

Lingnan University
Department of Economics

Course Title	:	Seminar in Social and Public Policy Issues
Course Code	:	SSC3102
Recommended Study Year	:	3 and 4
No. of Credits/Term	:	3
Mode of Tuition	:	Sectional approach
Class Contact Hours	:	3 hours per week
Category in Major Prog.	:	SPPS Major (Required Course)
Discipline	:	Social Sciences
Prerequisite(s)	:	N/A
Co-requisite(s)	:	N/A
Exclusion(s)	:	N/A
Exemption Requirement(s)	:	N/A

Brief Course Description

This seminar-based course is designed for students opting for the Social and Public Policy Studies stream. A select number of topics in social and public policy will be introduced and discussed in class (e.g. employment, social welfare, education, environmental, population and health policies). Faculty members and guest speakers will share with students their current research interests and knowledge in the field. Through seminar discussions and presentations, students will be familiarised with how policy analysis is done by researchers, academics and practising professionals, and how these selected issues impact and relate to society and individuals. Weekly seminars will provide an opportunity for students to raise questions and to participate in discussions, thereby deepening their understanding of issues involved in social and public policy. Students will get involved in research activities organised by the Lecturer in charge of the course to engage with leading professors and practitioners for reflecting upon major policy making and implementation issues.

Aims

This course aims to:

1. deepen students' understanding of social and public policy issues;
2. equip students with knowledge in how policy analysis is 'done'; and
3. sharpen their sensibility and awareness of issues involved in social and public policy formation, evaluation and impact.

Learning Outcomes (LOs)

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. recall and interpret issues in selected topics in social and public policy;
2. critically evaluate social and public policy verbally and in writing;

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3. identify and evaluate key concepts, perspectives and issues in selected topics in policy analysis; and
4. engage effectively in working as teams through collaborative learning activities when tasked to conduct comparative analysis of social / public policy issues in Greater China.

Teaching Method

During weekly sessions students will be introduced to the concepts, perspectives and issues related to the selected topics in policy analysis. Students will engage in discussions, presentations, in-class and on-line tasks to deepen their understanding of the selected topics. Case Studies and Group Presentation will be conducted in examining critical issues of managing rapid socio-economic changes and policy responses

Measurement of Learning Outcomes

1. In seminar discussions, students will give an oral presentation on a given topic to demonstrate their understanding of key ideas and concepts in social and public policy. They will be asked to present their review in a logical and analytical manner (LOs 1, 2).
2. Students' participation in weekly seminar discussions will be assessed. Students are required to critically evaluate current social and public policy issues. They are encouraged to think critically and give constructive comments to peers' opinions and presentations (LOs 1-3).
3. Students will reflect upon their learning experience after attending selected seminars / research events (LOs 1-3)
4. Students will engage in case studies and group presentation examining major issues related to managing rapid socio-economic changes and policy responses and organize presentations of their analysis (LOs 1-3).
5. Based upon their group research projects, students will write policy review / press release and reflective journal to demonstrate their understanding policy issues and policy analysis (LOs 1-3).

Assessment

Continuous assessment: 100%	(policy review & press release	– 40%,
	reflective journal	– 20%,
	group presentation	– 40%)

Required/Essential Readings

Mok, K.H. and Kuhner, S. (eds.) *Managing welfare expectations and social change: Policy*

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- transfer in Asia*, Londong: Routledge, 2018.
- Lau, K.W. and Gordon, D. (eds.) *Poverty in a rich society*, Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press, 2017.
- Yeates, N. (ed.) *Understanding global social policy*, Bristol: The Policy Press, 2014.
- Ho, L.S. *Public policy and the public interest*, London: Routledge, 2012.
- O'Connor, M.K., and Netting F. E., *Analyzing social policy: multiple perspectives for critically understanding and evaluating policy*, Hoboken, NJ: Wiley, 2010.
- Dunn, W.N. *Public policy analysis*, New York: Pearson, 2012.

