

## **COURSE DESCRIPTIONS 科目簡介**

### **COURSES FOR TAUGHT POSTGRADUATE PROGRAMMES**

#### **CUS501 Perspectives in Cultural Studies (3 credits)**

This course provides an overview of key themes, concepts, theories and issues in cultural studies. It will examine the origins and foundational texts of cultural studies as an academic discipline and an intellectual practice; discuss regional and national varieties; examine key notions and problems; and look at the position of cultural studies within and outside educational institutions. The course will also address such issues as the role of theory and analysis in the practice of cultural studies, the impact of cultural studies in government and cultural institutions; and relations to neighbouring disciplines (gender studies, postcolonial studies, literature, sociology, anthropology, history, and political economy).

#### **CUS502 Critical Thinking through Popular Culture (3 credits)**

This core course focuses on the relationship between critical theories and popular culture. Its premise is that the study of popular culture can provide not only examples but patterns of critical thinking needed for public cultural education today. Students will be introduced to different approaches to the many forms of popular culture, ranging from cinema and popular journalism to advertising, shopping mall culture, teen magazines, video games, fan stories and the internet. They will learn how popular ways of life can be analysed as involving complex negotiations of power and pleasure, solidarity and resistance, distinction and community formation in a cultural field increasingly characterised by multiple centres and domains of value.

#### **CUS503 Pedagogy and Cultural Studies (3 credits)**

This core course will question the “ordinary” ways we learn to see, speak, know and experience things; that is, how we learn to behave both as subjects of our own actions and when we are subjected to the actions of others. Theoretical approaches in cultural studies to pedagogical processes formative of the person will be introduced to open up familiar aspects of our behaviour for critical discussion. These include language, memory, experience, culture, technology, knowledge, identity, and power. On the practical side, the course will examine how education as an institutional practice works to perpetuate established power relations. It will also examine how a “decolonising” approach to pedagogy can bring together learning experiences that are normally excluded or marginalised in formal education. The history and practice of education in Hong Kong will be the main focus.

#### **CUS504 History in Cultural Studies (3 credits)**

This course focuses on different modes of representing the past in contemporary culture. It explores how particular representations of the past have profound implications for the formation of meanings and value systems inscribed in tradition, memory and nostalgia. Looking at different sites where history is crucial for the production of social meaning and personal identity (such as museums, heritage sites or historical films), the course examines how discursive forms, narrative structures and representational conventions inscribe particular assumptions about the past, which are circulated, mediated, modified and contested at their sites of reception and consumption. Through an analysis of these processes, students will learn to apply the conceptual tools and methods that cultural studies provides for approaching, and making an intervention in, the complex relation between history and representation.

### **CUS505 Methods in Cultural Research (3 credits)**

This core course provides a methodological foundation for doing cultural research, an indispensable component of postgraduate training in cultural studies. Method here is understood not only as research techniques, procedures, and practices, but also as involving the theories and perspectives that inform the production of a particular kind of research and justify it in terms of knowledge-making. By exploring different cultural research methods such as textual analysis, ethnographic methods (participatory action research, interviews, focus groups and story-telling), oral history, archival work, and quantitative studies, students will learn how to apply these methods themselves. Practical examples will be used to illustrate these methods and the problems they entail.

### **CUS506 Film and Television Culture (3 credits)**

This course takes an intensive look at the workings of film and television as major means of communication in our times. These media forms are analysed as cultural texts through which people imagine, mediate and question their social reality. Emphasis will be placed on the influential models of “the society of the spectacle”, “the medium as the message”, and “simulation” for understanding media culture. The course also examines how institutions, audiences and cultural contexts may play a part in the construction as well as the reception of meanings. Films and television will be framed as a social practice through a study of the politics and pleasures surrounding their use. Students will learn to handle aesthetic, social and ideological perspectives on film and media by examining such issues as narrative, representation, gender, discourse, genre, and globalisation and techno-media.

### **CUS507 Feminism and Cultural Politics (3 credits)**

This course deals with the cultural politics of gender and sexuality in relation to the historical development of feminist thought in different geo-political settings. There are two major areas of focus. The first deals with controversial debates around gender and sexuality as these affect women, such as the cultural construction of gender; the body; sexual desire and orientation; the politics of difference; production and reproduction; home and everyday life. The second focus is on feminist interventions in different fields of knowledge, such as science, religion, philosophy, art and literature, language, politics, economics, history and sociology, with particular emphasis on how gender and sexuality shape representations and discourses on one hand and, on the other, what role representations and discourses play in (re)shaping meaning and value in matters of gender and sexuality.

### **CUS508 Globalisation and Contemporary Social Change (3 credits)**

This course will introduce a cultural studies approach to social change of the contemporary world. Particular attention will be paid to how various processes of social polarisation - urban/rural, rich/poor, developed/underdeveloped - are conditioned by forces that have global reach. Tracing those forces, in particular those of nation-states and transnational corporations, the course will examine the resistance and complicity of people drawn into such processes of polarisation. The course will also consider how negotiated boundaries between the “local” and the “global” are culturally established and/or unsettled. Topics to be discussed may include war, development, poverty, cultural identities, science and technology, alternative practices, transnational cultural politics and the role of global media.

