

**LINGNAN UNIVERSITY**  
**HONG KONG CIVIL SERVICE**

**CLC9014**

2nd Term 2018-2019

Instructor: Dr. Tam Wai-keung; Department of Political Science

Office: WYL210; telephone: 26167199; email: [wktam@ln.edu.hk](mailto:wktam@ln.edu.hk)

Office hours: Tuesday 1:30-3:30pm; Friday 12:30-1:30pm, 3:30-4:30pm; or by appointment

**COURSE AIMS**

This course aims to:

1. introduce students a framework to understand the philosophy, mechanism, evolution and operational characteristics of the Hong Kong civil service system;
2. enable students to understand the salient and significant features of different civil service systems around the world;
3. prepare students to be more ready for government job applications by assessing their own interests and suitability for working in a civil service environment;
4. nurture students' higher order thinking as well as their abilities to communicate ideas and analysis verbally and in writing after reflection.

**LEARNING OUTCOMES (LOs)**

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

1. recall and distinguish the structural characteristics and administrative values of the Hong Kong civil service, in both the British colonial and SAR periods, and other civil service systems in the world;
2. define and examine the key managerial issues of the civil service, and the forces triggering its dynamics of change;
3. critically analyse the issues related to civil service management, and defend their arguments effectively in intellectual debates, both verbally and in report writing; and;
4. express logical opinions and critical judgments on civil service issues.

## INDICATIVE CONTENTS

| Week  | Topics  |
|-------|---|
| 1 & 2 | <p><b>Course Introduction</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The concept of bureaucracy in Public Administration and Sociological studies</li> <li>• Political and policy contexts of bureaucracy</li> <li>• Civil service and public interest</li> <li>• Bureaucrats and politicians</li> <li>• Competing values on public personnel systems</li> </ul>  |
| 3 & 4 | <p><b>Hong Kong Civil Service and its Developmental Context</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regime values and the Hong Kong Civil Service</li> <li>• Structure, size, demography</li> <li>• Key values in civil service management: neutrality, professionalism and consistency</li> <li>• Socio-economic development and transformation of the civil service since the 1980s</li> <li>• Sovereignty retrocession and Beijing's policies on the Hong Kong civil service</li> </ul> |
| 5 & 6 | <p><b>Civil Service Management Policy and Institutions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The political structure</li> <li>• General civil service management principles</li> <li>• Relevant departments and institutions: Chief Secretary for Administration, Financial Secretary, Public Service Commission, General Consultative Councils and Hong Kong Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC).</li> <li>• The Inter/ Intra-government relations</li> </ul>              |
| 7 & 8 | <p><b>Recruitment, Training, Pay and Sanction of Civil Servants</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Structures and grades of civil service</li> <li>• Staffing and training: the administrative service, the general grade and the professional grade</li> <li>• Motivation enhancement</li> <li>• Civil service pay structure and policy</li> <li>• Sanction of civil servants</li> </ul>   |
| 9     | <p><b>Industrial Relations of Civil Servants</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unionisation of civil service</li> <li>• The consultation mechanism</li> <li>• Civil service unions and their bargaining strategies</li> </ul>  |
| 10    | <p><i>Special Topic 1</i></p> <p><b>Civil Service Reforms in Hong Kong</b></p>  |
| 11    | <p><i>Special Topic 2</i></p> <p>Civil Service and the system of "Accountability System of Principal</p>  |

|           |   |
|-----------|---|
|           | Officials”  |
| <b>12</b> | <i>Special Topic 3</i><br>Civil Service system: a comparative perspective (USA) |
| <b>13</b> | <i>Special Topic 4</i><br>Civil Service system: a comparative perspective (UK)  |
| <b>14</b> | <i>Special Topic 5</i><br>The Civil Service system of Mainland China            |

## **TEACHING METHOD**

Lectures are combined with tutorials. Lectures focus on the introduction and explanation of key concepts, theoretical framework and critical analysis of various human resources and financial management practices in the public sector context, with illustrations by referring to current issues and local examples whenever appropriate. Tutorial sessions provide students with the opportunity to apply the concepts and theories acquired in lectures to real-life current issues.

