in the world began to decline for the first time in centuries. Combined with increasing life expectancies, the size and structures of families are undergoing unprecedented changes. This course delves into the intricate dynamics of fertility and family structures, introducing fundamental concepts and measures essential for a comprehensive demographic study. We explore key theories and empirical observations to illuminate fertility changes and family formation patterns by key demographic variables such as gender, age and education. Topics covered include reproductive health, family planning, changing family patterns, intergenerational relationships, and the impact of demographic and socio-economic factors on fertility decisions. We will pay particular attention to the cause and impact of fertility changes in the East Asian context, where levels are among the lowest in the world. Through a blend of theoretical discussions, empirical research, and case studies, students will gain a nuanced understanding of the complex relationships between fertility choices, family dynamics, and broader societal trends. The course also equips students with the ability to analyse fertility and family differences across countries and regions, considering various stages of the demographic transition.

Assessment: 100% coursework

MPOP7102. Health, ageing and mortality (6 credits)

As the global living standards continue to rise, understanding the intricate relationship between increased longevity and public health challenges has become an essential policy issue. This course comprehensively explores mortality patterns and health dynamics, focusing on their interdependence across time and space. Students will delve into the micro-level drivers and macro-level consequences of the mortality transition, understanding its linkage to better public health policies, increasing life expectancies and ageing populations. Students will explore various measures for mortality, health and population age structures and analyse relevant data sources to gain practical insights into current trends. Using a demographic perspective, we will study past and emerging issues in public health, such as chronic diseases, obesity, environmental health and infectious diseases. The course will conclude with critical reflections on strategies to overcome challenges in public health and demographic ageing in both low- and high-income countries, including in the East Asian context, home to some of the eldest populations in the world.

Assessment: 100% coursework

MPOP7103. Migration and urbanisation (6 credits)

Migration is becoming the prominent driver of population change in many regions and countries, as fertility and mortality rates decline to low levels. This course provides an in-depth exploration of migration and urbanisation, offering a holistic perspective on these dynamic phenomena. Students will gain a comprehensive understanding of migration concepts, migration and urbanisation theories, and the main past and current migration trends globally and in Asia. The course demonstrates how and where migration is becoming a pivotal force in demographic change, impacting population size, distribution, and characteristics, as well as the socio-economic characteristics of both origin and destination. Moreover, we will delve into the complexities of measuring and defining migration and urban areas, highlighting how these factors can make cross-country comparisons more challenging than other demographic processes such as fertility and mortality. Finally, we will discuss the evolution of migration policies, their effectiveness, and their impact on development in both the sending and receiving areas. The course will facilitate learning about key migration measures and data sources, fostering the ability to comprehend common myths on the scale of migration and its impact.

Assessment: 100% coursework

MPOP7105. Demography of Greater China (6 credits)

This module provides a focused exploration of the demographic landscape in Greater China, encompassing mainland China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Macau. Students will delve into the unique demographic patterns, trends, and challenges shaping this dynamic region. The course begins with an exploration of past and current key demographic indicators, including fertility rates, mortality trends, and migration patterns, providing a comprehensive overview of population dynamics. Students will examine the impact of historical political and cultural factors on demographic changes and explore the implications for social and economic development in Greater China. We will also reflect on expected future challenges for society and policymakers, including low fertility rates, changing household structures, ageing populations and population decline. Through case studies, discussions, and practical applications, students will gain a nuanced understanding of the complex interplay between current demographic shifts and the emerging challenges in Greater China.

Assessment: 100% coursework

Capstone Experience Course (Compulsory)

SOCI8039. Capstone project in Sociology (12 credits)

The Capstone Project in Sociology is a masters-level course that provides students with the opportunity to apply the knowledge and skills they have acquired throughout their program. In this course, students will work in small groups to undertake a significant research project that explores relevant sociological topics and address today's social problems.

Throughout the course, students will build upon their research skills as they design, implement, present, and write up their research projects. This course emphasizes the importance of conducting innovative research that is relevant to the pressing social issues of our time. Students will be encouraged to think critically and creatively, pushing the boundaries of traditional sociological research to offer fresh perspectives and potential solutions to complex social problems.

