

**City University of Hong Kong  
Course Syllabus**

**offered by Department of Applied Social Sciences  
with effect from Semester A 2015 / 16**

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**Part I Course Overview**

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| <b>Course Title:</b>   | Empowerment-oriented Practice with Socially Disadvantaged Groups   |
| <b>Course Code:</b>  | SS5116   |
| <b>Course Duration:</b>                                      | One Semester   |
| <b>Credit Units:</b>   | 3  |
| <b>Level:</b>  | P5   |
| <b>Medium of Instruction:</b>                                | English, supplemented by Cantonese/Putonghua in live demonstration, skills rehearsal, and role-play exercises as situation requires. |
| <b>Medium of Assessment:</b>                                 | English  |
| <b>Prerequisites:</b><br><i>(Course Code and Title)</i>      | Nil  |
| <b>Precursors:</b><br><i>(Course Code and Title)</i>         | Nil  |
| <b>Equivalent Courses:</b><br><i>(Course Code and Title)</i> | Nil  |
| <b>Exclusive Courses:</b><br><i>(Course Code and Title)</i>  | Nil  |

## Part II Course Details

### 1. Abstract

This course aims to help students to develop empowerment-orientated perspective in social work intervention and understand the nature, theories, ethical principles and strategies of empowerment-oriented practice in working with socially disadvantaged groups.

### 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<br>(if applicable) | Discovery-enriched curriculum related learning outcomes (please tick where appropriate) |    |    |
|-----|---|------------------------------|---|----|----|
|     |   |                              | A1  | A2 | A3 |
| 1.  | analyse issues of power and disempowerment in professional social work practice with socially disadvantaged groups; | 20%                          | √   | √  | √  |
| 2.  | explain social construction of vulnerability of socially disadvantaged groups;                                      | 10%                          | √   | √  | √  |
| 3.  | explain the causes of disempowerment, discrimination and oppression faced by socially disadvantaged groups;         | 10%                          |   | √  | √  |
| 4.  | describe the concepts, main features, values, ethical principles of empowerment-oriented practice;                  | 30%                          | √   | √  | √  |
| 5.  | demonstrate knowledge and strategies in empowering socially disadvantaged groups in the local context.              | 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. Teaching and Learning Activities (TLAs)

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

| TLA   | Brief Description  | CILO No. |   |   |   |   | Hours/week<br>(if applicable) |
|---|--|----------|---|---|---|---|-------------------------------|
|   |  | 1        | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |                               |
| TLA1: Lecture   | Lectures will cover the topics related to all CILOs and will be used to explain the concepts, theories and methods of empowerment-oriented practice.   | √        | √ | √ | √ | √ |                               |
| TLA2: Video shows in lectures                                     | Video shows about real life cases and situations will be shown to help students get a better grasp of the concepts and integrate what they have learnt to the local Hong Kong context. It will mainly contribute to achieve CILO 2, 3 and 5.   |          | √ | √ |   | √ |                               |
| TLA3: Experiential activities in lectures                         | Experiential activities will be used to help students develop an empowerment-oriented perspective (CILO4) and stimulate their reflection on social construction of vulnerability of socially disadvantaged groups (CILO 2) and oppression and discrimination faced by socially disadvantaged groups in Hong Kong societies (CILO 3). |          | √ | √ | √ |   |                               |
| TLA4: Guest lectures  | Guest speakers will be invited to share with students about social oppression and discrimination of socially disadvantaged groups (CILO 2 & 3), and the use of empowering strategies to empower socially disadvantaged groups (CILO 4 & 5).  |          | √ | √ | √ | √ |                               |
| TLA5: Class discussions and exercises and practice demonstrations | Class discussions, exercises and practice demonstrations will be frequently used to help students have further discussion and sharing on the concepts and knowledge they learnt from the lectures and the assigned readings. These teaching and learning activities are expected to achieve all CILO s.                              | √        | √ | √ | √ | √ |                               |

|   |  |   |   |   |   |   |  |  |
|---|--|---|---|---|---|---|--|--|
| TLA6: Group presentation                              | Students are asked to divide among themselves into small groups to have a presentation on one chosen topic in class. The topics are related to the achievement of CILO 1-5. Students are recommended to bring the voices of people of socially disadvantaged groups to be heard in the presentation. They can either invite 1 or 2 members of the socially disadvantaged groups to the class, or interview some members of the special need group they choose, collect their voices and let classmates have a chance to listen to their views. | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ |  |  |
| TLA7: Online sharing in Discussion Forum via e-portal | An on-line Discussion Forum will be set up to help students exchange their views, questions, comments and feelings on their learning in this course. Students can share whatever topics they like, so this activity is relevant to all CILOs.  | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ |  |  |

