CUS502 Critical Thinking through Popular Culture 普及文化的批判思考

Course Title	:	Critical Thinking through Popular Culture 普及文化的批判思考
Course Code	:	CUS502
No. of Credits/Term	:	3
Mode of Tuition	:	Lecture
Class Contact Hours	:	3 hours per week
Category	:	Core course
Discipline	:	Cultural Studies
Prerequisite(s)	:	Nil
Co-requisite(s)	:	Nil
Exclusion(s);	:	Nil
Exemption Requirements;	:	Nil

Brief Course Description : This course focuses on the relationship between critical theories and popular culture. It examines how the mediation of popular culture affects the ways in which our everyday life experience is shaped. Our main concern is that a renewed understanding of the everyday experience through popular culture can provide illuminating examples and patterns of critical thinking much needed for public cultural education today. Students will learn about different approaches to the many forms of popular culture, from cinema to popular journalism, from advertisement to shopping mall culture, to video games, fan stories and the internet. We aim to see how the popular ways of life can be analyzed as representing complex negotiations of power and pleasure, solidarity and resistance, distinction and community formation in a field increasingly characterized by multiple centers and domains of value.

Aims :	:	1. To introduce the basic approaches to popular culture in Cultural Studies so as to allow students to undertake the analysis of individual cases in relevant social contexts; 2. To provide a dynamic inter-disciplinary platform for the discussion of social, ideological, ethical and aesthetic issues through the perspectives of popular culture
Learning Outcomes (LOs) :	:	On completion of the course, students will be able to: 1. LO1 : demonstrate a critical understanding of the relationship between popular culture and everyday life in the contemporary context; 2. LO2 : discuss critical insights on a range of examples encountered in local contexts relating to the experience of popular culture as a dimension of the everyday life; 3. LO3: present in-depth analysis of individual cases of popular culture formation with a relevant critical perspective.
Indicative Contents	:	1. Popular culture and cultural studies: the question of culture and *value* re-visited; debates on the critical attitude toward and status of popular culture in its many forms (e.g., fiction, fashion journalism, advertisement, tourism, shopping, media and cyber culture); 2. Analytical approach to the practices of everyday life: culture as *ordinary experience* in the contemporary contexts; the critical concept and functions of *mediation* in popular culture; *play*, *performance* and *consumption* as the key dimension of popular experience for cultural analysis on the everyday; 3. Interface with popular sensuality, commodity and everyday culture: culture as event, spectacle and meaningful acts; popular culture and the experience of home, community, the state and the globe; identity and difference; social relation, aesthetics, history and politics; globalization, fetishism, and the society of the spectacle (cases to be examined may include: celebrity and fan culture; shopping, tourism, and consumer culture; sport, eating, digital and cyber cultural activities).
Teaching Method	:	Lecture and class discussion (in groups), with student reports on readings and project outlines. Emphasis is put on student participation in the

analysis of issues, relating their own views and experience of popular culture to the critical questions addressed in the course framework. Guest speakers are invited to share perspectives from the industry points of view when appropriate.

Measurement of Learning Outcomes : 1. Class Participation

- Group presentations and discussions on selected topics to test students' understanding of assigned readings, grasp of theoretical materials, and application of conceptual framework to local examples;
- Reading reports on the assigned materials give an opportunity for students to follow up on their oral presentations in class, and develop critical understanding on a small issue in the form of reading notes or analytical reflections;
- Class discussions (in roundtable format) on term paper proposals help students to formulate initial project ideas, develop critical problems for in-depth study, and share with others their viewpoints on selected topics/cases through dialogues (LO2).

2. Mid-term Assignment

- An analysis of either (i) a single popular cultural text, or (ii) a well-defined site or process of everyday/popular cultural production and/or consumption of meanings, or (iii) a specific event/activity in everyday lives where cultural meanings are made, mediated and circulated.
- This aims to focus students' work in critical analysis on a particular item/site/process in the making of popular culture. Students choose to do either (a) a close reading of the text/site/event that addresses issues as framed within the broader context involved (which the student must identify and discuss); or (b) a critical analysis of an issue or concept studied in the course with reference to the particular case chosen (LO1, LO2).

