

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS 科目簡介

COURSES FOR UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMMES

SOC101 Introduction to Sociology (3 credits)

(Restriction(s): Students who have obtained Grade D or above in AL Sociology are not allowed to take this course. Students are not allowed to take both this course and CUS213 Culture, Power and Government)

This is an introductory course in Sociology, starting with an overview of the nature of the discipline, followed by a survey of various aspects of the structures and dynamics of social life. General and specific examples are used to illustrate how thinking sociologically adds to our knowledge of the world around us.

SOC108 Reading Great Social Thinkers (3 credits) (GEA108)

The ability to read and digest writings from great classic and contemporary thinkers is an invaluable asset for any university career, but reading academic writing can be a daunting and often frustrating task for many university students. It is not uncommon for students to say that they know all the words in a reading but fail to grasp its central meaning. In this course, students will be introduced to a selection of writings from great social thinkers, including economists, philosophers, and social theorists. Using a “guided reading” approach, students will be familiarised with the rhetorical styles and normative conventions of classic and contemporary academic writing of great social thinkers, learn to overcome their fear of long sentences and jargon, and in the process learn how to appreciate and to produce good writing themselves.

SOC201 Classical Sociological Theory (3 credits)

(Prerequisite(s): (a) SOC101 Introduction to Sociology, or (b) Grade D or above in AL Sociology, or (c) CUS106 The Making of Modern Culture)

This course introduces you to three major thinkers - Karl Marx, Max Weber and Emile Durkheim - and the traditions of social thought they helped to establish. These authors are typically regarded as classical thinkers because they helped establish the key coordinates of sociology as a discipline. Sociological classics are not timeless, nor are they an authoritative guide to many modern problems. Nonetheless, they do provide some vital intellectual resources for the student of society; people who think that they can dispense with the classics would be best advised to understand them first. Reinventing the wheel is as common in sociology as it is elsewhere. I will suggest that each of these thinkers offer complementary insights into modern society, and into the methods with which it is best studied.

SOC202 Contemporary Sociological Theory (3 credits)

(Prerequisite(s): (a) SOC101 Introduction to Sociology, or (b) Grade D or above in AL Sociology, or (c) CUS106 The Making of Modern Culture)

This course is designed to acquaint you with the main schools of modern sociological theory. We will scrutinize key concepts and key thinkers. And we will show how sociological theory is relevant to understanding modern life. Two approaches are pursued. First, we outline the main traditions of theorizing, linking these to their classical counterparts: the conflict tradition, sociological rationalism, the Durkheimian tradition, and the microinteractionist tradition. Second, and simultaneously, we will employ these currents to illuminate a range of pertinent problems and questions: What is “scientific” knowledge in the social sciences? How much impact can individuals have in shaping social structure? What is the nature of social action, social conflict and social ritual?

SOC203 Social Gerontology (3 credits)

This course introduces students to social gerontology and its concerns with the impact of human ageing on all aspects of society. Gerontology is a multi-disciplinary field which studies the interrelated biological, psychological and social aspects of human ageing. It examines contemporary social issues and policy aspects of ageing and to encourage students to think about, analyse and project the effects of population ageing on political, economic, social welfare, cultural and recreational policies. The course examines individual, family and socio-economic issues, measures of ageing and health (physical and mental), the environment, accommodation and older persons' quality of life. Older persons and ageing are regarded as just one aspect of the life course.

SOC204 Society and Social Change (3 credits)

This course is about one of the most important concerns of our time: social change. Given that social change is happening everywhere and at times dramatic feature of society, the course will introduce the nature of social change and fundamental concepts related to social change, illustrated by real-life case examples in Hong Kong context, mainland China and the region in general. This course will also deal with questions of how society changes, in what direction, and by what forces this change occurs.

SOC212 Hong Kong Society (3 credits)

This course introduces students to the history, culture, social structure and social changes in Hong Kong since 1841. While many students may have some knowledge of these aspects of our society, a comprehensive overview will provide them with the necessary facts and perspectives demanded by a liberal arts education.

SOC213 Risk, Society and Modernity (3 credits)

Over the past decade, 'risk society' has become one of the most fertile fields of sociological and cross-disciplinary investigation. The focus of early modernity may be preoccupied with wealth accumulation, but in late modernity concerns about risk distribution and man-made hazards have emerged as important themes that span our identities, social discourses and public policies.

This course examines risks in modernity such as environmental pollution, mutating epidemics, food safety and financial crises. Theoretical concepts are mainly based on 'risk society' by Ulrich Beck and Anthony Giddens; cases are drawn from social issues close to our lives.

**SOC230 Sexuality and Society (3 credits)
(GEB230)**

Sex and sexuality are arguably the most as well as the least "natural" aspect of modern human life. While sexual reproduction and sexual desire are widely agreed to be "natural" in humans, their manifestations are subject to a wide range of social norms and formal regulations that vary greatly according to time and space. Sex and sexuality are highly sensitive and politicised issues in today's world. How are we to make sense of our own, and other people's sexual desires, behaviours, values and attitudes? How do we make sense of different society's stances on the issues of sexuality? This course introduces students to ways of understanding human sexuality in societies past and present by referring to historical records, empirical data and conceptual perspectives.

SOC318 Economic Change and Social Stratification (3 credits)

(Prerequisite(s): a) SOC101 Introduction to Sociology, or (b) Grade D or above in AL Sociology, or (c) CUS106 The Making of Modern Culture)

What is the role of the economy in social change? Why are some people - and some nations - richer and more powerful than others? What role does macroeconomic policy, social structure and power play in an economy's success or lack of it? How does the stratification affect every aspect of life? To what extent are economic, cultural and political ideas and institutions becoming globalised? These are the key questions that this course will address. It does so by examining a range of theories of economic change and social stratification and by providing actual case studies of modern economies, Western and Asian.

