

**City University of Hong Kong
Course Syllabus**

**Offered Department of Asian and International Studies
with effect from Semester A 2021/22**

Part I Course Overview

Course Title: Social Research Methods

Course Code: AIS 2012

Course Duration: One semester

Credit Units: 3

Level: B2

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: Nil
(Course Code and Title)

Precursors: Nil
(Course Code and Title)

Equivalent Courses: AIS2035 Social Research I
(Course Code and Title) AIS3122 Social Research Methods

Exclusive Courses: Nil
(Course Code and Title)

Part II Course Details

1. Abstract

This course will introduce students to basic principles of research design and causal inference in social science, as well as to a range of qualitative and quantitative methods commonly used in social science research. The course starts with an exploration of general issues in social inquiry and research design, and it then transition to discussing more specific areas and selected research methods that constitute the toolkit of social scientists. For each of them, we focus on underlying principles, practical applications, strengths and weaknesses, and ethical challenges. Assessment is based on class participation, written exams and final assignment in which students work in groups to design a research project in an area of choice, and a series of other assignments related to research topics. There will be a variety of activities to help students better understand the research process and discover the way to apply social science research methods to address their research questions.

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 [#]	Weighting* (if applicable)	Discovery-enriched curriculum related learning outcomes (please tick where appropriate)		
			A1	A2	A3
1.	Understand the main theoretical, practical and ethical challenges in conducting social science research;	15%	x	x	
2.	Identify and critique the various phases of designing and implementing social science research, such as choosing research questions, reviewing relevant literatures, developing hypotheses, collecting data.	25%	x	x	
3.	Understand basic tools for the analysis of quantitative and survey data	10%	x	x	
4.	Identify and explore strengths and weaknesses of various research methods and assess their suitability to address specific research questions in social science;	25%	x	x	x
5.	Apply principles of social science research by developing a full-blown research design given specific guidelines.	25%	x	x	x
		100%			

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

[#] 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	5		
Lectures	The instructor will present concepts and theories related to social science research	√	√	√	√			
Class participation	Students are expected to attend all lectures and tutorials, prepare for class by reading required materials and participate actively to class discussion when possible	√	√	√	√			
Mid-term exam	Students will answer a series of multiple-choice and open-ended questions designed to ascertain their knowledge of the material covered in lectures and their ability to apply that knowledge	√	√	√	√			
Final quiz	Students will answer a series of multiple-choice questions to demonstrate their knowledge of the material covered in lectures	√		√	√			
Research proposal	Students will work in small groups to draft a full research proposal on a topic of choice, applying the knowledge acquired in class to study an actual social issue	√	√		√	√		

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	5			
Continuous Assessment: 100%								
Mid-term exam	√	√	√	√			35%	To assess knowledge of research design and specific methods
Final quiz	√	√	√	√			15%	To assess knowledge of research design and specific methods
Research proposal	√	√		√	√		35%	To assess ability to apply knowledge and skills to the design of a research project, and to work in a group
Class participation	√	√	√	√			15%	To assess engagement with the course
Examination: ____% (duration: _____, if applicable)								
							100%	

* The weightings should add up to 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. Midterm exam; Final quiz	<i>Need to master the topics covered in class, and a capacity to critically reflect on them.</i>	Excellent knowledge of the materials covered in the course.	Good knowledge of the materials covered in the course.	Limited knowledge of the materials covered in the course.	Substantially flawed knowledge of the materials covered in the course.	Insufficient knowledge of the materials covered in the course.
2. Class participation	<i>Students are expected to attend all lectures and tutorials, and to participate actively, especially in tutorials.</i>	Demonstrates excellent level of engagement with lecture and reading material. Participation in tutorials is above average.	Demonstrates good level of engagement with lecture and reading material. Participation in tutorials is about average.	Demonstrates satisfactory level of engagement with lecture and reading material. Participation in tutorials is below average.	Demonstrates poor level of engagement with lecture and reading material. Participation in tutorials is well below average.	Indicates that through poor learning or lack of effort, the student has failed to maintain even minimal attendance and participation levels.
3. Research proposal	<i>Quality of writing</i>	Excellent quality of writing	Good quality of writing	Adequate quality of writing	Marginal quality of writing	Poor quality of writing
	<i>Application and demonstrated comprehension of principles of social science research</i>	Excellent application and demonstrated comprehension	Good application and demonstrated comprehension	Adequate application and demonstrated comprehension	Marginal application and demonstrated comprehension	Poor application and demonstrated comprehension
	<i>Demonstration of research and prudent use of research materials in relation to argument</i>	Excellent demonstration of research and prudent use of research materials	Good demonstration of research and prudent use of research materials	Adequate demonstration of research and prudent use of research materials	Marginal demonstration of research and prudent use of research materials	Poor demonstration of research and prudent use of research materials
	<i>Quality and originality of argument</i>	Excellent and original argument	Good and reasonably original argument	Adequate articulation of argument/adequate attempt at making an original argument	Marginal demonstration of argument and or originality in argument	Poor deployment of or non-existent argument

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.)

Purposes of research; Research process; Production of knowledge; Theory and empirics; Literature review; Research ethics; Research design; Causal inference; Conceptualization; Measurement; Qualitative methods; Interviews; Comparative method; Case study analysis; Quantitative methods; Statistics; Text analysis; Ethnography; Sampling; Surveys; Experiments.

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.	Johnson, B. J., Reynolds, H. T. & Mycoff, J. D. (2020) <i>Political Science Research Methods</i> . London, Sage.
2.	Babbie, Earl (2017) <i>The Basics of Social Research</i> . Boston: Cengage.
3.	Creswell, J. W. & Creswell, J. D. (2018) <i>Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches</i> . London, Sage.

2.2 Additional Readings

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

1.	Berg, B. & Lune H., 2011. <i>Qualitative Research Methods for the Social Sciences</i> . 8th ed. Boston: Pearson.
2.	Walliman, N, 2011. <i>Research Methods: The Basics</i> . Oxon and New York: Routledge.