

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 introduces students to the origins and foundational concerns of cultural studies as an academic discipline and an intellectual practice; examines selected critical notions and problems with reference to specific contexts; and look at the work of cultural studies in relation to social, historical and institutional conditions. The course also addresses such issues as the role of theory and analysis in the practice of cultural studies, the relevance of cultural studies for government and public cultures, as well as the constraints and possibilities cultural studies workers face today in their divergent attempts to engage themselves on location in critical projects of our time.

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 provide for approaching, and making an intervention in, the complex relation between history and representation.

CUS505 Methods in Cultural Research (3 credits)

This core course enhances the students to develop a reflexive attitude about and critical abilities of different methods used by cultural researchers. 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. Practical examples will be used to illustrate diverse cultural studies methods such as textual analysis, ethnographic methods (participatory action research, interviews, focus groups and story-telling), oral history, archival work, etc. Discussion of methodological issues involved in those examples will help students map out the trajectories in which cultural studies as a discipline developed in the past and the implications they have nowadays.

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)

How do we understand feminism and its relation to the making of our bodies? What is intimacy and how are intimate relations formed? How are sexualities constructed in Asian societies? What is the relationship between feminism, bodies, intimacy and sexualities? From bell hooks’ approach on feminism is for everybody to Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie’s statement on We Should All Be Feminists to Cinzia Arruzza, Tithi Bhattacharya and Nancy Fraser’s manifesto on Feminism for the 99%, students will begin with learning how gender is socially constructed, cultural ideologies are produced and reproduced, and how feminism is practiced in everyday life. Feminism is more than seeking equality with men, rather it takes into account various notions of difference, intersecting identities, femininities and masculinities.

This course will draw upon theoretical strands in feminist studies, cultural studies, queer studies and trans studies as critical tools to understand the social construction of bodies, intimacies and sexualities. By studying case studies and ethnographic research, you will be exposed to the challenges and obstacles in conducting research on intimate subject matters. Through a close reading of cultural representations, you will learn to analyse the meanings behind media representations on gender identities, heterosexuality and non-normative sexualities. This course examines how the body as a physical entity and a performative act is recognised, negotiated and regulated in closely linked yet diverse Asian societies. You will not only be learning the key theoretical approaches and emerging debates in the field of gender and sexuality studies, but rather, you will contribute by making debates on course materials and coming up with new interpretations of feminisms, bodies, intimacy and sexualities during the course.

CUS508 Globalisation and Contemporary Social Change (3 credits)

This course will take a multi-scalar approach in understanding globalisation and its relationship with everyday life. Through examining transnational, national, and local processes, this course will question how the ideas of global and local are socially constructed and unsettled in the age of globalisation. Particular attention will be made on how transnational forces are articulated, negotiated, and contested in local contexts, allowing the economy, polity, society, and culture of locales to affect one another

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 urban landscape 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)

(Prerequisite(s): CGPA 3.8 or above)

(Exclusion(s): Each student is allowed to register for this course ONCE.)

The course allows a student to work independently under individual supervision on a reading and research and/or practicum project. The student will do an in-depth study in an area not covered in the other MCS courses, develop specific scholarly work and gain practical experience through a well-designed and focused advanced independent project.

CUS515 Special Topics in Cultural Studies (1.5 credits)

(Exclusion(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.

CUS516 Digital Creativity (3 credits)

As we live in an increasingly digitalised world, this course seeks to deepen students’ understanding of the fast-evolving digital culture, while explores and expands their creative

potential in digital cultural production through a wide range of digital cultural forms.

It will do so by providing students with a critical understanding of how meanings and values are constructed and contested in processes of creative cultural production and audiences/consumers' reception and participation through a variety of digital forms, with a particular focus on the exercise of power over how we think, feel and act. It explores the opportunities and challenges digital technologies and platforms present for the creation of a globally interconnected space where people can conduct public life in positive, just and inclusive ways. The discussion focuses on such timely issues in contemporary public life such as class, gender, (im-)migrants, race, the nation, social movement, and data and surveillance.

Students will engage in their own digital production projects. The creative processes of digital cultural production aim to enhance students' digital literacy and creativity, develop their digital cultural languages and organisational skills for personal, cultural, and socio-political expression and communication, and deepen their understanding of the politics, possibilities, and limitations of digital cultural formations in the world around us.

CUS517 Culture/Creative Commons: Digital Technologies, Policies and Practices (3 credits)

Culture and creative commons present an alternative mode of cultural production and provision and an alternative approach to cultural and creative industries. Practices of cultural and creative commons span a long history and a range of terrains. This course examines various forms of culture and creative commons in terms of their histories, designs, organisations, management and cuttingedge trends. We critically assess their relationships with digital technologies, their workers, the cultural market, the city, and the implications for creating a democratic and progressive culture for all. Policies around culture and creative commons will also be addressed so that students can understand the policy-making processes and the impact of public policy frameworks on cultural commoning.

CUS518 Cultural Policy and Community (3 credits)

This course introduces students to cultural policy as a practical domain in which government, private enterprise and communities interact to manage and develop culture understood as a collective resource. Using case studies to explain the work of cultural policy as a community building strategy that may contribute to the building modern nation-states, we examine the factors affecting the development of the arts, the media and cultural education in contemporary societies. Special attention is put on the policy issues posed to cities and communities today by the complex forces of cultural globalisation. Key issues may include regulation, censorship, access to cultural goods and decision-making processes; cultural consumption, identity politics and citizenship; cultural imperialism, nationalism, and region-formation; cultural planning, urban renewal, and community participation; the cultural/creative industries, talents and education.

