

CUS514 Independent Study 獨立專題研究

Course Title	: Independent Study 獨立專題研究
Course Code	: CUS514
No. of Credits	: 3 credits
Mode of Tuition	: 1 hour of Individual Supervision
Class Contact Hours	: 1 hour per week, 14 hours for the whole course
Category	: Elective course
Discipline	: Cultural Studies
Prerequisite(s)	: A CGPA 3.5 or above
Co-requisite(s)	: Nil
Exclusion(s)	: Each student is allowed to register for this course ONCE. Normally, part-time students should take the course in the 2nd term during the first year of study or thereafter
Exemption Requirements	: Nil
Brief Course Description	: The course allows a student to work independently under individual supervision on a reading and research and/or practicum project. The student will do an in-depth study in an area not covered in the other MCS courses (for MCS students), develop specific scholarly work and gain practical experience through a well-designed and focused advanced independent project.
Aims	: To train independent research and critical skills through an intensive study on a pertinent topic in any area of cultural studies.

Learning Outcomes : On completion of the course, students will able to:

1. LO1 : write a research topic in cultural studies;
2. LO2 : demonstrate an analysis of appropriate cultural research methods and be aware of the limitations and merits of the methods employed;
3. LO3 : complete a piece of research work independently within manageable scope and time;
4. LO4 : critically discuss at an advanced level cultural issues related to the topic of research chosen for study

Indicative Contents : Not applicable

Teaching Methods : Lectures, seminar discussions and class presentations.

Measurement of Learning Outcomes:

LO \ Assessment	Class participation and discussion	Research proposal	Research paper
	(20%)	(20%)	(60%)
LO1		v	v
LO2	v		
LO3		v	v
LO4		v	v

Assessment : 100% continuous assessment, including class discussion and participation (20%), research proposal (20%) and research paper (60%)
Research Paper: Of approximate length of 10,000 characters in Chinese or 8,000 words in English. Class Discussion. If student is keen on raising relevant questions and expressing one's views to facilitate his/her research, course teacher will give additional marks for him/her.

Assessment Rubrics

1) Research proposal (20%)

Criterion	Excellent (90-100%)	Good (60-89%)	Pass (30%-59%)	Failure (0-29%)
Understanding of Topic (5%)	Comprehensive understanding and coverage of issues. Insightful and well-informed. Clearly answers the question.	Clear discussion of relevant issues. Shows good insight into the subject. Answers the question.	Shows some coverage and understanding of main issues. Does not answer the question fully/directly enough.	Very little or no understanding of the issues. Does not answer the question.
Use of evidence (5%)	Wide range of evidence used to support arguments. Thoroughly researched. Use of primary sources.	Good use of evidence to support arguments. Have researched and drawn on some evidence.	Adequate range of evidence used. Could have drawn on more suitable evidence.	Inadequate use of evidence to support argument. No use of evidence to support argument
Critical analysis (6%)	Excellent critical awareness of subject matter and current issues. Shows original thinking and analysis.	Goes beyond description. Analyses material to develop argument.	More description than analysis in content. Needs to draw material together to develop argument.	Describes the issues but shows significant misunderstanding of basic issues.
Structure of Argument (2%)	Clear structure. Presents a convincing and well developed argument.	Clear structure. Develops a sound argument.	Argument needs further development. Structure needs more clarity.	Poor structure. No clear argument. No clear linkage from point to point.
Writing & Referencing (2%)	Uses references correctly. Demonstrates excellent writing skills.	Generally uses references correctly but some parts less well referenced.	Some parts not referenced correctly. Writing skills could be improved.	Not referenced correctly. Poor writing skills. Needed proof reading.