By working in small groups, students will have the opportunity to collaborate and learn from their peers, fostering a supportive and intellectually stimulating environment. The course will also provide guidance and support from experienced faculty members who will serve as mentors throughout the research process.

Upon completion of the Capstone Project in Sociology, students will have gained valuable experience in conducting independent research and addressing real-world social problems. This course will not only enhance their research skills but also equip them with the ability to think analytically and critically about contemporary social issues. By undertaking innovative research, students will be well-prepared to make a meaningful impact in their future careers and contribute to the field of sociology.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SYLLABUSES FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

SUSTAINABILITY LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE [MSocSc(SLG)]

The Centre for Civil Society and Governance offers a postgraduate programme leading to the degree of Master of Social Sciences in the field of Sustainability Leadership and Governance. This programme aims to equip students with the knowledge and skills required for understanding complex sustainability challenges, and managing sustainability issues in their daily work. Embodied in the aims and curriculum of the programme are the key vision and mission of the Centre, which emphasize the importance of cross-sector collaboration and collective action. Specifically, the programme focuses on building the capacity of actors in the public, business and social sectors to engage in dialogue and partnerships to develop innovative solutions to the challenges set out by the 17 UN SDGs.

CURRICULUM

The programme shall extend over not less than one and not more than two academic years of full-time study; or not less than two and not more than three academic years of part-time study. Candidates are required to complete 60 credits, including 4 compulsory courses (6 credits each), 4 or 5 elective courses (3 or 6 credits each) (a total of 24 credits) and a capstone (12 credits).

Compulsory courses

Candidates shall complete all courses from the following list:

- SLGP7002. Principles for the management of corporate sustainability (6 credits)
- SLGP7007. Governance and policy for sustainability transition (6 credits)
- SLGP7008. Concepts of sustainability leadership (6 credits)
- SLGP7009. Market-based instruments and low carbon economy transition: a regional perspective (6 credits)

Electives courses

Candidates shall complete a total of 24 credits, 4 or 5 courses out of 18 courses from the following list:

- SLGP7108. Digital society and governance (6 credits)
- SLGP7109. Business ethics and social responsibility (6 credits)
- SLGP7110. Globalisation and the environment (6 credits)
- SLGP7111. Social entrepreneurship and social innovation (6 credits)
- SLGP7112. Special topics in cutting edge sustainability methods (6 credits)
- SLGP7113. Special topics in executing sustainability strategies (6 credits)
- SLGP7114. Special topics in sustainability leadership (6 credits)
- SLGP7115. Sustainability management systems (6 credits)
- SLGP7116. Sustainable and responsible investment (6 credits)
- SLGP7117. Sustainable procurement (6 credits)
- SLGP7118. Transparency, accountability and disclosure (6 credits)
- SLGP7119. Environmental economics and analysis (6 credits)
- SLGP7120. A framework for corporate sustainability strategy (6 credits)
- SLGP7121. Climate governance: mitigation and adaptation (6 credits)
- SLGP7123. Decision-making in value chain management (6 credits)
- SLGP7124. Sustainable cities and resilient communities (6 credits)

- ENVM8006. Environmental impact assessment (3 credits)
ENVM8018. Urban planning and environmental management (3 credits)
ENVM8020. Green buildings and energy management (3 credits)

Capstone experience course

Candidates shall complete the following course:

- SLGP7201. Capstone (12 credits)
-

EXAMINATIONS

There is no written examination and candidates are assessed through coursework only for all SLGP courses. Most assessments are based on papers/reports prepared by candidates working either individually or in groups. Particular emphasis is placed on the research and analysis elements of assessed work.

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

Compulsory courses

SLGP7002. Principles for the management of corporate sustainability (6 credits)

This course examines the various perspectives held by corporations toward the environment including a rationale for business involvement with environmental issues. The course offers an analysis of the strategic reasons for corporations to adopt good environmental practices including competitive advantage, corporate reputation, and cost saving, among others, resulting from a part of its broader commitment to risk management. This course allows students with different backgrounds to come together and gain a common understanding of the interface between organizations and their relationship with their key stakeholders. This will prepare students for their progression to deeper learning in this programme.

