

Course Title	:	Dialogue with Policy Practitioners: Theory and Practice
Course Code	:	SOC602
Recommended Study Year	:	Taught Master Year 1
No. of Credits/Term	:	3
Mode of Tuition	:	Lecture, Seminar and Field Visits and Group Activities
Class Contact Hours	:	Intensive Teaching Block
Category in Major Prog.	:	Master of Social Sciences in Comparative Social Policy (International)
Discipline	:	Sociology and Social Policy
Prerequisite(s)	:	N/A
Co-requisite(s)	:	N/A
Exclusion(s)	:	N/A
Exemption Requirement(s)	:	N/A

Brief Course Description

This course provides opportunities for students to dialogue with policy practitioners with expertise in a few major social and public policy areas, namely, education, health, housing and social security. Special lectures, class discussions, field visits, seminars will be organized for students. More specifically, students will be engaged in field observations and field visits to related government offices, political parties, research and policy institutes, NGOs and other economic and social organizations, including the Central Policy Unit, the Committee of Professional Development of Teachers and Principals, Hospital Authority, Elderly Commission, and Hong Kong Council of Social Service. In addition, the course will also invite some experts in social policy to give lectures about their studies. Potential invited speakers with rich policy making and policy implementation include Professor Alfred CHAN, Professor MOK Ka Ho, Professor David PHILLIPS, and Professor HO Lok Sang (experts in different social and policy areas), Professor LAU Siu Kai and Professor LEE Ming-kwan (formerly Principal Officers of central Policy Unit of HKSAR Government). Senior retired government officials or key chief-executives of NGOs will be invited to share their management experiences in social / public policy.

Aims

To enable students engage in comparing and contrasting major social policy issues with actual field observations, professional visits, and dialogues with practitioners, and understand the underlying dynamics, social challenges, and appropriate responses of major social policy issues.

Learning Outcomes (LOs)

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

1. Understand the most recent development trends and major social policy challenges through field visits, dialogue with experts in social policy and policy practitioners.
2. Analyze the significance of social, economic, and political factors that influence policymaking and implementation.
3. Analyze major social policy responses in managing rapid social, economic, demographic and political changes in Hong Kong from comparative perspectives

4. Summarize and present arguments and findings from collaborative learning activities on major comparative development and social policy issues in the region
5. Communicate verbally and in writing their own viewpoints and arguments regarding social / public policy issues
6. Reflect and integrate what they have learned from classroom to real world experiences when participating in field visits in different organizations.

Indicative Contents

- a. Introduction: challenges and social policy responses in Hong Kong and other selected East Asian countries in comparative perspective
- b. Understanding major policy issues confronting the selected Asian societies
- c. Participating in field visits to related government offices, political parties, research and policy institutes, NGOs and other economic and social organizations in Hong Kong
- d. Organizing small research group in examining policy issues during the field visits
- e. Researching on the research topic, making group presentations and discussing with policy practitioners during field visits
- f. Reflecting critically the learning experiences and making policy recommendations in managing the development / policy issues

Teaching Method

1. Lectures combined with seminars. Students will deliver presentations on designated topics in seminars, followed by discussion.
2. Field observations and field visits to government offices, political parties, research and policy institutes, NGOs and other related organizations.
3. Field visit combined with group research projects. Students will undertake group research projects in examining major development challenges and social policy responses in Greater China and Asia from comparative perspectives.

Measurement of Learning Outcomes

Field Visit Report (30%): LOs 1, 2, 3, 6	Each student has to submit a field visit report (minimum 1,500 words) after each field visit.
Participation (25%): LOs 1-3, 5, 6	Participation in discussions during class and field visits
Group Presentation (15%): LOs 4-6	- Each group will lead a presentation and discussion based on their chosen research topic - The aim is to provide an informative and stimulating learning experience for the class
Group Research Project (30%): LOs 1, 2, 3, 4, 6	Each group will conduct a research project based upon their chosen topic

Assessment Weightings

Field Visit Report:	30%
Participation in Discussion:	25%
Group Presentation:	15%
Group Research Project:	30%
Total:	100%

Grading of Student Achievement

Examination duration: Nil

Percentage of coursework: 100%

Letter Grade	Grade Point	Grade Rubrics
A	4.0	<u>Excellent</u>
A-	3.7	Students not only show a thorough understanding on all of the LOs, but also are able to reflect and integrate what they have learnt from classroom and field observations, professional visits and dialogues with practitioners into making policy recommendations.
B+	3.3	<u>Good</u>
B	3.0	Students show a thorough understanding on most of the LOs, and are also able to reflect their learning experience and making policy recommendations.
B-	2.7	
C+	2.3	<u>Fair</u>
C	2.0	Students show a general understanding on some of the LOs, and are capable of articulating a very limited number of examples from their field observations, professional visits and dialogues with practitioners and policy recommendations is somewhat reflected.
C-	1.7	
D	1.0	<u>Pass</u>
		Students show a limited understanding on some of the LOs, with minimal or no contribution to the group project and are incapable of articulating any example.
F	0.0	<u>Failure</u>
		Students fail to show any understanding on any of the LOs, and fails to contribute to the group project.