#### 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%  |          |   |   |   |   |           |         |
| AT1 Class exercises and on-line discussion<br><br>Students are assessed according to their effort in participating in the class exercises. They are also expected to have active participation in on-line discussion, in giving comments, raising questions and contributing to reflective sharing and discussion in the class. Students' effort in reading and understanding the assigned reference materials is also assessed. | √        | √ | √ | √ | √ | 20%       |         |

|  |   |   |   |   |   |  |      |  |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|--|------|--|
| <p>AT2 Group presentation</p> <p>The group presentation is designed to assess students' understanding of the concepts and knowledge they have learnt and test their abilities and competence in applying knowledge to different socially disadvantaged groups or community situations.</p>   | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ |  | 30%  |  |
| <p>AT3 Term Paper</p> <p>Each student has to submit an individual Term Paper of not more than 3,000 words. The term paper topic can be either (a): an essay on the student's presentation topic; or (b): any self-selected topic which is within the course syllabus. It aims at gauging the student's grasp on concepts, theories and knowledge introduced in lectures, assigned readings and class discussions, as well as the ability to apply them to solve problems in various client group situations.</p> | √ | √ | √ | √ | √ |  | 50%  |  |
|  |   |   |   |   |   |  | 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<br>(A+, A, A-) | Good<br>(B+, B, B-) | Adequate<br>(C+, C, C-) | Marginal<br>(D) | Failure<br>(F)                    |
|---|---|--------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|-----------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Class exercises and on-line discussion (20%) | Ability to raise questions, give sharing and comments, and make self-reflection and sharing in the on-line discussion.    | High                     | Significant         | Moderate                | Basic           | Not even reaching marginal levels |
| 2. Group presentation (30%)                     | 2.1. Capacity of understanding the concepts and knowledge they have learnt.   | High                     | Significant         | Moderate                | Basic           | Not even reaching marginal levels |
|   | 2. 2. Ability and competence in applying knowledge to various socially disadvantaged groups situations                    | High                     | Significant         | Moderate                | Basic           | Not even reaching marginal levels |
|   | 2. 3. Team work and presentation skills   | High                     | Significant         | Moderate                | Basic           | Not even reaching marginal levels |
| 3. Term Paper (50%)                             | 3.1 Ability to grasp the concepts, theories and knowledge introduced in lectures, assigned readings and class discussions | High                     | Significant         | Moderate                | Basic           | Not even reaching marginal levels |
|   | 3.2 Ability to apply them to solve problems in various socially disadvantaged groups situations                           | High                     | Significant         | Moderate                | Basic           | Not even reaching marginal levels |
|   | 3.3 Organisation of the paper   | High                     | Significant         | Moderate                | Basic           | Not even reaching marginal levels |
|   | 3.3 Writing skills and proper reference citation skills   | High                     | Significant         | Moderate                | Basic           | Not even reaching marginal levels |

### 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.)

##### 1.1 Power issues in social work practice

Power relationship in social work practice. Disempowering nature of the profession and social work practice. Relationship between power, social work profession and the state.

##### 1.2 Disempowerment of socially disadvantaged groups

Causes of disempowerment. Social construction of vulnerability of socially disadvantaged groups. Disempowerment in social work practice. Oppression and discrimination faced by disadvantaged groups. PCS analysis.

##### 1.3 Empowerment-oriented practice

Concepts, philosophy and functions of empowerment. Values base and ethical principles in empowerment-oriented practice. Anti-oppressive practice and anti-discriminatory practice. Relationship between strengths perspective, participation and empowerment.

##### 1.4 Strategies in empowering socially disadvantaged groups

Asset-based community development approach. Effective ways to identify strengths of disadvantaged groups. User participation. Self help groups. Advocacy in social work practice.

#### 2. Recommended Reading

##### 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. | Adams, R. (2008). <i>Empowerment, participation and social work</i> (4 <sup>th</sup> ed.). New York: Palgrave Macmillan.                            |
| 2. | Adams, R., Dominelli, L., & Payne, M. (Eds.). (2009). <i>Critical practice in social work</i> . New York: Palgrave Macmillan.                       |
| 3. | Ferguson, I. (2008). <i>Reclaiming social work: Challenging neo-liberalism and promoting social justice</i> . Los Angeles: Sage.                    |
| 4. | Miley, K., O'Melia, M., & Dubois, B. (2013). <i>Generalist social work practice: An empowering approach</i> (7 <sup>th</sup> ed.). Boston: Pearson. |
| 5. | Okitikpi, T., & Aymer, C. (2010). <i>Key concepts in anti-discriminatory social work</i> . Los Angeles: Sage.                                       |
| 6. | Saleebey, D. (Ed.). (2013). <i>The strengths perspective in social work practice</i> (6th ed.). Boston: Pearson.                                    |
| 7. | Thompson, N. (2012). <i>Anti-discriminatory practice: Equality, diversity and social justice</i> (5th. ed.). New York: Palgrave Macmillan.          |
| 8. | 甘炳光 (2014a) 。〈「去權」與「充權」：社工專業本質的反思〉。《香港社會工作學報》，48(1/2) ，85-95 。  |