		Competent writing skills.		
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2) Class Participation and Discussion (20%)

Criterion	Excellent (90-100%)	Good (60-89%)	Pass (30%-59%)	Failure (0-29%)
Level of participation (3%)	Participates actively and constructively all the time.	Participates actively most of the time	Participates most of the time but sometimes requires prompting.	Student does not attend tutorial.
Engagement with course materials (4%)	Engages constructively with, all course material (assigned readings, issues, concepts).	Demonstrates a good understanding of, and engages constructively with course material.	Demonstrates a basic understanding of most of the course material and engages with it, though not always successfully.	Student demonstrates little or no understanding of course material, lacks engagement with it
Quality of analysis and discussion (10%)	Provides insightful analyses, raises critical points, and advances and deepens group discussion.	Frequently provides helpful points or asks questions that advance and deepen group discussion.	Sometimes makes positive contributions that advance group discussion.	Little or no engagement / participation in group discussion even with prompting.
Engagement with others (3%)	Consistently appreciates others' contribution and engages with their ideas sensitively.	Generally appreciates others' contribution and engages with their ideas sensitively.	Attempt to appreciate others' contribution and to engage with their ideas sensitively, with some success.	Shows no appreciation of others' knowledge and skills.

3) Research Paper (60%)

Criterion	Excellent (90-100%)	Good (60-89%)	Pass (30%-59%)	Failure (0-29%)
Understanding of Topic (15%)	Comprehensive understanding and coverage of	Clear discussion of relevant issues. Shows good	Shows some coverage and understanding of	Very little or no understanding of the issues.

	issues. Insightful and well-informed. Clearly answers the question.	insight into the subject. Answers the question.	main issues. Does not answer the question fully/directly enough.	Does not answer the question.
Use of evidence (20%)	Wide range of evidence used to support arguments. Thoroughly researched. Use of primary sources.	Good use of evidence to support arguments. Have researched and drawn on some evidence.	Adequate range of evidence used. Could have drawn on more suitable evidence.	Inadequate use of evidence to support argument. No use of evidence to support argument
Critical analysis (20%)	Excellent critical awareness of subject matter and current issues. Shows original thinking and analysis.	Goes beyond description. Analyses material to develop argument.	More description than analysis in content. Needs to draw material together to develop argument.	Describes the issues but shows significant misunderstanding of basic issues.
Structure of Argument (2.5%)	Clear structure. Presents a convincing and well developed argument.	Clear structure. Develops a sound argument.	Argument needs further development. Structure needs more clarity.	Poor structure. No clear argument. No clear linkage from point to point.
Writing & Referencing (2.5%)	Uses references correctly. Demonstrates excellent writing skills.	Generally uses references correctly but some parts less well referenced. Competent writing skills.	Some parts not referenced correctly. Writing skills could be improved.	Not referenced correctly. Poor writing skills. Needed proof reading.

- Important Notes : 1. Students are expected to spend a total of 126 hours (including class contact and personal study) for the whole course to achieve the course learning outcomes.
2. Students shall be aware of the University regulations about dishonest practice in course work, tests and examinations, and the possible consequences as stipulated in the Regulations Governing University Examinations and Course Work. In particular, plagiarism, being a kind of dishonest practice, is “the presentation of another person’s work without proper acknowledgement of the source, including exact phrases, or summarised ideas, or even footnotes/citations, whether protected by copyright or not, as the student’s own work”. Students are required to strictly follow university regulations governing academic integrity and honesty.
3. Students are required to submit writing assignment(s) using Turnitin.
4. To enhance students’ understanding of plagiarism, a mini-course “Online Tutorial on Plagiarism Awareness” is available on <https://pla.ln.edu.hk/>.
5. Students must adhere to the University’s guidelines and practices when using Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools. The official documents “Guidelines for Using GAI Tools at Lingnan University” and “Best Practices for Ethical and Responsible Use of GAI Tools in Course Assessments” can be found here:
<https://www.ln.edu.hk/tlc/generative-artificial-intelligence/gai-guidelines-best-practices>.

Required/Essential Readings :

To be determined jointly by the supervisor and the student