The course introduces and explains tools associated with environmental management that enable a firm to improve its compliance, compliance-plus performance, and risk management strategies alongside the expectations for corporate social responsibility such as stakeholder engagement. A number of marketing, assessment, disclosure and reporting concepts will be covered along with problem identification and further exploration. Environmental management systems and environmental auditing will however be covered in other courses under the programme. Some topics that will be covered in this course include: sustainability challenges and opportunities from the corporate and environmental perspectives; the chronology of this evolving relationship; examples of organizational environmental management tools as reactive or proactive responses to changing expectations; introduction to disclosure, risk management, eco-labelling and green marketing.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SLGP7007. Governance and policy for sustainability transition (6 credits)

The course examines the relevance of different governance approaches and public policy for sustainability transition. The application of these governance approaches and various policy instruments to address sustainability issues will be investigated through a range of case studies.

The course critically reviews the roles played by the public sector, private sector and civil society as well as their opportunities and constraints in advancing change for sustainability. Attention will be paid to the importance of leveraging cross-sector collaboration for just and low carbon transition. With the aim of training students to become drivers of sustainability initiatives and policy, the course introduces tools such as policy effectiveness assessment and programme impact assessment.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SLGP7008. Concepts of sustainability leadership (6 credits)

This course will help you to establish the skills and characteristics of leaders and leadership. Through the use of case studies and self-evaluation tools students will become familiar with the elements of leaders and leadership that support human capital development. The understanding of being a leader and what is leadership has changed considerably in the last few years and particularly so with the growing expectations of organizational social responsibility, environmental stewardship and accountability mechanisms for good governance. The course will explore the characteristics of a leader, the elements of leadership and how this contributes to working cultures that support sustainability. Examples and case studies will be used to illustrate how leaders work, make-decisions and can drive responsible organizations, as well as critiques of leadership styles that are not conducive to sustainability and positive systemic change.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SLGP7009. Market-based instruments and low carbon economy transition: a regional perspective (6 credits)

Market-Based Instruments (MBIs) play a significant role in the low-carbon economy transition. In addition to ETS (emissions trading system), other MBIs such as carbon taxes and performance-based financing are garnering support in developing countries. This course provides a detailed examination of carbon trading mechanisms and analyses the political economy of cap-and-trade systems and carbon offset schemes, as well as updates regarding the role of carbon market in global climate negotiations. Special reference will be given to the policy context of Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) under which a new poly-lateral geopolitical structure is conceived and new economic opportunities and implications for developing nations are discussed.

This course will cover a diverse set of perspectives and approaches on the need for climate policies and governance to be driving adaptation, building resilience in physical, environmental and social assets. Examples will be drawn from various parts of the world including North America, Europe and Asia.

Assessment: 100% coursework

Elective courses

SLGP7108. Digital society and governance (6 credits)

We're all living in a fast-changing world – now largely driven by technology and innovation – from the way how we shop, where we get information, and to the future of financial services. Meanwhile, we acknowledge the biggest challenge to technology and innovation is no longer the development of new technology itself but rather how to get the users and policymakers to understand the pros and cons of emerging technologies and then how to apply them to the new digital society in a responsible way as the general public do expect higher efficiency in delivery of public services as well as better control of our own data privacy. Those are the questions and issues we will explore in this course. The instructor designs the course based on his first-hand long time experience at Meta (previously known as Facebook) as well as a witness of the rapid changes of regulatory landscapes across the globe, which is becoming more and more divided and the students need to learn and assess which internet governance models will be more desirable and why. We will also touch on geopolitics and learn why technology lies at the heart of growing US-China tensions, for example, AI, electric vehicles, and semiconductor business. Student will also have the opportunities to meet guest speakers from leading technology, companies and policymakers as well as accesses to company visits and related industry seminars.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SLGP7109. Business ethics and social responsibility (6 credits)

This course is a complement to: Principles for Management of Corporate Sustainability and moves in to the context of sustainable development by considering ways in which businesses can operate in a way that is consistent with the concept of a corporation's responsibility to society and will examine the gap between business compliance and business ethics in the face of changing societal expectations.

