

Description of the 4 Discipline Majors and 1 Stream

The Bachelor of Social Sciences (Hons) Programme offers students the choice to major in one of the following Discipline Majors/Stream starting from 2018-19 AY.

Note: China and Asia Pacific Studies Stream is not available for first year students admitted from 2018-19 AY.

1. Economics
2. Political Science
3. Psychology
4. Sociology
5. Social and Public Policy Studies Stream

Discipline Major in Economics

Economic questions arise from dilemmas and difficult choices under limited resources and constraints. Faced with the problem of scarcity, we must decide how to best allocate resources among competing uses. Every decision inevitably carries its opportunity cost. Economics studies how individuals, businesses, governments, and societies make choices as they confront different situations. Two big questions summarise the scope of economics: How do individuals' choices in the market place end up determining what, how, and for whom goods and services are produced? How do they make choices in other contexts and what are the consequences of such choices for their private benefits and for society at large? The goal of the Economics Discipline Major programme is to open students' eyes to the economist's way of thinking. It will help students gain insight not only into how the economy works, but also how society and human beings can make better choices, collectively or as individuals.

Discipline Major in Political Science

Political Science is centrally concerned with the nature and governance of the modern state, party politics, electoral system, and the distribution of power. The Discipline Major offers a variety of mainstream courses, including those in public policy area studies and international politics, as well as more specialised offerings in such areas as Hong Kong politics, foreign policy, the politics of Northeast and Southeast Asia, global environmental politics, environment and society, comparative politics, international law and the politics of sport. The Department of Political Science offers degrees at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. While Political Science is an academic subject, it has plenty of real-world applications, for instance in the civil service, non-government organisations, social movements and political parties.

Discipline Major in Psychology

Psychology is the scientific study of human mind and behaviour. Through the introduction and investigation of major concepts, theoretical perspectives and empirical findings from different sub-fields in psychology, students will learn how to apply different psychological principles to the analysis of personal, organisational, social and cognitive issues in this Discipline Major. The courses offered have a strong applied focus and will equip students with the background knowledge and methodologies necessary for understanding human adjustment in relation to occupational health psychology, social psychology and positive psychology. Related subjects also include human development, cognitive psychology, personality, industrial and organisational psychology, human factors, health psychology, abnormal psychology, counselling psychology, environmental psychology, psychology applied to safety, interpersonal relationships, creativity, and stress management. Graduates from this Discipline Major will be prepared for further studies in related disciplines in social sciences, such as Psychology, Social Work, and Occupational Health; or for employment in a wide range of professions that require the deployment of sophisticated social and interpersonal skills, such as managerial and administrative positions in different organisations.

Discipline Major in Sociology

Sociology is dedicated to the understanding of the fundamental principles of social life and to the systematic study of social institutions and social transformations. Sociology enables students to answer the “what”, “how” and “why” questions about human societies past and present. The Discipline Major in Sociology is designed to equip students with the tools to understand the world in a way that goes beyond common sense notions of everyday life. Students learn to understand and think critically about the social factors that shape the world. Successful graduates will have a broad array of postgraduate opportunities and will be equipped to pursue employment opportunities in government and social service sectors, non-profit organisations and international corporations.

Social and Public Policy Studies Stream

This Stream is concerned with the study of social and public policies, particularly as they relate to rapid changes in a local, regional and global environment. Issues brought on by such changes affect individuals, social groups, and social and public institutions in different ways. Social and economic issues such as ageing and population, employment, health and social welfare are commonly faced by policy makers in

different societies, and the policies formulated in response to these issues are often the subject of heated debates and controversies. The Stream is designed to provide interdisciplinary perspectives that will enhance students' ability to analyse social and public policy issues and debates, thereby facilitating them to become fully-engaged members of the local and international community.

China and Asia Pacific Studies Stream (not available for first year students admitted from 2018-19 AY)

This Stream couples an Asia Pacific geographical focus with an awareness of the global perspective, reflecting the region's growing integration with the changing world order, and also demonstrating the strength of Hong Kong's links with the region. Offered through a cross-disciplinary combination of courses in economics, politics, sociology and behavioural sciences, the Stream covers not only the varied patterns of economic growth and development across the region but also changes in social, political and security inter-relationships brought about by social transformation, democratisation, regionalisation, in a rapidly globalising world. Special attention is given to China and its economic and political roles in the region and the wider international environment, but other countries of importance to Hong Kong are also studied. Simultaneously academic and practical, the Stream will prepare graduates to seek employment opportunities successfully in Hong Kong, the Mainland and overseas.