3. Term Paper

- A well-focused study of a specific topic discussed in the course, which reveals students' command of their critical and analytical ability in handling a contextualized problem or case of popular/everyday life culture effectively. Students' ability to present and examine the case/topic with an effective framework of critical analysis would be assessed (LO1, LO3).

Assessment : 100% Continuous Assessment, to be based on:

1. Group Presentation (10%)
2. TWO Reading Reports (2-4 pages each) on any assigned materials. (10% x 2 = 20%)
3. Term Paper Proposal (10%)

(*Presentation: in English, Cantonese or Putonghua)

4. Mid-term (Short) Assignment (30%)
5. Term Paper (30%)

On a focused study of any one of the topics/areas discussed in the course, of approximate length of 4,000 characters in Chinese or 3,000 words in English.

Class presentation (30 to 45 mins) is group presentation. If a particular student is keen on answering questions and expressing one's views, course teacher will give additional marks for that student.

Criteria for group presentation assessment

- Quality of Interpretation of the readings
- The relevance of the case to the arguments raised
- Organization of flow
- Clarity of the presentation/ commentary
- Relevance of questions raised
- Response to classmates' questions

Assessment Rubrics:

1) Group Presentation (10%)

***Peer assessment will be conducted as a reference for assessment of one's contribution to the group presentation or project.**

2%

A, A-	**B+, B, B-**	**C+, C, C-**	**F**
Excellent performance of teamwork. Demonstrates	Good performance of teamwork. Demonstrates	Fair performance of teamwork. Demonstrates	Poor performance of teamwork. Demonstrates no

full communication with formal roles for each group member. Equal distribution of workload.	some communication with roles for each group member. Moderate distribution of workload.	limited communication with informal roles for each group member. Some distribution of workload.	communication with unclear roles for each group member. Unequal distribution of workload.

8%

A, A-	**B+, B, B-**	**C+, C, C-**	**F**
Identifies and addresses clearly the main question(s) Examines the question /issue/ problem from all important perspectives. Overall logic is clear. Presenter(s) engage the audience at all times.	Identifies and addresses most of the main question(s). Examines the question/issue/ problem from most of the important perspectives but not all relevant arguments and counter arguments are fully examined. Presenter(s) engage the audience most of the time.	Identifies and addresses most of the main question(s). Examines the question/ issue/ problem from some of the important perspectives. Presenter(s) engage the audience most of the time	Lacks an understanding of what the question requires. No critical engagement with issues, and themes. Presentation characterized by serious inaccuracies and misunderstandings. Presenter(s) seem to make little attempt to engage the audience

2) TWO Reading Reports (10% x 2 = 20%)

A, A-	**B+, B, B-**	**C+, C, C-**	**F**
Identifies and addresses clearly the main question(s); Consistent perceptive and critical engagement with relevant concepts and theories; Introduction states clearly writer's thesis or position, and conclusion clearly summarizes main arguments. The language contains very few, if any, errors in grammar and vocabulary. If slips are present, the meaning is still clear. Conventions of academic writing (e.g.	Identifies and addresses most of the main question(s). Frequent perceptive and critical engagement with relevant concepts and theories; Introduction states writer's thesis or position, and conclusion summarizes main arguments. The language is generally accurate but contains some systematic errors in complex grammar and vocabulary. Conventions of academic writing (e.g. citation, references, footnotes, etc.)	Identifies and addresses most of the main question(s). Some perceptive and critical engagement with relevant concepts and theories; Introduction and conclusion are included and generally capture the essence of the topic and discussion. The language is mostly accurate; and errors, when they occur, are more often in complex grammar and vocabulary. Errors are distracting but the overall meaning is still intelligible.	Lacks an understanding of what the question requires. No critical engagement with issues, and themes. Introduction and conclusion are unclear, lack detail or missing altogether. Very little evidence of an ability to organize the essay into paragraphs Errors in language and vocabulary are so frequent and distracting that the essay is largely incomprehensi ble. Does not adhere to the conventions of academic writing (e.g. citation,

citation, references, footnotes, etc.) are followed meticulously.	are followed apart from the occasional oversight.	Conventions of academic writing (e.g. citation, references, footnotes, etc.) are followed but at times inconsistencies and/or errors occur.	references, footnotes, etc.).

