

**City University of Hong Kong  
Course Syllabus**

**offered by Department of Public Policy  
with effect from Semester A 2018/19**

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**Part I Course Overview**

**Course Title:** Business and the Environment

**Course Code:** POL3242

**Course Duration:** One Semester

**Credit Units:** 3

**Level:** B3

Arts and Humanities

**Proposed Area:**  Study of Societies, Social and Business Organisations

*(for GE courses only)*

Science and Technology

**Medium of Instruction:** English

**Medium of Assessment:** English

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

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

**Equivalent Courses:** SA3242 Business and the Environment  
*(Course Code and Title)*

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

## Part II Course Details

### 1. Abstract

*(A 150-word description about the course)*

The course aims at building knowledge and practical skills for students to understand the regulatory and business logic for making the environment and sustainability a core element of corporate management strategy and systems. Students will be asked to analyse how and when environmental thinking can be translated in competitive advantage for profit-seeking companies. The course is divided into four broad areas: 1) general environmental challenges facing the business sector, in particular Hong Kong's key economic sectors, including service sector; 2) drivers of business greening at the levels of individual firms, particular industries, and the economy as a whole; 3) corporate strategies of environmentally responsible firms, in the areas of greening processes, products, marketing and governance; 4) major corporate environmental management (CEM) tools including environmental management systems, environmental management accounting, environmental marketing, green supply chain management, and corporate social responsibility.

Experiential learning is at the heart of the course. Through the experiential learning, real-world challenges and associated learning objectives are approached on a case and small group basis and students take more central role in achieving the academic goals.

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

*(CILOs state what the student is expected to be able to do at the end of the course according to a given standard of performance.)*

No.	CILOs <sup>#</sup>	Weighting* (if applicable)	Discovery-enriched curriculum related learning outcomes (please tick where appropriate)		
			A1	A2	A3
1.	Learn the basic concepts and analytical tools of corporate environmental strategy and management system	25%	√	√	
2.	Analyse and appraise the strategies of environmentally responsible firms, in the areas of greening processes, products, marketing and governance	25%	√	√	
3.	Identify and evaluate the drivers of business greening at the levels of individual firms, particular industries, and the economy as a whole	25%	√	√	
4.	Discover the environmental challenges facing a private or public company and construct innovative solutions to the environmental challenges	25%	√	√	√
		100%			

\* If weighting is assigned to CILOs, they should add up to 100%.

<sup>#</sup> Please specify the alignment of CILOs to the Gateway Education Programme Intended Learning outcomes (PILOs) in Section A of Annex.

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. Teaching and Learning Activities (TLAs)

(TLAs designed to facilitate students' achievement of the CILOs.)

TLA	Brief Description	CILO No.					Hours/week (if applicable)
		1	2	3	4		
Lectures	Students are expected to complete the readings assigned for each session prior to class in order to participate fully in class discussions.	√	√	√	√		
In-class exercise	Students form 4-5 member teams in class to conduct relevant discussions and elaborate the results according to the detailed instructions of the related class exercises	√	√				
Individual case write-ups	Three 5-7 page case write-ups to summarise and analyse the key discussion questions about the three cases which will be self-selected from 8 cases being taught in the course.	√	√	√			
Group oral presentations	Each group will give a 15-minute oral presentation during the classes in weeks 12/13. Five-minute Q&A will follow each of the group presentations to offer feedback and stimulate mutual learning.	√	√	√	√		
Term report writing	A term paper on assessing the corporate environmental management system to deal with the environmental challenge facing a Hong Kong-based private or public company. A team of 4-5 students will write a term paper to analyse the environmental management strategy or system taken by a Hong Kong-based private or public company of your choice. Your paper should analyse the institutional environment of the selected company, evaluate its response to the environmental issues facing it, and explain why and to what degree the chosen environmental management strategy or approach is or is not likely to be effective. You, as a group, must make at least one field visit to the company to interview the environmental manager and visit the actual business operation. You should employ concepts and analytical tools from class lectures and readings where relevant, but feel free to apply new ideas of your own.	√	√	√	√		

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

(ATs are designed to assess how well the students achieve the CILOs.)

Assessment Tasks/Activities	CILO No.						Weighting*	Remarks
	1	2	3	4				
Continuous Assessment: <u>100</u> %								
Five in-class exercises	√		√				20%	4% for each in-class exercise
Four individual case write-ups	√	√	√				40%	10% for each case write-up
15-minute group oral presentations at the last two sessions in weeks 12/13	√	√	√	√			10%	
Up to 20 page group term papers	√	√	√	√			30%	
Examination: <u>0</u> % (duration: _____, if applicable)								
* The weightings should add up to 100%.							100%	

## 5. Assessment Rubrics

(Grading of student achievements is based on student performance in assessment tasks/activities with the following rubrics.)