The course will:

- Explore approaches to business and sustainable development and evaluate how they might be implemented.
- Introduce the important concept of a corporation's responsibility to society and its various elements such as the "social contract".
- Discuss issues such as human rights, labour practices, fair trade and community / stakeholder engagement
- Examine international standards and conventions of the United Nations and International Labour organization (ILO) as well as voluntary standards for environmental and social responsibility
- This takes us into a discussion about the study of moral philosophies and ethics and the issues of human rights, labour practices, and community engagement. International standards and conventions of the United Nations such as International Labour Organisation (ILO), and the declaration of Human Rights will be discussed.

Topics will include: the meaning of Corporate Responsibility from the business context, the elements, and usage, of sustainable development and corporate social responsibility (CSR). Review of human rights and associated conventions including UN Guiding Principles for Business and Human Rights (UNGPs), a discussion of the Guidance Document on Corporate Social Responsibility ISO 26000, the up-take of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), tools associated with culture change and organizational change, stakeholder engagement and accountability, management and an introduction to financial drivers that are shaping understanding of impact versus outcome.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SLGP7110. Globalisation and the environment (6 credits)

This course will introduce students to the major theories and conceptual understandings regarding globalisation and international issues relating to the environment and natural resource management. Students will be introduced to international efforts and organisations involved in global environmental governance, roles and relationships within the international arena and the implications of this for natural resources. This will allow critical engagement and debate of the broader trends and issues that impact the environment and the associated implications for sustainability.

Bringing together the economic, environmental and social sides of sustainability, students will analyse and take on the roles of different stakeholders and transnational actors to develop understandings of the challenges and opportunities presented by global trends for decision making in this context. This includes exploring the role of transnational non-state actors such as international corporations and multinationals and their growing international influence. Alongside this, issues of equity and justice will also be critically examined and debated to understand the social issues at stake. Finally, globalisation alternatives will be explored as well as the role of innovations and emerging global trends to better understand what the future implications of these phenomena mean for the environment and sustainability.

A range of case studies focused at the international, regional and national level will be drawn on to illustrate lessons, allow for comparisons and develop better understanding of the interconnections involved for the environment in a globalised world. Virtual simulations, interactive exercises and generative AI may also be incorporated to enable students to experience how real-world international policy situations unfold and allow for iterative understandings to be developed.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SLGP7111. Social entrepreneurship and social innovation (6 credits)

This course is founded upon the premise that social innovation and social entrepreneurship play an important role in the building of a sustainable society. The course argues that social innovation should not be merely understood as the introduction of a new product or service which addresses social and environmental needs. The focus should instead be placed on empowerment, capacity building and the creation of new forms of partnerships and collaborations. Efforts should be targeted at enabling empathy, incubating competencies, building social capital and reimagining allocation of resources to facilitate the development and implementation of innovative solutions and strategies. Social entrepreneurship, being both a construct and an approach that promises value creation for the society, signals the imperative for a new form of institution and organizational structure to identify and deliver social goals.

The course investigates how system innovation helps social systems adapt and be transformed, leveraging innovative ideas for greater societal impact. Different incubation models for innovation and an array of social innovation examples will be discussed, along with topics such as practices and principles of social entrepreneurship, blended value and creative problem solving. A thematic module of organizational certifications and accreditations, such as B Corp Certification, is covered to provide students with insights on assessing social venture's sustainability performance.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SLGP7112. Special topics in cutting edge sustainability methods (6 credits)

This course examines selected topics addressing the key issues in cutting edge practice in public or private sector that is driving transformational change in economic practices, business model changes, and system innovation. The exploration and discussion will centre around how new and emerging innovative approaches are helping to address social equality, environmental stewardship and key areas of mitigation, adaptation and resilience to climate change impacts.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SLGP7113. Special topics in executing sustainability strategies (6 credits)

This course will be provided as a unique and separate experience tapping into suitable opportunities to explore special areas of interest and new and emerging topics in the field. This will be undertaken in various ways from field experiences to invited guests from the region or from overseas who are experts on a particular issue, research area or new development in sustainability. The aim is to either focus on a specific topic of current relevance or to have a practical experience that allows for the consolidation / synthesis of learning. Examples of topics that may be covered include: current issues of energy transition to renewables; field experience on food security; site visits to witness the direct dependencies of livelihoods on local environmental resources; expert instructors on a relevant issue such as design for sustainability, circular economy, community investment programs, among others.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SLGP7114. Special topics in sustainability leadership (6 credits)

This course is designed to explore a selected area or a set of selected issues in culture change and transformational leadership. The course applies different theoretical approaches and combines with practical examples to enhance students' understanding of the changing global environment while connecting to local context with the need for system change and how this applies to most decision-making, and ethical leadership in all sectors and roles.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SLGP7115. Sustainability management systems and (6 credits)

This course is dedicated to equipping students' concepts and skills of different sustainability related management systems. Emphasis will be placed on practical approaches to improving environmental performance over time across organizational functions to increase organizations' resilience under the rapid changing climate and in meeting their environmental goals.