## 2.2 Additional Readings

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

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|-----|--|
| 1.  | Adam, R. (2003). <i>Social work and empowerment</i> (3 <sup>rd</sup> ed.). New York: Palgrave Macmillan.   |
| 2.  | Bishop, A. (2002). <i>Becoming an ally: Breaking the cycle of oppression in people</i> (2nd ed.). London & New York: Zed Books.  |
| 3.  | Braye, S. & Preston-Shoot, M. (1995). <i>Empowering practice in social care</i> . Buckingham: Open University Press.   |
| 4.  | Ezell, M. (2001). <i>Advocacy in the human services</i> . Toronto: Brooks/Cole.  |
| 5.  | Glicken, M.D. (2004). <i>Using strengths perspective in social work practice: A positive approach for the helping professions</i> . Boston: Pearson.   |
| 6.  | Gutierrez, L.M., Parsons, R.J., & Cox, E.O. (1998). <i>Empowerment in social work practice: A source book</i> . Pacific Grove: Brooks/Cole Publishing Company.   |
| 7.  | Hugman, R. (1991). <i>Power in caring profession</i> . London: Macmillan.  |
| 8.  | Humphries, B. (Ed.). (1996). <i>Critical perspectives on empowerment</i> . Birmingham: Ventures.   |
| 9.  | Kam, P. K. (1997). Towards empowerment and advocacy: Practice and policy in social services for old people in Hong Kong. <i>Asia Pacific Journal of Social Work</i> , 7(2), 46-62.   |
| 10. | Kam, P. K. (2002). From disempowering to empowering: Changing the practice of social service professionals with older people. <i>Hallym International Journal of Aging</i> , 4(2), 161-183.  |
| 11. | Kam, P.K. (2009). From social control to empowerment: Toward a youth empowerment approach in services for young people. In E.S.C. Liu, M.J. Holosko, & W.T. Lo (Eds.), <i>Youth empowerment and volunteerism: Principles, policies and practices</i> (1st ed.). (pp.109-134). Hong Kong: City University of Hong Kong Press. |
| 12. | Lee, J.A.B. (2001). <i>The empowerment approach to social work practice: Building the beloved community</i> . New York: Columbia University Press.   |
| 13. | Liu, E.S.C., Holosko, M.J., & Lo, T.W. (Eds.). (2009). <i>Youth empowerment and volunteerism: Principles, policies and practices</i> . Hong Kong: City University of Hong Kong Press.  |
| 14. | Mullaly, R.P. (2007). <i>The new structural social work</i> (3 <sup>rd</sup> ed.). Don Mills, Ont.: Open University Press.   |
| 15. | Parsloe, P. (Ed.). (1996). <i>Pathways to empowerment</i> . Birmingham: Venture Press.   |
| 16. | Riessman, F., & Carroll, D. (1995). <i>Refining self-help: Policy and practice</i> . San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.  |
| 17. | Shera, W., & Wells, L. (1999). <i>Empowerment practice in social work: Developing richer</i>   |



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|     | <i>conceptual foundations</i> . Toronto: Canadian Scholars' Press.  |
| 18. | Thompson, N. (2003). <i>Promoting equality: Challenging discrimination and oppression</i> (2 <sup>nd</sup> . ed.).Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan.                              |
| 19. | Yip, K.S. (Ed.). (2009). <i>Strength based perspective in working with clients with mental illness: A Chinese cultural articulation</i> . New York : Nova Science Publishers. |
| 20. | 宋麗玉、及施教裕 (2009) 。《優勢觀點—社會工作理論與實務》。台北：洪業文化事業有限公司。  |
| 21. | 香港中華基督教青年會編 (2002) 。《香港青年充權：理論與案例彙編》。香港：編者。   |
| 22. | 趙雨龍、黃昌榮、及趙維生編 (2003) 。《充權—新社會工作視界》。台北：五南圖書出版公司。   |
| 23. | 趙維生、及黃昌榮合編 (1999) 。《青年工作與充權：理論與寶踐》。香港：香港政策透。  |