### **CUS509 Urban Culture of Hong Kong (3 credits)**

Hong Kong has in recent years been characterised broadly as hybrid, in-between, in perpetual transit, plural and international. This seminar investigates specific dimensions

of Hong Kong urban culture that involve processes of border-crossing: the emergence of a Hong Kong urbanscape and local identity in relation to the city's negotiation between China and the world; the cosmopolitan imagination of Hong Kong as a dialectic of desire and fear to become "China"; the making of the Hong Kong popular as a crossing of boundaries in culture, nation, gender and ethnicity. The course will analyse various cultural texts including film, writing and architecture. At the same time it will examine notions of the intercultural, multicultural, transnational, global/local, postmodern and postcolonial.

### **CUS510 Workshop in Cultural Practices (3 credits)**

This course will use a "workshop" approach to discuss how cultural studies can be practised in different professional fields. Professionals working in the fields of education, media, social and community services, arts and other areas will be invited to participate in the workshop and dialogue with the instructor and students of cultural studies. Through these dialogues students will learn about the cultural-political dimensions of professional and technical practices and consider the implications of these in their own vocational fields.

Topics may vary from year to year. Examples are: Liberal Education through Drama; Transformance Workshop; Community Cultural Development; Theatre for Self Understanding and Community Building; Media Production; Theatre of the Oppressed, Playback Theatre and Playforward Theatre; Community Cultural Development; Art, City Space and Community Building; Harvesting the Future: Farming and the Food Movement; The Cultural Politics of Eating.

### **CUS511 Topics in Cultural Institution and Policy (3 credits)**

This elective course is the theoretical counterpart of the course "Workshop in Cultural Practices". It examines how public policy on culture can be understood in the framework of Cultural Studies, and it focuses on the ways in which institutional factors affect the planning, development and management of culture in contemporary societies. Issues of citizenship and subjectivity will be discussed in the context of specific forms and processes of cultural governance.

Topics may vary from year to year. Examples are: Cultural Economy; Politics as Cultural Practices; Cultural Studies, Law and Human Rights; Peace and the Everyday Life; Contemporary Cultural Policies; Teacher as Facilitator; Ideologies of Modern Science and Environmentalism; Understanding Cultural Futures; Alternative and Community Media; Network Media and the Everyday; Critical Urban Studies; The Modern and the Postmodern.

### **CUS512 Topics in Cultural Representation and Interpretation (3 credits)**

This elective course takes the production of meaning and ideology as a fundamental issue in Cultural Studies. Through case studies, it examines how specific forms of representation help shape and reconstruct aspects of our social reality, our experience of the world, and indeed our view of others and of ourselves. Students will analyse the modes of cultural production involved, and attempt to understand how cultural practices generate, fix and deliver meaning for us in particular social contexts. The question of interpretation will be raised in relation to the generic formation of the "text" at issue, so that we can approach the plurality of textual functions and effects in terms of the contextual issues involved.

Topics may vary from year to year. Examples are: Power and Resistance in Everyday Life Practice; Modern China as represented in film and literature; Technology, Sustainability and Education, Media and Education; Sexualities; Music as Cultural Text; Revisiting “The Sixties”; Re-Visiting Modern Chinese Culture; Comparative Study of Latin America and Contemporary China; Media Production; Alternative and Community Media; Contemporary Global Crisis and Alternatives as represented in Film and Literature; Designing Culture; The Design of Technological Literacies of the Future; Cultural Studies and Literary Politics; Colonial Memory, Reality, and Real-life disasters; Historical Memory and Imaginations for the Future; Music and Popular Culture in Hong Kong; Early 20th century, China and Europe; The Cultural Politics of Chinese Music; Media, City and Citizen; Rethinking the Mediated Politics of Urbanisation.

### **CUS513 Research Seminar (3 credits)**

This elective course is composed of a series of seminars. Students taking this course will be working on a common research topic recommended or approved by the instructor. Each student will be required to conduct library/internet research and field work both independently and as a member of a team, and will present research findings in a seminar, engage in seminar commentaries and discussions, and write up a research paper. The research topics will be on areas of work in cultural studies related to, for example, questions of pedagogy, journalism, popular culture, critical practice, feminism, cultural policy, social change, social movement or historical representation.

### **CUS514 Independent Study (3 credits)**

(Restriction(s): Each student is allowed to register for this course ONCE during the first year of study or thereafter.)

The course allows a student to work independently under individual supervision on a reading and research project. The student will do an in-depth study in an area not covered in the other MCS courses, develop further research interests and gain practical experience of advanced independent research.

### **CUS515 Special Topics in Cultural Studies (1.5 credits)**

(Restriction(s): Each student is allowed to enrol in a maximum of two topics under this course.)