The course curriculum will explore the fundamental aspects of environmental management and auditing, greenhouse gases accounting (carbon auditing), and carbon management and environmental target setting as tools to drive meaningful progress towards a low-carbon, sustainable future. Through a comprehensive exploration of decarbonization and net zero targets, students will be empowered to spearhead impactful environmental initiatives within their respective fields and organizations.

Combining conceptual explanations, practical approaches and a site visit, students will gain a better understanding of the rationale behind the adoption of different sustainable management and assessment tools and acquire the skills of applying these tools to within real world corporate contexts.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SLGP7116. Sustainable and responsible investment (6 credits)

Sustainable and responsible finance is a growing field made up of green finance, green bonds, impact investing and responsible investment that require the integration of ESG factors. This is a rapidly emerging field that supports the development of a sustainable, low-carbon, and climate-resilient and inclusive economy.

The main objective of this course is to provide students with the knowledge on international policy, regulatory and market initiatives in support of sustainable finance and investment in general. Specifically, the incorporation of environmental, social and governance (“ESG”) information into investment decision-making will be explored through various technical finance areas including, but not limited to: 1) the relevance of sustainability reporting; 2) the understanding and application of various social impact measurements methodologies and standards (e.g. GIIRS, GRI & SROI); 3) the introduction of socially responsible or impact investment concepts; 4) the incorporation of ESG data into investment decision and 5) the emergence of green and sustainable bond issuances. In addition to financial topics, we will also cover some important corporate and nonprofit governance and the emergence of social enterprises, to provide our students with sound knowledge about the hybrid nature of our global green finance and impact investment market.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SLGP7117. Sustainable procurement (6 credits)

The general sentiment for including sustainability within the procurement or purchasing function is to i) reduce risk, more specifically ESG risk, and to be able to identify new business opportunities for the organization, and ii) to help companies protect their brand reputation which in turn requires them to develop ESG risk related mitigation practices. These reasons, although not wrong, are quite limiting of the potential of the procurement role to move an organization beyond the efficiency conundrum.

By expanding from risk management to prioritising ethical suppliers, minimizing overproduction and waste and improving efficiency in supply and demand management, the organization can leverage off the procurement role to move beyond mitigation, and focussing within the four walls of the operation to looking more broadly at relationships, upstream resource dependencies, social and communities more holistically. The organization can gain a better understanding of the operational environment and the overarching sustainability context.

This course will offer a deeper and more comprehensive perspective of the potential and opportunity for procurement to play a key role in organizational sustainability performance. With a particular exploration of functional roles, in this case procurement, this course will cover – relevant standards, frameworks and topics such as supply chain policy and strategy; reviewing trends and the relationship of suppliers to supply chain performance; how might organizations increase value creation beyond financial value; discussions concerning identification, assessment and management of sustainability-related risks and opportunities using examples; the importance of logistics and inventory; how might cross functional and cross-stakeholder collaboration improve problem-solving and increase circular initiatives. Purpose – to provide greater insight and reframing of functional roles toward sustainability.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SLGP7118. Transparency, accountability and disclosure (6 credits)