CUS519 Creating Urban Commons: Learning from International and Local Experiences (3 credits)

Urban commons are resources in the city which are managed by the users in a non-profit oriented and prosocial way. They boost a new relationship between us and the urban space we inhabit. This course is the mixture of conceptual debates and grounded practices that introduces the concept and practice of urban commons in the context of cultural studies. It focuses on the ways in which institutional and cultural factors affect the planning, development, and management of urban commons in contemporary societies. Issues of

alternative democracy, social economy, participatory community, spatial justice, and gendered and classed subjectivity will be discussed in the context of specific forms and processes of cultural governance.

CUS520 New Trends of Cultural Management: Co-Creation Process of Culture (3 credits)

Cultural production and innovation in contemporary world are no longer shaped by forms of high culture and arts and neo-liberal mode of management. This course introduces an alternative view of culture, and creative commons as an alternative mode of cultural management and provides an alternative approach to cultural and creative industries. Culture is understood, following renowned cultural theorist Raymond Williams, as “whole way of life - the common meanings...the arts and learning – the special processes of discovery and creative effort”. Whereas the cultural hegemony of neoliberal capitalism has deepened its economic, political and intellectual control over us, resulting in a poorer public realm, stunted human development and the diminution of the common good, cultural commoning aims to rescue ‘cultural commons’ from all these, and reclaim an autonomous sphere of collaborative artistic and cultural expression and management for all. This course introduces new trends of cultural management, conceptualising new modes of thinking and practices that cut across traditional boundaries and, in effect, creating a democratic and progressive cultural management ecosystem.

CUS521 Inclusive Culture Management: Gender, Ethnicity and Youth Engagement (3 credits)

Cultural innovation is the outcome of a co-creation process that fosters interaction, reflection and change within societies. Young people are the most vibrant participants in the digital era. They also play a vital role in societal change and cultural innovation. This course will draw upon interdisciplinary theoretical perspectives and case studies to understand how young people negotiate their desires for innovation in their school-to-work transition while facing the capitalist logic and its demands. Along with factors of gender and ethnicity, this course examines who defines culture, who has the power to communicate and interpret culture, and how culture is produced and constructed? Students will learn about inclusive cultural innovation approaches. This course highlights a reflective co-creation process that promotes diversity and contributes to a democratic and sustainable environment for culture. Students will understand how to integrate perspectives of gender, ethnicity and youth engagement in cultural innovation.

CUS522 Everyday Culture of the Web (3 credits)

From search engines to mobile apps, the internet has become an essential part of our everyday life. Drawing from the fields of cultural studies, media studies, and critical algorithm studies, this course will introduce students to the multiple imaginations and practices relating to internet culture and technology. We will examine a variety of critical issues ranging from representation, participatory culture, digital platforms, surveillance, to AI and algorithms.

The overarching questions to be discussed in this course include: Who invented the internet and how has it evolved? How does the internet connect us and meanwhile constrain us? Why is TikTok so controversial? How does Google rank web pages? What if AI is racist and sexist? Taking an interdisciplinary approach, we will reflect on the promise and peril of the internet in our everyday practice, and then, explore alternative ways to imagine the internet for a better digital future.

CUS523 Digital Future: Platform and Open Co-operativism (3 credits)

The advent of digital technologies brings about tremendous change to our societies. They raise new questions to cultural managers and social innovation practitioners who help expand their repertoire of tools and techniques. This course discusses the opportunities and challenges posed by emerging digital technologies for platform co-ops and digital commons, be they historical, technological, organisational, legal, cultural or contextual. Real-world cases from different sectors and across local and international contexts will be drawn on so as to demonstrate the complexities of this still-emerging realm of thought and action. Practical resources and guidance will be assembled to stimulate innovative ideas on prospective platform and open co-operative initiatives.

CUS524 Dissertation (6 credits)

The dissertations and projects are intended to assess the full range of students' abilities and to apply a range of learning outcomes which the programme enables students to develop. In particular, it enables assessment of the ability to design, develop and write an advanced research project using primary and/or secondary materials appropriate to the topic and according to the necessary conventions of scholarly work. It requires independent motivation and self-directed learning, under supervision, and enables students to demonstrate competence for critical analysis and sustained persuasive argument. Students will be assigned one supervisor from the Programme and the Concentration.

CUS525 The Cultural Politics of Labour: Digital Labour (3 credits)

This course focuses on digital labour, technology, and the cultural and creative industry. From a theoretical standpoint, the course engages with various theoretical frameworks such as Marxist feminism, autonomist Marxism, and classic Marxism to examine the concept of digital labour and the digital worker within the context of capitalism. In an analytical sense, the course employs case studies and examples from literature, media, and popular culture to illuminate how the meanings, ideologies, and rhetoric surrounding digital labour and network technology are shaped, manipulated, negotiated, and contested. For instance, it scrutinises the portrayal of tech companies as 'fun,' 'playful,' and 'creative' workplaces, while also exposing the power dynamics and social inequality underlying these representations through cultural analysis and criticism. Moreover, the course delves into resistance movements that challenge dominant discourses and meanings, such as the anti-work movements and the '996, ICU' project initiated on GitHub. By completing this course, students will acquire a comprehensive understanding of digital labour and network technology, enabling them to analyse the discourse and underlying meanings constructed within the media sector and everyday life.

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.

Last Updated: 3 Mar 2024