3) Term Paper Proposal (10%)

A, A-	**B+, B, B-**	**C+, C, C-**	**F**
Identifies and addresses clearly the main question(s); Consistent perceptive and critical engagement with relevant concepts and theories; Introduction states clearly writer's thesis or position, and conclusion clearly summarizes main arguments. The language	Identifies and addresses most of the main question(s). Frequent perceptive and critical engagement with relevant concepts and theories; Introduction states writer's thesis or position, and conclusion summarizes main arguments. The language is generally accurate but	Identifies and addresses most of the main question(s). Some perceptive and critical engagement with relevant concepts and theories; Introduction and conclusion are included and generally capture the essence of the topic and discussion. The language is mostly	Lacks an understanding of what the question requires. No critical engagement with issues, and themes. Introduction and conclusion are unclear, lack detail or missing altogether. Very little evidence of an ability to organize the essay into paragraphs Errors in language and

contains very few, if any, errors in grammar and vocabulary. If slips are present, the meaning is still clear. Conventions of academic writing (e.g. citation, references, footnotes, etc.) are followed meticulously.	contains some systematic errors in complex grammar and vocabulary. Conventions of academic writing (e.g. citation, references, footnotes, etc.) are followed apart from the occasional oversight.	accurate; and errors, when they occur, are more often in complex grammar and vocabulary. Errors are distracting but the overall meaning is still intelligible. Conventions of academic writing (e.g. citation, references, footnotes, etc.) are followed but at times inconsistencies and/or errors occur.	vocabulary are so frequent and distracting that the essay is largely incomprehensible. Does not adhere to the conventions of academic writing (e.g. citation, references, footnotes, etc.).

4) Mid-term (Short) Assignment (30%)

A, A-	**B+, B, B-**	**C+, C, C-**	**F**
Identifies and addresses clearly the main question(s); Consistent perceptive and critical engagement with relevant	Identifies and addresses most of the main question(s). Frequent perceptive and critical engagement with relevant concepts and	Identifies and addresses most of the main question(s). Some perceptive and critical engagement with relevant	Lacks an understanding of what the question requires. No critical engagement with issues, and themes. Introduction

concepts and theories; Introduction states clearly writer's thesis or position, and conclusion clearly summarizes main arguments. The language contains very few, if any, errors in grammar and vocabulary. If slips are present, the meaning is still clear. Conventions of academic writing (e.g. citation, references, footnotes, etc.) are followed meticulously.	theories; Introduction states writer's thesis or position, and conclusion summarizes main arguments. The language is generally accurate but contains some systematic errors in complex grammar and vocabulary. Conventions of academic writing (e.g. citation, references, footnotes, etc.) are followed apart from the occasional oversight.	concepts and theories; Introduction and conclusion are included and generally capture the essence of the topic and discussion. The language is mostly accurate; and errors, when they occur, are more often in complex grammar and vocabulary. Errors are distracting but the overall meaning is still intelligible. Conventions of academic writing (e.g. citation, references, footnotes, etc.) are followed but at times inconsistencies and/or errors occur.	and conclusion are unclear, lack detail or missing altogether. Very little evidence of an ability to organize the essay into paragraphs Errors in language and vocabulary are so frequent and distracting that the essay is largely incomprehensi ble. Does not adhere to the conventions of academic writing (e.g. citation, references, footnotes, etc.).

5) Term Paper (30%)

A, A-	**B+, B, B-**	**C+, C, C-**	**F**
Identifies and addresses clearly the main question(s); Consistent perceptive and critical engagement with relevant concepts and theories; Introduction states clearly writer's thesis or position, and conclusion clearly summarizes main arguments. The language contains very few, if any, errors in grammar and vocabulary. If slips are present, the meaning is still clear. Conventions of academic writing (e.g.	Identifies and addresses most of the main question(s). Frequent perceptive and critical engagement with relevant concepts and theories; Introduction states writer's thesis or position, and conclusion summarizes main arguments. The language is generally accurate but contains some systematic errors in complex grammar and vocabulary. Conventions of academic writing (e.g. citation, references, footnotes, etc.)	Identifies and addresses most of the main question(s). Some perceptive and critical engagement with relevant concepts and theories; Introduction and conclusion are included and generally capture the essence of the topic and discussion. The language is mostly accurate; and errors, when they occur, are more often in complex grammar and vocabulary. Errors are distracting but the overall meaning is still intelligible.	Lacks an understanding of what the question requires. No critical engagement with issues, and themes. Introduction and conclusion are unclear, lack detail or missing altogether. Very little evidence of an ability to organize the essay into paragraphs Errors in language and vocabulary are so frequent and distracting that the essay is largely incomprehensi ble. Does not adhere to the conventions of academic writing (e.g. citation,