## **MEASUREMENT OF LEARNING OUTCOMES**

Assessment of students’ performance will be based on the following four criteria:

1. Class participation (10%) (measures LOs 1-4)

Students will be graded according to their degree of class participation and other relevant contributions to the class discussion.

2. Class presentation (15%) (measures LOs 1-4)

The whole class is divided into presentation teams (each team comprising around 3 students) and each team is required to give a 40-minute oral presentation on a government department/bureau from the perspective of street-level bureaucracy, followed by a question and answer session and further discussion in the class.

3. Group written report (15%) (measures Los 1-4)

Following the oral presentation, the presentation team submits a group written report on the presentation topic. The paper should be not less than 3000 words in length (excluding footnotes, bibliographies and appendices) and typed in one-and-a half line spacing. It should be properly referenced according to established academic rules and

plagiarism is strictly prohibited. A table setting out the division of work amongst the presentation team should also be attached at the end of the paper for individual assessment. Students should submit their report *two weeks* after the group presentation.

4. Final Examination (60%) (measures LOs 1-4)

This will assess students' understanding of the basic concepts, case studies, and debates encountered in this course.

### **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. 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/>.

## REQUIRED READINGS

“The Public Sector: An Overview,” in Ian Scott, *The Public Sector in Hong Kong* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2010), pp. 1-22. (for week 2)

David Rosenbloom, Robert Kravchuk, and Richard Clerkin, *Public Administration: Understanding Management, Politics, and Law in the Public Sector* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2009) (Seventh Edition), pp. 2-14. (for week 3)

Graham Allison, “Public and Private Management: Are They Fundamentally Alike in All Unimportant Respects?” in Jay Shafritz and Albert Hyde (eds.), *Classics of Public Administration* (Boston: Cengage Learning, 2012) (7th Edition), pp. 395-411. (for week 3)

Michael Lipsky, “Street-Level Bureaucracy: The Critical Role of Street-Level Bureaucrats,” in Jay Shafritz and Albert Hyde (eds.), *Classics of Public Administration* (Boston: Cengage Learning, 2012) (7th Edition), pp. 412-419. (for week 5)

Lael Keiser, “State Bureaucratic Discretion and the Administration of Social Welfare Programs: The Case of Social Security Disability,” *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory* Volume 9, No.1 (January 1999), only read pp. 87-93. (for week 5)

James Q. Wilson, *Bureaucracy: What Government Agencies Do and Why They Do It* (New York: Basic Book, 1989), Chapter 6 (pp. 90-110). (for week 6)

“The Civil Service: Personnel Policies,” in Ian Scott, *The Public Sector in Hong Kong* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2010), pp. 95-103, 110-113. (for week 7)

Rikkie L K Yeung, “Divestment in Hong Kong: Critical Issues and Lessons,” *The Asia Pacific Journal of Public Administration* Vol.27, No.2 (December 2005), pp. 141-162. (for week 8)

John Burns and Li Wei, “The Impact of External Change on Civil Service Values in Post-Colonial Hong Kong,” *The China Quarterly* No.222 (June 2015), pp. 522-546.

(week 10)

Tingjin Lin and John Burns, "Protest Policing in Hong Kong: Maintaining Professionalism and Solidarity in the Face of Renewed Political Challenges," *Public Administration and Development* Volume 36, (2016), pp. 93-107. (week 11)

Wilson Wong and Raymond Yuen, "The Ombudsman in Hong Kong: Role and Challenges under the Transformation of Governance in the Post-1997 Era," *Asia Pacific Law Review* Volume 17 (2009), pp. 115-134. (week 13)

