

SS1024: SOCIAL ISSUES AND PROBLEMS

Effective Term

Semester B 2024/25

Part I Course Overview

Course Title

Social Issues and Problems

Subject Code

SS - Social and Behavioural Sciences

Course Number

1024

Academic Unit

Social and Behavioural Sciences (SS)

College/School

College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences (CH)

Course Duration

One Semester

Credit Units

3

Level

B1, B2, B3, B4 - Bachelor's Degree

Medium of Instruction

English

Medium of Assessment

English

Prerequisites

Nil

Precursors

Nil

Equivalent Courses

Nil

Exclusive Courses

Nil

Part II Course Details

Abstract

This course aims to: 1) develop students interest by examining selected social issues in the light of the emerging technologies with different social science perspectives; 2) use different social science perspectives and theories to

understand selected social issues and social problems with special focus in Hong Kong and selected societies; 3) enable students to apply theories to examine the social problems and identify solutions to these problems.

Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

CILOs		Weighting (if app.)	DEC-A1	DEC-A2	DEC-A3
1	identify the basic and essential concepts and principles of social sciences theories for the analysis of social problems and issues;	40	x	x	
2	apply social sciences concepts, perspectives and analysis to the interpretation of social problems and issues in light of the emerging technologies;	40	x	x	x
3	appraise the social policies and innovatively identify practical solutions to tackle the social issues and problems.	20	x	x	x

A1: Attitude

Develop an attitude of discovery/innovation/creativity, as demonstrated by students possessing a strong sense of curiosity, asking questions actively, challenging assumptions or engaging in inquiry together with teachers.

A2: Ability

Develop the ability/skill needed to discover/innovate/create, as demonstrated by students possessing critical thinking skills to assess ideas, acquiring research skills, synthesizing knowledge across disciplines or applying academic knowledge to real-life problems.

A3: Accomplishments

Demonstrate accomplishment of discovery/innovation/creativity through producing /constructing creative works/new artefacts, effective solutions to real-life problems or new processes.

Learning and Teaching Activities (LTAs)

LTAs	Brief Description	CILO No.	Hours/week (if applicable)
1	LTA 1: Lectures	Students will engage in formal weekly lectures, with topics concerning theories on social problems and social issues, prepared and presented by lecturer.	1, 2, 3
2	LTA 2: Tutorials	Students will engage in one-hour tutorials for class discussion.	1, 2, 3

Assessment Tasks / Activities (ATs)

ATs	CILO No.	Weighting (%)	Remarks (e.g. Parameter for GenAI use)
1	AT1: Term Paper	1, 2, 3	40
2	AT2: Student Presentation	1, 2, 3	35
3	AT3: Class Participation	1, 2, 3	25

Continuous Assessment (%)

100

Examination (%)

0

Additional Information for ATs

AT1: Term Paper (40%) Students are required to submit an academic paper on topics related to the subject matter. They have to apply one relevant theory to analyse a social problem and to identify practical solutions for this problem. Max word length: 1,500.

AT2: Student Presentation (35%) Students are required to form in groups and pick up one social issue or problem as their topic. They need to select one or more theoretical perspective to analyse the issue. They have to collect information from existing literature to substantiate their arguments. They are also required to give a short evaluation of the current policies adopted to tackle the problem.

AT3: Class participation (25%) The students are required to participate in a wide variety of assignments, ranging from assigned readings, video viewing, group discussions, quiz and problem-solving activities.

Assessment Rubrics (AR)**Assessment Task**

1. Term Paper

Criterion

- Present the ideas in logical manner- Use of proper references and evidences to illustrate the ideas
- Identify a social problem
- Apply a theory to analyse the problem critically- Identify practical solution for the problem with reference to the existing theory

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

Strong evidence of original thinking; good organization, capacity to analyse and synthesize; superior grasp of subject matter; evidence of extensive knowledge base.

Good (B+, B, B-)

Evidence of grasp of subject, some evidence of critical capacity and analytic ability; reasonable understanding of issues; evidence of familiarity with literature.

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Student who is profiting from the university experience; understanding of the subject; ability to develop solutions to simple problems in the material.

Marginal (D)

Sufficient familiarity with the subject matter to enable the student to progress without repeating the course.

Failure (F)

Little evidence of familiarity with the subject matter; weakness in critical and analytic skills; limited, or irrelevant use of literature.

Assessment Task

2. Student Presentation

Criterion

- Ability to deliver an effective presentation
- Demonstrate the ability to pick up one social issue or problem as the topic.
- Ability to select one or more relevant theoretical perspective(s) to analyse the issue.
- Able to give a short evaluation of the current policies adopted to tackle the problem

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

High

Good (B+, B, B-)

Significant

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Moderate

Marginal (D)

Basic

Failure (F)

Not even reaching the marginal level

Assessment Task

3. Class participation

Criterion

- The students are required to be actively participate in a wide variety of assignments, ranging from assigned readings, video viewing, group discussions, quiz and problem solving activities.
- Discuss the issues with reference to the existing theories

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

Very active and contribute significant ideas in the lesson

Good (B+, B, B-)

Sometimes actively contribute the significant ideas in the lesson

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Occasionally contribute ideas in the lesson

Marginal (D)

Rarely contribute any constructive ideas

Failure (F)

Little evidence of participation

Part III Other Information**Keyword Syllabus**

the relationship between theory and practice; functions of theory/model in social sciences; issues of knowledge, objectivity and personal involvement; definition of social problem; sociological imagination; AI and technologies; social policy, social issues and social problems in Hong Kong; social welfare services related to the social problems introduced in the course.

Reading List**Compulsory Readings**

Title	
1	Macionis, J. J. (2013) Social Problems. New Jersey: Pearson

Additional Readings

	Title
1	Cohen, R., Kennedy, P. & Perrier, M. (2013) Global Sociology. Basingstoke; New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
2	Feagin, J.R., Feagin, C.B. & Baker, D.V. (2006) Social problems: a critical power-conflict perspective, 6th ed. Upper Saddle River, N.J. : Prentice Hall.
3	Finsterbusch, K. Ed. (2003) Social problems 03/04. Guilford, Conn.: McGraw-Hill/Dushkin.
4	Giddens, A. (2014). Introduction to Sociology. New York: W.W. Norton.
5	Heiner, R. (2013) Social problems: an introduction to critical constructionism. New York : Oxford University Press
6	Kendall, D.E. (2013) Social problems in a diverse society, 6th ed. Boston: Pearson.
7	Lopata, H.Z. & Levy, J.A. (eds) (2003) Social problems across the life course. Lanham, Md. : Rowman & Littlefield.
8	Mooney, L. A., Clever, M., & Van Willigen, M. (2021). Understanding Social Problems. New York: Cengage Learning.
9	Nolan, P. & Lenski, G. (2011). Human Societies: An Introduction to Marcosociology. Boulder, Co.: Paradigm Publisher.
10	Rubington, E. & Weinberg, M.S. (eds) (2011). The Study of Social Problems: Seven Perspectives. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
11	Rubington, E. & Weinberg, M.S. (eds). (2008). Deviance : the interactionist perspective. Boston : Allyn and Bacon.
12	Sernau, S.R. (2012) Global Problems: The Search for Equity, Peace, and Sustainability. New Jersey: Pearson.