Given the importance of standards and guidelines in supporting organizations to adhere to transparency, accountability and disclosure expectations, this course will provide an exploration of the development of standards, guidelines and frameworks. By exploring the frameworks that have developed in direct response to increased demand for organizational accountability, students will learn about those adopted by organizations that in turn have helped to drive the sustainability agenda. Standards, guidelines and frameworks provide a formula or “way of doing things” that describe or promote continuous learning for best practices and provide a point of reference from which to measure improvements and continuous learning. For example professional standards provide a practical and ethical framework for decision-making by instilling a sense of responsibility and accountability as well as increasing our knowledge base through experience, continuing professional development. The fast development of these frameworks have also increased pressure on organization and we see both pros and cons, and thereby Greenwashing will be discussed. Since the demand for an increased demonstration of responsibility by organizations means improvement in performance against environmental, social and governance measures, this course will explore the growth in the disclosure guidelines and frameworks. Discussions will include the most current changes being driven by the ISSB, SAB, TCFD and TNFD, GRI, along with changes occurring in various markets e.g., EU corporate sustainability reporting directive, EU taxonomy regulation, US securities and exchange Commission Climate Disclosure Rule, Canadian government mandatory TCFD-aligned reporting, Japan financial Services Agency mandatory TCFD reporting and others.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SLGP7119. Environmental economics and analysis (6 credits)

This course aims to equip students with the ability to undertake socio-economic analyses of environmental assets, damage, and policies. It will examine the environment as a component of productive capital that can be combined with other forms of capital (human, social, financial, built) to produce goods and services that contribute to human wellbeing. The course explains the failure of markets to efficiently allocate environmental resources and introduces strategies for internalising the external costs of environmental damage such as pollution and climate change. The course includes an introduction to cost-benefit analysis, social return on investment (SROI) and methodologies for the valuation of environmental impacts and ecosystem services.

There will also be a consideration of alternative policy instruments from an economic perspective. The aim is to examine ways of managing resources to maximise human welfare, while accounting for ecological limits and externalities. Topics to be included: supply, demand and the optimal allocation of resources, market failure and the environment, economic policy instruments, valuation of environmental impacts, ecosystems services and natural capital, the economics of ecosystems and biodiversity (TEEB), cost-benefit analysis, economics of climate change, natural capital accounting.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SLGP7020. A framework for corporate sustainability strategy (6 credits)

All organizations need to develop a strategy if they are to have continuity, competitive advantage and be able to deliver their mission. With the increasing awareness and understanding of sustainability, the next and often more challenging step is for an organization to develop a sustainability strategy. This has proven to be quite challenging for organizations, private sector in particular resulting in separate business and sustainability strategies.

This course will provide a pathway for an organization to understand the value of developing a holistic strategy for the organization and thereby providing value in coherence of organizational mission / direction. There will also be sessions to explain the differences between implementation, execution, action plans, as well as vision and mission statements.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SLGP7121. Climate governance: mitigation and adaptation (6 credits)

Much coverage is given to the mitigating of climate change through various policies and market-based instruments for reducing GHG emissions, however we must urgently be implementing complementary approaches for adaptation and building resilience.

This course will support the students' learning to understand how various communities are, and will be impacted by climate-related hazards. Additionally, it supports students in thinking about policies and approaches that increase a community's resilience to climate-related hazards. Different areas have different vulnerabilities due to their exposure and sensitivity to climate change impacts. Therefore, we must reduce vulnerabilities through increasing adaptive capacity of local and regional communities. This can be undertaken in a number of different ways from financing instruments, green business-oriented policies, closing knowledge gaps, nature-based solutions, relocating infrastructure away from coastal areas through managed retreat, enhancing early warning systems.

This course will cover a diverse set of perspectives and approaches on the need for climate policies and governance to be driving adaptation, building resilience in physical, environmental and social assets. Examples will be drawn from various parts of the world including North America, Europe and Asia.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SLGP7123. Decision-making in value chain management (6 credits)

This course aims to familiarise students with the concepts and evolution of global supply chains as well as how organisations perform within, and interact with other stakeholders and partners across supply chains. This course takes a look at sustainability impacts of globalization and trade, and will explore the trends of supply chain globalization (e.g. long-distance outsourcing and offshoring), the implications for international interconnection of trade and production processes, and more specifically, using tools such as news-vendor model, economic order quantity (EOQ) model for inventory management, and mathematical programming tools for optimizing logistics networks, practical approaches for exercising social and environmental responsibility in supply chain management for sustainable and inclusive growth. It will go on to examine approaches including product design, the development of markets, improvements in productivity along supply chains and ways of creating clusters of economic growth that meet targeted social and environmental needs.