**Assessment Rubric for Class Participation**

| <i>Criteria</i>                  | <b>Excellent (8-10)</b>  | <b>Good (6-7)</b>  | <b>Acceptable (4-5)</b>  | <b>Poor (0-3)</b>   | <b>Score</b> |
|----------------------------------|--|--|--|---|--------------|
| Frequency of class participation | Student initiates contributions more than once in each session.  | Student initiates contributions once in each session.  | Student provides contributions after the instructor solicits input.  | Student does not provide contributions after the instructor solicits input.   |              |
| Quality of comments              | Comments are always insightful & constructive. Comments balanced between general impressions, opinions & specific, thoughtful criticisms or contributions.               | Comments mostly insightful & constructive. Occasionally comments are too general or not relevant to the discussion.  | Comments are sometimes constructive, with occasional signs of insight. Comments not always relevant to the discussion. | Comments are uninformative. Heavy reliance on personal opinion & personal feeling (e.g., “I like it”, “I do not like it”)                         |              |
| Attention                        | Student listens attentively when others present, as shown by comments that built on others’ remarks (i.e., student hears what others say & contributes to the dialogue.) | Student is mostly attentive when others present, as shown by comments that built on others’ remarks. Occasionally needs encouragement or reminder from instructor of focus of comment. | Student is often inattentive. Instructor has to remind student of focusing on class.                                   | Does not listen to others; regularly talks while others speak or does not pay attention while others speak; detracts from discussion; sleep, etc. |              |
|                                  |  |  | Raw Score (out of a possible maximum of 30)  |   |              |
|                                  |  |  | Divide Raw Score by 30 then multiply by 10 to obtain the <b>Mark</b> (out of 10)                                       |   |              |

### Assessment Rubric for Class Presentation

| <i>Criteria</i>  | <i>Levels of Performance</i>  |   |  |   | <b>Score</b> |
|--|---|---|--|---|--------------|
|  | <b>Excellent (4)</b>  | <b>Good (3)</b>   | <b>Acceptable (2)</b>  | <b>Insufficient (0-1)</b>   |              |
| Time Control   | Start and end on time; Allocated time appropriately, and managed time effectively, with smooth progression. Appropriate pace.   | Start and end on time; Marginally long or marginally short but uses time reasonably; Reasonable pace in most parts of the presentation. | Start and end on time; Marginally long or marginally short but cannot use time reasonably; Pace is too fast or slow in most parts of the presentation. | Cannot start and /or end on time; Significantly too short or too long and did not use time effectively. Pace is significantly too fast or too slow. |              |
| Clarity  | All ideas, points and explanations are extremely clear, with no gaps, ambiguities or inaccuracies.                              | Ideas, points and explanations are generally clear, with few gaps, ambiguities or inaccuracies.   | Ideas, points and explanations are sufficiently clear, but with some gaps, ambiguities or inaccuracies.  | Ideas, main points and explanations lack sufficient clarity, with major gaps, ambiguities and inaccuracies.   |              |
| Sequencing   | Material flows extremely well and is presented in a consistently logical sequence.  | Material flows generally well and is presented in a generally logical sequence.   | Material flows sufficiently well and is presented in a sufficiently logical sequence.  | Material does not flow sufficiently well and is not presented in a logical sequence.  |              |
| Relevance of material  | All the information included is completely relevant to the issue being addressed.   | The information included is generally relevant to the issue being addressed.  | Most the information included is sufficiently relevant to the issue being addressed.   | Much the information included is of questionable relevance to the issue being addressed.  |              |
| Liveliness, enthusiasm   | Conveys the material in a very lively and very enthusiastic manner throughout.  | Conveys the material in a lively and enthusiastic manner.   | Generally conveys the material with sufficient liveliness and enthusiasm.  | Generally conveys the material without sufficient liveliness or enthusiasm.   |              |
| Teamwork during the presentation   | The presentation is very well choreographed; members take an exactly and obviously equal share and transitions are very smooth. | The presentation is well choreographed; members take more or less equal shares and transitions are smooth.                              | The presentation is sufficiently choreographed; by and large, members take roughly equal shares and transitions are generally sufficiently smooth.     | The presentation is inadequately choreographed; members take vastly unequal shares and transitions are awkward.                                     |              |
| Evidential support   | Provides very strong and substantial evidence to support positions taken.   | Provides sound evidence to support positions taken.   | Provides sufficient evidence to support positions taken  | Does not provide sufficient evidence to support positions taken   |              |
| The group engages effectively in self-directed learning                          | Through this assignment, the group clearly demonstrated its ability to engage in self-directed learning                         | Through this assignment, the group demonstrated its ability to engage in self-directed learning   | Through this assignment, the group demonstrated sufficient ability to engage in self-directed learning   | The group was heavily dependent on instructor guidance in preparing for this assignment.  |              |
| <b>Raw Score</b> (out of a possible maximum of 32)                               |   |   |  |   |              |
| Divide Raw Score by 32 then multiply by 15 to obtain the <b>Mark</b> (out of 15) |   |   |  |   |              |