Recommended/Supplementary Readings

- Saunders, P. and He, J.W. (eds.) *Social protection in East Asian Chinese societies: Challenges, responses and impacts*, Special Issue of *Journal of Asian Public Policy*, Vol.10, No.2, July 2017.
- Ngok, K.L. and Chan, C.K. *China's social policy: Transformation and challenges*, London: Routledge, 2016.
- Chan, K.H., Zinn, J.O., Wang, L.R. (eds.) *New life courses, social risks and social policy in East Asia*, London: Routledge, 2016.
- Mok, K.H. and Lau, K.W. (eds.), *Managing social change and social policy in Greater China*, London: Routledge, 2014.
- Izuhara, M. (ed.) *Handbook on East Asian Social Policy*, Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 2013.
- Mok, K.H. and Forrest, R. (eds.), *Changing governance and public policy in East Asia*, London: Routledge, 2009.
- Hajer, M.A. and Wagenaar, H. *Deliberate policy analysis: Understanding governance in the network society*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003.
- Joseph E. Stiglitz and Jay K. Rosengard, *Economics of the Public Sector*, 4th Edition, W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 2015.
- Fischer, F., Miller G.J., and Sidney M.S. (eds.), *Handbook of public policy analysis*, Boca Raton, FL: Taylor and Francis, 2007.
- Gupta, D.K., *Analyzing public policy: concepts, tools and techniques*, Washington DC: CQ Press, 2011.
- Lavalette, M., and Pratt A. (eds.), *Social policy: a conceptual and theoretical introduction*, London: Sage, 2001.
- Rainwater, L. (ed.), *Social policy and public policy: inequality and justice*, New Brunswick, NJ: Aldine Transaction, 2009.

Additional readings directly relevant to the topics selected for the seminar will be suggested by the instructors and speakers concerned.

Important Notes:

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- (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. 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 <http://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>.

Assessment Rubrics

Reflective Journal 20%

Criteria	Excellent	Good	Pass	Failure
	A (85-100) A- (80-84)	B+ (75-79) B (70-74) B- (65-69)	C+ (60-64) C (55-59) C- (50-54)	F (0-49)
Understanding of topic (5%)	Comprehensive understanding and coverage of issues. Insightful and well-informed.	Clear discussion of relevant issues. Shows good insight into the	Shows some coverage and understanding of main issues. Does not	Very little or no understanding of the issues. Does not answer the question.

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	Clearly answers the question.	subject. Answers the question.	answer the question fully/directly enough.	
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.	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 (5%)	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 (3%)	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 and referencing (2%)	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.

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Presentation of Policy Analysis (40%)

Criteria	Excellent	Good	Pass	Failure
	A (85-100) A- (80-84)	B+ (75-79) B (70-74) B- (65-69)	C+ (60-64) C (55-59) C- (50-54)	F (0-49)
Content (20%)	Comprehensive understanding and coverage of issues. Wide range of evidence used to support arguments and demonstrate critical thinking.	Clear discussion of relevant issues. Good use of evidence support arguments. Go beyond description.	Show some coverage and understanding of main issues. Adequate range of evidence used. More description than analysis in content.	Very little or no understanding of the issues. Inadequate use of evidence to support argument. Describe the issues but show significant misunderstanding of basic issues.
Organisation (10%)	Clear structure. Present a convincing and well-developed argument.	Clear structure. Present a sound argument.	Argument needs further development. Structure needs more clarity.	Poor structure and no clear argument.
Style of presentation and effectiveness in leading the discussion (10%)	Demonstrate excellent presentation skills and communication with audience.	Demonstrate competent presentation skills and communication with audience.	Demonstrate good presentation skills and communication with audience.	Demonstrate poor presentation skills and communication with audience.

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Policy review & Press release (40%)

Criteria	Excellent	Good	Pass	Failure
	A (85-100) A- (80-84)	B+ (75-79) B (70-74) B- (65-69)	C+ (60-64) C (55-59) C- (50-54)	F (0-49)
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 (10%)	Wide range of evidence used to support arguments. Thoroughly researched. Use of primary sources.	Good use of evidence to support arguments.	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 (15%)	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 (10%)	Clear structure. Presents a convincing and well developed argument.	Clear structure. Develops a sound argument.	Argument needs further development. Structure needs	Poor structure. No clear argumentNo clear linkage

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			more clarity.	from point to point.
Writing and referencing (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.