SOC319 Family, Gender and Society (3 credits)

(Prerequisite(s): (a) SOC101 Introduction to Sociology, or (b) Grade D or above in AL Sociology, or (c) CUS106 The Making of Modern Culture)

This course will introduce students to a range of issues that impact on society from specifically family and gendered perspectives. It will provide students with a sound understanding of family in traditional and post-modern context as a social institution and ideology. Traditionally, women's voices have been ignored, and the assumption has been that the male is the norm of the human race. However, changes have been made under the influence of feminism, democracy, and industrialization. Whether there is greater gender equality in our society will be discussed in this course.

Students will be introduced to the patriarchal structures of society that have shaped and categorized gender roles and status, through a range of psychological and sociological discourses, including Politics, Literature, the Media, Religion, Race and Medicine. The focus on issues of race will include the structures, processes and mechanisms whereby gender as a social division is produced and reproduced. We will look at changes in family structures and family ideologies in Hong Kong, and how policies and processes in the public sphere are related to family and gender relations in the private sphere.

SOC320 Population Dynamics and Policy (3 credits)

This course starts with an introduction to the global trends and patterns in fertility, mortality and migration. It is followed by discussions on the patterns and social consequences of various population policies aimed at monitoring population growth, structure, quality and movement. Special focuses will be put on the convergent and divergent of population dynamics and policies between the more developed and the less developed societies. Population issues and policies specific to Hong Kong will also be discussed.

SOC321 Social Justice (3 credits)

(Prerequisite(s): (a) SOC101 Introduction to Sociology, or (b) Grade D or above in AL Sociology, or (c) CUS106 The Making of Modern Culture)

Social justice (or distributive justice) is about the ways in which valued resources are distributed in society. This is a topic of interest and importance for a wide range of academic disciplines, including sociology, social theory, political philosophy and public policy. The first half of the course will introduce students to the subject on a theoretical and conceptual level, and the second half will be concerned with the application of these theories and concepts to contemporary social issues and phenomenon such as income inequality, discrimination, and affirmative action policies.

SOC323 Organisations and Bureaucracy (3 credits)

Organizations are a dominant component of contemporary society, and they affect almost every aspects of every day life. Hence, they play a very important role in modern society. In this course, we will cover three major perspectives of organizations -- Rational Systems Perspective, Natural Systems Perspective, and Open Systems Perspective. These perspectives will add in the analysis of concepts and issues in organizations and bureaucracy. Topics such as workplace stress, leadership, conflict, as well as the issues related to changing organizational environment will be discussed.

SOC324 Work and Occupation (3 credits)

Most people are engaged in work throughout or part of their adult lives. Work accounts for a greater part of their days. Fresh graduates, in particular, concern the most about the roles as future workers. Given the tremendous importance of work in one's life, understanding of work world in advance is both intellectually satisfying and pragmatic. This course as an upper-level sociology course will gain a general understanding of the multi-disciplinary approach to understand work and occupation across time and in modern society.

SOC326 Mass Communications and Public Opinion (3 credits)

This course examines the nature, theories and effects of the mass media in contemporary society and the relationships of mass communication with public opinion. This course will discuss four major mass communication theories including Mass Society Theory, Limited Effects Theory, Active Audience Theories, and Critical Cultural Studies. These theories will be discussed together with four major mass media including newspapers, magazines, television and radio. The course assists students to improve their powers of analysis to understand mass communication, provide them with a solid understanding of the importance of public opinion, the knowledge on how to conduct public opinion research, and prepare them for a career in the mass media, publicity professions and public opinion research.

SOC327 Social Welfare and Social Problems in Hong Kong (3 credits)

This course provides students with conceptual tools to understand and analyse social problems and social welfare policies in a cross-national perspective. They will be equipped to apply these analytical principles to contemporary social welfare and social security in Hong Kong.

SOC328 Ageing, Modernisation and Adaptation (3 credits)

This course tries to re-examine the relevancy and applicability of the various theories in explaining the social status and quality of life of older persons in the modern world. It also tries to decode the cultural stereotypes about ageing and older persons. It starts with an examination on the functional relationship between modernization and population ageing. It is followed by the discussions about the impacts of modernization on social and economic well-being of older persons in later life. In response to extended longevity, the course advocates students of the importance of pre-retirement planning and highlights the ways to achieve successful ageing.

SOC330 Crime and Delinquency (3 credits)

(Prerequisite(s): (a) SOC101 Introduction to Sociology, or (b) Grade D or above in AL Sociology, or (c) CUS106 The Making of Modern Culture)

This course provides students with an understanding of the domestic, regional and international dimensions of crime and delinquency. Special attention is accorded to relevant theories; to the study of organised criminal networks; to the institutions of control, justice and treatment; to correctional services in the local community; and to problems of

social policy.

SOC333 Health, Illness and Behaviour (3 credits)

This course provides a social psychological and medical sociology perspective to health and illness and human behaviour in reaction to health and illness. The course introduces Chinese and Western conceptualisations of health and illness; social epidemiology – how people and the human and physical environments are associated with health and disease and key current issues and debates in health and medical fields including the doctor-patient relationship, medicalisation of illnesses, professionalisation of the medical and para-medical professions, patient behaviour and rights and principles of diagnostic criteria.

SOC334 Science, Technology and Society (3 credits)

This course will examine and reflect on science and technology's impact on the global village economically, politically, socially and environmentally. The course will start with examining the important questions of what science and technology are and their impacts in contemporary society. The course will also discuss the various theoretical underpinnings of science and technology in society, focus on the impact of science and technology on international relations, social institutions, social groups and on everyday life, and finally look at the future of science and technology in human civilisation.