

**City University of Hong Kong  
Course Syllabus**

**offered by Department of Media and Communication  
with effect from Semester A 2024 / 25**

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**Part I Course Overview**

**Course Title:** Social Science Theories in Communication

**Course Code:** COM8001

**Course Duration:** One semester

**Credit Units:** 3

**Level:** R8

**Medium of Instruction:** English

**Medium of Assessment:** English

**Prerequisites:**  
*(Course Code and Title)* None

**Precursors:**  
*(Course Code and Title)* None

**Equivalent Courses:**  
*(Course Code and Title)* EN8003

**Exclusive Courses:**  
*(Course Code and Title)* None

## Part II Course Details

### 1. Abstract

Introduce communication theories to students and help them identify their implicit theoretical hunches, articulate those ideas into a researchable question, search and review the extant literature, and then propose a theoretical framework to discover new knowledge in the relevant context. It is also designed to help students develop a thesis proposal through practice, discussion, and mutual critique.

### 2. Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

No.	CILOs	Weighting	Discovery-enriched curriculum related learning outcomes		
			A1	A2	A3
1.	Develop research problems and hypotheses, review the extant literature and discover new knowledge in the relevant domain	35%	✓	✓	✓
2.	Analyze the structure, logic, and experience of thesis writing	35%		✓	
3.	Discuss the standard, taste, and innovativeness of scholarship	30%	✓	✓	
		100%			

A1: Attitude

*Develop an attitude of discovery/innovation/creativity, as demonstrated by students possessing a strong sense of curiosity, asking questions actively, challenging assumptions or engaging in inquiry together with teachers.*

A2: Ability

*Develop the ability/skill needed to discover/innovate/create, as demonstrated by students possessing critical thinking skills to assess ideas, acquiring research skills, synthesizing knowledge across disciplines or applying academic knowledge to self-life problems.*

A3: Accomplishments

*Demonstrate accomplishment of discovery/innovation/creativity through producing /constructing creative works/new artefacts, effective solutions to real-life problems or new processes.*

### 3. Learning and Teaching Activities (LTAs)

LTAs	Brief Description	CILO No.			Hours/week
		1	2	3	
Lectures	Lectures on the principles and fundamentals for communication theories	✓			Throughout the class
Analysis	Discuss and analyze “model” work		✓	✓	Throughout the class
Discussion and presentation	Discuss the logic and experience of research development		✓	✓	Throughout the class
Research proposal	Write research proposal based on a comprehensive review of the extant literature	✓	✓	✓	NA

#### 4. Assessment Tasks/Activities (ATs)

Assessment Tasks/Activities	CILO No.			Weighting	Remarks
	1	2	3		
Continuous Assessment: 100 %					
In-Class Discussion	✓	✓	✓	10%	
Reflection papers & pop-up quizzes	✓	✓	✓	20%	
Research proposal (presentation & written proposal)	✓	✓	✓	70%	
Examination: N.A. (duration: _____, if applicable)				100%	

## 5. Assessment Rubrics

Applicable to students admitted before Semester A 2022/23 and in Semester A 2024/25 & thereafter

Assessment Task	Criterion	Excellent (A+, A, A-)	Good (B+, B, B-)	Fair (C+, C, C-)	Marginal (D)	Failure (F)
1. In-Class Discussion	ABILITY to EXPLAIN in DETAIL and with ACCURACY the principles and methods used in communication research	High	Significant	Moderate	Basic	Not even reaching marginal levels
2. Reflection papers & Pop-up quizzes	ABILITY to comprehend TENETS of major theories and have a critical ASSESSMENT of theories	High	Significant	Moderate	Basic	Not even reaching marginal levels
3. Design and propose a research project	CAPACITY for SELF-DIRECTED LEARNING to understand the principles of communication research	Strong	Significant	Moderate	Basic	Not even reaching marginal levels

Applicable to students admitted from Semester A 2022/23 to Summer Term 2024

Assessment Task	Criterion	Excellent (A+, A, A-)	Good (B+, B)	Marginal (B-, C+, C)	Failure (F)
1. In-Class Discussion	ABILITY to EXPLAIN in DETAIL and with ACCURACY the principles and methods used in communication research	Excellent demonstration of the ABILITY to EXPLAIN in DETAIL and with ACCURACY the principles and methods used in communication research	Good demonstration of the ABILITY to EXPLAIN in DETAIL and with ACCURACY the principles and methods used in communication research	Marginally satisfactory demonstration of the ABILITY to EXPLAIN in DETAIL and with ACCURACY the principles and methods used in communication research	Unsatisfactory demonstration of the ABILITY to EXPLAIN in DETAIL and with ACCURACY the principles and methods used in communication research

2. Reflection papers & Pop-up quizzes	ABILITY to comprehend TENETS of major theories and have a critical ASSESSMENT of theories	Excellent demonstration of the ABILITY to comprehend TENETS of major theories and have a critical ASSESSMENT of theories	Good demonstration of the ABILITY to comprehend TENETS of major theories and have a critical ASSESSMENT of theories	Marginally satisfactory demonstration of the ABILITY to comprehend TENETS of major theories and have a critical ASSESSMENT of theories	Unsatisfactory demonstration of the ABILITY to comprehend TENETS of major theories and have a critical ASSESSMENT of theories
3. Design and propose a research project	CAPACITY for SELF-DIRECTED LEARNING to understand the principles of communication research	Excellent demonstration of the CAPACITY for SELF-DIRECTED LEARNING to understand the principles of communication research	Good demonstration of the CAPACITY for SELF-DIRECTED LEARNING to understand the principles of communication research	Marginally satisfactory demonstration of the CAPACITY for SELF-DIRECTED LEARNING to understand the principles of communication research	Unsatisfactory demonstration of the CAPACITY for SELF-DIRECTED LEARNING to understand the principles of communication research

## Part III Other Information

### 1. Keyword Syllabus

Logic and craft of research. Conducting literature search and review. Writing for social sciences. Theoretical framework, research conceptualization, and hypothesis development. Methodology. Creativity and rigor.

### 2. Reading List

#### 2.1 Compulsory Readings

1.	Becker, Howard (1986). <i>Writing for Social Scientists</i> . Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
2.	Chaffee, S.H. (1991) <i>Communication Concepts 1: Explication</i> . Newbury Park, CA: Sage
3.	Merton, Robert K. (1966). <i>Social Theory and Social Structure</i> . New York: Free Press.
4.	Bryant, J., & Oliver, M. B. (Eds.) (2008). <i>Media effects: Advances in theory and research</i> (3rd ed.), New York: Routledge.
5.	Littlejohn, SW, & Foss, KA (2008). <i>Theories of human communication</i> . (9th ed.). Belmont, CA: Thompson Wadsworth.

#### 2.2 Additional Readings