This elective course aims at providing students with focused theoretical and practical tools drawing from the field of cultural studies to critically analyse and effectively address current socio-cultural issues. Topics may vary from year to year. Examples are: Food Crisis and Farming for the Future; Cultural Politics of Emotion; Food Sovereignty and Farming for the Future; Debt, Money, Finance and Crisis of Values; Reflections on Contemporary Social Crisis through the Lens of Modern Chinese Thought; Bruce Lee as Cultural Construct; Digital Humanities into Cultural Studies; Theories of Ideology; Aesthetics and Governmentality; Martial Arts Cinema, Cultural Geography, Agriculture and the Question of the Common -- A Cultural Critique of Globalisation etc; Community and Cultural Policy.

### **CUS580 Performance Studies: Genealogy and Challenges (3 credits)**

Situating in the larger context of the rise of cultural theory and the cultural turn in the latter part of the twentieth-century, this course (i) traces the emergence of performance studies by examining the forces and elements that precipitated the particular interdisciplinary relations that we call “performance studies” today; (ii) reflects upon the continuous challenges that performance studies poses to academic research and pedagogy; i.e., refusing the compartmentalisation of knowledges, repudiating the difference between thinking and doing, theory and practice, abstraction and embodiment.

This course places performance studies at the intersections of elocution, interpretive action, aesthetic creativity, social behaviour, experience and expression, performativity, representation, and globality. After Richard Schechner's "broad spectrum approach," the course inquires performance studies' paradigm of embodied knowledge and enacted events across the disciplinary boundaries of theatre and drama studies, literary studies, anthropology and ethnography, transgender and queer studies, among others.

#### **CUS584 Performance Workshop with Artist (3 credits)**

Dance, Theatre, Music and Media Art are exhibition of artistic style, an experiment of bodily movements, as well as a vehicle for creative resistance. This course is a guided journey to help students develop these art forms as performance practice. The mode of workshop supplements other theoretical courses by providing the perspectives of putting theory into practice, exploring "what works and not work", based on extensive real-life experiences in different cultural sites. Experienced professionals working in dance, drama, music, and media are invited to participate in the workshop and dialogue with the facilitators and students. Students will be required to design/curate/choreograph a piece as term end project by applying relevant concepts and ideas from artist guest lecturers, which could result in an exhibition/performance to interested audience at the end of the course. Through the process of application, creativity, performance, students will be able to engage in the organic learning mode (of action-reflection-action) where they will also write a reflective essay on the process.

Artists from different fields will be invited as guest lecturers depending on the designated theme of the term and the availability. This course is catered for those with and without previous practical experience in the field of performance in which the workshop is dedicated to. Students will be advised to focus on the process, the narratives and the critical reflection of the creative breakthrough they shall experience in the course.

#### **CUS585 Special Topics in Performance Studies (3 credits)**

This elective course provides students with up-to-date theoretical and practical knowledge in the field of performance studies. Through case studies, it examines how various kinds of performance help shape and reconstruct aspects of our social reality, our experience of the world, and indeed our views of others and of ourselves. Students will analyse the modes of performance involved, and attempt to understand how artistic practices generate, fix and deliver meaning for us in particular social contexts.

#### **CUS586 Gender and Performance (3 credits)**

This course picks up the wide-ranging postmodern challenges to preconceptions of the male/female gender bipolarity and addresses the theories and debates in the contexts of the performing arts, different historical temporalities, and everyday performance. Beginning with the conceptual assumption of "gender is performance", the course examines theories of gender performativity, differences in gender constructions, and how femininity and masculinity were performed in different historical moments in different cultures. Attention will be paid to transgender performance in social life at large and in a variety of theatrical contexts specifically, with special reference to the theatrical performance of male and female cross-dressing in Euro-America, China, Japan, and other cultural locations, focusing on the figures of drag, nandan and nüsheng, and onnagata.

#### **CUS588 Drama, Theatre and Performance (3 credits)**

This course examines the theory and practice of performing in theatrical contexts. The goal is to develop students' appreciation and understanding of dramatic theories and aesthetics from various literary-cultural traditions, as well as a variety of techniques and of the

processes by which they are theatrically realised. The focus is not the dramatic text itself but the piece in performance in specific social-cultural context via the acting body. Students will first revisit the literary approaches to drama and explore the major dramatic theories from Asia and Euro-America as part of the respective theatrical traditions in performance. The traditional aesthetics and practice of acting in China, Japan, and Europe will be analysed in connection to the study of influential modern theatrical systems/methods of Konstantin Stanislavsky, Bertolt Brecht, Jerzy Grotowski and others. The last part of the course will scrutinise, in light of poststructuralist theories, linguistic performativity and theatrical performance, the search for a biology of acting, physical theatre, and the politics of street theatre; i.e., breaking down the barriers between public/private space, theatre/performance by interrogating the urban context of performance in our everyday life.