citation, references, footnotes, etc.) are followed meticulously.	are followed apart from the occasional oversight.	Conventions of academic writing (e.g. citation, references, footnotes, etc.) are followed but at times inconsistencies and/or errors occur.	references, footnotes, etc.).

Important Notes:

1. Students are expected to spend a total of 9 hours (i.e. 3* hours of class contact and 6* hours of personal study) per week 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 Readings: Core Texts:

Couldry, Nick. Inside Culture: Re-imagining the Method of Cultural Studies. London, Thousand Oaks & New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2000.

Highmore, Ben. Ordinary Lives: Studies in the Everyday. London and New York: Routledge, 2011.

Silverstone, Roger. Why Study the Media? London, Thousand Oaks and New Delhi: Sage Publications,

1999.

Recommended Readings:

Aas, Katja Franko, Helene Oppen Gundhus and Heidi Mork Lomell eds. Technologies of InSecurity: The surveillance of everyday life, Oxon/New York, Routledge/Cavendish, 2009.

Adorno, Theodore W. The Culture Industry: Selected Essays on Mass Culture. (1991) 2nd ed. Ed. And intro. J. M. Bernstein. London and New York: 2001.

Bell, Gordon and Jim Gemmell, Total Recall, How the E-Memory Revolution Will Change Everything, New York: Dutton/Penguin, 2009

Chua, Beng-huat. Structure, Audience, and Soft Power in East Asian Pop Culture. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2012.

Couldry, Nick & Joseph Turow. "Advertising, Big Data, and the Clearance of the Public Realm: Marketers' New Approaches to the Content Subsidy." International Journal of Communication 8 (2014): 1710-1726.

Danesi, Marcel. Popular Culture: Introductory Perspectives. 3rd. Ed. Blue Ridge Summit: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2015.

Debord, Guy. The Society of the Spectacle (Paris, 1967), trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith, New York: Zone Books, 1994.

de Certeau, Michel. The Practice of Everyday Life, trans. Steven F. Rendall, Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 1984.

Ellis, John. "Television as Working Through." In Television and Common Knowledge, ed. Jostein Grisprud. London and New York: Routledge, 1999.

Fitzsimmons, Lorna, and John A. Lent, eds. Asian Popular Culture in Transition. Milton Park and New York: Routledge, 2013.

Hall, Stuart. "Encoding/Decoding." In Popular Culture: Production and Consumption, eds. C. Lee Harrington and Denise D. Bielby. Oxford and Malden, Mass.: Blackwell, 2001 123-132.

Haugen, David M, and Susan Musser, eds. Popular Culture. Farmington Hills, MI: Greenhaven Press, 2011.

Kellner, Douglas. Media Spectacles. London & New York: Routledge, 2003.

Lefebvre, Henri. Critique of Everyday Life, vol. 1: Introduction (Paris, 1947), trans. John Moore, London and New York: Verso, 1991.

Marshall, P. David. Celebrity and Power: Fame in Contemporary Culture (1997). Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 2014.

Morris, Meaghan. Too Soon, Too Late: History in Popular Culture, Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1998.

Moskowitz, Marc L. Popular Culture in Taiwan: Charismatic Modernity. London and New York: Routledge, 2011.

Negus, Keith. Popular Music in Theory: An Introduction. Cambridge: Polity Press with Blackwell,

1996.
Papenburg, Jens Gerrit, and Holger Schulze. Sound as Popular Culture: A Research Companion. 2016.
Van Dijck, José. The Culture of Connectivity. New York: Oxford University Press, 2013.
Waskul, Dennis D., and Phillip Vannini. Popular Culture as Everyday Life. London & New York: Taylor and Francis, 2016.