Assessment: 100% coursework

SLGP7124. Sustainable cities and resilient communities (6 credits)

The course offers an advanced examination of the principles, strategies and innovations critical to fostering a sustainable and climate-ready urban environments. Grounded upon planning theories and concepts of social equity and inclusive society, the course analyses the socio-economic, environmental, and infrastructural dimensions of sustainable city development. Both classic and emerging challenges such as greening the built environment, bridging urban-rural divide, climate change adaptation, regenerative production and community-based economy will be explored. The course adopts Problem-based Learning (PBL) approach where students will take lead and debate on selected current urban affairs. The course aims to equip students with the analytical tools and strategic insights necessary to design and implement sustainable urban strategies that enhance the overall resilience and quality of life of the city and its inhabitants.

Assessment: 100% coursework

ENVM8006. Environmental impact assessment (3 credits)

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is one of the most important contemporary instruments of environmental management. Used widely around the world to identify the environment impacts of development projects as well as strategic plans and policies. EIA plays a key role in many regulatory systems for the environment. This course reviews the development of different approaches to EIA, basic analytical principles, administrative and legal systems for EIA, assessments at the project and strategic levels (SEA), and case study applications in Hong Kong.

Assessment: 100% coursework

ENVM8018. Urban planning and environmental management (3 credits)

This course lays down the challenges of achieving sustainability in cities. It highlights the important role of urban planning and its related tools and instruments in managing development pressure, mitigating environmental impacts, conserving ecological sensitive areas and achieving the society's overall resilience. The course begins with an introduction to the fundamental functions and processes of planning. Illustrated with real-life case studies, the course then critically reviews the effectiveness of a series of planning tools, such as land use zonings, conservation trusts, partnership schemes, in resolving climate change and sustainability conflicts in both urban and rural contexts. The course adopts the Problem-based Learning (PBL) approach where students will take lead and debate on selected current environmental affairs such as planning and development on private land with high conservation value, planning for facilities with environmental nuisances, design and planning for inclusive open space and rural revitalisation for sustainable communities.

Assessment: 100% coursework

ENVM8020. Green buildings and energy management (3 credits)

One of the ways to tackle global climate change is to significantly enhance energy efficiency especially in buildings. This course will introduce the global trends in the green building movement with focuses on current energy management in new and existing buildings in Hong Kong e.g. BEAM Plus. With a focus on practical knowledge and experiences in energy management in buildings, this course will introduce various aspects of energy efficiency including laws and codes; assessment tools; methods to analyse energy uses in different types of buildings and practical energy conservation measures. Starting from the Academic Year 2020-21, this course is accredited by Hong Kong Green Building Council Limited (HKGBC) and BEAM Society Limited (BSL). Under this accreditation scheme, part of the course contents will be the BEAM Affiliate Training which will be delivered in video format. Also, there will be a BEAM Affiliate examination organized by BSL and arranged by HKU. The student upon passing the examination of the course and completing the MSc(EnvMan) programme will be eligible to register as a BEAM Affiliate at HKGBC.

Assessment: 50% coursework, 50% examination

Capstone Experience Course

SLGP7201. Capstone (12 credits)

The Sustainability Leadership Governance (SLG) programme requires students to complete a substantive piece of research work as a final requirement for graduation; and it is referred to as the Capstone Project. The Capstone Project requires students to take what they have learned in the classroom and apply this knowledge in a real-world situation, by analysing a specific sustainability issue. Building upon a strong research foundation, a capstone project addresses real-life challenges: “How does this research project help to resolve the identified challenge in order to promote ‘sustainable’ practices and positive systemic changes”

The SLG programme focuses on the practical needs of working professionals in the field and the Capstone Project will give students the ability to take their classroom learning and apply it directly to tackling a real-world challenge. This will be done by allowing the students in their group to work with a stakeholder in the community. The Capstone Project is a group-based learning-in-action exercise where you will discover a way of working together by building your group skills. Each Capstone Project is undertaken by a group of four students and will support the development of planning, critical thinking and creativity skills. Project supervision is provided by the course coordinators, who are also core members of the staff in the SLG Programme. The course co-ordinators will guide the capstone project groups through a series of themes and topics from which the groups can choose, and then subsequently the groups will be introduced to the stakeholders in the community with whom they will be working. The project to be submitted by June 30 of the final academic year of study.

Assessment: 100% coursework