Rubric for **Field Visit Report** (30%)

Criteria	Excellent	Good	Fair	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)	D+ (45-49) D (40-44)	F (0-39)
Argument based on field observations and field visits (15%)	Arguments both well supported and genuinely compared to conflicting explanations	Main arguments valid, systematic, and well supported	Some arguments valid and well supported, some not	Weak or invalid argument, perhaps a simple assertion	No argument, perhaps a simple assertion
Use of Data or Evidence (10%)	Fully explore the richness of the data /evidence /ideas, and is sufficiently persuasive	Feasible evidence appropriately selected and not over-interpreted	Some appropriate use of evidence but uneven	Draws on little evidence, mostly relies on assertions or opinions, or evidence not clearly presented	Draws on no evidence, mostly relies on assertions or opinions, or evidence not clearly presented
Organization of the Writing (5%)	Expression of ideas or opinions is consistently factually accurate, logical and clear	Expression of ideas or opinions is generally factually accurate, logical and clear. Lapses were rare and minor in nature	Expression of ideas or opinions is generally factually accurate, logical and clear, but with a number of minor lapses	Ideas or opinions are not expressed logically, and are characterized by significant factual inaccuracies and lack of clarity	Ideas or opinions are not expressed logically, and are characterized by significant factual inaccuracies and lack of clarity

Rubric for **Participation** (25%)

Criteria	Excellent	Good	Fair	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)	D+ (45-49) D (40-44)	F (0-39)
Student has made effort to prepare for discussions during class and field visits (25%)	Expression of ideas is consistently accurate, logical and clear	Expression of ideas is generally accurate, logical and clear. Lapses are rare and minor in nature	Expression of ideas is generally factually accurate, logical and clear, but with a number of minor lapses	Ideas are not expressed logically, and are characterized by significant factual inaccuracies and lack of clarity	Ideas are not expressed logically and are characterised by significant inaccuracies and lack of clarity

Rubric for **Group Presentation** (15%)

Criteria	Excellent	Good	Fair	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)	D+ (45-49) D (40-44)	F (0-39)
Content (5%)	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.	Superficial coverage and understanding of the issues. Relies on limited range of sources. Too descriptive.	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 (5%)	Clear structure. Present a convincing and well-developed argument.	Clear structure. Present a sound argument.	Argument needs further development. Structure needs more clarity.	Arguments not clear. Structure is not clear.	Poor structure and no clear argument.
Style of presentation and effectiveness in leading the discussion (5%)	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 fair presentation skills and communication with audience	Demonstrate poor presentation skills and communication with audience

Rubric for **Group Research Project** (30%)

Criteria	Excellent	Good	Fair	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)	D+ (45-49) D (40-44)	F (0-39)
Content (15%)	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.	Superficial coverage and understanding of the issues. Relies on limited range of sources. Too descriptive.	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.	Arguments not clear. Structure is not clear.	Poor structure and no clear argument.
Writing and referencing (5%)	Thorough referencing. Use references correctly and demonstrate excellent writing skills.	Generally use references correctly but some parts less well referenced. Competent writing skills.	Some parts not referenced correctly. Writing skills could be improved.	Referencing is inconsistent. Writing skills need considerable improvement. Need proof reading.	Not referenced correctly. Poor writing skills. Need proof reading.

Essential Readings

Ho, L.S. 2012. *Public Policy and the Public Interest*, London: Routledge.

Mok, K.H. and Lau, K.W. (eds.) 2014. *Managing Social Change and Social Policy in Greater China: Welfare Regimes in Transition*, London: Routledge.

Mok, K.H. and Ku, Y.W. (eds.) 2010. *Social Cohesion in Greater China: Challenges for Social Policy and Governance*, New York: World Scientific Press.

Ramesh, M., 2004. *Social Policy in East and Southeast Asia: Education, Health, Housing, and Income Maintenance*. London and New York: Routledge.

Supplementary Readings

Chan, C. M. A., & Liang, J. S. E. 2013. Active aging: Policy framework and applications to promote older adult participation in Hong Kong. *Ageing International*, 38(1), 28-42.

Kinsella, K. G., & Phillips, D. R. 2005. *Global Aging: The Challenge of Success* (Vol. 60, No. 1). Washington, DC, USA: Population Reference Bureau.

Phillips, D. R., Chan, A. C., & Cheng, S. T. 2010. Ageing in a Global Context: The Asia-Pacific region. *The Handbook of Gerontology*, 430-446.

Ray Forrest and Yip Ngai-Ming (Eds.) 2013. *Young People and Housing: Transitions, Trajectories and Generational Fractures*, London: Routledge

(Additional readings will also be given weekly on a topic by topic basis)

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/>.
- (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>.