**Assessment Rubric for Group Written Report**

| <i>Criteria</i>                           | <i>Levels of Performance</i>   |   |  |  | <b>Score</b>  |
|---|--|---|--|--|---|
|   | <b>Excellent (7-8)</b>   | <b>Good (5-6)</b>   | <b>Acceptable (3-4)</b>  | <b>Insufficient (0-2)</b>  |   |
| Significance of topic                     | The topic is significant and sound; Demonstrates excellent knowledge of the topic  | The topic is largely significant and sound; Demonstrates substantial knowledge of the topic                                   | The topic is somewhat significant and sound; Demonstrates good knowledge of the topic  | The topic is not significant and sound; Inadequate knowledge of the topic  |   |
| Critical thinking                         | Students are aware of different perspectives and weigh evidence to successfully argue for their own conclusion and/or opinion. | Students develop their conclusions based on objective evidence and concrete arguments.  | Students accept most things at face value, as if most opinions were created equal. Opinions are supported by weak argument.          | Students accept things at face value, as if all opinions were created equal. Opinions are not supported by argument. |   |
| Clarity                                   | Ideas, points and explanations are extremely clear throughout, with no gaps, ambiguities or inaccuracies.                      | The overall clarity of the ideas, points and explanations is good. Any gaps, ambiguities or inaccuracies are minor in nature. | The ideas, points and explanations tend to be sufficiently clear, although there are some notable gaps, ambiguities or inaccuracies. | Ideas, points and explanations tend to lack sufficient clarity. There are major gaps, ambiguities and inaccuracies.  |   |
| Strength of support for positions taken   | Provides very strong and compelling evidence to support the positions taken.   | Provides generally strong evidence to support the positions taken.  | Provides adequate, though not strong, evidence to support the positions taken.   | Does not provide sufficient evidence to support positions taken; evidential support is weak or non-existent.         |   |
| Relevance of material                     | All the information included is highly relevant to the issue being addressed.  | Almost all the information included is relevant to the issue being addressed.   | A sufficient proportion of the information included is relevant to the issue being addressed.  | Much of the information included is irrelevant, or is of questionable relevance to the issue being addressed.        |   |
| Comments (may continue on separate sheet) |  |   |  |  |   |
|   |  |   |  |  | <p><b>Score</b> (out of a possible maximum of 40)<br/>           Divide Raw Score by 40 then multiply by 15 to obtain the <b>Mark</b> (out of 15)</p> |

| <b>Rubric for Final Examination</b>                                |  |  |  |  |              |
|--|--|--|--|--|--------------|
| <b>Criteria</b>  | <b>Excellent</b>   | <b>Good</b>  | <b>Meet Minimum Standard</b>   | <b>Below Standard</b>  | <b>Marks</b> |
| <b>Comprehension of all the relevant concepts (40%)</b>            | Shows a deep and insightful level of understanding (35-40)             | Shows a good level of understanding (30-34)  | Shows a fair level of understanding (20-29)  | Shows an inadequate level of understanding (0-19)  |              |
| <b>Application of concepts to the problem posed (40%)</b>          | Concepts are all applied correctly (35-40)                             | Most concepts are applied correctly (30-34)  | Some concepts are applied too generally or misapplied but the central concepts are applied correctly (20-29) | Most concepts are applied too generally or misapplied (0-19)                                   |              |
| <b>Ideas are expressed logically, accurately and clearly (10%)</b> | Expression of ideas is consistently accurate, logical and clear (9-10) | Expression of ideas is generally accurate, logical and clear, with some minor lapses (7-8) | Expression of ideas is comprehensible but there are some major lapses (5-6)                                  | Expression of ideas is largely comprehensible with some major inconsistencies and errors (0-4) |              |
| <b>Quality of English (10%)</b>                                    | English is excellent (9-10)  | English is proficient with no major errors (7-8)   | English conveys the essential meaning but has a number of errors (5-6)                                       | English is below acceptable university standard (0-4)  |              |