Assessment Task	Criterion	Excellent (A+, A, A-)	Good (B+, B, B-)	Fair (C+, C, C-)	Marginal (D)	Failure (F)
1. In-class exercises (weeks 1-4)		Excellent individual contribution to the in-class exercises and well-justified results	Good individual contribution to the in-class exercises and basically correct results	Fair individual contribution to the in-class exercises and partially correct results	Poor individual contribution to the in-class exercises and mostly wrong results	Absence in class exercises
2. Case write-ups		Strong evidence of original thinking; good organization, capacity to analyse and synthesize; superior grasp of cases; evidence of extensive knowledge base.	Evidence of grasp of subject, some evidence of critical capacity and analytic ability; reasonable understanding of cases; evidence of familiarity with class material.	Student has the basic; understanding of the cases; ability to develop solutions to simple problems related to the cases without limited analysis and synthesis.	Sufficient familiarity with the cases to enable the student to offer some simple descriptions of the cases without much analysis and synthesis.	Little evidence of familiarity with the cases; weakness in critical and analytic skills; limited, or irrelevant use of case material.
3. Group oral presentation of term project		Excellent preparation for the term project topic; succinct presentation of key research questions, methods, and data and facts; persuasive assessment findings and policy recommendations; and proactive interaction and mutual support among team members.	Good preparation for the term project topic; clear presentation of key research questions, methods, and data and facts; sound assessment findings and policy recommendations; and good interaction and mutual support among team members.	Adequate preparation for the term project topic; average presentation of key research questions, methods, and data and facts; acceptable assessment findings and policy recommendations; and modest interaction and mutual support among team members.	Inadequate preparation for the term project topic; meagre presentation of key research questions, methods, and data and facts; insufficient assessment findings and policy recommendations; and lacking mutual support among team members.	No preparation for the term project topic; poor presentation of key research questions, methods, and data and facts; self-contradictory assessment findings and policy recommendations; and little or no participation.

<p>4. Group paper of term projects</p>		<p>Demonstrating comprehensive, in-depth understanding of CEM concepts and excellent application of the CEM analytical tools to assess and the Environmental Management System (EMS) of a private or public company and to recommend on improving its environmental performance, with active participation in and contribution to the entire research processes of term projects.</p>	<p>Demonstrating good to very good understanding of CEM concepts and good application of the CEM analytical tools to assess and compare the EMS of a private or public company and to recommend on improving its environmental performance, at least with satisfactory participation in and contribution to major research processes of team projects.</p>	<p>Demonstrating basic but not advanced understanding of CEM concepts and basic application of CEM analytical tools to assess and compare the EMS of a private or public company and to recommend on improving its environmental performance, with at least occasional participation and useful contribution in the entire research processes of term projects.</p>	<p>Partial but very inadequate understanding of CEM concepts and inadequate application of the CEM analytical tools to assess and compare the EMS of a private or public company and to recommend on improving its environmental performance, with at least some limited group participation.</p>	<p>Failure to demonstrate understanding of CEM concepts and to apply the CEM analytical tools to assess and compare the EMS of a private or public company, with poor attendance and little constructive group participation.</p>
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**Part III Other Information** (more details can be provided separately in the teaching plan)

**1. Keyword Syllabus**

*(An indication of the key topics of the course.)*

Environmental management; Environmental risk; Business opportunity; Competitive advantage; Environment regulation; Environmental management system; ISO 14001; Ecosystem services; Life cycle analysis; Life cycle management; Environmental product differentiation; Cost reduction; Industry self-regulation; Climate change; Greening the supply chain; Reverse supply chains; Extended Producer Responsibility; Partnerships and stakeholders; Base of the Pyramid; Market failure; Sustainability; Green economy, Environmental governance; Corporate social responsibility; and Voluntary environmental program.

**2. Reading List**

**2.1 Compulsory Readings**

*(Compulsory readings can include books, book chapters, or journal/magazine articles. There are also collections of e-books, e-journals available from the CityU Library.)*

1.	Schaltegger, S., Burritt, R., and Petersen, H. 2003. An Introduction to Corporate Environmental Management, Greenleaf Publishing. [electronic resource via CityU Library]
2.	Graedel, T.E. and J.A. Howard-Grenville. 2005. Greening the Industrial Facility: Perspectives, Approaches, and Tools. Springer. [electronic resource via CityU Library]
3.	Nath, B., Hens, L., Compton, P. and Devuyst, D. Eds., Environmental Management in Practice, Vol. 1: Instruments for Environmental Management, London and New York, Routledge.
4	Piper, Lennart, Sven-Olof Ryding, and Curt Henricson. 2003. Continual improvement with ISO 14000. IOS Press.
5	Bernhart, Michelle S. and Francis J. “Sonny” Maher. 2011. ISO 26000 in practice: a user guide. Milwaukee, Wis. : ASQ Quality Press.
6	Reinhardt, F. Down to Earth. Cambridge: Harvard Business Press, 1999

**2.2 Additional Readings**

*(Additional references for students to learn to expand their knowledge about the subject.)*

1.	Coase, R. 1960. The Problem of Social Cost, Journal of Law and Economics: 1-44.
2.	Porter, M. E. 2008. The Five Competitive Forces that Shape Strategy. Harvard Business Review: 24-40.
3.	Esty, D. C. and M. E. Porter. 1998. Industrial Ecology and Competitiveness: Strategic Implications for the firm. Journal of Industrial Ecology, 2(1): 35-44.
4	Porter, M. E. and Claas van der Linde. 1995. Green and Competitive: Ending the Stalemate, Harvard Business Review, 73(5): 120-134.
5	Solow, R. 1992. An Almost Practical Step Toward Sustainability. Washington: Resources for the Future.